

ATTITUDES TO WEALTH IN OLD FRENCH
DIDACTIC AND COURTLY VERSE (1150-1300)

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the attitudes to wealth as depicted in two contrasting literary genres: didactic verse sermons and courtly verse romances. A preliminary chapter briefly outlines the historical background, its relationship with contemporary literature and with the prominence of wealth as a literary theme.

Part One, devoted to the didactic works, begins with an appraisal of the sources of the Old French attitudes to wealth, and of their mode of expression. Consideration follows of the treatment of avarice in medieval verse sermons. Thereafter the relationship between man and wealth is studied from two standpoints. Firstly man is viewed as a moral type, usually the evil rich man. Chapters Three and Four resume the opinions of the didactic poets on wealth and on man as a social type in all his different roles.

Part Two, centred upon the courtly works, examines avarice as a literary topic, and goes on to consider the more dominant theme of courtly liberality. This leads to a careful analysis of the gift theme wherein are demonstrated the complexity and significance of giving and accepting gifts in courtly romance. A critical survey of attitudes to wealth embraces also attitudes towards poverty, and a study of the ways of amassing wealth includes the approved courtly remedies for poverty. Wealth is overshadowed only by the

theme of love in the romances. Accordingly the thesis ends with a study of the conflicting attitudes to wealth in relation to love found in courtly society and in its heroes.

The General Conclusion assesses how far the two literary genres differ and coincide regarding attitudes to wealth, and seeks to establish why.

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INTRODUCTION

The reader of medieval French literature is familiar with the antithesis between the concept of avarice, attacked by the moralists, and that of liberality, upheld by courtly writers. However this apparent dichotomy between the didactic and courtly works, while not wholly erroneous, is an over-simplification, as the present study will seek to demonstrate.

The misconception arises, I believe, from the hitherto accepted premise that the moralising poets simply oppose wealth. I shall demonstrate that they were too practical and too realistic to attack wealth as being intrinsically evil. Their censure was directed primarily against the means employed to acquire wealth, the use made of riches, and, above all, the differing attitudes of men towards their material possessions.

Likewise I hope to dispel the impression that the courtly poets indiscriminately favour wealth, and that greedy "jongleurs" simply pursue their own interests in praising riches and ostentatious spending. On the contrary, we shall see that beneath the veil of fantasy, characteristic of this aristocratic, escapist literary genre, there lies a hard core of realism. The modern reader is able to discern implicit attitudes to wealth, and thereby to discover that the treatment of wealth is more complex than at first appears.

The title of this thesis evolved over many months, my work having begun as a study of satire in Old French literature. A preliminary exploration made clear that satiric complaint centred on one principal theme, that of wealth. The title thus became "Money in Old French Literature". The final modification to the present title based on a study of attitudes was a natural progression since wealth is a topic inseparable from human psychology: it derives its primary interest from its relationship with man.

All attitudes have a direction and an intensity. When they are directed

towards riches, a high degree of intensity is inevitable, for wealth is an essential and controversial feature of life. The two extremes of approval and of disapproval mentioned above are immediately apparent in the courtly and didactic works. In addition there is considerable middle ground. We shall see that neither the deep-rooted prejudices against wealth of some moralists, nor the unrealistic eulogies to wealth of some courtly poets are typical of the works studied.

In my analysis I am conscious that one should take care to distinguish between various kinds of reaction. Poets who were also members of the clergy would inevitably betray certain imposed attitudes. Church teaching would predispose such men to react in a particular way to certain moral issues or to specific social features. For example, one would expect a member of the clergy to express an accepted Church opinion on usury, so that any personal views he might hold on the practice of making loans on interest would be subordinate to current doctrine. These received attitudes will be important to my study, but I am careful to seek out personal attitudes when they may be perceived. For instance, the personal circumstances of a poet may well dictate his attitude to liberality. He would consider it a necessary expedient to sing its praises to a hoped-for patron.

In order to distinguish the various attitudes and to "classify" them, it is important to examine the motivation of the poets and also to identify in their works all that is literary commonplace. I shall, therefore, be concerned to indicate to what extent the poets, and particularly the didactic poets, were original in their works. This will involve some consideration of economic and social history, of moral and religious ideas, and of literary sources. Although this thesis is not intended primarily as a source study, much attention will, of necessity, be given to well-worn ideas which the Old French poets were content merely to repeat in their own works. This will permit me to establish any originality of treatment

or ideas. My aims are then, in short, to seek to collect together the views of leading and minor writers, to interpret and explain them, to compare, evaluate and appreciate similar and conflicting attitudes, ideas and feelings. A literary appraisal of the works selected will not be neglected.

The subject of this thesis is too vast to treat exhaustively in a single study. Rigorous selection has been necessary in order to avoid a superficial survey of the material available. The period 1150 to 1300 was one of intense literary activity which produced innumerable works of very varied character. Moreover my particular field of investigation has been heretofore largely neglected by medievalists, and there still remains much untouched ground. I have limited myself to verse works which incorporate all the prevalent themes associated with wealth, and all shades of attitude to be found therein. This selection has also permitted me to include an extensive cross-section of courtly works.

The courtly romances are well-known to students of medieval literature. I have studied some sixty of them in detail. These range from the early "romans antiques", to Chrétien de Troyes and the "matière de Bretagne" in general; to later miscellaneous works of the late thirteenth century when the genre had passed its peak.

The didactic works chosen for study here, in the first part of my thesis, need more introduction since they are not so well-known. I use "didactic" as a convenient inclusive term to cover a wide variety of heterogeneous works, all with some degree of intent to edify the reader. These works expound certain moral principles, often in order to provide a layman's guide to a good Christian life in spite of worldly temptations. The general title of "didactic" will, nevertheless, not prevent me being attentive to satirical traits in these works. Conversely, although the courtly romances were intended principally as entertainment, I am aware that this does not

preclude didactic traits, and I shall seek to identify these.

Even within the field of didactic verse literature further selection has been necessary. Some "fabliaux", for example, may be considered indirectly didactic, and the genre certainly makes considerable use of the topic of wealth. However the material available is so great that I have preferred to leave aside the study of these and other genres for another occasion.

Of the remaining didactic verse works, I have collected what I consider to be a representative group. It spans the sober moralising of the sermon, the bitter invective of pure satire and the sorrowful laments of complaint. The core of my study is formed by the "Etats du Monde" poems, so-called because they are at least partially devoted to a critical review of the estates of medieval society. These works are listed, with brief descriptions in my first chapter, and the social reviews are studied fully in the two following chapters. I shall allude to the major contemporary poet, Rutebeuf, when relevant, but have accorded him less attention than more neglected poets. I shall include also some short anonymous works such as the anti-bourgeois satires to be found in a collection of poems from the industrial town of Arras. Any study of medieval literature cannot ignore the taste of poets for sustained allegory, and I have considered these works in so far as they relate to the topic of wealth. I have not, however, attempted to do justice to the Roman de la Rose, a major but unclassifiable work to which I shall, of course, allude upon occasion. The above assortment of didactic works, together with sixty courtly romances, make up the texts to be studied in this thesis.

Since I am interested in the motivation of the poets of these works, I shall introduce relevant and significant biographical details when appropriate. While the shorter works remain anonymous, the authors of the longer works are more easily identifiable. They tend, in general, to be

elderly men closely connected with the Church, clergy of varying rank, or late converts to monasticism. On the other hand, the authors of the courtly works were either professional poets or noblemen. Such differences of social background do colour the attitudes of poets to wealth.

Whatever their provenance, whatever their social position, all poets, didactic and courtly alike, share the current preoccupation with wealth. Wealth, always a topic of universal interest, was of overwhelming concern to all during the Old French period. My preliminary chapter will consider the historic background of the time which prompted this concern.

Thereafter, in Chapter One, I propose to seek elsewhere for possible sources of inspiration: chiefly the doctrinal influences which were brought to bear upon the Church-educated poets of a Church-dominated society. By first considering the state of contemporary society and then balancing its influence against that of the poets' education, I hope to be better able to gauge to what extent their material was original and based on direct observation and personal attitudes, and how much of it was drawn from literary predecessors.

Throughout the first part of this study, I consider the criticisms and complaints of the didactic poets. Were they genuinely angered or grieved? Or were they merely seizing upon a subject of contemporary interest and refashioning time-honoured literary commonplaces to deal with the topic? Or, again, were they merely spokesmen for Church teaching? Since the poets were themselves Churchmen they may well have used their vernacular works to communicate contemporary Church teaching to the laity.

Part two deals with the courtly romances. Here the poets' personal attitudes will become a point of interest only in the didactic or satiric comment which lies outside the framework of their narrative. In these four chapters I am concerned with a study of courtly notions regarding wealth, and with some examination of the manner in which the poets treat

such themes.

My research has revealed that no comprehensive study of the topic of wealth in either the Old French didactic or courtly works has hitherto been attempted. Studies devoted to the didactic poems have been generally of a descriptive nature. Few have sought to make a critical analysis of the themes expounded, and no study has been devoted solely to the topic of wealth, and its many and varied aspects. The theme of avarice has attracted attention, but few critics have progressed from their study of this topos to a consideration of the underlying attitudes to wealth. Some have made an extensive study of a particular, well-defined subject and have discussed wealth as a secondary theme, for example J.A. Yunck's article: "Economic Conservatism, Papal Finance, and the Medieval Satires on Rome"⁽¹⁾ or J.V. Alter's work: Les Origines de la Satire anti-bourgeoise en France⁽²⁾. Here the treatment of the topic of wealth is restricted to its social aspects, and the moral implications are not touched on.

On the whole the didactic poems, when studied as a genre, have received cursory treatment, for instance at the hands of C. Lenient (La Satire en France au Moyen Age)⁽³⁾ and C.-V. Langlois (La Vie en France au Moyen-âge de la fin du XII^e au milieu du XIV^e siècle d'après des moralistes du temps)⁽⁴⁾. Critical works devoted to a specific group of didactic works, termed the "Etats du Monde" poems, have delved a little deeper: Ruth Mohl (The Three Estates in Medieval and Renaissance Literature)⁽⁵⁾ recorded the intensification of the attacks on avarice in all social types, but did not go on to explain this trend, nor to assess the implicit attitudes. Mary Morton Wood (The Spirit of Protest in Old French Literature)⁽⁶⁾ came closer to a study of the topic of wealth by picking out one or two of the major anti-wealth themes, and also by noting the interest of the moralists in the rich man and the poor man. She offered long quotations to illustrate this interest, but did not undertake any analysis of attitude or treatment on the particular topic of wealth.

Recent studies have proved more forthcoming on the subject of wealth in the Old French poems. Since I started my own research, I have noted that my subject has attracted the attention of other researchers: Jill Mann (Chaucer and the Medieval Estates Satire)⁽⁷⁾ often has occasion to refer to the Old French didactic poems in her study on Chaucer. However, her study is based on English literature and the Old French works appear only as source material. In common with most critics who broach the subject of wealth, Dr. Mann emphasises the social aspect of these didactic poems, namely that contained in the "Etats du Monde" section of these works. Ignored by all to date is the fact that the so-called "Etats du Monde" poems contain far more than a mere social review. It is for this reason that I prefer to call them sermons. I myself undertake a detailed study of the wealth themes which abound in these neglected parts of the poems which are not of the "Etats du Monde" formula.

Some recent articles by J. Batany⁽⁸⁾ have given a more penetrating analysis of these poems. This critic has broached a study of the topic of wealth, but has so far confined himself to its negative side, that is poverty ("Les Pauvres et la pauvreté dans les revues des 'estats du monde'.")⁽⁹⁾

Surprisingly the topos of wealth has also been neglected in studies of the courtly romances. As with the didactic poems, certain aspects have been examined, such as the description of the rich settings. There have been many references to courtly largesse or liberality, so often dismissed as mere propaganda from greedy poet to potential patron. This theme has been closely studied with limited reference by G. Cary (The Medieval Alexander)⁽¹⁰⁾. It is my intention to show that this theme is more intricate than hitherto suggested and goes far deeper than the mere praise of generosity. I propose also to show that the subject of wealth plays a role of paramount importance in the courtly works beyond the theme of courtly liberality.

So it is that although the topic of wealth is ubiquitous in Old French

literature, it has been largely neglected. Having established that there is a need for a detailed study of the attitudes towards wealth as found in Old French poetry, I have assumed the task of combining in one study the two neglected genres, both didactic and courtly verse, and propose to compare for the first time, the treatment the literary topos of wealth receives in each of them.

Preliminary Chapter: Economic and Theological Considerations

Constantly under consideration in this study will be the degree of veracity to be found in the way poets depict their society. Do they give a true or distorted reflection of the age? If distorted, it need not be discounted, for any deviation from the "truth" established by historians will tell us much of current or personal attitudes. Critics have been sceptical about the accuracy of the picture presented by the moralising poets⁽¹⁾. We shall try to see if their scepticism was justified or not. On the other hand, some critics have claimed that much is to be learned indirectly of contemporary society from the apparently unreal world portrayed in the courtly romances⁽²⁾. This claim, too, will be borne in mind.

There are several reasons why wealth should be a subject of particular interest in the literature of the period 1150 to 1300. While it is not my intention to perform the task of the historian, it is nevertheless essential that one should be able to set both the didactic and courtly poems against their contemporary social and economic background, for it is surely within this framework that they derive much of their meaning and coherence. The didactic poems are, after all, to a large extent, complaints against the times. One must, therefore, have some view of the age in order to attempt to assess the authenticity of the complaints. I would refer the reader who wishes to have a detailed picture of the period to my bibliography. At this point I shall merely present a brief outline of contemporary conditions. More detail will be supplied when relevant in succeeding chapters.

Historians agree that the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were a time of great economic expansion in Western Europe. Northern France reflected the contemporary developments and consequently underwent some dramatic changes during this period.

The changes hinge on the considerable increase in trade which occurred. This arose for several reasons (See my Chapter Four, section A, 2). The commercial upsurge made an impact on the towns of Northern France. Commerce in the old cathedral towns had been limited to a local market, but with increased trade and growing numbers of merchants, the towns began to grow⁽¹³⁾. The "faubourgs", territories outside the town walls which accommodated the overspill of itinerant merchants, spread further, bringing to the original town new activities.

In the wake of the merchants flocked the artisans⁽¹⁴⁾ and gradually the new residents constituted a new society, that of the burghers or "bourgeois". These town-dwellers of the new era had no assigned place in the established social hierarchy, and no special role or function was allotted to them within the traditional interdependent structure of feudal society. They were usually of humble birth, even refugee serfs from feudal domains. In the freer society, beyond the bonds of feudalism, opportunities awaited all who would and could make a profit. From modest beginnings "bourgeois" rose to positions of power and became wealthy citizens. They lived outside the feudal system, and effectively constituted a new society which co-existed peaceably with the older, predominantly agrarian system. The town-dwellers eventually secured judicial and administrative autonomy⁽¹⁵⁾. It was a society where wealth conferred great prestige and the richest men were the most powerful. Birth counted for less than it did in feudal society proper.

Linked with the rise of the bourgeoisie was the seizure of power by the crown from the powerful nobility. The monarchy saw its chance to regain effective sovereignty by allying itself with the nascent town powers. By supporting the "commune" movement the king won strong allies in his struggle to challenge the supremacy of the territorial barons. Philippe-Auguste (1165-1223) appointed high officials from the ranks of the bourgeoisie to deal with economic and judicial matters⁽¹⁶⁾. He also accorded special

protection to merchants in 1209⁽¹⁷⁾.

In this climate of economic change wealth based on land no longer represented absolute security, for a money economy was growing in importance. Commerce had long functioned through the intermediary of coins, but other transactions within the feudal domain were concluded with services or in kind. Greater commercial activity meant greater mobility of money. Consequently this was an age when more coinage was minted and put into circulation. The nobility held the right to mint coins, a right they over-exercised when they realised that power lay in the possession of nummery wealth⁽¹⁸⁾. Moreover the more clear-sighted of the nobility were quick to adapt to changed circumstances, and so fostered trade, seeking to acquire tangible riches⁽¹⁹⁾. The large number of local mints invariably led to abuses of the system: the debasement of coinage reached ridiculous proportions⁽²⁰⁾. Private right of coinage was fought by King Philippe-Auguste, and gradually minting became a sovereign prerogative. This was almost fully achieved by the beginning of the fourteenth century⁽²¹⁾.

The growth of a money economy had far-reaching effects upon society. It certainly encouraged the increase of certain social types such as money-changers and usurers, types usually regarded with suspicion if not outright dislike. In rural domains, an increasingly important money economy prompted the system of mutual services and payment in kind to give way in part to money payments. Above all the economic change heralded a new attitude. Henceforth wealth was to be seen in a different light. In the form of money wealth became a source of power and prestige⁽²²⁾, and so, inevitably, it was sought after by all. Commercial capitalism began to emerge⁽²³⁾. Money could grow and many enriched themselves thus. The making of profits became, apparently, the sole aim of a certain social category, the bourgeois. Such a rapacious attitude was, of course, in direct opposition not only to Christian teaching, but also to the ideal of a society

which hitherto was based, in theory at least, on a system of mutual benefit. (See also Chapter Four, section A).

Thus the times are characterised in part by a preoccupation with money and increased opportunities for acquiring it. Henceforth wealth lay not only in land, but also in its more obvious and more flexible form, that is in money. Wealth was in this way more calculable, more immediate, and inevitably much more of an obsession.

There is a danger that one might imagine that the bourgeois suddenly appropriated the wealth of society and that the towns suddenly became the seats of power. This is, of course, untrue. The established leaders of society were not abruptly ousted from their positions, nor did the town-dwellers monopolise the fortunes that were being made. There was no social revolution. In the period I am studying the towns did not accommodate more than ten per cent of the total population of the country⁽²⁴⁾. It was an age which saw great shifts of wealth, but the movement was not inevitably from country to town. There were money-making opportunities for all.

The Church certainly profited greatly from the changing economic circumstances. Indeed the Church, particularly the monasteries, pioneered some commercial developments. (See my Chapter 3, A, 1 and 2).

In the case of the nobles the situation varied considerably. Some were quick to turn the commercial expansion to their own ends and thus shared in the general prosperity. Others suffered from the changing social pattern. They were too firmly entrenched in their rural habits to change, or else they were too slow to handle the new mode of transaction competently. Consequently many feudal land-owners found themselves the receivers of a fixed rent from their tenant farmers, a rent which was rapidly devalued. (See my Chapter 3, B, 1). The bourgeoisie also constituted a threat to some of the higher nobility in that they were contenders for the king's favour and resulting power⁽²⁵⁾.

The remaining sector of society, the peasantry, did not suffer from the economic expansion. Rather they benefited directly. Money loans from merchants and usurers were made to peasants for the purpose of agricultural developments. Loans were also available to serfs in order that they might purchase their freedom⁽²⁶⁾. Moreover the towns were a refuge for fugitive serfs who had seized their freedom and who there found the opportunities to make money⁽²⁷⁾.

We see then that the period from the middle of the twelfth century onwards was a time when the economy thrived, when there was a general prosperity. The times encouraged men to make money, and to revel in the things which they could acquire. Economic well-being favoured delight in the world and its riches.

This changed state of affairs was not universally welcomed. The Church reacted against the new materialism and spoke out against the new acquisitive society. Thus the economic developments were not given a free rein by the Church, not in theory at least. The moral issues which arose from the new obsession with riches were seized upon by Church teachers. They saw that it was more necessary than ever to repeat the warnings of Christ on the dangers of great wealth. This we learn from the sermons of the day⁽²⁸⁾.

On a more practical level the Church bowed to the inevitability of the commercial expansion but attempted to curb the general, undisciplined drive towards the acquisition of great wealth. Canon lawyers formulated sets of rules for those engaged in commerce, thereby attempting to reconcile the exercise of trade with the Christian values of charity and justice. The rules dealt with matters such as the Just Price, and loans with interest, (see my Chapter Four, A, 2, 3), and were the particular field of activity of the experts in canon law.

The theologians were more concerned with the moral issues raised by wealth. They engaged in dialectics on the nature, role and function of

money. The stage reached by theological thought on these subjects is best demonstrated in the writings of Thomas Aquinas⁽²⁹⁾. Though too late to have influenced the works I am studying, his teachings reflect the current tendencies of the thirteenth century as a whole. He bases his conclusions upon a study of the Bible, the writings of the Church fathers and also on the philosophical works of classical writers such as Aristotle⁽³⁰⁾.

Upon the subject of wealth St. Thomas makes no dramatic departure from the accepted teachings of the Church fathers. He claims that riches cannot be the goal of man since they exist to serve man: (Summa Theologica, 1-11, q.2, a.1)⁽³¹⁾. He certainly does not deny riches their place in society, but warns men against attaching too much importance to them. He admits that wealth can give a person some social standing and so it cannot be ignored, but a man's value should not be calculated solely on his wealth (q.63, a.3). At the heart of the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas on wealth is the concept of justice in the use of it. A person may possess wealth but should always be ready to give to others (11-11, q.66, a.2). He is careful to specify that he does not mean that a man should give away all his wealth. On the contrary, a man has a duty to himself and his dependents and should put himself first in spiritual and temporal matters (11-11, q.117, a.1)⁽³²⁾.

Avarice was anathema to St. Thomas as to all moralists. He considered it a sin against justice, since the miser unjustly withdrew from circulation his riches and thus rendered them useless to anyone. This is a topic to which we shall return later (See Chapter Two, A, 8, c).

Thomas Aquinas also had much to say on almsgiving and on commerce. His study of the Just Price was particularly influential upon succeeding generations of theologians⁽³³⁾. We shall have occasion to refer to these teachings in Chapters Two (section 8,c on almsgiving) and Four (The Merchant and the Usurer, sections A and B respectively).

Both canonists and theologians were concerned primarily with man's soul and attempted to discourage an unbridled lust for wealth. They did not formulate coherent economic doctrines for they were concerned with ethics. They rather presented a set of rules designed to prevent men making riches their absolute goal⁽³⁴⁾. The result of the theories on such subjects as the Just Price may have had little effect on the practice of trade, but served to prevent merchants from making huge fortunes with a clear conscience⁽³⁵⁾.

There is, of course, something of an anomaly in the ambivalent position of the Church. In spite of all its preaching against the involvement with wealth, it was itself a great commercial pioneer. Banking houses, credit businesses, were often in Church hands. Many historians have pointed to the dilemma of the Church at this time, to its own conflict between the spiritual and the material. Such ambivalence was, however, inevitable given its interests and its principles⁽³⁶⁾. One economic historian examines what he calls the "paradox of spiritual and economic well-being"⁽³⁷⁾, and concludes that unless the Church freed itself from any connection with wealth, which was unrealistic, then the paradox could not be completely resolved⁽³⁸⁾. The problem prompted great activity on the part of canonists and theologians who sought to reconcile possession of wealth with care of the soul, without denying the economic realities of the day, a seemingly impossible task.

This then was how wealth figured in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; it was an important aspect of life on all levels. As its practical role in society grew so a corresponding interest was aroused in those concerned with ethics. Not surprisingly, the increasing importance attached to wealth at this time also appeared in vernacular literature.

PART I

THE DIDACTIC WORKS

Chapter One: The Topic of Wealth in the Old French Didactic Works

Introductory Remarks

A. Literary Sources of Relevant Themes

1. The Bible
2. The Early Church Fathers
3. Classical Latin Literature
4. "Contemptus mundi" Writings
 - a) Aims of the "contemptus mundi" works
 - b) Evolution of the "contemptus mundi" tradition
 - c) Attitudes of the "contemptus mundi" writers
 - d) The sources of "contemptus mundi" ideas:
 - i The Bible; ii The Early Church fathers
 - e) "Contemptus mundi" topics:
 - i General pattern; ii The Three Enemies
 - f) Terminology of "contemptus mundi" writing
 - g) "Contemptus mundi" exponents:
 - i Peter Damian; ii Bernard of Morval; iii Innocent III.

B. "Contemptus mundi" and Individual Old French Didactic Poets

C. Avarice as a Topic in the Didactic Works

1. Definitions of Avarice
2. Avarice and the Seven Deadly Sins
3. Avarice and the "Contemptus mundi" Tradition
4. The Derivative Evils of Avarice
5. Avarice and the "Laudatores Temporis Acti" Topos.

CHAPTER ONE

The Topic of Wealth in the Old French Didactic WorksIntroductory Remarks

The topic of wealth was not, of course, a new one. Money has always been a subject close to the heart and head of man. It is a basic feature of life and its practical importance is inevitably reflected in literature. Consequently there has always been some treatment of the universal themes associated with wealth. In a period where wealth begins to play such a significant role, as in the period I am studying, it is not surprising that this state of affairs should somehow make its mark on contemporary literature.

Literature may testify to the state of the times either directly or indirectly. In my study we shall see instances of both approaches. With the courtly romances we shall see that society was to a certain extent mirrored indirectly. With the didactic works, the poets assert that they are presenting a true and accurate picture of their times. When they tackled a subject which they viewed with disapproval, these didactic poets could treat their material in one of two major ways. The more seemingly direct way was through the medium of satire.

There is a clear link between a society of commercial activity and the rise of satire. We see an example of it at the time of the Silver age satirists. Juvenal, for example, directed many of his satires against the upstart freedman class who lived by commerce and who made of money a God⁽¹⁾. Similarly we see the revival of satirical literature in Northern France in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries. This genre flourished particularly in Arras, a centre of intense commercial activity. This was no coincidence says one historian⁽²⁾, for a preoccupation with wealth and displays of greed will soon find their critics in literature. As the commercial society developed, so the literary satire became more subtle

and sophisticated⁽³⁾. Its darts were aimed at the rich bourgeois, for instance, condemning his easy profits. Much of the satire of Arras was bitter and personal. Its writers were prolific. Men such as Jean Bodel, Adam de la Halle and other anonymous or minor poets attacked those who abused wealth. They did not decry involvement with commerce, for one could not be a citizen of Arras and attack that which made the town such a thriving place. If one studies a group of poems coming from Arras at this time⁽⁴⁾ one sees that the poets vent their anger on the cheats, the tax-evaders, the avaricious, the merciless money-lenders or those who use their position of authority to exploit others⁽⁵⁾. Such satires give us an insight into current preoccupations and abuses, but their passionate nature and the fact that they are often motivated by personal grudges restrict their interest, so that one cannot call them didactic in the true sense.

The didactic works proper also react unfavourably to the obsession with money prompted by a commercialised society, but they tend to attack general abuses, rather than air personal grievances. This is a less direct approach, but nevertheless allows a reflection of contemporary reality to emerge. These moralists rarely ridicule, but they complain. We shall see that they complain not about individuals, but about social types; they do not pin-point specific cases of abuse, but rather consider broader moral issues. Above all, the motivation is different. The satirists, like those of Arras, hit out against what offends their sense of justice. Their targets are those who cheat society. The didactic poets judge man according to Christian values, and their aim is not to secure personal revenge, but to urge man to return to the narrow path of righteousness that he might save his soul. The fine distinction between satire and complaint will preoccupy me during the course of this study, although I shall be mostly concerned with the moralising poets.

The didactic writers in general share an attitude of disapproval

towards the desire for wealth and an attitude of suspicion towards the effect it may have on its owner. They, therefore, one and all, counsel men to avoid wealth if they are in danger of becoming corrupted by possession of it. To this end the poets use anti-wealth commonplaces. However, when one examines in detail works which at first sight appear to resemble each other to the point of tedium, one may perceive significant shifts of emphasis, or a different presentation of a subject in a manner indicative of a tempered attitude. Occasionally a didactic writer even betrays a radical departure from a traditionally accepted attitude. It is through such differences, when the individual stamp is placed upon received ideas, that one is allowed an insight into the personal attitudes of a man of those days. Yet such subtleties are not immediately apparent and have to be sought. In order to distinguish conditioned attitudes from spontaneous ones, one must first identify to what extent the material was original.

A. Literary Sources of Relevant Themes

The medieval preoccupation with money manifested itself in literature in different ways. The treatment the subject of wealth received at the hands of the moralising poets also varied. However such a poet had two main courses of action open to him: on the one hand he could criticise contemporary society and activities, founding his own comments on what he purports to be direct observation. He would, therefore, describe in some detail the society of the day and comment on particular social types. On the other hand he could take up a more general standpoint and use universal moral themes relating to the subject. Some moralists combined the two approaches, dividing their works between a critical social review (my Chapters Three and Four) and a consideration of broader issues in vaguer terms in the manner of a sermon. In the sermon, the exposition of the

age-old themes relating to wealth was rarely original. The expression of attitude was not usually in this case personal or spontaneous, but was subordinate to Church doctrine. The Church poets were, of course, deeply influenced by the rich store of writing on wealth offered by Christian tradition. These writings include the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, whose teaching was repeated and developed by the Church Fathers, and further interpreted and elaborated by medieval theologians. The medieval poet thus had a plentiful supply of material to draw upon, and he did not neglect to do so, whether to rehash old ideas in a slightly modified form or else to express them in a new and enlightening way. The influence is obvious whether the ideas are repeated verbatim or reshaped, reinterpreted and adapted to contemporary conditions. In order to appreciate the influence, and more important, to recognize departures from it, we shall first give some close attention to this source material.

1. The Bible

At this point I shall give a brief account of the obvious influence of the Bible. Specific references will be cited when appropriate in relation to themes and ideas.

The Bible was regarded in the Middle Ages as the chief source of learning, the chief school book. As I have pointed out, many of the Old French moralising poets belonged to some echelon of the Church hierarchy and were, of course, well-versed in Bible study. Quite naturally they drew much of their inspiration from it. How then does wealth figure in the Bible?

The Bible abounds in texts decrying the love, accumulation and misuse of wealth. In the New Testament, particularly, the overall message is that Christian happiness is not to be found in this life amongst the riches, pleasures and honours of the world. The aim of the true Christian is a complete detachment from all things earthly. (See later in this chapter, the themes of "Contemptus mundi": C.4 and D).

The biblical texts upon which the denunciation of the corrupting influence of riches is based are many, and a comprehensive list would be unnecessarily tedious⁽⁶⁾. I shall, therefore, limit myself to the main texts which match in matter and tone the sentiments expressed by the Old French poets, either by direct quotations, paraphrase, or similarity of notion.

In the Old Testament there are warnings against covetousness and avarice⁽⁷⁾, which we shall meet in section C of this chapter. There are also warnings against putting any trust in worldly goods, and the dire consequences thereof⁽⁸⁾: man will lose the hope of eternal life, for his soul will be damned. Evil deeds perpetrated to obtain riches are likewise condemned⁽⁹⁾.

Anti-wealth texts also abound in the New Testament. Man's relationship to God and to his material wealth was a fundamental question often raised in the teaching of Christ, and it is clearly shown that the two loves, that of God and that of mammon, were incompatible⁽¹⁰⁾. The rich man appears often as a villain who, having chosen the material in preference to the spiritual, will be duly punished⁽¹¹⁾. The text relating to the difficult access of the rich man to heaven (Matthew 19: 23-24) is a favourite one of the Old French poets. Covetousness is an important theme in the New Testament⁽¹²⁾ where the covetous man is put on a par with the vilest criminals of society, such as murderers.

In short, the Bible preaches distrust of wealth, even detachment from wealth. It is only justified when used in God's service, that is, in the form of alms, which is active Charity. (Chapter Two 8, c).

2. Early Church Fathers

Besides the Bible, widely studied in the Middle Ages were the commentaries or "gloses" on biblical texts written by the early Church Fathers, among whom we find such illustrious names as Augustine, Jerome, Gregory. Study of the Bible implied study also of the writings of the

Fathers⁽¹³⁾. Their interpretations of biblical texts greatly influenced the Old French moralists, who echo in the vernacular texts many of the ideas expressed and the conclusions reached.

A typical procedure adopted by the Church Fathers was to take a particular biblical text as the point of departure and to develop the ideas therein. This, of course, remains the traditional pattern of a Church sermon today. I take as an example a sermon of St. Augustine⁽¹⁴⁾ which is based on the story of the rich young man to whom Christ's counsel was: "Vade, vende omnia quae habes, et da pauperibus"⁽¹⁵⁾. The incident, briefly reported by Matthew, is enlarged upon by Augustine, who considers the attitude of the rich man and his motive for ignoring Christ's advice, and also the consequences thereof. Caput II: "Itaque perverso corde audiens quem iam dixerat magistrum bonum, majore amore vilitatis, possessionem perdidit charitatis. Nisi vitam aeternam consequi vellet, consilium de habenda Vita aeterna non requireret."

Much consideration is given by the Church fathers to an assessment of the nature of wealth. Some argue that although wealth cannot be evil in itself, since it is God-given, nevertheless possession of it can lead to evil, which manifests itself as an inordinate love of riches or misuse of them. However, those who, like Saint Hermas, a second century Church Father⁽¹⁶⁾, believed in the divine origin of earthly possessions, saw wealth as a means of perfection. When riches are used by a Christian in the service of the needy, it assumes its true function, that is to serve the good of all men.

Wealth condemned as evil in itself is a notion which occurs in early Christian writing, but tends to be modified later, although, as we shall see, it is revived by extreme medieval asceticism. (See this chapter, section C, 4, g). This attitude is represented in the writings of Origen⁽¹⁷⁾, a third century Church father. When studying the history of words he protests against the use of "bonus" and "bene" to denote material possessions⁽¹⁸⁾. Such a narrow outlook arose, says I. Giordani⁽¹⁹⁾, from

the confusion between material things themselves and the use made of them. This confusion, he says, was at the root of the sweeping condemnation of wealth to be found in some writers.

A more tempered attitude characterizes the writings of St. Augustine, whose teaching on money was to have a far-reaching and long-lasting effect⁽²⁰⁾. In particular he greatly influenced medieval canonists by his theory of the dual aspect of wealth, "that by the natural order all things are enjoyed by the righteous in common; that private property is the result of sin; but that nonetheless it is justified because it is, after all, a remedy for sin, and because it canalises, as it were, and reduces to order the greed of possession which came with sin"⁽²¹⁾. This teaching was adopted by Gratian⁽²²⁾ and the canonists as their technical doctrine with regard to property.

We see, therefore, that although riches may be used in an evil way, the early Church fathers were prepared to accept the notion of the personal possession of riches, if they were also used for the common good. The most obvious way of achieving this was, of course, through alms. Early in the history of the Christian church it was accepted that the rich man was not inevitably doomed. The simplistic association between the rich man and hell was not preached. Indeed one of the earliest Church fathers devoted a work to the question of which rich man would be saved, thus assuming from the outset that not all are condemned; it was Clement of Alexandria⁽²³⁾ who in his Quis dives salvetur?⁽²⁴⁾ urges men to free themselves from attachment to their wealth, but not necessarily to renounce it altogether. (Quis dives..., XI). He argues the case for the possession of wealth and its good use: "Therefore, we must not cast away riches which can benefit our neighbour. Possessions were made to be possessed, goods are called goods because they do good, and they have been provided by God for the good of men; they are at hand and serve as the material, the instruments for a good use

in the hand of him who knows how to use them. If you use them with skill you reap a benefit from them."⁽²⁵⁾

On the use of wealth, the Church Fathers all insist that alms are the justification of wealth. Yet Augustine does not put alms before all else. He admits that personal needs must be catered for, and urges that one's family should be put before other people. He preaches that Charity begins at home in a literal sense⁽²⁶⁾.

To this patristic intellectual and finally practical interest in wealth has been partially attributed "the more rapid success of Christianity in comparison with the other religions supported by the state or spread by the army."⁽²⁷⁾ Money and private property posed ethical questions. Ever mindful of the fate of man's soul, they tackled the problems of the world and presented man with a practical guide to his ideal conduct in it. Thus the Fathers reconcile the spiritual and the material, showing that wealth and Christianity can be compatible when certain rules are observed⁽²⁸⁾.

It is this practical approach to the basic problems posed by great wealth which attracted the attention of the Old French poets and they, too, attempt to adapt their moral precepts founded on the teaching of the Bible to life in society, thus helping man to steer a safe course until he reaches his salvation.

3. Classical Latin Literature

Another literary source for "anti-wealth" themes lies not in Christian writings, but in pagan works. This is not surprising since wealth is a subject of universal interest which has ever preoccupied mankind in general.

In the twelfth century there was a revived interest in the classics⁽²⁹⁾. This interest was to lessen during the course of the thirteenth century. Nevertheless the date of composition of many of the Old French didactic poems coincides with this classical renaissance which demonstrated an indiscriminate admiration for all that was ancient⁽³⁰⁾. The influence upon

vernacular literature is undeniable.

One has merely to glance at the writings of some of the ancients on wealth to find an obvious similarity of ideas and, not infrequently, an identical expression. The medieval abhorrence of injustice is a basic tenet of the philosophy of Cicero: he asserts that the increase of one's property is not wrong if it is free from injustice and is not motivated by an insatiable greed for wealth⁽³¹⁾. Cicero also speaks out against avarice, claiming that it indicates a serious character defect⁽³²⁾. On a social level, Cicero condemns the practice of usury, and regards commerce with scorn⁽³³⁾.

I have found that similarities of idea extend to close resemblances of style and expression when one compares the satires and epistles of Horace with the social attacks of the Old French didactic poets⁽³⁴⁾.

Satire I presents a portrait of the miser which obviously influenced the medieval poets. The miser lives in fear of thieves and so cannot sleep at night (Satires I, I, ll.76-78); he is hated by everyone, even his family (ll.84-87). In a later satire, Horace describes the social effects of great wealth: it bestows upon the owner a good reputation, honour and wisdom (Satires II, III, ll.94-99). In my second chapter, we shall see how the Old French poets reiterated these comments.

The epistles of Horace also provided later writers with a fount of material into which they frequently delved. Consequently we shall see that many of the oft-quoted ideas associated with wealth and the rich man originated in classical literature. Specific references will be given in this study when relevant.

Many of the commonplace ideas of the Old French works are to be traced to the satires of Juvenal⁽³⁵⁾. That there should be a sympathy of ideas and attitudes between Juvenal and the medieval complainants is understandable. Juvenal, too, was writing at a time of great commercial expansion which was

analogous to the medieval situation. He hankered after a Golden Age, seemingly with more justification than the Old French poets, since the age which preceded Juvenal's had indeed been a Golden Age in some respects, compared with the reign of terror and corruption under the Emperor Domitian in Juvenal's lifetime. Like the Old French poet, Guiot de Provins⁽³⁶⁾, Juvenal berates the noblemen for their meanness, and bewails the demise of private patrons (Satires, I, V. VII); he accuses men of worshipping wealth instead of the Gods (Satire I), a familiar though Christianised lament of the medieval poets. Wealth is the goal of all (Satires III and X), and such is its importance in present day society that a man's reputation depends solely on his wealth (Satire III). Juvenal's portrait of the self-torturing miser was surely the model for many of the characteristic traits of subsequent portrayals (Satire XIV). Certainly the satire and the complaints of Juvenal were in tune with the attitudes of the medieval didactic poets and they readily delved into his poems for their own use.

The wisdom of the ancients did not always arrive directly at the medieval writers. There were many intermediaries, some of whom were extremely important in the communication of classical thought and expression to later writers.

Such a person was Boethius⁽³⁷⁾ whose De Consolatione Philosophiae was generally acknowledged to have been largely instrumental in passing down the teachings of such men as Aristotle, Plato, Seneca, Cicero and Virgil⁽³⁸⁾. The importance of this work is attested by its popularity. There are four hundred extant manuscripts⁽³⁹⁾.

The great interest shown by medieval writers in the works of the classical authors may be judged by the amount of literature of this period which acknowledged the influence of classical authors. Fragments of classical philosophy were transmitted to medieval public in a vulgarised form in collections such as Le Livre de Philosophie et de Moralité by Alard

de Cambrai⁽⁴⁰⁾. This work is based on quotations taken from the writings of classical authors. Such quotations, often misattributed, are used to build up a framework for a work which combines courtly and Christian attitudes and which professes to be a work of instruction. It was destined for aristocratic readership.

Thus by two routes, one Christian, the other pagan, we arrive at the medieval period, the point when the two routes converge, for the greater enrichment of contemporary literature. One can see elements of both cultures in the writings of the Old French period. However, there was one other major literary influence, not yet mentioned. It was a recent influence, dating from the eleventh century, itself based on earlier Christian influences. Scholars know it as the theme of "Contemptus mundi".

4. "Contemptus Mundi" Writings

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries a series of moral ideas were grouped together under the heading of "contemptus mundi" or Scorn of the World, a general attitude which is of particular relevance to this study because therein abound many of the wealth motifs developed by Old French didactic poets.

Works based on this nexus of moral ideas were numerous in the Middle Ages and later. The following figures for the period from the twelfth to the seventeenth centuries have been presented by one critic⁽⁴¹⁾: 300 prose works, 150 to 200 poems. Confining himself to the Middle Ages, M. Robert Bultot⁽⁴²⁾ testifies to the difficulty of assessing the number of works on this subject: "La doctrine du mépris du monde est si répandue au Moyen Age que prétendre en recueillir toutes les manifestations serait une tâche indéfinie." My research has led me to perceive the truth of this statement, and so, in this study, I shall limit my references to those works considered to be typical of their kind or to those most widely known, and especially

to those works which have clearly influenced the Old French poets I am studying.

(a) The Aims of the "Contemptus Mundi" Works

The term "contemptus mundi" is self-explanatory. Advocates of this concept wished to inspire men with a scorn of the world, to urge them to abandon all material things offered by life on earth, and particularly by the secular world, and to seek their salvation in the love and service of God. The "contemptus mundi" doctrine is, therefore, an expression of the struggle of medieval man to reconcile the spiritual and the worldly. In the early "contemptus mundi" works the material world is unequivocally rejected, an attitude which is subtly modified when taken up by the Old French poets, as we shall see.

The ideal of "contemptus mundi" was in keeping with monastic asceticism. Indeed most authors of the early "contemptus mundi" treatises were themselves monks: for example, Peter Damian⁽⁴³⁾, Roger de Caen⁽⁴⁴⁾, Hugh of St. Victor⁽⁴⁵⁾, Jean de Fécamp⁽⁴⁶⁾ and Bernard of Morval⁽⁴⁷⁾. The degree of asceticism varied according to the author, but the same basic themes recur in all such works. These themes will be studied later.

(b) Evolution of the "Contemptus Mundi" Tradition

Recent studies of the "contemptus mundi" idea in literature show that it did not become a common theme in moralising treatises until the twelfth century⁽⁴⁸⁾. That it should appear so frequently at this point is understandable when one considers the growing love of all things worldly amongst the laity prompted by the spread of commerce. The "contemptus mundi" works were an expression of the adverse reaction of men who represented the spiritual but were everywhere confronted with a growing materialism. Hence the intensification of their condemnation of all things which distracted man from seeking the salvation of his soul. This wave of concern for the spiritual life of man, endangered by greater worldly temptations, as it

appears in "contemptus mundi" works, has been aptly termed "a backlash of religious sentiment", in the face of so much worldly activity⁽⁴⁹⁾.

The tone adopted by those writers was violent, their attitudes often extreme, certainly unrealistic as a formula for lay behaviour. A historical reason has been suggested for this obvious fury. D.R. Howard⁽⁵⁰⁾ attributes it to the rift between Church and State dating from between 1050 and 1130. He maintains that the eleventh century Gregorian reforms attempted to promote ascetic ideals for laymen, as well as monks. When the failure of this aim drove the "world" and the "Church" further apart, one result was that many ascetic reformers withdrew from the world, joined new monastic orders and thence proceeded to vituperate all that was secular.

In the case of the Old French poets who wrote "contemptus mundi" works, this reason is not entirely valid. Although some of the Old French writers had close connections with the monastic world, they do not limit their attacks to secular society. Nor indeed do they always praise monasticism as the only justifiable way of life. They are addressing a lay public and pitch their tone and attitudes accordingly. We shall see later that, although they adopted the "contemptus mundi" ideal, they did not expect all men to follow it to its logical and extreme conclusion. They preached an attitude of mind and suggested a code of conduct for man in society, rather than advocating withdrawal from the secular world. We shall see also that the tone of the Old French works was much milder than that of the ascetic reformers.

c) Attitudes of the "Contemptus Mundi" Writers.

In the earlier Latin "contemptus mundi" works, pessimism would appear to be the key-note. It is with despair and gloom that these medieval ascetics viewed the activity and future of the human race. In some works, every aspect of secular life is condemned including marriage or the exercise of a profession. This extreme attitude, undeniable in early works such as

those of the ardent reformer Peter Damian⁽⁵¹⁾ becomes somewhat tempered in later works, for example in the treatise of Innocent III (see this chapter, section C, 4, g, iii). Nevertheless throughout the works the attitude of pessimism persists. In his The Three Temptations, Howard considers that medieval Christianity, in asking for sainthood from men who by its own doctrines were corrupt since the Fall, showed that any notion of adjusting "the ideal to the capacity of the performer" was foreign to it⁽⁵²⁾. I would dispute Howard's assessment in relation to most of the Old French poets who, as I shall show, in the course of this study, expounded the same Christian doctrines, but did make concessions to the weaknesses of human nature and man's life in society. The Old French works display shades of attitude which indicate the moralists' desire to be reasonable and not to set impossibly high standards for their lay audiences. Their approach differs greatly from the negative pessimism of the early "contemptus mundi" works. The detailed accounts of abuses prevalent in society (the "Etats du Monde" poems, see my Chapters 3 and 4) show that secular activities were not condemned in themselves, but that abuses in social activities were attacked. A more positive, optimistic approach appears in those works where the moralist describes what man's conduct should be in order that he might justly fulfil his social role. Monasticism may be the ideal, but not all the Old French poets urge it upon the whole of mankind.

To return to the Latin "contemptus mundi" works, one may deduce from them that the attitude of censure is directed not only against those who lead overtly sinful lives, but against all who are in any way attached to the materialistic world. This is clearly expressed by M. Robert Bultot⁽⁵³⁾, who comments on Hugh of St. Victor's distinction between the three loves of man. They are: firstly, the love of God; secondly, the love of the world (joie de vanité); finally, the love of sin (joie d'iniquité). The last two are, according to "contemptus mundi" exponents, reprehensible.

Only the first is justified and desirable. In the Victorine view, it is not simply the evils of the world that one should scorn, but anything which distracts from the love of God.

d) The Different Sources of "Contemptus Mundi" Ideas

i. The Bible.

The biblical text upon which the "contemptus mundi" doctrine is based is 1st Epistle of John II, 15-18⁽⁵⁴⁾. The three sins mentioned in this text - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life - were to be associated with the phrase "contemptus mundi" from the twelfth century onwards.

There are other subsidiary texts which serve to express the same idea or some particular aspect thereof: St. John, XV, 18-19⁽⁵⁵⁾ where Christ comforts his disciples by saying that they should rejoice since they are hated by the world and are no longer of the world; James, IV, 4, which equates a friend of the world with an enemy of God⁽⁵⁶⁾. Moreover all biblical texts which urge men not to covet wealth and worldly power are also indirectly preaching the "contemptus mundi" message (see Section C, 1).

ii. The Early Church Fathers.

The Church Fathers echoed the teaching of the Bible with regard to love of worldly things. The very phrase "contemptus mundi" originates in the writings of St. Jerome, Biblia Sacra XI⁽⁵⁷⁾. The notion was one shared by other Church fathers. St. Augustine (Confessions X, 30-40)⁽⁵⁸⁾ lists all the temptations offered by this life and which lead man away from God. In De Civitate Dei (XII, 8), Augustine explains how man can never be satisfied with the acquisition of a material good:

"Ac per hoc qui perverse amat cuiuslibet naturae bonum, etiamsi adipiscatur ipse fit in bono malus et miser meliore privatus."⁽⁵⁹⁾

The message is the same throughout the works of the influential Augustine:

"Woe to those who put their hope in the world; woe to them that cling to

those things which they brought forth through hope in the world. What then should the Christian do? He should use, not serve the world." Enarrationes in Psalmos, XCV, 14⁽⁶⁰⁾. The last line of this text is significant. It shows that Augustine did not dismiss all worldly things, deeming them evil by their very nature. Rather he judged them harmless if subordinated to the love of God. Augustine acknowledged "temporal blessings" such as "health, material possessions, honor, friends, a home, wife and children, and peace and quiet."⁽⁶¹⁾ He lamented the misuse of things, not material things themselves. We see, therefore, that the Latin "contemptus mundi" writers like the extreme ascetic Peter Damian did not find their source of inspiration in the Church fathers such as Augustine. Their attitude was personal - whereas the more moderate views of the vernacular poets were far more in keeping with the outlook of St. Augustine and his peers.

Whatever the degree of scorn demanded, it is clear that the idea of contempt for the world was a basic Christian doctrine preached by moralists from the beginning of the Christian era. By the twelfth century the idea had evolved into a set of literary themes which occur in all works claiming "contemptus mundi" as their inspiration.

e) "Contemptus Mundi" Topics

i. General pattern.

The pattern of the Latin works was far more rigid than that of the Old French works. There was apparently little deviation from the standard elements as set out in a recent study by Mr. D.R. Howard⁽⁶²⁾. He lists five developments: Firstly there is a diatribe on the "corruption of the natural order; and in particular that of the human body." Sections two, three and four are particularly relevant to this study. They are the "mutability of earthly things", where the author stresses the transience of riches, followed by an assertion of the vanity of seeking worldly goods:

setting aside the danger presented by the vicissitudes of Fortune and the brevity of life, the very possession of riches can only bring care and sorrow. This was to be a commonplace idea in the Old French didactic poems. The fourth theme to be developed was the social review usually known as the Estates of the World. Here the author moves away from moral analysis of man to a critical observation of his social activities. This important aspect will be dealt with fully in my chapters Three and Four in connection with the Old French poems where this particular development occurs. The fifth and final part of the typical "contemptus mundi" treatise, says Howard, relates the punishment or reward received in the life after death.

ii The Three Enemies

Another closely associated topos to figure in the Old French works was the concept of the three enemies of man on which Mr. Howard has written a study. The enemies are: the world, the flesh and the Devil. The first mention of these together has been attributed to St. Augustine (Sermon 158)⁽⁶³⁾. The notion is also to be found in a monastic prayer preserved in a ninth century manuscript⁽⁶⁴⁾. It thereafter gained in popularity and was widely used in the eleventh century⁽⁶⁵⁾. St. Bernard often referred to the three enemies or temptations. Howard notes that Bernard associates the world with sense, the flesh with consenting delights and "the devil with resulting sin"⁽⁶⁶⁾.

A topos in religious literature from the second half of the twelfth century, this notion of the three enemies does not seem to have particularly inspired the Old French poets, since it makes only an occasional appearance in their works (see section B, xi and xii). It is nevertheless interesting to remark that the three enemies are linked with the seven deadly sins, the world being particularly associated with avarice and covetousness⁽⁶⁷⁾. Thus when the Old French poets exhorted men to free themselves from avarice, they are urging men to be less attached to the world. In short they are

preaching the "contemptus mundi" ideal. This connection of vernacular poets with religious literature has not been fully pointed out heretofore. Later in this chapter I shall demonstrate more fully how far the Latin "contemptus mundi" writers and the Old French poets shared the same aims and approach.

f) Terminology of "Contemptus Mundi" writing

It should be noted that two of the most important terms used in the Latin treatises have extended meanings peculiar to the religious writings of the Middle Ages. Their equivalent in Old French also incorporated these extended meanings. The terms are "mundus" ("monde" in the Old French poems) and "saeculum" ("sicle"). These terms signified for medieval Christianity the secular world as opposed to the monastic communities. A further meaning of "monde" could be given as all human activity which distracted from the love of God and so should be scorned and shunned⁽⁶⁸⁾. In this sense, "monde" becomes a pejorative term. In his work on the history of moral doctrine, M. Robert Bultot⁽⁶⁹⁾ considers that "mundus" as used by such as Peter Damian, embraces many connotations, all of them fallacious and dangerously enticing from true spiritual happiness.

Similar expansions of meaning apply to "saeculum". It, too, represented the secular world, and also had a pejorative signification. Thus, explains M. Bultot, when a man left the world to become a monk, he was not only renouncing sin and all wrong-doing, but was also turning his back on all earthly existence as it appears in the society of man, for example marriage or a profession⁽⁷⁰⁾.

These definitions of the terms "mundus" and "saeculum" will also prove helpful to us in understanding the ideas and attitudes of the Old French moralists, most of whom I have found to use one or both of the terms with the same connotations as in Latin religious writing.

g) "Contemptus Mundi" Exponents

Some of the "contemptus mundi" writers in Latin have already received a brief mention, but now my work must enlarge upon their attitudes to wealth, owing to what I consider to be an important influence on the Old French texts studied here.

i Peter Damian (1007-1072, a monk)

Peter Damian towers above his contemporaries of the eleventh century and is representative of an extreme attitude of condemnation towards all things worldly. His main work in our genre was Apologeticum de Contemptu Saeculi⁽⁷¹⁾. Here he was primarily concerned with the conduct of monks whom he accused of having abandoned their vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. Hence the severity of his tone. The fact, too, that he was addressing the regular clergy and not a lay public may explain the extremely high standard of behaviour he encouraged men to adopt. His ideals were extreme. He preached scorn of the world not merely in the sense of an evangelical renunciation, but aimed even at obliterating all creativity⁽⁷²⁾. This very literal and rigorous interpretation of the "contemptus mundi" doctrine was one which would be unrealistic if applied to lay society.

Peter Damian's attitude to wealth, though rather narrow, is certainly clear-cut. Riches he dismisses as an evil except in one context where they serve to gain salvation for the rich man if he gives alms:

Ad hoc dantur temporalia quatenus per haec acquirantur aeterna.
(Ep. IV, 2, 299A) (73)

In short, for Peter Damian money is only a means of salvation. When advising rich men to give their wealth in alms, he does not appear to consider primarily the relief of the poor and starving. Wealth thus becomes merely a tool in the hand of the rich man with which he can forge his passage to the next world. By giving alms he has made a contract with God. (See also Chapter Two, section A, 8, c). That money could be put to good use on earth does not seem to occur to Peter Damian. Since he unequivocally rejects secular society,

he does not apparently consider social problems to be of any concern to a monk. M. Bultot highlights the inhumanity of such excessive asceticism:

"Trop souvent il en résulte que les auteurs spirituels, au lieu d'intégrer les réalités terrestres à leur juste place, les disqualifient purement et simplement." (74)

ii Bernard of Morval

The reputation of Bernard of Morval⁽⁷⁵⁾, a Cluniac monk, rests largely on his verse work, De Contemptu Mundi⁽⁷⁶⁾. It was written in 1140, immediately before the period I am concerned with, and it assembles many commonplaces of the works which precede it. I can also claim that it was clearly an important influence on the Old French poets. This treatise has been called "one of the great stabilizations of theme and figure in latter medieval literature"⁽⁷⁷⁾. Indeed many themes which I shall study later, for the first time, with reference to the Old French didactic poets already appear in Bernard's work.

His main theme is man's conversion from love of the world to the love of God⁽⁷⁸⁾. Subsidiary themes include the deadly sins; the Estates of the World; the results of possessing riches, including the worry that they bring; the notion that a man is valued according to the amount of money he has. On the question of alms, Bernard concurs with Peter Damian, that the rich man should give his material wealth to the poor so that the poor man may become the instrument by which the rich man gains spiritual reward⁽⁷⁹⁾.

M. Bultot has shown that Bernard's work is based largely on the writings of the Church Fathers⁽⁸⁰⁾. I have also noted quotations from Latin poets, particularly Juvenal. The works of earlier "contemptus mundi" exponents must, in my view, also have influenced him as witness the title, lay-out and theme structure of his treatise. Another source of inspiration was, says M. Bultot, the new wealth and the flowering of culture of the twelfth century⁽⁸¹⁾. These historic circumstances, of course, also affected the Old French poets of the late twelfth and the thirteenth centuries.

I propose now to trace the development of Bernard's work in greater

detail with a view to demonstrating for the first time the many similarities that exist between it and the works to which this study is primarily devoted. My chief interest will be focussed on the topic of wealth which predominates in Bernard's treatise.

The work begins with a lengthy description of the Day of Judgement. Hell awaits many men and it is to these people that Bernard addresses himself. He singles out those who love wealth above all else:

Dum licet auribus haec vigilantibus accipiatis,
 Qui lucra conditis in lucra curritis, ad lucra statis.
 Gens cita pascere viscera viscere, carne que carnem,
 Qui tumidis satis exiguis datis heu! neque panem.
 (De Contemptu Mundi, Book I, ll. 661-64)

Bernard warns the rich man of his fate and, to illustrate his point, he uses the "Ubi sunt?" theme: Where are the fine clothes and the feasts? These are fleeting things, he answers, but the penalties they incur last for ever⁽⁸²⁾. Bernard enumerates rich and famous men from the past whom Death has conquered: Nebuchadnezzar, Darius, Cyrus, Caesar (Book I, ll.933-951).

Book Two begins with a portrayal of the Golden Age, when money had not corrupted man. It is obviously an imagined age when conditions were ideal, when all possessions were held in common, when the love of God was the aim of all men. In contrast, the present age offers a sadly different aspect, one of decay:

Vult modo carnea, commoda terrea vult modo quisque,
 Praeest: gula plebibus, aes senioribus, error utrisque.
 Gratia venditur, omneque curritur in scelus aere.
 Cumque fides labet, omnis habens habet, horret egere,
 (Book II, ll.203-206)

Next comes the section on the Estates of the World where Bernard shows how all levels of society are obsessed by the love and gain of money. His order is rather haphazard: the bishop, the soldier, the nobleman, the tax officer, the merchant, the clergy, the judge, again the merchant, then women. (See my Chapters Three and Four). Bernard then mentions greedy heirs who anxiously await their parents' death. (See my Chapter Two, A, 7, a).

Such a state of affairs, says Bernard, would make erstwhile satirists such as Horace, Cato, Persius and Juvenal, change their views on their own days which, in place of condemnation, would deserve respect compared with Bernard's times.

Bernard then decries the power of money, how it buys honours, confers eloquence and knowledge, and increases the possessions of the rich man. Meanwhile it is the scourge of the poor who suffer the physical and legal assaults of the rich (ll. 847-53). However, the rich man is doomed. He will soon be overtaken by death and then his wealth will be of no avail to him. The accumulated riches of a life-time will be lost in a single hour. Moreover it is not only death which brings torment to a wealthy man. Life will also bring him a great deal of suffering: as his obsession with money increases and his fortune grows, he becomes correspondingly more fear-ridden. His mental and physical well-being are eroded by worry. The dread of thieves brings nightmares which wrack his whole being. (ll. 884-94). In order to acquire money the rich man continually courts danger in the form of hazardous sea-voyages, highway robbers, but these are nought compared with his overwhelming and ever-present fear of poverty. (ll. 895-97).

Book Three opens with the charge that simony is rife in the present age. Then ensues a detailed account of the life of a worldly bishop, an account which bears a close resemblance to a passage in the later Old French work of bishop Etienne de Fougères, Le Livre des Manières (1174) where he gives a detailed description of those of his fellow clergy who are more concerned with the things of this world than in preparing people to be received into the next (ll. 253-360). (See also my Chapter 3, A, i, f)

Bernard's next target is the Papal State at Rome, also a favourite target of the Old French poets, as we shall see. Bernard claims that the Pope and his entourage are not untainted by the ignoble desire for wealth. Moreover, Rome sells "justice" in her law-courts. (ll. 601-sqq.).

Bernard next returns to the theme of the power of money, and lists its attributes with dramatic eloquence:

Sola pecunia destruit omnia, cuncta venenat
 Cor scit, onus premit, arma dat, os emit, ora serenat.
 Criminis unctio, cordis ademptio, fur oculorum,
 Parma nocentibus et locupletibus est grave lorum.
 (Book III, ll.785-88)

We see from these lines that Bernard does not put all the blame for current corruption upon man and his attitude towards wealth. He appears to believe that money is evil in itself and that it has a corrupting influence upon men, that it is indeed the ally of sin and wrongdoing. This is an extreme view which we have encountered in one or two of the Early Church Fathers⁽⁸³⁾, but which finds little response in the Old French moralists. Few share this view. (See my Chapter Two, A, 2). Once again profane literature is more moderate and balanced in its attitudes than religious writing in Latin.

iii Innocent III.

Most of the themes used by Bernard recur in the work of Innocent III: De Miseria Humane conditionis⁽⁸⁴⁾. This was written in 1195 when Lothario dei Segni, once a monk, was a cardinal at Rome prior to his elevation to the papacy in 1198. The work has special interest for us since it is contemporary with some of the Old French didactic works to be studied hereunder. One of them, le Besant de Dieu of Guillaume le Clerc (1226) acknowledges the influence of the De Miseria upon his work and mentions Innocent III by name. (line 1251 and line 3299). Innocent's work was certainly very popular to judge by the 435 extant manuscripts⁽⁸⁵⁾.

Innocent deals exhaustively with the traditional "contemptus mundi" themes, prompting Dr. Howard to say with justification that it is "an encyclopaedic treatment of a favorite topic."⁽⁸⁶⁾

In the first book, Innocent describes the various miseries that life on earth brings with it. Both rich and poor have their particular sources of anxiety. Like Bernard and many of the Old French poets, Innocent bewails

a state of affairs whereby a man is esteemed in proportion to his wealth:

XV "De Miseria divitis et pauperis":

Proh pudor! secundum fortunam existimatur persona, cum potius secundum personam sit estimanda fortuna. Tam bonus reputatur ut dives, tam malus ut pauper, cum potius tam dives sit reputandus ut bonus, tam pauper ut malus.

Innocent also refers to the three enemies of man (see above, section C, 4, e, ii), and adds a fourth, man himself, who is his own worst enemy.

Taking as his point of departure Job 7: 1,⁽⁸⁷⁾ that the life of man on earth is a warfare, he continues:

An nonne vera militia est, cum multiplices hostes semper undique insidentur ut capiant, persequantur ut perimant, demon et homo, mundus et caro?
(Liber Primus, XVIII)

In the second book, entitled "De Culpabili Humane Conditionis Progressu", Innocent begins by a statement of man's vain and futile pursuits, including their quest for wealth, pleasures and honours:

Tria maxime solent homines affectare: opes, voluptates, honores. (Liber Secundus, 1)

He backs this statement by quoting the all-important biblical text, the basis of "contemptus mundi" thinking: John 2: 15-16. Subsequent paragraphs analyse the covetous man, his moral state and the social consequences thereof: theft, wars and plundering. It is covetousness which incites men to accept bribes in order to corrupt justice. This last topic the author develops at great length.

Innocent then shows how wealth tempts men so that they fall into the hands of the devil. Covetous men are insatiable because true contentment comes only from the love and service of God. Covetousness, however, is opposed to this, being the service of Mammon. Innocent quotes the usual biblical texts on wealth in his warning against the pursuit of worldly riches.

Unlike Bernard of Morval, Innocent does not believe wealth to be evil in itself. It has an evil influence however, on weak, greedy men. Yet

the true servants of God are able to possess wealth and remain untainted: men such as Abraham, Job, David, who did not become the slaves of wealth. This attitude is much more tolerant than that held by ascetes such as Peter Damian. Innocent writes on licit wealth: "De licitis opibus":

Facilius enim invenies qui diligat divitias et non habeat quam qui habeat et non diligat, quia sicut difficile est esse in igne et non ardere, ita difficilium est possidere divitias et non amare.
(Liber Secundus XI)

The transience of riches and the warning that one accumulates riches for other people to enjoy after one's death are among the other commonplace themes, propounded by Innocent. These are followed by the portrait of the avaricious man, hard of heart, depriving not only the poor but also himself of the potential benefits of his hoarded riches. (See also my Chapter Two, section A, 5, 6, 7).

Book Three concludes the work with the account of man's death and the torment he will suffer in Hell as a result of his folly.

The concept of "contemptus mundi" and the themes it embraces were undoubtedly a major, probably the major, influence on the Old French didactic poets. In view of this I have dwelt on the content of some of the Latin works. Later in this study I shall show the ways in which similar themes are treated by the vernacular poets.

B. "Contemptus Mundi" and Individual Old French Didactic Poets

The concept of "contemptus mundi" manifests itself in some measure in all the major didactic verse works I have chosen to study. At this point I intend to examine the background, general tone and main content of the Old French poems, and to establish how far their authors shared an attitude of scorn towards the material aspect of the world, and how much they favoured the ideals of the "contemptus mundi" doctrine as expounded in the earlier Latin works.

A detailed account of how each work illustrates this attitude will be

given later in this study when individual treatment will be analysed separately.

i) In the vernacular possibly the earliest such work which I have found in the course of my research is known by its first line: Grant mal fist Adam.⁽⁸⁸⁾ There is some discussion as to its date: Suchier puts it at the first part of the twelfth century, whereas Herr Jauss⁽⁸⁹⁾ puts it later, in the middle of the twelfth century. This poem seems to have had an influence upon at least one of the later Old French didactic poets, Thibaud de Marly (see this section, no. iii).

The work is addressed to simple, unschooled people:

A la simple gent
ai fait simplement
un simple sermun.
Nel fis as letrez,
Car il unt assez
escriz e raisun.

(Stanza 116)

The poet deplores the importance of riches in his age, and points out that it was not so in the early days of Christianity. Christ did not live in a luxurious fashion, but rather identified with the poor and humble. The author also preaches the transience of earthly goods and the inevitability of death. He quotes one of the "contemptus mundi" biblical texts: Ecclesiastes I:2⁽⁹⁰⁾:

Ceo dit Salemun,
e bien le savun:
'Tot est vanité.'

(Stanza 108)

He continues: It is futile to amass wealth which is so unstable and which causes sorrow by its loss:

Por nient travaillun
e amuncelun
e l'or e l'argent;
Car qui plus avrunt,
quant cel guerpirunt,
plus serunt dolent.

(Stanza 115)

ii) Etienne de Fougères also quotes the biblical text from Ecclesiastes in his work Le Livre des Manières⁽⁹¹⁾. Etienne de Fougères was a churchman who lived for many years at the court of Henry the Second of England. In 1168 he became Bishop of Rennes, and died in 1178. His Livre des Manières was probably written in 1174⁽⁹²⁾. Etienne's literary output ranged from the "choses gaies" of his youth to the religious and didactic works of his maturity. Only the poems of the latter category have survived: the lives of St. Guillaume and of St. Vital, both written in Latin, and the Livre des Manières.

The Livre des Manières is devoted almost entirely to a systematic review of the three traditional estates of feudal society. It will be recalled that this was one of the standard elements of "contemptus mundi" treatises. Etienne confronts the ideal with the reality of social behaviour and moral attitudes.

Salemon fait un petit livre
 Qui enseigne comment deit vivre
 Cil qui l'amor del mont eïvre
 Por ester de pechié delivre.
 (ll. 1-4)

The enjoyment of the things offered by this world constitutes vanity for Etienne, as it does for the Latin "contemptus mundi" writers.

Veine est la joie de cest monde,
 (line 9)

Etienne laments the fact that men are obsessed by the so-called joys of this world which may be subsumed in the joy of amassing wealth:

Aveir chastel, aveir cite
 Aveir grant feu, grant erite
 Nis reiaume tot aquite
 Farfelue est et vanite.
 (ll. 13-16)

iii) The Vers of Thibaud de Marly⁽⁹³⁾ were written about ten years after the Livre des Manières. The editor has been able to establish that the Vers were composed between 1182 and 1185. The author was a feudal lord, the seigneur of Marly le Roi, born between 1130 and 1135. Having spent

most of his life "in the world", he became a monk after 1182 and wrote the Vers sometime after that date.

Scorn of the world is very evident in this work. The main idea is that society is evil and man can only find salvation by leaving it. It is not an attitude of mind to things worldly that Thibaud de Marly is preaching, but a physical departure from secular society into the cloisters (ll. 91-100). He has chosen that course for himself and urges others to do likewise (see Chapter Three, section on regular clergy, 2, B, 3).

Thibaud begins by explaining and justifying his motives for writing the Vers. Like the author of Grant mal fist Adam, Thibaud claims that his work is not a learned work:

A ce que voi ou siecle ai pensé longuement;
 Por ce vos vueil retraire le mien entendement;
 Puis qu'en le me commande et nusnel me deffent,
 Si est biens que je die ce ou je pens sovent;
 Por ce que ne sai lettres, le diré plus briement.
 (ll. 1-5)

"Contemptus mundi" themes include the enemies of man - although Thibaud mentions just two: the Body and the Devil (ll. 168-195). At more than one point in his work does the poet speak of the transience of worldly things and the fallacious nature of the secular life.

iv) Of those works I have selected for close study, the earliest to be written by a life-time monk is Les Vers de la Mort by Helinand⁽⁹⁴⁾. Given that the majority of the Latin "contemptus mundi" works were written by monks, we, therefore, expect Helinand to share their opprobrious view of the world. The fact that he chose to leave the secular world would indicate this. Helinand was a monk from Froidmont who composed his Vers de la Mort between 1193-1197. Details of his life are limited, but the editors have suggested that Helinand must have been about thirty-five when he wrote his poem. It is described by them as: "une suite d'apostrophes véhémentes à la mort, de considérations sur son pouvoir inexorable, d'invectives contre les riches, les puissants, qui achètent les joies de ce monde au

prix de leur perdition."⁽⁹⁵⁾

In a series of dramatic rhetorical questions, Helinand shows that the things and qualities the "world" values are for him worthless:

Que vaut quanque li siecles fait?
(Stanza XXVIII)

Que vaut biautez, que vaut richece,
Que vaut honeurs? que vaut hautece,.. ?
(Stanza XXIX)

Helinand intimates that the rich and powerful believe themselves to be stronger than death, that their worldly status cannot be challenged even by God. However, they are deluding themselves, says Helinand; death comes to rich and poor alike. The difference between them lies in their respective fates after death:

Morz qui les hauz en prison tiens
Aussi comme nos, povres chiens,
Cui li siecles a en despit.
(Stanza XVII)

One notes that Helinand identifies closely with the world-haters. He illustrates his attitude towards material goods with a telling allusion to his own frugal existence:

Fui, lecherie! Fui, luxure!
De si chier morsel n'ai je cure,
Mieuz aim mes pois et ma poree.
(Stanza L)

v. The Reclus de Moilliens was the author of two didactic verse works whose popularity is attested by the large number of extant manuscripts. They are: Li Romans de Carité and Miserere,⁽⁹⁶⁾ dated between 1183 and 1187, and circa 1200 respectively⁽⁹⁷⁾.

Some biographical details based on internal evidence is suggested by the editor: that the author was old at the time of writing; he was well-educated and probably a monk before becoming a religious recluse.

Let us first consider the Roman de Carité. It takes the form of an allegorical search for charity which, the author eventually has to acknowledge, has disappeared from the world. At each stage of his

imaginary journey the poet pauses to criticise the corrupt elements of society. It is thus in part an "Etats du Monde" poem, although the editor reproaches the Reclus his vagueness and over-generalising which deprive his criticisms of much of their sting⁽⁹⁸⁾.

The Reclus divides men into two categories, those who serve God and those who serve the world. The latter spend their lives in the pursuit and enjoyment of the transient pleasures of secular life:

Chil sert a Diu, chil sert au monde.
(Stanza III, line 7).

The Reclus preaches the monastic ideal as do other didactic writers (see my Chapter Three, section A, 2, b). He urges men to abandon the "world" and its pernicious attractions, and to seek refuge for their souls in the monasteries. This attitude is not in the least surprising from a monk-turned-recluse who led an extremely ascetic life himself.

In figurative language so characteristic of his colourful and elegant style, the Reclus contrasts life in the monastic orders to life in the secular world. He uses the image of a threshing-floor, the worthless husks representing the shallow, Godless people living in the world, the precious grain representing the true servants of God who make up the monastic orders:

Le monde cha fors apel aire
Ke jou voi felon, dure et aire;
Et le paille est le gens mondaine;
Et de chou ne cuit pas meffaire,
Se dou cloistre voel grenier faire;
Et tu, cloistriiers, t'as le graine.
Si com li vens le paille maine
Par mi l'aire, en itele paine
Est toute le gens seculaire;
Mais tu, ki tiens vie hermitaine,
En grenier ies, pais as chertaine,
Quant aimes vie regulaire.

(Stanza CXXIX)

In Miserere, the poet takes an equally disapproving view of the secular. Here he compares the 'world' to a barren willow tree, and continues with the commonplace theme that men cannot keep their riches after death:

Las! a si povre garant fuit
 Ki de Dieu a le sauch refuit.
 Le saus, ki est arbres brehains,
 Ki verdoie en fuelle sans fruit,
 Ch'est li mondes, ki rit et bruit,
 Li monde vais, vius, vuis, et vains,
 Li monde faus, fous, fel et fains,
 Faus prometerre, faus compains:
 Car ki se fie en sen conduit,
 Cascun jour vient dou plus au mains
 Et en le fin a vuides mains;
 Li plus rike s'en vont tout vuit.
 (Stanza XXXVII)

The poet next warns people who have espoused the world of the dire fate which awaits them:

Entent, hom cui pekiés mehaigne,
 Entent, fous hom, terre br'haigne,
 De cui bons fruis ne puet venir,
 Ki par le mondaine campagne
 Ensius : vanité, te compaigne,
 A quel fin cuides parvenir?
 Ke vois tu a chiaus avenir
 Ki vanité suelent sivrir?
 Cascun jour moustre aperte ensaigne
 Li mondes k'on le doit fuïr:
 Que on i pert au porsivir
 Autrui vie bien nous ensaigne.
 (Stanza CCXXVIII)

Thus, it would appear that the Reclus de Moilliens shared the ideas and ideals of the Latin "contemptus mundi" writers. His overall attitude seems very rigid and dogmatic. He cannot conceive good as existing anywhere but in the cloisters. This extreme attitude, as we shall see later, is not consistent. The Reclus is very tolerant on some subjects which receive harsh treatment from other didactic poets, as we shall note during the course of this study.

vi We expect an attitude of scorn towards the world from monks such as Helinand and the Reclus, but what is surprising is that this same attitude is held by men who are quite happy to live in the secular world. The authors so far studied all appear to have had some close connection with the religious life. Etienne de Fougères was a bishop; Thibaud de Marly, though a feudal lord, left the secular world to finish his days in the

cloisters, and Helinand and the Reclus of Moilliens appear to have spent their lives as monks. We now find the sentiments of these stern, devout men echoed by someone who admits that he is neither learned nor leads a particularly pious life. He is the anonymous author of Le Roman des Romans:⁽⁹⁹⁾

... petit sai, e sui de fole vie,
(line 7)

This plea of ignorance was found in Thibaud de Marly (line 5). By confessing also that he is far from saintly, the author may wish to assure his audience that he can speak of the secular world with first hand knowledge, thus rendering his condemnation more convincing. (cf. Hugues de Berzé who adopts a similar approach, number x of this section). On the other hand one wonders why, when he scorns the world so much - as we shall soon see - he continues to lead a "fole vie".

About the world the poet states quite clearly that love of it leads a man to hell (ll. 53-56). (See my Chapter Two, A, 2).

Ainz le conduient as peines enferrals.
(line 56)

The transience of all things material is also emphasised; so, too, is guilt in proportion to wealth:

Ore escotez des joies de cest monde,
Quei eles valent e queles eles sont:
Come fumees trespasent e trespont,
Plus sont copable tuit cil qui plus i ont.
(ll. 57-60)

He accuses the world of having a dangerous influence upon men because it urges them to seek wealth:

Veint nos cist mondes, ceo est dols et damages;
Trop entendons a conquere heritages.
(ll. 177-78)

vii) Another anonymous work written about 1200 is the Poème Moral⁽¹⁰⁰⁾.

According to the modern editor, the author was probably a member of the secular clergy, who was writing for the uneducated layman (see ll. 2313-14).

This work is particularly interesting because it is, on the whole, more

tolerant than any of the other didactic works I am studying. Written for laypeople the poet's aims are more practical and not so demanding of his audience. Bayot justly says of it: "Avec un sens très averti; des réalités, écrivant pour le commun des hommes, il évite le rigorisme et laisse à l'élite l'austérité évangélique (ll. 2209-88). Il est, sous ce rapport, un maître de la nuance; sa souplesse, son goût de la mesure contrastent avec le dogmatisme massif des théoriciens de l'époque. Ce qu'il propose comme condition de salut, c'est le minimum exigible de vie chrétienne."

For all his tolerance of human activity in the world, the poet does adopt an overall attitude in keeping with the "contemptus mundi" trend: He begins his work with a section headed: "Vaine est la joie de cest siecle et que mult est digne chose de la Sainte Arme." His first lines seem to resemble so many other "contemptus mundi" works, inveighing against the vanity of life in society:

Ki cest secle trop siut, ne vait pas droite voie,
 Quar joie d'icest secle, c'est uns venz, n'est pas joie.
 (ll. 1-2)

However one notes that from the outset this poet has a different attitude from the majority of the didactic poets. The subtle use of the word "trop" tells us that the poet does not condemn the world outright nor man's activities in it, but that he warns against becoming too closely involved in it and thus neglecting the spiritual side of life.

The author believes that men of strong will and a true love of God can lead blameless lives in the secular world⁽¹⁰¹⁾. He prescribes the monastic life only for those who cannot withstand the temptations of the world. (See my Chapter Three, section A, 2, B, 3).

viii. The end of the twelfth century also saw the composition of an Anglo-Norman didactic poem by Guischart de Beaulieu (Le Sermon de Guischart de Beaulieu)⁽¹⁰²⁾. The editor of this work supports the idea that

Guischart was probably an elderly knight who had retired to a monastery in order to make a good death. This would put him in the same social position as other poets like Thibaud de Marly and Hugues de Berzé (no. x of this section).

Guischart uses the commonplace themes of the "contemptus mundi" tradition: that the 'world' is an evil place and yet men are obsessed with it; love of the world prevents love of God; the love of the world leads man to an unhappy end. There is a vein of lamentation in this:

Li secles est mut vielz e si est trespasanz
 Frailles est e malveis tuit sen vait declinanz
 Or ne set lum ki creire, tant est fel e muanz
 Et cum lem plus le tent tut tens et suduianz.
 A lamur de cest mund vei plusurs at endanz
 Mais cil mar la cointat qui deu en est perdanz
 Morir en ai veu malement ne sai quanz
 Ki deu pert por cest secle mult par est nun savanz
 (ll. 11-18)

The opposition between love of God and love of the world is made again later:

Deu est mis en obli por mundaines honors
 (l. 190)

Guischart associates love of the world with covetousness. We shall see later in this chapter how covetousness and avarice define love of the world:

Mar orent coveitise e lamor de cest mund
 Quant deu (por lui) guerpissent tel luer en aurunt
 Mal ait itel luer ia nen amenderunt,
 Mult le deivent hair.
 (ll. 141-144)

ix. Next comes the Bible of Guiot de Provins⁽¹⁰³⁾ written in 1206. The interest of this work lies largely in the questionable motives of the poet. The work falls into two distinct parts: the first is a bitter outcry against the feudal lords; the second is a satiric review of the clergy, in particular of the monastic orders. Guiot was a court poet, a jongleur, in his youth, but later became a monk and so was, one may assume, qualified to describe and criticise the monastic orders.

The two very different parts of Guiot's life may explain the two equally different parts of his poem. The editor suggests⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ that the first part of the work was written while Guiot was still a jongleur. Thus he is railing against the meanness of the feudal lords upon whom he depended for his livelihood. (Cf. the jongleurs of the courtly romances. See my Chapter Five, section A, 2). If this was indeed so, then Guiot's disapproving attitude towards the "sicle" does not stem from Christian principles but from motives much more personal. The late John Orr⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ explains that Guiot had been absent from France at a time when the country was passing through an important period of transition, when many feudal lords were becoming impoverished. (See my preliminary chapter and also Chapter Three, section B, 1). On his return Guiot found that the number of "seigneurs" who could still afford to patronise poets had diminished alarmingly. Whence came, one may presume, his angry disillusionment and withdrawal from the world.

That Guiot feels scorn for the secular world there can be no doubt, but what he apparently feels is not "contemptus mundi" with all that that phrase implies. He begins his Bible thus:

Du siecle puant et orible
 m'estuet commencer une bible,
 por poindre, et por arçoilloneir,
 et por grant exemple doner.
 (ll. 1-4)

At several points in the poem he reiterates exactly what he means to do in his work and why:

Li siecles per trestout enpire.
 En la bible covient a dire
 Parolles dures et cuissans
 (ll. 583-85)

Guiot does not oppose the "world" and the cloisters. Instead he contrasts the "world" of today with the "world" he once knew. He does not sing the praises of Charity as do other Old French didactic poets. For him the supreme virtue is "largesse". It becomes obvious that Guiot's ideals are

courtly more than Christian. The following description of the "good old days" gives us a clue as to his attitude:

Deus! con estoient honorei
 li saige, li boin vavassour!
 Sil furent li consoilloour
 qui savoient qu'estoit raisons;
 Sil consilloient les barons,
 Sil faisoient les dons doneir
 et les riches cors assembler.
 (ll. 190-196)

Line 195 leads us to suspect that Guiot's motives were not disinterested.

In the second half of the work, written after he had become a monk, Guiot is no less disillusioned. He has little good to say about the monastic orders which he lists. In this part his attitude seems to be rather more in keeping with the didactic genre in which he writes. He appears to be genuinely shocked by the spirit of commercialism and greed which reigns in the cloisters. In this part, there is no longer any mention of "largesse". Guiot outwardly laments the demise of charity. While displaying no signs himself of a true vocation for the religious life, he nevertheless attacks the attitudes and activities which have corrupted the orders, as I will demonstrate later (Chapter Three, section A, 2). One must conclude that whereas Guiot seems to be prompted by self-interest in the first part of his work, the second half is more altruistic. This later half would seem to be a social satire following closely the pattern of the traditional portrayal of the Three Estates, although Guiot deals only with the Church in this part of his work. This critical review is the only resemblance which Guiot's Bible bears to a standard "contemptus mundi" treatise.

It is ironic that a work which can claim little association with the "contemptus mundi" tradition should come from one who has demonstrated his own contempt for the world by turning his back on it. Though a monk, Guiot laments not the corrupting influence of the world, but the demise of erstwhile worldly pleasures. Even in the second half he affects a humorous horror of asceticism (ll. 1421-26). It seems indeed impossible to assess the sincerity of this strange, heterogeneous work.

x. With Hugues de Berzé we return to a more conventional attitude towards the "sicle". This author appears to be inspired by purely religious convictions. According to Lecoy,⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ the Bible of Hugues de Berzé was written in 1220. Its author, a feudal lord, had been a crusader. At the time of writing, he was about fifty years old, a man of mature years whose thoughts would turn naturally to death and the fate of his soul.

The tone of the work is that of a sermon and is in marked contrast to the fiery, and yet occasionally amusing, invective of Guiot de Provins. It will be recalled that the sermon often formed a section of the "Etats du Monde" type of poem. At the beginning the author claims that he is in a good position to comment on the state of the secular world since, as a mature and experienced knight, he has seen much of it:

Tant ai ale, tant ai vell
 Que j'ai le siecle conneü
 Qu'il ne vaut riens a maintenir
 Fors pour l'ame dou cors perir.
 (ll. 5-8)

His advice should, therefore, be heeded:

Et quant je, qui tant ai amee
 La joie du siecle sans foi,
 Vous moustre qu'ele vaut molt poi,
 Vous poés bien apercevoir
 Que je m'en vois parmi le voir;
 (ll. 396-400)

One is here reminded of the Victorine love of the world or "joie de vanité" (see my page 36, and also lines from the Poème Moral, page 55).

Hugues' point of view is that since he has spent the whole of his life in the world, he is better able to denounce it than others. He refers to the monks who condemn the secular world while cloistered from it. With little firsthand experience of the world, they reject it on principle.

E si me devroit on miex croire
 C'un hermite ne c'un provoire,
 Car j'ai le siecle molt parfонт
 Cerchie e aval e amont
 E cil qui plus le cherche e voit
 C'est cil qui mains amer le doit,
 Car cil i trueve plus de mal
 Qui plus vet amont e aval.
 (ll. 401-08)

There was a time, confesses Hugues de Berzé, when he too loved the world, but maturity has brought wisdom, and he now rejects it. His Bible is a justification of this, intended as a lesson for others. He calls his work a sermon (line 860).

In the "Etats du Monde" section of his work, Hugues lists the faults of the monastic orders, but concludes that, notwithstanding, man's best hope of salvation lies therein. (ll. 359-64) (See also my Chapter Three, section A, 2, B, 3).

xi. Another close follower of the "contemptus mundi" tradition was Guillaume le Clerc. In his work, the Besant de Dieu,⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ dated 1226, several of the passages are even translated directly from Innocent III's De Miseria Humane Conditionis.⁽¹⁰⁸⁾

Guillaume speaks of the instability of worldly pleasure which might be snatched away at any moment.

Certes, que nus ne savum quant,
 Au matin ou au coc chantant
 Ou a mienuit^{ou} al seir:
 Si nus deusom purveeir
 (Que ceo savum de verite)
 Et laissier cele vanite
 Qui en cest siecle nus retient:
 (ll. 49-55)

In a revealing and personal fashion, Guillaume describes how his present attitude towards the world developed. He recounts how, having led a worldly life, he began one night to think seriously how worthless and futile his existence was. He realises that he is too involved in the deceitful world:

... cest siecle qui se passa,
 Qui est si fals e decevanz:
 (ll. 94-95)

Man is beguiled by the attractions of the 'world' and so neglects his spiritual well-being:

Es deliz del monde se fie
 E si n'a terme de savvie.
 (ll. 373-74)

This idea recalls Bernard de Morval's view of earthly delights, as emphasised by Dr. Howard (see page 39). The world gives man wicked advice which leads him to attach over-riding importance to wealth: (ll. 447-50. See Chapter Two, p. 108).

The man who does not heed this dangerous advice has quite a different attitude to the "world":

Home qui a dreit se remembre,
Puet bien veir por verite
Que tute chose est vanite,
(ll. 1448-50)

Later in his work Guillaume states clearly his aim which coincides with that of the "contemptus mundi" teaching:

Por faire vus hair cest monde.
(line 2051)

Following the ideas of Bernard of Morval and Innocent III, Guillaume le Clerc makes use of the topos of the three enemies of man: the world, the flesh and the Devil (see above, section C, 4, e, ii).

Cist mondes od sa vaine gloire,
(line 445)

xii. The topos of the three enemies also makes an appearance in the Sermon en Vers ⁽¹⁰⁹⁾, an anonymous work dating from 1250. According to the editor, the author was probably not a churchman. There is internal evidence for this (Stanza CCXVIII).

Having listed the three enemies (Stanzas CXLIV-VI) the poet makes the opposition between the dictates of the world and those of God:

Li mund vus aprent
Kanke a mal apent,
E vus l'aprenez;
Cheskun de vus aprend
Ceo ke Deu defend:
Par tant perisez.
(Stanza CXLVII)

Like the sermon parts of the "Etats du Monde" the poet is general and not specific in his strictures on the world and its temptations.

Another commonplace of the "contemptus mundi" tradition appears in this Sermon, stating how the world leads man to death but not to eternity:

Li mund vus norist
 La mort, e trafst;
 Trop l'alez siwant!
 Trop l'avez a cointe
 Par li wu.ert jointe
 Mort a remanant.

(St. CL)

xiii There is indeed one short thirteenth century work devoted entirely to the topos of the three enemies: Le Roman de Trois Enemis de l'Homme by Simon⁽¹¹⁰⁾. Jauss⁽¹¹¹⁾ suggests that Simon was a monk. This is probably the only surviving work based solely on this particular theme⁽¹¹²⁾.

Simon illustrates how the world urges false values upon men and prompts them to desire worthless things. Let us note, too, how he addresses himself to noble lords and their besetting sins.

Li mondes qui nos est a l'uil,
 A son boban, a son orguil,
 Si dit que trop est granz ennors
 Et grant prouesse, biax segnors,
 D'estre riches et asazez,
 D'estre puissanz et enmorez,
 D'avoir digneté et baillies
 Et sor genz avoir seignories,
 D'avoir chevax et vesteures,
 Bales et bones teneures.

(ll. 615-24)

If he is a monk, he is nonetheless preoccupied with aristocratic failings. Simon represents the "world" as being the tool of the Devil, a tool consisting largely of riches and property, that is Mammon, all particularly effective in estranging men from God (Matthew 6:24).

Deables met le monde avant
 Dont il fiert home ou vis devant
 Quant il presante argent ou or
 D'amasser deniers ou tresor,
 Si die: "Nuns ne sert a Dé
 Ensemble ne a Manmoné,
 Va t'an et ta monoie tote
 En abysme la droite rote!"
 Manmoné, c'est un adversiers
 Qui fait amasser les deniers
 Et qui fait covoitier baillies,
 Dignitez et granz seignories.

(ll. 755-66)

xiv The last of the major works I propose to study is Li Vers de la Mort.⁽¹¹³⁾ Although its editor, C.A. Windahl, does not claim to be able to identify the poet, it is attributed by Jauss to Robert le Clerc of Arras. Windahl dates it as circa 1268.

This work is based chiefly on the theme of death, a basic "contemptus mundi" theme (See Chapter Two, section A, 7, b). The poet has a very low opinion of secular life and urges men to leave it.

Li siecles aime gloutonie,
Luxure, orgoel et felonie:
Dont, ne se pueent entravoir
Dieus et li sieeles, coi qu'on die.
Lai dont le siecle, en Diu te fie!
S'ieres riches d'oneste avoir.

(Stanza XX, ll 7-12)

At a later stage in the argument, his invective against the world is reminiscent of Guiot de Provins, line 1 (see page 57 above).

Siecle puant, ort et divers
(Vers de la Mort: Stanza CXVII, l. 9)

He takes up this cry again later when comparing the world to a hair shirt implying that the closer the contact the worse the discomfort (Stanza 49). This image helps the poet to preach the renouncing of the world. (Stanz 50).

An impassioned anti-world tirade, this work bears a further resemblance to that of Guiot de Provins. Like Guiot, Robert le Clerc had a personal grudge against society. Guiot is a victim of miserly nobles, Robert complains of grasping lawyers (Vers de la Mort: Stanza CLXX). Hence his bitter invective against this social type and his intense dislike of rich men. The poet reveals himself as poor by his reactions. As with Guiot de Provins, any claim to "contemptus mundi" principles may be treated with some scepticism. His revulsion from the world is based on personal bitterness rather than on religious conviction. Robert le Clerc's overall message, however, is the denunciation of world lovers. His urgent cry on behalf of the crusading ideal bears witness to some religious feeling (see Stanza CXXI)

We see, therefore, that the Old French didactic poets mostly echo the sentiments of the earlier Latin "contemptus mundi" exponents. Heretofore, however, the Old French works mentioned above have been grouped together under the heading of social satires or "Etats du Monde" poems⁽¹¹⁴⁾. I have endeavoured to demonstrate that they are also, and perhaps above all, continuations of the "contemptus mundi" genre, generally speaking, whereas the "Etats du Monde" are only part of that genre. Dr. Howard, of course, disentangled five developments in the "contemptus mundi" nexus, of which the Estates of the World are only one. How the "contemptus mundi" notion figures in the Old French works, and how its subsidiary themes are developed will be analysed throughout the remainder of the first part of this thesis.

C. Avarice as a Topic in the Didactic Works

A fundamental aspect of what may be called "contemptus mundi" literature is the topos of avarice. The subject, with all its ramifications, lends itself well to an attitude of scorn towards the world, since avarice implies love of riches, hence love of the things of the world. It is, therefore, the negation of the "contemptus mundi" ideal. For this reason, primarily, avarice is regarded by that literature as a reprehensible attitude towards wealth. Thence comes the reaction of censure from the moralising poets.

With regard to avarice, it is not only "contemptus mundi" which lies at the heart of the attacks. World-haters are not the only ones to lash out at avarice and at greedy, miserly people. Those poets who revelled in all things worldly, such as the jongleurs of the courtly works, are equally vehement in their condemnation of avarice. Their motives we shall consider later, in my Chapter Five.

In the didactic works avarice appears as an important vice. It is universally attacked as a deadly sin together with the various social malpractices associated with it, such as usury, a subject dealt with in my Chapter Four, and simony which I discuss in Chapter Three. This theme

of avarice was not a new one in Old French verse. It is, of course, an age-old preoccupation which has never ceased to arouse the interest and anger of writers, and to inspire revulsion in all people. A modern journalist⁽¹¹⁵⁾ who invited readers to recount examples of meanness they had encountered at first hand confesses his surprise at the enormous response to his inquiry and at the unconcealed bitterness felt by people who had been in contact with these misers. They thus demonstrated that avarice is held in abhorrence even today.

1. Definitions of Avarice

Let us first establish exactly what I understand in this study by avarice, and, more important, what the Old French poets understood by the term. There seems to have been an evolution in the understanding of avarice throughout the history of Christian thought.

For St. Augustine, avarice was a lust for material possessions:

"libido habendi pecuniam, quae avaritia" (De Civitate Dei, Liber Quartus Decimus, l xiv. cxv)⁽¹¹⁶⁾.

A later theologian, Alcuin (c. 735-805), enlarges the scope of avarice in his definition by adding the notion of the hoarding of wealth: "avaritia est nimia divitiarum acquirendi, habendi, vel tenendi cupiditas, quae pestis inexplebilis est." (Liber de Virtutibus et Vitiis, caput XXX, 'De Avantia')⁽¹¹⁷⁾

Written in the Old French period, Innocent III in his De Miseria Humane Conditionis⁽¹¹⁸⁾ bases his assessment of avarice on a New Testament text: Colossians 3:5, thus echoing the definition of Paul the Apostle who equates avarice with idolatry: "Recte diffinit Apostolus: 'Avaritia est servitus idolarum'". (Book II, 12: Cur Avaritia sit servitus idolarum).

Avarice, as understood by the Old French writers, is somewhat difficult to define precisely. For the most part the notion of avarice covers the wider range of activities mentioned by Alcuin, that is both the hoarding

of wealth and a greedy acquisitiveness, the active pursuit of wealth that implies a certain rapacity in the obtaining of earthly goods. The Old French words used to express these notions are "avarisce" and "convoitise". However, whereas "convoitise" is usually limited in practice to greed for the acquisition of money, "avarisce" may often be inclusive of both covetousness and the unjust retention of wealth.

The well-known thirteenth century Anglo-Norman Manuel des Pecheiz⁽¹¹⁹⁾, attributed to William Waddington and dated between 1266 and 1279, clearly distinguishes between the two terms in his section on the seven deadly sins:

Or covient dire de Coveitise,
 Qe muz funt en meinte guise.
 < Avarice > le apele meint hom,
 Mes ceo est la destinction;
 Qe coveitise est en purchacant,
 E Avarice en retenant.

(ll. 4635-40)

One notices that the poet refers to the confusion which apparently existed in the minds of many of his contemporaries between the terms "avarisce" and "covoitise". He accuses them of not discerning the difference in connotation between the two words, and of using "avarice" when sometimes "covoitise" would be more fitting.

One poet to whom this reproach does not apply was Robert de Blois who had already made a similar distinction in his Enseignement des Princes (c. 1250)⁽¹²⁰⁾: "Coveitise", he says, is the greedy desire for wealth and the act of obtaining it, whereas "avarice" signifies the evil retention of wealth:

De dous vices est entoichiez,
 Don on porroit a poinnes dire",
 Tant sont andui malvais, li pire.
 De Covoitise est trop prenanz
 Et d'avarice trop tenanz.
 Qui prant la, ou prandre ne doit
 Et tient contre raison et droit.

ed. Ulrich, (ll. 1404-10)

This is the earliest of the few examples of a clear distinction made between the two terms. That made by the Roman de la Rose⁽¹²¹⁾ was also in the

second half of the thirteenth century:

car Avarice et Covoitise
ont es queurs des homes assise
la grant ardeur d'avoir aquerre.
L'une l'aquiert, l'autre l'enserre,
ne ja mes la lasse chetive
nou despendra jor qu'ele vive.
(ll. 9545-50)

In my experience, as regards the late twelfth and early thirteenth century, the writer of the Manuel des Pecheiz was quite right in concluding that what many men called avarice was in fact covetousness.

To resume: With reference to the works I am studying, when the term "convoitise" is used, it generally means covetousness; in the case of "avarice", it can mean either covetousness, or the evil hoarding of wealth, or, indeed, both together. Linguistically, "avarice" is the inclusive term according to the general usage of Old French writers.

2. Avarice and Seven Deadly Sins

The concept of the seven deadly sins has a long and complicated history, which Morton W. Bloomfield⁽¹²²⁾ has attempted to trace, and which I now summarise.

In the Hellenistic Age (323 B.C. to the fifth century A.D.) avarice did not appear in the first list of the seven chief or cardinal sins. This was the list in the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs (dated 109-106 B.C.). Later, in circa 20 B.C., Horace puts avarice at the head of his list of crimes which are expiatiable. These are: avarice, love of praise, jealousy, anger, sloth, drunkenness and lechery. (First epistle to Maecenas, I, 33-38).⁽¹²³⁾

In the Christian era avarice begins to be considered not as a minor offence, but as a deadly sin; that is, a sin which may lead man to damnation. It is hardly surprising that avarice should appear as a graver spiritual lack in a Christianised world, for it is incompatible with the practical aspect of charity, the greatest of all Christian virtues. It assumes,

however, a greater importance than that of a mere social vice.

The New Testament contains many texts that clearly condemn the sin of avarice and warn men of its consequences: for example, I Corinthians 6:10⁽¹²⁴⁾. Another Pauline text often quoted by the Old French didactic writers is I Timothy 6: 9 & 10,⁽¹²⁵⁾ wherein we learn that the love of money is the root of all evil. Biblical texts do not leave any doubt that avarice was a sin to be spurned by the Christian. It is a warning often repeated: the Bible contains some seventy references to avarice⁽¹²⁶⁾.

With the Early Church Fathers, avarice became a favourite topic. St. Augustine wrote many sermons denouncing it. In one such sermon he refers to the famous text from the epistle of Paul to Timothy:

"Verum Apostolus intelligendus est isto nomine genus significasse per speciem, id est, per amorem pecuniae universalem generalemque avaritiam, quae vere radix est malorum omnium." (Ennaratio in Psalmum CXVIII, Sermon XI no. 6). (127)

Some of the Church Fathers took up the theme of the seven sins mentioned earlier, and arranged them into a hierarchy of gravity. John Cassian (d.c.435) an important figure in the history of monasticism, made a list of eight capital sins. To each one he devoted a book of his work Institutiones.⁽¹²⁸⁾ His list was:

"gastrimargia; fornicatio; filargyria; ira; tristitia; accedia; cenodoxia; superbia. (Inst. 5, 1.)

St. Gregory (died 604 A.D.) rearranged Cassian's order. He gave a list of seven sins which he claimed to be all tributary sins of the greatest sin of all: pride. Subsequent enumerations of the seven deadly sins usually followed Gregory's arrangement rather than Cassian's.

"inanis gloria; invidia; ira; tristitia; avaritia; ventris ingluties; luxuria." (Moralia in Job, 31, 87)⁽¹²⁹⁾

Although avarice was a mortal sin according to Biblical texts, which condemned the covetous to the same fate as overt criminals,⁽¹³⁰⁾ later thought gave some latitude to those possessing and desiring to possess money. The dual aspect of avarice or delight in worldly goods seem to

originate in the works of St. Thomas Aquinas, and was henceforth generally accepted by moralists. His views may be summarised thus: If avarice is in opposition to justice, that is, if the wealth is acquired by theft, or if the desire for wealth provokes theft, or if the detention of the wealth is contrary to charity, since the poor do not benefit from it, or even if the owner deprives himself of the necessities of life; finally, if the love of money is greater than the love of God, then avarice is counted a deadly sin. However, if a man becomes over-attached to his own possessions only to the point whereby he cannot be called generous, then he is lacking in liberality, but no more. His brand of avarice was counted by St. Thomas a venial failing⁽¹³¹⁾.

We may conclude that the Old French poets were not as tolerant as St. Thomas Aquinas. They did not make any such fine distinction between two kinds of avarice or between varying degrees of the same spiritual defect. They labelled all love of worldly things avarice, and then condemned it as a sin which would damn the culprit.

3. Avarice and the "Contemptus Mundi" Tradition

We have seen that from the age of the Church fathers to the Old French period and beyond, the subject of avarice in Christian thought continued to be debated and condemned whether as a vice or a sin. At this period I wish to consider briefly how avarice appears in the writing of the exponents of the "contemptus mundi" ideas which so influenced the Old French poets. I shall refer principally to the work which predated most of the didactic works by a few years, and which is known to have been a great influence: the De Miseria. of Innocent III.

All the writers of the "contemptus mundi" tradition are severe in their censure of avarice. Peter Damian comes down heavily on it and devoted an entire work to it: Contra philagyriam et munerum cupidatem⁽¹³²⁾. Bernard of Morval complains bitterly of the avarice of the times in his De Contemptu Mundi and also in another of his works: De Octo Vitiis, on

the eight primary vices. (Avarice ll. 189-476).

It is Innocent III who makes the most analytical study of avarice. First he establishes the link between the attitude of "contemptus mundi" and that of avarice. He elucidates the Biblical text which we have seen forms the basis of the "contemptus mundi" notion: I John 2: 15-16. Innocent explains what is meant by the three lusts mentioned in this text: that the lust of the flesh is associated with physical pleasures, that of the eyes with riches, and the pride of life with honours. All of these worldly goals foster vices. Derived from riches are the ignoble passions of greed and avarice. (One notes that Innocent distinguishes between covetousness and avarice).

"concupiscentia carnis ad voluptates, concupiscentia oculorum ad opes, superbia vitae pertinet ad honores. Opes generant cupiditates at avaritiam; (De Miseria..., Book II, l: 'Quaenam soleant homines communiter affectare.')

This same explanation is also given by the Reclus de Moilliens in his work Miserere. Innocent's work seems to have been his source.

Par l'uel covoitise conchois
De chou ke il te met devant;
(Stanza CXXXII ll. 8-9.)

The greed is then transmitted by the eyes to the corrupt heart:

Cuers est covoitous, de tout veut
Et volentiers al uel s'acoste,
(Stanza CXXXVI; ll. 5-6.)

The greater part of Book II of the De Miseria is devoted to a searching analysis of cupidity and avarice. Innocent proceeds with such headings as:

- 2 De Cupiditate
- 6 De insatiabile desiderio cupidorum
- 7 Quare cupidus satiari non potest
- 8 De falso nomine divitiarum
- 11 De avaritia
- 12 Cur avaritia. sit servitus idolarum
- 13 De quibusdam proprietatibus avariitiae.

I shall not enlarge at this point upon the contents of Innocent's work, for reference will constantly be made to it in relation to similar ideas

to be found in the works of the Old French poets.

In my section on the "contemptus mundi" works (section C, 4) the other main topic mentioned was that of the three Enemies of Man, namely: the world, the flesh and the devil. Avarice figures largely in this topos. Each of the enemies is allied to specific sins: the world is linked with avarice and covetousness, the flesh with gluttony and lechery, the devil with pride. An American scholar⁽¹³³⁾ claims that the position of all seven sins in the scheme of the Three Enemies was never definitely fixed, but that avarice pertained to the world. It is this traditionally close relationship between the world and avarice which interested the "contemptus mundi" writers.

4. The Derivative Evils of Avarice.

The New Testament pronouncement that the love of money, or avarice, was the root of all evil (I Tim: 6:9) became a cliché in subsequent didactic and religious literature, and the Old French poets did not neglect to echo it⁽¹³⁴⁾. For example, Guillaume le Clerc says of covetousness:

Qui tuz les autres mals atise
(Besant de Dieu, l. 860)

Similarly, the Reclus de Moilliens:

... coveitise pont tous maus
(Miserere: CXXVI, l. 3)

Also the Poème Moral:

Avarisce est uns maz qui mule ore ne fine; ..
Tot li altre mal vinent de sa male racine.
(Stanza 464, ll. 1 & 4)

What exactly are the evils begotten by avarice? In the period of the Church fathers, Cassian combined both moral failings and social malpractices in his list of the results of avarice: lying, fraud, theft, perjury, lust for illegal gain, false witness, violence, cruelty and rapacity.

"de filagyria mendacium, fraudato, furta, perjuria, turpis
lucri adpetitus, falsa testimonia, violentiae, inhumanitas,
ac rapacitas. (Collationes 5,16. P.L. XLIX-L)

Gregory, the moralist, was more concerned with the moral and psychological results of avarice: betrayal, fraud, falsehood, perjury, anxiety, violence and hard-heartedness.

De avaritia, proditio, fraus, fallacia, perjuriam,
inquietudo, violentiae, et contra misericordiam
obdurations cordis oriuntur (L, xxxi, C. xlv, no. 88)⁽¹³⁵⁾

Innocent III concentrates for his part more on the social evils attributable to avarice: sacrilege, thefts, rapine, war-mongering, killing, the practice of simony, fraudulent trading, usury, the breaking of faith, the bearing of false witness and the perversion of justice.

Radix enim omnium malorum est cupiditas - haec sacrilegia committit et furta, rapinas exercet et praedas, bella gerit et homicidia; simoniace vendit et emit, inique petit et recipit; injuste negotiatur et feneratur, instat dolis et emminet fraudibus: dissolvit pactum, et violat juramentum: corrumpit testimonium et pervertit iudicium. (De Miseria..., Book II, 2)

In the thirteenth century, Thomas Aquinas also considers the results of avarice and reproduces, as had Alcuin, the list of Gregory. (Summa Theologica 1^a 11^{ae}, q. LXXXIV, a.4.)⁽¹³⁶⁾

From this brief survey of ~~the~~ Church thought on avarice from the Early Church Fathers to the late thirteenth century, we note that it is Innocent III who places it best in a social context. Indeed from the comprehensive list of the social evils committed by men possessed by an overriding love of money, one perceives that Innocent III has an acute social awareness. This is in complete contrast to the ascetic ideals of writers such as Peter Damian. Innocent does not preach the monastic spirit of withdrawal from worldly evils to the exclusion of human values. One senses that here is a religious man capable of a feeling of involvement and concern with social wrongs which must be righted. He descends from the realms of abstract idealism to a more practical and human standpoint. It is this social conscience which makes Innocent III a sympathetic figure, and which doubtless helped to make him a favourite with the Old French poets. They appreciated his stance and adopted it in their own works

addressed to a lay public. Like Innocent, and unlike the ascetes, the vernacular poets, as we shall see, placed emphasis on the desire and need to reform society rather than on a complete dismissal of all things secular.

The Old French writers under review here attributed a wide range of social malpractices to avarice. Thibaud de Marly's list resembles that of Innocent, but predates it. It was written between 1182 and 1185 whereas Innocent's work is dated 1195. Both lists include murder, treason, usury, simony, perjury, theft and broken faith:

Mes ce fet covoitiez, qui a si grant baillie
 Que n'a pechié ou monde qu'il n'ait de sa frarie:
 Murtre ne traïson, usure, symonie,
 Homicide, parjure, larrecin, foi mentie.
 (Vers, ll. 389-92)

Similar social faults are mentioned by the author of the Poème Moral:
 (date: c. 1200. It, therefore, followed Innocent III's treatise):

Avarice at issi serjans cui elle guie:
 Parjurement, menchongne, usure, tricherie,
 Musdre, rober, tollir, fasseteit, larrenie,
 Juner, voilhier, puor, laidesteit, vilonie.
 (Stanza 678)

The Poème Moral progresses from active social misdeeds as listed by Thibaud de Marly to the psychological effects of avarice and the suffering it brings: fear and sleeplessness. This aspect of avarice will be dealt with in Chapter Two, whereas the social malpractices commonly associated with covetousness will be developed at greater length in chapters Three and Four, which will be devoted to social types and the Three Estates.

One notices that the Poème Moral used personification to describe the tributary evils of avarice. Avarice is portrayed as a leader, the social vices as its acolytes. The subject of avarice is one which lends itself well to an allegorical treatment. Personifications of the vice were common both in medieval pictorial art and literature. In the didactic works the allegorical approach is more frequently found in short works, but also makes an appearance in the longer sermons. We see other examples of it

with regard to the tributary evils of avarice.

The late thirteenth century writer, Robert le Clerc, uses an image similar to that noted above in the Poème Moral. This poet sees avarice as a lord ruling over a feudal household. He is master, not of social crimes, but of moral vices - pride, hatred and envy:

Couvoitise tient de maisnie
Orgoel et haïne et envie.

(Vers de la Mort, stanza ~~CLXXXIX~~)

With Robert le Clerc we move from the derivative vices of avarice to the interconnection of the sins, probably the most popular themes for allegory in medieval literature, although it was by no means a medieval creation⁽¹³⁷⁾.

The analysis of the relationship between avarice and other sins or vices as found in the Old French works owes much to the Psychomachia, the work of Prudentius Clemens written around 405 A.D.⁽¹³⁸⁾ Presented as a battle between virtues and vices, it symbolises the moral conflict in man's soul. It greatly influenced medieval writers many of whom used the same method.

Whether or not the framework of Psychomachia is used, there seems to be no traditional interconnection between the vices or sins. In some cases avarice is linked with social malpractices, in others, with moral vices, and in some with both. The Tournoiement Anticrist⁽¹³⁹⁾ of Huon de Méry follows the Psychomachia pattern. Aligned on the side of avarice are covetousness, rapine, cruelty, simony and hypocrisy, a mixture of active crimes and moral defects. (Tournoiement Anticrist ll. 761-73 and ll. 882-89). In Raoul de Houdenc's Le Songe d'Enfer⁽¹⁴⁰⁾, we follow the dreamer to the city of Covetousness in the land of Disloyalty. He is lodged by Envy; he dines with Trickery, sister of Rapine and cousin of Avarice. The last mentioned is the enemy of Generosity. His host is Broken Faith whose son Theft is the enemy of Giving (ll. 18-134). Here again, associated with avarice is a mixture of crimes, vices and failings.

Both Raoul de Houdenc and Guillaume le Clerc (Besant de Dieu) use the allegory of a repast to symbolise vices. However, whereas in Le Songe

d'Enfer usurers are on the menu, in the image of Guillaume le Clerc, the vices and sins are all members of a household, who organize a banquet. In this instance Avarice has many and varied companions: First she is associated with Meanness and Filth.

Quant les ostes deivent mangier,
 Eschar les fait tuz enrengier.
 Ordure lor aporte napes
 Sor lor genoilz e sor lor chapes.
 Avarice les sert del pain:
 En son giron e en son sain
 Musce quanqu'ele puet tenir
 Al aler e au revenir.
 Escharsete est cu'sinere.

(Besant de Dieu: ll. 1905-13)

Other personifications involved in the offering of hospitality are Glotenie, Yvrece, Luxure, Tricherie, Traïson, Menconge (ll. 1914-52). Finally there are Covetousness, Usury, Fraud and Discord. Covetousness manages the finances of the household and makes use of usury in order to fill her purse. Watchmen at this strange house are Fraud and Discord:

Coveitise porte la borse.
 Tuz les deniers conte e enborse
 Nuit et jor quanqu'el puet rabler.
 Usure preste por gabler.
 Barate e descorde sont gaites.

(ll. 1953-57)

The Reclus de Moilliens had earlier used this image of covetousness holding the purse-strings in his Roman de Carité. He is referring to the greed endemic at the papal court of Rome:

Ch'est Covoitise, le boursiere,
 (Stanza VIII, line 8)

Such sustained flights of allegorical imagination are rare in the longer didactic works. More frequent are the straightforward accounts of the conflict between the virtues and the vices in the fashion of Psychomachia. Here the adversaries are often paired, so that the vices are only connected in as much as they are all on the side of evil. The important connection here is not between the vices, but the opposition between a particular vice and a particular virtue. In the military confrontations described by the

poets, avarice or covetousness is usually the adversary of charity or liberality. The choice of term, whether "charité" or "largesse" would appear to have little significance since the more religious poets might use "largesse" to mean the practical side of charity. There are no undertones of a courtly rather than religious attitude in the preference for "largesse". The opposition avarice - charité occurs in the Roman des Romans (ll. 893 sqq) and also in Rutebeuf's Des Jacobins (line 8⁽¹⁴¹⁾), but the opposition avarice - largesse is more usual: e.g. Besant de Dieu (line 1669), Sermon en Vers (Stanza XCV), Rutebeuf's La Bataille des Vices contre les Vertus (line 161).

Whether or not the interconnection between the sins is explicitly stated and although the derivative evils of avarice and covetousness may vary considerably, most poets agree that the vice or sin is a dangerous one and can only give rise to evil. The Reclus de Moilliens alone assumes the task of explaining just why, in his opinion, covetousness nurtures all other vices and sins: He believes that a man who is not tainted by covetousness is also free from all other faults. But once a man is infected with covetousness, then his whole character is poisoned. A covetous person envies his fellow men. Soon he hates them and seeks to destroy them. It is covetousness which is the destructive force. It engenders pride which alienates man from God; from it comes envy which makes an imagined enemy of his brother. It fosters bitterness which makes a man hate himself. Thus a covetous man denies himself social and human relationships, and rejects the most precious gift of all: the love of God.

Hom, or entent coment je truis
 Et par quele raison je pruis
 Ke covoitise pont tous maus.
 Jou en toi mal trover ne puis
 Se tu n'ies covoitous; car puis
 Pert Envie ses enviaus.
 Por coi mes tu chiaus en travaus
 Ki mieus valent ke tu ne vaus
 Et sont plain de chou dont ies vuis,

Ou tes menours ou tes paraus?
 Quant tu n'as rien perdu par aus,
 Por coi les traïs et souduis?

Hom, tout chou muet de covoitise,
 Ki tous les maus en toi atise.
 Ou est cose ki mieus apere?
 Hom, pense encore et si avise
 Com covoitise te devise:
 Par orguel te tout Dieu ten pere,
 Par envie te tout ten frere,
 Et toi te tout par ire amere.
 Chele ki tant te defelise,
 Des biens marastre et des maus mere,
 De tous viches done matere.

(Miserere: Stanza CXXVI, CXXVII)

5. Avarice and the "Laudatores Temporis Acti" topos.

From these general attacks on avarice, it is already apparent that for the Old French didactic poets, greed for wealth was a mortal sin and a moral plague. However we have noted that avarice has always been an important literary topic and that it has always aroused strong feelings. The Old French poets do not acknowledge this, however. Most of them try to justify their complaints by claiming that the covetousness which holds society in its grip is a scourge which has recently attacked the times. Consequently it is commonplace to refer to the "good old days" when society was free from evil influences. This trait is, of course, not unusual. Most people, especially elderly people, as was the case of the Old French poets, compare their own age unfavourably with a past age whose defects have faded with the passage of time and the haze of nostalgia.

When referring wistfully to the past, the poets may either have in mind a specific historical period. This is usually the years immediately before the present; or they may refer to a vague past which is painted in such rosy hues that it is not situated in any time in history, but is a vision of a perfect society which could never have existed as imagined. The latter vision we find, for example, in the work of Bernard of Morval, De Contemptu Mundi (1140) where he paints an idealised picture of an age

where avarice did not exist. This was an evocation of Jerusalem the Golden.⁽¹⁴²⁾

Bernard says that there was once such an age, but that its purity was eroded by the growth of avarice:

Gens erat aurea, cui furor alea, cui scelus aurum,
Cui pudor emptio, cui neque mentio divitiarum.
Non erat abdere fas, neque tollere lucra crumenis.
(Book II, ll. 35-37)

Bernard then contrasts the present day:

Haec neque nomine digna nec ordine recta stataetas
Haec vitiis perit, haec animas gerit irrequietas.
Cumque ruens eat, haec populum creat ad mala stantem
Rebus, honoribus, ebrietatibus invigilantem.
(ll. 105-08) (143)

The source of the theme of the Golden Age comes from Ovid's Metamorphoses, I, 89-115 and 127-50, and might well have been made familiar to medieval writers by the De Consolatione Philosophiae of Boethius⁽¹⁴⁴⁾ who also yearns for the primitive age of man before the discovery of gold and the consequent birth of ignoble passions⁽¹⁴⁵⁾.

The Old French didactic poets, when evoking past perfection are split between an age of historical remembrance and a far distant age of imagined purity. Other poets are not at all explicit in their references to the past. Some are content simply to emphasise the corruption of the present, implying the better condition of any other age. For example, the author of the earliest of the "Etats du Monde" poems in the vernacular, Etienne de Fougères, makes the following statement in the present tense, a statement echoed in similar form by all the poets.

Tant reigne partot Coveitise
Livre des Manières (line 59)

The Reclus de Moilliens is also rather vague when he refers to the age of our ancestors:

Ne vivons pas en le maniere
Ke vesquirent nostre anchisour.
Roman de Carité: Stanza IV, ll. 3-4)

This is the prelude to his discourse on the uncharitable manners of his

own times. He then compares the past and the present, to the inevitable detriment of the latter. This comparison between the well-ordered society of the past and the corruption of contemporary times is also made by the anonymous author of the Sermon en Vers: Like the Reclus this writer is vague about the time of the advent of corruption, but his mention of "le primer he" would appear to situate it well into the past.

Tust est eschange
 Pus le primer hé
 De nos ancessurs
 Del ben ke dunk fu;
 (Stanza II)

One notes that the 'new' era of corruption pilloried by Etienne de Fougères, at the end of the twelfth century, again becomes at the end of the thirteenth century a "new" period of unprecedented evil, or so Rutebeuf implies:

...trop est li mondes changiez,
 Qui de toz biens est estrangiez.
 Vous peez bien apercevoir
 Se je vous conte de ce voir.
 (De L'Estat du Monde, ll. 173-176)
 Faralot Bastin: Vol. I, p. 388

In the lines quoted above there have been complaints that society has deteriorated, and also that society is in the powerful grip of avarice. Some of the poets link these two laments and insist that their age is different from earlier ages precisely because of the advent of avarice and covetousness. Guillaume le Clerc affirms this quite clearly:

Plus a ui de la coveitise.
 (Besant de Dieu: line 859)

Later, he says that his contemporaries are always covetous:

Home ne velt ui crere rien
 De son profit ne de son bien.
 Il ne fine de coveiter.
 (ll. 2159-61)

With nostalgia Hugues de Berzé evokes an age when all appeared to be well.

Il soloit estre uns tans jadis
 Que li siecles estoit jolis
 E plains d'aucune vaine joie.
Bible: (ll. 79-81)

Not so nowadays:

Couvoitise, angoisse e orguiex
 Ont si toute joie perie
 Qu'ele est par tout le mont faillie;
 (ll. 90-92)

Man can no longer find joy in the world which has become a field of battle for material wealth. However, Hugues de Berzé is not yearning after a distant age untainted by gold and private possessions. It is apparently not the worldliness of the present age which offends him, but the selfish greed of contemporary men. His "good old days" are obviously set not too far away, and they did not reject material pleasures. Hugues recalls the laughter and songs, the tournaments and journeys, the love rites and fine courts of a lost age.

Solaz de rire e de chanter
 E de tornoier e d'errer,
 De dosnoier e de servir
 E de cours mander e tenir
 Sont mais au siecle remés tuit.
 (ll. 93-97)

Hugues objects primarily to the joyless competition of the present when men regard each other as potential enemies, rivals for the wealth of society.

In the Roman des Romans it is not clear whether the author means the times or the secular world by his use of the term "siecle". His change from past to present tense would indicate that he believes that covetous men have caused a recently-developed corruption.

Bons fust li siecles, mes la gent est malvaise,
 Molt coveitose en delize, en aaise;
 (ll. 45-46)

First on his list of 'malveis hom' the poet places "li aver" (line 281). The poet then wonders why God no longer performs miracles on earth, and arrives at the conclusion that avarice has now conquered the world:

N'est pas por ceo que Deus n'ait la vertu
 Que il aveit al tens que jadis fu;
 Mais tuit avons e oï e vell
 Que coveitise ad le monde vencu.
 (ll. 449-52)

The word "jadis" appears again in the Sermon by Guischard de Beaulieu:

Jadis fud un bon secle al tens [ancienur]
 Lealte i esteit si fud de tel valur
 (ll. 293-4)

Line 293 resembles closely the opening line of La Vie de St. Alexis (1040)⁽¹⁴⁶⁾:

Bons fut li secles al tens ancienur,
 Quer feit i ert e justise ed amur;
 (ll. 1-2)

The influence is confirmed by other similarities: St. Alexis:

Bon fut li secles, ja mais n'ert si vailant.
 Velz est e fraisles, tut s'en vat declinant:
 (ll. 8-9)

Sermon:

Li secles est mut vielz e si est trespasanz
 Frailles est e malveis tuit s'en vait declinanz.
 (ll. 11-12)

It is interesting to note that whereas Guischart de Beaulieu speaks of a vague past, the poet of Alexis is more specific. He attributes purity and goodness to the age of Biblical characters: the times of Noah, Abraham and David (Stanza 2).

Guischart says that avarice has taken firm root in the present day:

Avarice est par tut racinee e esprise.
 (Sermon: line 1521)

For Rutebeuf, too, the present day signifies the demise of charity and generosity and the triumph of covetousness, pride and envy:

Orgueil et Couvoitise, Avarisce et Envie
 Ont bien leur enviaus seur cels qui sont en vie ;
 Bien voient envieus que lor est la reavie,
 Car Charité s'en va et Larguesce devie.
 (Des Jacobins: ll. 5-8. ed. Faral et Bastin, Vol. I, pp. 314-15)

The same sentiments are shared by Jean de Meung: Roman de la Rose: Vol. 2. ll. 8323-8424. This poet describes at length the idyllic simple, rustic life of the "tens des prumiers peres" (line 8325).

In some instances the poets do not claim that society as a whole has changed, but that certain sections of it have been spoiled by covetous behaviour and attitudes. This topic will be developed later in the chapters on the Three Estates (Chapters Three and Four). Thus far we are left with

the general impression that the poets all attributed the decline in moral standards to the rise of covetousness and avarice. Hence the great importance of avarice as a literary theme during this period. It is a subject to which I shall often have cause to return in this study.

It is, of course, premature to reach definite conclusions on matters raised in this thesis, but I believe that certain important features of the Old French didactic verse have already been established in this first part of my work. I have shown that the Old French poets had good reason to concern themselves with the topic of wealth. I have also indicated that their literary education both Christian and classical, would have furnished them well with ideas and modes of expression to be used in their attacks and complaints regarding wealth. Already we can see that they did not neglect to draw on the wealth of material available in earlier Latin works. Nor, indeed did the attitude of the Old French didactic poets differ fundamentally from those of their Christian predecessors.

My introduction to the individual Old French poems has demonstrated that the sermon part of these works owes much to the "contemptus mundi" tradition, both as regards attitudes to wealth and the presentation of connected themes.

My preliminary study of avarice as an abstract concept has suggested that the Old French poets brought little originality to this topic, but were content to treat this age-old, universal theme in traditional manner. In their role of "laudatores temporis acti", the poets may seek to rejuvenate well-worn protests against the times by presenting the comparisons between the past and the present. However their picture of the past is too vague and too idealised to make a credible and effective comparison. As for their allegations against the corruption of the present day, we shall suspend judgement on their assessment until we have studied their complaints in greater detail in Chapters Three and Four.

Chapter Two: Moral Types and Wealth as Presented in the Old French Works.

A. The Rich Man

1. Significance of the qualification "riche"
2. The Rich Man's Corruption by Wealth
3. His Obsessive Attitude to Wealth
4. His Enslavement to Wealth
5. His Wretched Existence
 - a) His psychological suffering caused by mental and moral stress
 - b) His psychological suffering caused by material loss
 - c) His physical suffering due to self-imposed hardship
6. Consequences of His Attitudes and Actions
7. His Future Retribution
 - a) Wealth and Heirs
 - b) The Rich Man and Death: i. Wealth is powerless against death;
ii. wealth must be abandoned at death
 - c) The Evil Rich Man at the Judgement
8. His Hope of Salvation
 - a) Renunciation of Wealth
 - b) His Attitude towards his Wealth Determines his Ultimate Fate
 - c) The Good Use of Wealth: i. the notions of "good use" and the "right to own"; ii. the position of the Old French didactic poets on the good use of wealth; iii. Charity in the Old French didactic works; iv. charity as the rich man's duty; v. the rewards of charity; vi. alms are not always acceptable; vii. laments at the demise of charity; viii. exempla associated with the topos of charity; ix. the wish to give alms is as meritorious as the actual giving; x. false charity

B. The Poor Man

1. Different Aspects of this Moral Type
2. God's Poor
3. The Rewards of the Poor Man's Suffering
4. His Right and Wrong Attitudes towards Poverty

CHAPTER TWO

Moral Types and Wealth as Presented in the Old French Works

In their attack on the love of wealth, the Old French didactic poets did not content themselves with a treatment of avarice as an abstract concept. They went much further and attempted, in varying degrees, to analyse the relationship between a man and his wealth. This relationship proved in many cases to be based on avarice, which is not surprising if one bears in mind the aims and tenor of these writings. It is interesting to examine how the poets explain the psychological state of the pursuers and owners of wealth.

The relationship between wealth and man is presented in two different ways by the didactic poets. The difference lies in the literary presentation of man. On the one hand he may be considered as a moral type, and as such he represents certain moral qualities or defects. As a result, he is called the rich man or the miser, for example. Alternatively, man may be treated as a social type. To this end he is set in a particular social milieu where he exercises a specific social function, for instance as monk or as merchant. As a moral type, man is either good or bad. We see him as a Christian, judged according to God's laws. He is either granted eternal life or doomed to Hell. On the other hand, nuances of behaviour are permitted when man is considered as a social type. Here we see him in relation to other men. He is judged according to the ideal of his social function. Chapters Three and Four will be devoted to a study of wealth and social types. In this present chapter I am concerned only with attitudes to wealth and moral types.

A. The Rich Man

The moral type most closely associated with wealth is, of course, the rich man.

i. Significance of the qualification "riche"

In the Old French works I have studied, it is obvious that "riche" indicates far more than the financial situation of a person. Sometimes it embraces his social standing, sometimes his conduct. Also the application of the qualification "riche" could often imply a value judgement. The nature of the value judgement depended upon the intent of the person using the term; that is, it depended upon the user's attitude to wealth. The word on the lips of a didactic poet signified something far removed from anything a courtly poet would have in mind. Let us elaborate on the various shades of meaning of "riche".

In the first place, "riche" signified "powerful"⁽¹⁾. Traditionally in the Middle Ages, this qualified the noble landowner. The secondary meaning of "riche" indicated a certain level of economic well-being in that it attributed to the person so described a quantity of wealth. This secondary meaning arose from the fact that power and wealth are inseparable, the one promoting the other. As I explained in my preliminary chapter, the distribution of wealth shifted somewhat in the Middle Ages, and so the rich man was not necessarily a nobleman, but could be a "bourgeois". Even so, the notion of accompanying power persisted since the wealthy bourgeois held great social responsibility in his own milieu.

Attitudes, indeed prejudices, are clearly discernible in the use of the qualification "riche". For the courtly poet, as we shall see, "riche" signified not only wealthy and powerful, but often implied a high degree of generosity. Thus, in courtly works, to describe a man as "riche" automatically ascribed to him certain good moral qualities associated with generosity. So "riche" was essential in the introductory portrait of a courtly hero. This laudatory use of "riche" also occurs at times in the didactic works, particularly those written by secular poets. Of the works I have studied the chief example of this is in Guiot de Provins whose attitudes in the first

part of his Bible appear unashamedly courtly. To be "riche" was a creditable attribute. We see that this use of the term "riche" figures in an enumeration of good moral qualities possessed by noble men of a bygone age:

Deus! con furent preu et valant
et riche et saige et conoissant!
(Bible: ll. 119-20)

The implied notion of generosity becomes more apparent in another application of "riche". By the antithesis: "riche" - "chiche", we understand that much material wealth does not suffice for a man to be dubbed "riche". He must show that he does actively own his wealth by liberally disposing of it. "Riche", therefore, suggests to Guiot a generosity of spirit which is demonstrated by generous giving of material wealth. Guiot bitingly compares the noble men of the past with the tight-fisted, money-obsessed rich men of his own time:

Certes, li riche
Sont or au siecle li plus chiche -
riche ne sont - j'ai menti, voir -
mais il sont sogit a l'avoir.
(Bible: ll. 511-14)

The view expressed here by Guiot de Provins is not typical of didactic poets in general, who tend to regard the qualification "riche" in a very different light. For the majority the word is used in a derogatory sense to designate the greedy or miserly man who displays an excessive desire to acquire and retain worldly wealth. Further qualifications were superfluous. While Modern French writers can refer to "le mauvais riche", Old French didactic writers convey the same notion by "li riche". When presenting a person as both rich and good, a rare feature in these medieval works, only then did "riche" need further qualification. (See my section 8, b).

It is easy to detect the moral censure underlying "riche" in such lines as:

Li riche volent avoir tot,
(Besant de Dieu: line 863)

and

O rikes hom, si povre fin!
 Mar veï's l'argent et l'or fin
 Et l'avoir, dont tant agrapas.
 (Miserere: Stanza XLV)

Were one to understand by "riche" merely an allusion to the possession of wealth, one could dismiss these works as no more than "anti-wealth" in attitude and intent. However when one realises that "riche", as used by the Old French didactic poets, could imply both wealth and evil at once, then it becomes clear that the possession of riches, not necessarily in itself an evil, was often a precondition of evil. The close association between wealth and sin in the minds of these poets, makes for a use of the word "riche" somewhat confusing to the modern reader.

Serving as a model for this attitude of suspicion directed at the rich man was the New Testament. Such texts as Matthew 19: 23-24 were interpreted to mean that, at best, the rich man was morally at risk, at worst, doomed to Hell. Guillaume le Clerc takes up this text in his Besant de Dieu:

.....plus legier serroit
 Que un chameil trespasereit
 Par la chasse d'une aguillete
 Qui serreit petite e greslette,
 Q'a un riche home n'est legier
 Que el ciel puisse herbergier.
 (ll. 865-70)

Extensive use in the didactic poems of the parable of Dives and Lazarus (Luke 16: 19-26) is also significant for here the man whose name simply means rich represents the selfish man hated by God and condemned to eternal torment (see my pages 124-125)

We see, therefore, that there were certain moral defects attached to the term "riche" in the minds of the Old French didactic writers, and that the rich man, irrespective of social rank, is considered to be an evil person. It is, therefore, the evil rich man who will dominate my study of moral types.

A reading of these didactic texts reveals that the poets use two ways of explaining the evil nature of the rich man. The more usual approach of the poets is to see the rich man as the wicked harbourer of avarice or covetousness. Hence a man's attitude to wealth makes him evil. We have already seen some of the evils associated with avarice in Chapter One (section E,4) and the subject will receive further attention in this chapter. Some Old French poets do not consider a man's attitude to wealth to be the starting-point to a moral decline, but rather accuse wealth itself of exerting a corrupting influence. This influence erodes the good moral qualities of the man who possesses riches.

2. The Rich Man's Corruption by Wealth

The notion that wealth exerts a malevolent influence upon its owner is, however, by no means general. It occurs in a few major didactic works as an occasional idea, and is found in some shorter poems holding less claim to be truly didactic.

Among the major works this view of the poet's is to be found in the Roman des Romans where it is asserted that "goods" are misnamed since material wealth is, on the contrary, evil:

Ne dites mie de ces biens temporals
 Que soient biens, mes vanitez e mals:
 Qui s'i delite ne poet estre en ço sals,
 Ainz le conduent as peines infernals.
 (Roman des Romans: ll. 53-56)

The initial impression that the poet believes wealth corrupts man is later reinforced: Surveying the clergy, the poet comments that money has evilly worked the wonder of inciting God's servants to be quick to seek wealth:

Deniers ont ja fait maint grant merveille,
 N'est gueres hom qui al prendre someille.
 (ll. 567-8)

For Hugues de Berzé the possession of great wealth inspires evil pride which alienates man from God. He illustrates this point with a personally experienced anecdote of a crusade where the Christians initially

secured a victory which acquired for them great wealth from the vanquished pagans. Their heads turned by such riches, the crusaders lost sight of their Christian purpose and grew proud. To this Hugues de Berzé attributes their subsequent defeat. (2)

E nous fumes de povreté
 Hors e plongie en richeté
 Es esmeraudes, es rubis
 E es pourpres e es samis,
 E es terres e es jardins
 E es tres biaux palés marbrins
 E es dames e es puceles,
 Dont il i avoit molt de beles,
 Si mesimes Dieu en oubli
 E Damedieus nous autressi

(Bible: ll. 475-83)

Similar examples are to be found in the stories of four powerful emperors, recounts Hugues de Berzé. Their greed for land and conquest hastened them to early deaths. Again the sequence was wealth which engendered pride which led to godlessness, in that these powerful rulers believed themselves immune to death.

Mais les richesses les avoient
 Si orgueillis qu'il ne cuidoient
 Que mors les osast envayr;
 (ll. 511-13)

Wealth is certainly no stigma in the eyes of Guiot de Provins as we have already noted. However, he evidently believes that only certain people cope with great wealth, and that the challenge of a large fortune can only be met by the landed nobility. Wealth, he finds incompatible with the clergy, and maintains that its possession leads them to decline morally so that they lose the will to do good.

et quant il ont les grans richesses
 les cuers perdent et les proesses
 et de bien faire se repentent.
 (Bible: ll. 851-3)

Guiot, however, is not here speaking of the rich man as a moral type, but introduces a social and vocational factor in that the clergy should have no personal links with great wealth. To riches, in general, this poet does not attribute any corruptive influence.

In Le Petit Plet by Chardri⁽³⁾, a young boy is in conversation with an old man. The latter laments the loss of his wealth (ll. 997-1004). The boy claims that his so-called loss was, in reality, a blessing. His reason for so saying is that wealth ruins and corrupts a man, and leads him to eventual damnation:

The boy: "Richesce de vus est departie
 E mult ad fet grant curteisie
 Ke hunie ne vus ad ne ledengee:
 De tant s'en est vers vus changee
 Plus ke vers nul autre hume.
 Car au derein ert ceo la summe:
 Ele perdera le hume u le humelli,
 Car le un des dous ert maubailli."
 (ll. 1011-18)

The literary technique of the debate or imaginary dialogue is to be found in some short works. One of the best known is Du Denier et de la Brebis⁽⁴⁾. Here it is the kid which acts as prosecutor of riches. In his defence Denier, personified, vaunts the power and pleasures that derive from money, also its social usefulness - it can be used to build bridges, roads; it finances crusades; it facilitates exchanges and so fosters commerce. In an attempt to prove his superior social usefulness, Brebis counters with the other side of riches. Money undermines social and moral worth and creates false values, corrupting men:

".....tu es plains de trahison:
 Tu fez d'un hermite larron,
 Tu tols a droit, dones a tort.
 D'un mauves homme, boçu tort,
 Fez tu tant que plus est amez
 C'uns sages hom plains de bontez.....
 (Jubinal, Nouveau Recueil, Vol. 2, page 270)

The personification of Denier occurs also in the well-known work De Dan Denier⁽⁵⁾ which is, in essence, an exposé of the good and evil associated with money. As with Hugues de Berzé, money is accused of encouraging pride:

Denier parole fierement.
 Denier pardone mautalent,
 Denier va orguilleusement,
 Ce est la somme.
 (Jubinal, Jongleurs et Trouvères, p. 96)

Gradually the attack on money gathers momentum. Money upsets the social

order elevating evil persons who should be kept low; it corrupts women:

Denier est rage,
Denier mont mauvès langage;
Denier met vilain en parage,
Denier maine fame à putage,

Money leads to crime:

Denier fet homme forsener. (p. 97)

It corrupts the clergy:

Denier fet prestres desréer,
Et .iiij. messes le jor chanter.

Denier lies at the root of conflicts:

Denier fet guerres esmouvoir. (p. 98)

It deviates the course of justice:

Dans denier fet tout son voloir,
Et la loi toudre;

Money buys absolution for sins committed:

Denier rachate les pechiez; (p. 99)

In short, money holds the whole world in its evil power:

A denier est li mons acclin. (p. 100)

For some poets, then, wealth has an undeniable, evil influence, or as the modern misquotation has it: "Money is the root of all evil." Most didactic poets, however, base their analysis of wealth and man upon the original biblical text (I Timothy 6:10) and consider the love of money to be the source of evil. They examine the psychological effect of money upon man and conclude that money does not in itself lead to evil, but that man's love of it inevitably does. It is this attachment to riches termed covetousness or avarice, which is the corrupting agent in the relationship between a man and his wealth. In other words, man is not seen by the Old French poets in general as a passive creature who succumbs to an external force exerted by wealth. Rather he is the active being who desires wealth, acquires it, unjustly retains it, and so is justifiably named covetous or miserly, and eventually punished. It is this latter type, the evil rich

man, who prompts the psychological analyses of the poets. The portraits which emerge from their study reveal certain traits common to all.

3. The Rich Man's Obsessive Attitude to Wealth

The Old French didactic poets present the evil rich man as living for wealth, interested only in accumulating it and increasing it. A characteristic of the covetous and the miserly man is the insatiable desire for more and more riches. Guiot makes this point:

Molt assemble, mais po s'exploite,
Et con plus ait et plus covoite:
Ja li siecles n'iert assaseiz.
(Bible: ll. 519-21)

This is an aspect noted by most of the poets, and one which was not original. It appears in the Bible: Ecclesiastes 5:9 and Proverbs 13:7. Augustine spoke of the insatiable desire of the covetous person⁽⁶⁾. In pagan literature, too, it makes a frequent appearance, notably in Horace:

semper avarus eget; certum voto pete finem
(Epistles I, II line 56)

Juvenal, too:

crescit amor nummi, quantum ipsa pecunia crevit,
(Satires, XIV, line 139)

The idea acquired proverb status⁽⁷⁾. It is discussed at length by Boethius in his De Consolatione... (Book III, Prose 3 and Poetry 3)⁽⁸⁾.

The same subject receives comprehensive treatment from Innocent III in his De Miseria (Book II, VII & VIII). He quotes the text from Juvenal, and the relevant biblical texts. The insatiability of the covetous man is explained: By submitting to covetousness a man shuts out God, for the two are incompatible. Yet no human soul can ever be complete without the presence of God: Hence the everlasting craving which the avaricious person tries to assuage with ever more riches, but which can only be calmed by the love of God. To illustrate this, Innocent refers to the biblical text which teaches that one cannot serve God and Mammon (Matthew 6:24), a favourite with the Old French poets.

Treatment of the topic is more superficial in the Old French works. The poets tend to content themselves with the expression of the commonplace, as did Guiot (my page 92). The poet of the Roman des Romans links the insatiable greed of the covetous man to the theme of the vanity of life in the world:

Cist mundes est tot pleins de vanitez;
Ja de ses biens n'en ert hom asacez:
(ll. 189-90)

Hugues de Berzé and Guillaume le Clerc make the same point in similar terms.

Hugues:

E cil qui miex a sa besongne
C'est cil qui couvoite encor plus:
(Bible: ll. 76-77)

Guillaume:⁽⁹⁾

Plus a ui de la coveitise,
Qui tuz les autres mals atise,
En cels qui les plus riches sont,
Q'en tote l'autre gent del mond.
(Besant de Dieu: ll. 859-62)

Guillaume develops the idea further. With particular reference to the rich and powerful, he points out the obsessive nature of these people, spurred on by one desire, that of becoming wealthier. The poet uses an interesting enumeration to define wealth, and also shows his aristocratic bias, equating riches with land:

... jeo vei maint riche puissant,
Qui a nule rien n'est pensant
Fors a plus avoir tuteveie
Or e argent, terre e moneie,
Chastels, citez, viles e bors.
James ne pensera aillors.
(Besant de Dieu: ll. 877-82)

The later work of Robert le Clerc expresses the same idea tersely and in proverbial style:

Bourse d'aver n'est onques plaine.
(Vers de la Mort: Stanza CXXII, l. 3)

There are customary images to convey the greed of the rich man. The one which occurs most compares the covetous man to one suffering a great

thirst. Different poets used the image in a variety of ways: the need ranged from a simple thirst to the feverish and frantic craving of the sick man.

The source of this image is undoubtedly the myth of Tantalus who was condemned to suffer eternal thirst. The analogy with the rich man is made by Horace (Satires I, 1, 68-72)⁽¹⁰⁾:

Tantalus a labris sitiens fugientia captat
flumina: quid rides? mutato nomine de te
fabula narratur: congestis undique saccis
indormis inhians et tamquam parcere sacris
cogeris aut pictis tamquam gaudere tabellis.

The image was taken up by Christian writers. For example Alcuin likens the covetous man to one who has dropsy whose thirst can never be slaked however much he drinks:

sicut hydropicus, qui quanto bibit, tanto plus
illi sitis accrescit: sic avaritia quanto magis
habet, tanto plus desiderat. (11)

Two of the Latin "contemptus mundi" writers revert to the myth of Tantalus to describe the covetous man. They are Bernard of Morval in his De Contemptu Mundi (Book 2, ll. 868-72)⁽¹²⁾ and Innocent III in his De Miseria... Book II, XIV, in a section on the avaricious and covetous man. Innocent says that just as Tantalus was surrounded by water, yet could not drink a drop, so the avaricious man surrounds himself with riches and cannot derive any pleasure or satisfaction from them.

The images survived into the vernacular. The Poème Moral equates avarice with an illness for which there is no cure or potion:

Cum plus at, plus demande; ne seit avoir termine.
Cest mal ne puet sansir ne poisons ne mezine.
(Stanza 464)

This is echoed with slight variation of expression in the Sermon of Guischard de Beaulieu⁽¹³⁾:

Eus unt len fermete dunt il ia ne garrunt.
Coveitise unt es queors dunt il en grute sunt
(ll. 742-43)

Robert le Clerc dramatically depicts avaricious men as those who are ill with fever and who drink so greedily that they choke:

..... par covOitise resanlent
 Ciaus cui gries maladie emprent
 Dont boivent si louvicement,
 Qu'il sanle, au veŕr, qu'il estranlent?
 (Vers de la Mort: Stanza LXV, l. 9-12)

The image of the man sick of the dropsy is used by Guillaume le Clerc with particular reference to the entourage of the Pope at Rome. A feverish man never drank as greedily as these men take money, says the poet:

Onques uncore nul fevros
 Ne ydropique ne lepros
 Ne but autresi volentiers
 Come cil prenent les deners.
 (Besant de Dieu: ll. 2285-88)

An added refinement is to state that the richer a greedy man is, the meaner he becomes. Noting this there is Guiot de Provins: Bible: ll. 511-12. (see my page 86). Likewise in Vers de la Mort by Robert le Clerc:

Ki plus aquiert plus est escars.
 (Stanza CCLXXXIII)

4. The Rich Man's Enslavement to Wealth

An addiction to wealth is depicted by most Old French didactic poets as an enslavement. This is probably the idea most commonly found associated with wealth and the avaricious person.

The notion doubtless has its origin in the biblical text, Matthew 6:24 which asserts that one cannot serve God and Mammon. By this we understand that if one places wealth, that is Mammon, above God in our affections, then we cannot be said to serve God. Rather one serves riches. Linked, too, is the idea of avarice as a sin. The Gospel of St. John, 8:34, tells us that indulgence in sin makes one a servant of sin.

The concept was not only Christian in origin. It occurs in Seneca (De Vita Beata, XXII and Epistle CXIX) and in Horace (Epistle I, XVI, ll. 63-66). However it is Christian literature which kept the notion alive.

One of the early Church fathers, Cyprian (210-258), addresses the miser thus:

Pecuniae tuae captivus et servus es, catenis cupiditatis et vinculis alligatus es, et quem iam solverat Christus, denuo vinctus es. Servas pecuniam, quae te servata non servat. (14)

According to St. Augustine, man should utilise, not serve the world⁽¹⁵⁾. By this one may understand that the material things of life, particularly wealth, should be used for a right purpose and should not be idolised.

The "contemptus mundi" writers adopted the idea. Peter Damian made a rigorous interpretation of the gospel of St. Matthew 6:24, classing as servitude any participation in worldly things⁽¹⁶⁾.

Innocent III enlarges upon Paul's Epistle to the Colossians 3:5 wherein it is stated that covetousness is a form of idolatry. Innocent goes on to say that just as the idolator is the servant of his idol, so the avaricious man is the servant of his riches. (De Miseria: Book 2, XV).

The commonplace is revived and much used by the Old French didactic poets. The Poème Moral states the belief clearly:

Ki trop aimmet l'avoir, c'est cil qui l'avoir sert.
(Stanza 500)

The poet describes the man who locks away his possessions as being ruled by his money. He obtains a striking effect by his use of personification - money is the feudal lord, the rich man, a mere retainer:

Qui tant lo garde enclos qu'il musist et empire,
Serjanz est a l'avoir, li avoires est ses sire.

(Poème Moral: Stanza 502, ll. 2007-2008)

Since an excessive love of money is opposed to the love of God, he concludes that one cannot serve God and worldly wealth. Echoing Matthew 6:24⁽¹⁷⁾:

Ki si sert a l'avoir, il ne puet Deu servir;
Qui si aimet l'avoir, lui covient Deu haïr;
(Stanza 503)

We have already seen how writing a few years after the Poème Moral, Guiot de Provins described the wealthy of his day as "sogit a l'avoir" (Bible:

line 514). This poet maintains that a man cannot really be said to possess his riches unless he puts them to good use. (See also section 8, c)

Otherwise the man might just as well be poor:

Avoir, qui l'ait, s'il n'en ait point
qui n'en s'en jot. Bien lor acoint
qu'hons avers faut a ceu qu'il ait
auci bien con a ceu qu'il n'ait.

(Bible: ll. 499-502)

Guiot shows how the roles may be reversed: wealth possesses and uses the man who is not altruistic:

s'il n'en fait bien soi ne autrui
je di que li avoires ait lui;

(Bible: ll. 517-18)

One should note in passing that Guiot's altruism is not Christian charity. When speaking of the proper use of wealth the moralists allude to practical charity given to the poor. Not so Guiot who borrows this didactic commonplace to a different end, that is generosity from a literary patron to a poor jongleur such as the poet himself. (cf. ll. 244-57)

Guillaume le Clerc develops the same line of thought, but with charity in mind. He asserts that the only way to be master of one's money is to use it to do good. (See also my section 8, c).

Cil est de richescs porsis
Qui les amoncele tut dis.
Il nes a pas: eles ont lui,
Quant il a sei ne a autrui
N'en fait bien: donc nes a il mie,
Mes eles ont lui en baillie.
Il sert, eles nel servent pas.
Il n'en est seignor en nul cas:

(Besant de Dieu: ll. 969-76)

Guillaume contrasts such an enslavement to riches with the behaviour of one who is generous. This man is master of his money:

Mes cil qui les done e despent
E qui sa main au povre estent,
Cil est sires, e cil les a
E autre feiz les trovera.

(ll. 977-80)

5. The Wretched Existence of the Rich Man

Servitude to wealth, and, to a lesser degree, the mere possession of wealth, greatly affect the life of a rich man. For the most part the Old French didactic poets concur that this life cannot be a happy one. The poets appear to vie with each other to paint the blackest picture of the utter misery which besets the very rich person. They seem determined to persuade men that the rich, and particularly those who are obsessively concerned with personal wealth, can only know a joyless existence. The suffering they impute to the rich takes various forms.

a) Psychological suffering caused by mental and moral stress

The Old French poets emphasise the fears and feelings of insecurity which, they claim, necessarily accompany the possession of great wealth. In so doing they are following a long literary tradition which either describes the worry-wracked miser, or warns all men of the dire consequences of the possession of riches. Again the sources of this theme are both Christian and pagan. Juvenal, who so greatly influenced the Middle Ages, states that all the gold in the world is not worth having if one has to pay for it with one's peace of mind. (Satire 3, ll. 54-57). It is a theme to which he often returns. He remarks on the carefree attitude of the empty-handed traveller and his lack of fear in the presence of a robber (Satire X, line 22).⁽¹⁸⁾

"cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator

In Satire XIV he again considers the misery and anxiety of the man who has to look after a fortune (ll. 303-308).

The Christian tradition covers the same ground. Love of money is a "hurtful lust" says the Bible (I Timothy, 6:9) and elsewhere we find a reference to the sleeplessness of the rich man (Ecclesiastes 5: 12-13).

The Church Fathers developed the topos.- For example, Cyprian describes the rich greedy men who can never escape their tortured thoughts of loss

by theft or law-suit, and who thus suffers amid his luxuries.⁽¹⁹⁾ Augustine depicts the anguish of the rich man with even greater emphasis:

"But the rich man is anxious with fears, pining with discontent, burning with covetousness, never secure, always uneasy, panting from the perpetual strife of his enemies, adding to his patrimony indeed by these miseries to an immense degree, and by these additions also heaping up most bitter cares" (20)

The "contemptus mundi" writers did not neglect to describe in detail the anxiety-ridden rich man⁽²¹⁾. Bernard of Morval gives us a particularly detailed portrait of the suffering endured by the wealthy. He describes the worry and anguish of the money-obsessed man; his troubled sleep and nightmares; his constant terror of thieves; his never-ending toil to acquire yet more riches:⁽²²⁾

Quanta pecunia, tanta molestia crescit eidem.
 Pertinet omnia, quem sua copia reddit egentem;
 Res sua possidet, angit et obsidet undique mentem.
 Cura cor anxiat, angor inebriat, impedit error.
 Pallet ei color, hinc dolus, hinc dolor, undique terror.
 Somnus inania, multaque somnia, nil sibi praestant;
 Luce negocia, nocte minacia visa molestant.
 Scrinia frangere, caetera tollere latro videtur,
 Dives egens tremat, evigilans gemit, idque veretur;
 Illico surgitur, arca revolvitur, aes reperitur.
 Noctis abit mora, lux vocat ad fora, merx strepit, itur.
 Post lucra cursitat, in lucra militat, ad lucra spirat.
 (Book II, ll. 884-895)

Innocent III's treatment is more cursory, but briefly encompasses the various stages in the relationship between a man and wealth⁽²³⁾:

Labor in acquirendo, timor in possidendo, dolor in
 amittendo, mentem eius semper fatigat, sollicitat
 et affligit:

The same images are borrowed in the vernacular texts. The Poème Moral gives a picture of the condition of the miser: He suffers great inward mental anguish:

Or voiez de l'aveir, s'il unkes en pais vit;
 Il n'est unkes en joie n'en repos n'en delit.
 (Stanza 463)

Such is the force of his avarice that it drives him not only to lose sleep, but also to commit crimes in order to acquire even more:

Avarisce fait l'omme et nuit et juer voilier;
 Estre lo fait larron, robeor, usurier;
 (Poème Moral: Stanza 465)

Hugues de Berzé compares the greedy poor man and the greedy rich man. They have much in common. They are both obsessed with the thought of acquiring wealth. Thus they both suffer. They share an attitude of covetousness towards wealth but the poet demonstrates neatly the antithesis of their respective situations: the poor man worries constantly about how he can become rich, whereas the rich man is chiefly haunted by the fear that he will lose his money.

Li povres brait tous jors e crie
 Qu'il ait avoir e manantie,
 Et li riches muert de paour
 Qu'il ne la perde chascun jour.
 (Bible: ll. 381-84)

It is evident that Guillaume le Clerc bases his evaluation of the suffering of the rich man upon the De Miseria of Innocent III (see above, p. 99). He shows how the past, present and future of the rich man are marked by anxiety, as he labours to become wealthy, endures mental anguish while keeping his wealth and suffers when he loses it. He can, therefore, never know real peace of mind:

Seignors, en trop grant paine sont
 Cil qui les granz richescs ont.
 Car grant paine a en l'auner
 E grant peor a bien garder
 E grant dolor quant hom les pert.
 Dont poez veeir en apert
 Que ja a eise ne sera
 Home qui granz richescs a.
 (Besant de Dieu: ll. 951-58)

Guillaume, one notes, does not limit his remarks to misers, but to all rich men who care for their wealth. After becoming rich, pursues the poet, a man assumes that God has favoured him and that, lacking for nothing, he will be content. This, alas, can never be so since one of the torments of the rich man is that he can never himself set a limit to his riches. The richer one is, the greater one's mental distress. We return here to

commonplace idea noted earlier (section A, 3) that the more one has, the more one desires, so that the rich man is condemned to feel an ever present need in the midst of plenty⁽²⁴⁾.

Or quide ome bien espleiter
 Qui riches est e averos.
 Deus, ceo dit, la fait euros.
 E com il a plus grant richesce,
 Plus est en paine e en destresce
 De plus aveir, de plus conquere.
 (Besant de Dieu: ll. 2162-67)

It is not only man's psychological attitude to his wealth which causes suffering. External factors also contribute to his worries. The rich man has to contend with innumerable practical problems and these increase his mental burden.

With special reference to kings and rulers, Etienne de Fougères, in his Livre des Manières, writes that the greedy man merely creates more problems in seeking to enlarge his territory. We note that Etienne is referring to the covetous man and not the miser:

Salemon dit que chose est veine
 A gouverner trop grant demaine;
 Qui plus en a, plus en a peine,
 Plus en travaille la semaine.
 (Livre des Manières: ll. 97-100)⁽²⁵⁾

Chardri in Le Petit Plet describes the rich man as harassed by many legal wrangles⁽²⁶⁾. The worry results in loss of appetite, which soon impairs his health, even to the point where he dies. The poet concludes that it is better to be happy in poverty than miserable in riches.

"Si ert li riche plus travillee
 Par tut en plez e en cuntee.
 Issi avera le riche le quor amer
 Par encheison de sun aver;
 Beivre e manger li toudra.
 E por pensers ne dormira,
 Si avera por defendre l'aver
 Gran amertume e grant penser.
 Issi encurra ben maladie
 U, poet cel estre, perdre la vie.
 Dunc di jeo ben ke povere en joie
 Vau meuz ke riche en te/le/ voie"
 (ll. 985-96)

b) Psychological Suffering caused by Material Loss.

The Old French moralists in their campaign to persuade people either to scorn riches or at least to use them wisely, add further touches to their portrait of the unhappy rich man. The fears which rob the rich man of his sleep may be realised, if he is confronted with a severe material loss. Emotionally attached to his riches, he can then suffer nothing less than a tragedy on the scale of a personal bereavement. This disaster may come about in various ways, and the Old French poets describe the entire range of such possibilities.

The poet of the Roman des Romans states in general that the more one has, the more one has to lose, and so the greater one's sorrows. The poet is referring here to the loss incurred at death, rather than in the rich man's life-time. Whenever it falls, the blow is a hard one:

Se il est riches quant il vient al morir,
Com il plus ad, plus li estoet guerpier.
(ll. 129-30)

Thibaud de Marly also warns the rich man of probable loss in vague terms:

Molt est malves li siecles, molt doit estre blasmez.
Ja n'i verroiz nul home, tant soit enparentez,
Ne tant i ait richesce ne tant soit ennorez,
Qui i puis/ē parester/ tant c'uns ans soit passez
Qu'il n'oiē tel novele qui n'iert mie a ses grez.
Povres si est /ou siecle/ en plusors sens grevez.
(Vers: ll. 307-12)

Etienne de Fougères goes into detail: Castles can be burnt to the ground, cities may be destroyed, even whole lands may disappear beneath a flood. Thus wealth is manifestly an unstable condition:

Chasteaus ardent et citez fondent
Terres neent, eires sorondent,
Cil riche rei s'entreconfundent
Et quant plus ont, et mains abundant.
(Livre des Manières: ll. 17-20) (27)

In his poem, Guillaume le Clerc also dwells on the various practical problems with which the rich man has to contend. He has so many worries that he does not know which way to turn. Like Etienne de Fougères, Guillaume

apparently ignores commercial expansion, and adheres to the traditional image of the rich man as the land-owner. The cares of the rich man are those of the agriculturist:

Cele charue ert desturbee
 Ou cele faude esteit robee
 Ou cel molin ert depecie
 Ou cel estanc esteit brisie
 Ou sa forest ert eissilliee
 Ou sa grant nef ert pereillee
 Ou morte esteit sa porcherie
 Ou arse esteit sa vacherie
 Ou ses granz tas mangiez de raz
 Ou les poleins de son haraz
 Emblez e menez de larrons.
 Tantes diverses achaisons
 Oeit le jor qu'il ne saveit
 Quel part primes torner deveit
 Por ses besognes comander
 E por ses pertes amender.
 (Besant de Dieu: ll. 993-1008)

Losses incurred for the poet of Le Petit Plet are through money-grabbing magistrates, baillifs and swindlers, ever poised to pounce on the riches of the wealthy man, forcing him into the hands of money-lenders.

Li riches est, sachez de fi,
 Plus dolurus e plus mari
 Sovent ke li povre ne seit
 Car, seit a tort u seit a dreit,
 Bailifs, viscuntes e wandelarz
 Li pincerunt de tutes parz
 E encheisun li porquerrunt
 De li tollir ceo k'il porrunt.
 Qui li povres s'en vet juer,
 Cuveent al riche plegges trover,
 (ll. 975-84)

Of course the various losses cause misery and suffering to the rich man, indicating too strong an attachment to wealth, reprehensible in the eyes of the moralist. Such reversals of fortune would not be counted as disasters were the rich man less involved with worldly things. While the evil rich man represents the wrong attitude to wealth, some show in contrast the exemplary figure of Job. This biblical figure is offered as a moral type who demonstrates the correct attitude to wealth; one of indifference. His unflinching love of God and moral courage when faced by adversity made him an ideal choice for the Old French moralists who often had recourse to

biblical characters to demonstrate an ideal. Their complaints about the corruption of their own society doubtless precluded their choosing a contemporary person to illustrate ideal conduct. Job appears in many didactic works where he exemplifies sometimes the perfect rich man, sometimes the perfect poor man. In the Roman de Carité Job shows the approved attitude towards the loss of wealth:

Job bons rikes avoit esté;
 Quant son avoir vit tempesté,
 N'en ot pas le cuer molesté;
 Et son plume et sor estramier
 Garda mout bien Job s'onesté.
 Job vesqui sans deshonesté,
 Bons ou palais, bons au fumier.
 (Carité: Stanza CCXII, ll. 6-12)

c) Physical suffering of the Rich due to self-imposed hardship.

In addition to mental suffering, whether this arises from the rich man's own attitude or whether he is the unwitting victim of practical problems and accidental losses, there is also a degree of physical suffering borne by certain rich men. In this case we are dealing only with the miser proper. So anxious is a miserly man to retain his money that he often denies himself all but the bare essentials of life. This is a traditional feature of the miser⁽²⁸⁾.

Helinand in his Vers de la Mort remarks that as a man becomes richer he becomes meaner not only to others, but also to himself, an observation which shows real psychological penetration:

Quant plus est li home forz et riches
 Tant est il plus avers et chiches,
 Et plus a froit qui plus a plume!
 (Stanza XLII, ll. 10-12)

They are coldest who have most to buy clothes, being too jealous of their money to spend any of it for personal comfort.

The Poème Moral shows us that the all-consuming passion of the miser will drive him to inflict unbelievable torment upon himself. He will go

through fire and water, would sacrifice his eyes and limbs in order to guard his money:

En fou le fait entreir et en aiwe plonchier;
Les olz li fait creveir et les membres trenchir.
(Stanza 465)

Like Helinand, this poet points out that the miser starves and shivers rather than part with a penny of his treasure.

Ele fait son serjant, plus qu'il puist consireir;
Grant fain le fait soffrir et grant froit endurer;
(Stanza 466)

Moreover, the man gripped by avarice acquires a bold nature. He is willing to risk his life in the defence of his money or in order to gain more. He does not fear battles or sea-storms:

Batalle ne estuer ne li ait redoteir;
Hardit le fait en aiwe et en peril de meir.
(Stanza 466)

6. Social consequences of a Rich Man's Attitudes and Actions

It is inevitable that the miser who treats himself so badly should be at least as merciless to others. Some of the poets comment on his anti-social behaviour. For example, Helinand accuses misers of having no mercy on the poor: they make a poor man work hard, but, far from rewarding him, they will snatch what little he has to appease their own hunger for money:

Qui povres travaillent et lassent
Les abandonez a toz venz,
Qui de la sustance as dolenz
La fain d'avarice respassent.
(Vers de la Mort: Stanza XL, ll. 9-12)

In Miserere, the Reclus de Moilliens has recourse to an exemplum to show the effects of avarice. The man in question was hard-hearted, had no pity for the poor and no love or fear of God (Stanza LVI). The man had a dream whereby he is made to understand that avarice was the cause of his moral decline. It was avarice which had made him unfeeling toward the poor.

Ore a il bien aperchell,
 Par cheste demonstration,
 K'avarisce l'a dechell;
 K'en son cuer n'avoit recheù
 De povre miseration.

(Stanza LX., ll. 8-12)

In the Poème Moral, the poet uses the commonplace notion of greedy men being servants of their wealth (see above section A, 4). These men, he continues, are unmoved by the plight of the poor and destitute. They turn a blind eye to all the suffering of others.

Ki trop aimmet l'avoir, c'est cil qui l'avoir sert.
 Qui pitiet /n'at/ de povre, de nut, de descovert,
 Ki a a/trui mesaise n'at unkes l'uelh overt,
 C'est cil qui l'avoir ainmet et l'amur de Deu pert.

(Stanza 500)

The portrait of the hard-hearted miser occurs in other works very similarly expressed: Guischart de Beaulieu regrets that those who most have the means to do good are the least inclined to do so (Sermon, ll. 738-43). Robert le Clerc asserts that those in the grip of avarice are, in fact, deprived of the ability to do good (Vers de la Mort, Stanza CCLXXXI) Consequently they have no social use and are worthless to God (Stanza CCLXXXIII)

It is important to note that these poets are describing the corrupting influence not of wealth (cf. section A, 2) but of the pernicious desire for great wealth which eclipses all else.

We have seen the attitudes to wealth purported to be held by the miser. The Old French didactic poets also consider the attitudes which the evil rich man inspires in others, how he is regarded within his social context. His selfishness and unconcern for the poor and needy earn him the hatred of all. So says Guillaume le Clerc who adds that the greedy rich man is also hated by God. This is because he never spends his money, never gives it away, never shares it to relieve the poor:

Certes, seignors, mult est traiz
 De deu e del monde haiz
 Qui en sa richesce se fie,
 S'il ne la despent en sa vie
 E s'il ne la done e depart
 Si que le povre en ait sa part.

(Besant de Dieu: ll. 1049-54)

Tuz jurz li dit (the world) "faites, biau sire,
 Tut ceo que vostre char desire!
 Se vus volez aveir hautesce,
 Querez avoir, querez richesce!
 En auner pensez tut dis!
 Querez nus autre paradis
 Que seeir en tel palefrei
 Od tel herneis, od tel agrei,
 E de vestir tel vesteure
 E de chaucier tel chauceure
 E de mangier ces beals mangiers
 E de bevre ces vins d'Angiers •

(ll. 447-58)

Quel pareis volez aveir
 Fors richesce e plente d'aveir?
 Querez terre, purchaciez rente
 Que valent vint livres ne trente!
 Mes se mil livres eussiez,
 Cel bois achater peussiez,
 Cel biau pre e cel bon molin
 E cel vigne, ou tant crest de vin.
 Si riches estes e mananz,
 Tuz jurz serront obeissanz:
 Se rien n'avez, ren ne valdrez,
 Com un chaitif de faim morreiz."
 Issi li mondes le sarmone.

(Besant de Dieu: ll. 463-475)

The rich man, says Guillaume le Clerc, gains social respect by his ostentatious display of the trappings of wealth. Guillaume condemns in him his worldliness and his greed.

Hugues de Berzé goes one step further and maintains that not only the rich and greedy are admired by society but even more so are the dishonest tricksters. The most devious people are the most respected:

Or se delitent a trayr
 Li un l'autre e a engingnier.
 Cil qui miex set desavancier
 Son compaignon, cil vaut or miex.

(Bible: ll. 86-89)

The rich man's ability to win cases in a court of law earns him great prestige, says Robert de Blois in L'Enseignement aux Princes. The more innocent people he can rob by dishonest means, the greater his social standing:

Qui plus puet d'avoir amasser
 Et frans homes desserieter,
 Povre genz rainbre et dechacier,
 S'il^{se} vuet plus faire prisier.

(ll. 95-98)

This theme of the unjust power wielded by the rich in court cases is a familiar one and occurs in a number of the works I have studied⁽³⁰⁾.

The poet refers sometimes to feudal courts, sometimes to ecclesiastical courts, often to the papal one.

A short work shows how superficial is the apparent love showered on the rich man. Fair weather friends and sycophants surround him flatteringly during his life, but as soon as he is dead, no-one gives a thought for his soul, and no prayers are said for him. All love is transferred to the inheritor of the dead man's wealth:⁽³¹⁾

Quant li hom a grant manandie,
Reubes, cevaus de Lombardie,
Lors est amés et cier tenus,
De toutes pars est bien venus;
Et quant du siecle est trespasés,
N'est mie tant cōnus d'assés
Com cil ki après le reçoit.

(Chansons et Dits Artésiens, Piece XIV, ll. 25-31)
ed. Jeanroy et Gui. page 63. Date: 13th century)

One, therefore, notes an apparent contradiction amongst the poets. Some warn that the greedy rich man is universally hated. Others bemoan the fact that he is not despised, but enjoys all worldly and social advantage. The first case is probably true in part in that no-one really feels genuine affection for a person because he is greedy, grasping and unjust. On the other hand, money brings power, and power is, of necessity, respected by lesser folk. The so-called "love" shown to the evil rich man can either be a sycophantic and certainly not disinterested attention offered by those who foresee some gain from it. The love and respect shown may be dismissed as the equally false display of affection by fearful, oppressed people who are afraid to cross the powerful rich man in any way lest he use his power and wealth to harm them. One may assume that there are elements of truth in both the arguments found in these works, and also a measure of exaggeration. The categorical statements of those who say that the greedy rich man is despised are doubtless based on wishful thinking. The poets, acting as spokesmen of God and His Church, are making

anti-wealth attacks. In their eyes, the hatred attracted by the greedy rich man is simply his just desserts. When poets allege that the evil rich man wins the love and respect of others, their words cannot wholly be believed, although they do reflect faithfully the current rise in commercialism and materialism. Such a state of affairs could only be lamented by an exponent of "contemptus mundi" ethics. In a sense these apparently conflicting assessments of the lot of the rich man in life are not incompatible. It is quite possible for a rich man to enjoy the esteem and friendship of society, while inwardly suffering the psychological torment we have described in earlier sections. Therefore a poet such as Guillaume le Clerc (Besant de Dieu) who describes the rich man as hated by all, and leading a joyless existence, and yet commanding the respect and admiration of society, is not necessarily being inconsistent.

It may be said that the reprehensible "you are what you have" attitude of society so bemoaned by the didactic poets is but a small step from the overt courtly approbation of great wealth found in the romances. The fundamental difference between the two social stances is, of course, that wealth, in the courtly works, is generously given away. However the courtly hero's giving is based largely on a desire for social acclaim and has no relation to Christian charity. (See Chapters Five and Six). Motivation does not, seemingly, interest the poets. The rich man of the didactic poems is always the evil person, the villain, who abhors giving. The rich man of the courtly works is dedicated to giving and is the hero of the romances. Nevertheless, in spite of this basic difference between the didactic rich man and the courtly rich man, generous giving would not qualify the latter to merit any approval from a "contemptus mundi" orientated moralist. Were the courtly hero transposed to a didactic poem for judgement, he would be pilloried for his finery, his extravagant life-style, his evident enjoyment of worldly things. Even his generosity would be attacked by the more

analytical poets as being based on vanity. Destined to profit the giver, it paid no heed to the needs of the deserving poor. Yet, we shall see later in this chapter (Section 8, c) that almsgiving was not necessarily prompted by pure benevolence and Christian charity.

7. The Rich Man's Future Retribution

Whatever kind of life the rich man leads, and whatever the degree of personal contentment he attains, one thing is certain. The didactic poets will never allow the rich man any lasting enjoyment of his wealth. Happy in his lifetime, possibly, but even then beset by cares and suffering, the rich man reaches the end of his pleasures or the culmination of his troubles at his death. Then he will pay dearly for his worldly advantages. There are various aspects of the future retribution of the evil rich man as forecast by the Old French poets.

a) Wealth and Heirs.

My review will now show how these arguments against the amassing of wealth culminate in the warning that the rich and miserly man will derive no permanent advantage. Instead he will see his riches snatched from him at death by his heirs, who are usually represented as undeserving.

The warning that the rich man is saving that others may spend is of biblical origin⁽³²⁾. The New Testament text, Luke 12:20, is the one which influenced the poets. Some of them allude to this parable of the man who built bigger barns⁽³³⁾, and they stress the message of Christ: Do not hoard your wealth! The idea that the heirs are undeserving, as we shall see, seems to have been a medieval refinement to the theme. Some poets attribute the all-pervading sin of covetousness to the man who awaits the death of his father.

Guiot de Provins shows the futility of hoarding wealth: the man who spends his entire life in the pursuit of wealth often does not share in it since others spend it when he is dead. He sees many instances of this

reproaching misers for their folly:

Teil home i ait qui molt assemble
 avoir; quant il l'ait mis ensemble
 Se n'i ait part, avient sovent,
 por coi? c'uns autres lou despent -
 Selui qui lou despent n'est il.
 De ceaus porroit on veoir mil;
 donc est bien fous qui trop s'i fie;
 (Bible: ll. 503-09)

Thibaud de Marly stresses the culpable greed of the heirs, surely a deterrent to the miser. Having been lovingly brought up, a child can find no better way to repay his parents than to await their death so that he may inherit: (34)

Quant li pere et la mere ont lor enfant norri,
 Si voudroit il qu'il fussent mort et enseveli
 Por avoir l'eritaige de quoi il sont saisi.
 (Vers: ll. 229-31)

Rutebeuf turns his attention to the use made of the fortune after the father's death. He, too, has little confidence in the heirs. They will squander the inheritance in loose-living, following the maxim: "Easy come, easy go." They will lend money unwisely and neglect the land passed to their care. The remainder of the fortune will be spent vainly trying to recover by legal action money owed to them:

Et quant li cors est mis en terre
 Et hon est a l'osteil venuz,
 Ja puis n'en iert contes tenuz.
 Quant li enfant sunt lor seigneur,
 Veiz ci conquest a grant honneur:
 Au bordel ou en la taverne
 Qui plus tost puet plus s'i gouverne.
 Cil qui lor doit si lor demande;
 Paier covient ce c'om commande.
 Teiz marchiez font com vous elistes
 Quant en vostre autoritei fustes.
 Chacuns en prent, chacuns en oste;
 Enz osteiz pluet, s'en vont li oste;
 Les terres demeurent en friche,
 S'en sunt li home estrange riche.
 Cil qui lor doit paier nes daingne,
 Ansois covient que hon en daingne
 L'une moitié por l'autre avoir.
 Veiz ci la fin de vostre avoir.
 (Nouvelle Complainte d'Outremer: ll. 306-325) (35)

The poet of a short satirical work quoted above (page 109) adds a

special sting to the warnings that wealth passes from hand to hand, and that a miser will have to surrender it to unworthy heirs who will have no care for their benefactor's soul. He instances actual cases of recently deceased people whom he names together with the inheritor. Such boldness must have brought home to other misers in Arras the reality of their perilous situation. I quote one example where the poet names names:

Après vi jou un Maistre Adan;
S'ame est passee outre le dan.
De sen avoir a un grant mont
Se feme, voir, de Miraumont;
Maucions a le remanant,
Mais jou ni sai appartenant,
Foi ke doi Diu, le pere nostre,
Ki pour aus die patrenostre.

(Chansons et Dits Artésiens, ed. Jeanroy et Gui,
Piece XIV, page 64, ll. 65-72)

This satirical approach, based on local actuality, doubtless created the desired effect amongst certain citizens of Arras. However the device, though didactic in intent, can only have a limited scope since it is too precisely situated in time and place, and becomes rapidly outdated. The more general approach of the moralists surely had greater appeal and more universal relevance.

Of all the poets Hugues de Berzé elaborates the theme of wealth and heirs much more fully and I, therefore, propose to follow closely his argument and presentation:

When a rich man dies, his heirs immediately pounce on his money. Impatiently waiting for his death, they waste no time when that longed-for moment arrives. However fights and quarrels soon arise among the greedy heirs who all want a good share of the deceased man's riches:

Maintenant qu'il l'ont enterré,
S'en part chascuns tout sans demeure;
Ja nus ne cuide veoir l'aure
Qu'il s'en soit sevrés e partis.
Puis commence entre aus li estris
De sa terre e de son avoir.
Chascuns en veut sa part avoir.

(Bible: ll. 722-28)

We note that this theme is about all types of the rich. Hugues de Berzé

says that the rich man may have been a good knight, a generous spender and a courageous fighter. This, however, means little to his heirs. They are interested only in laying claim to the riches he leaves behind (Bible: ll. 729-35). The disadvantages of having heirs are present in earthly life: Far from being rewarded for his good deeds, the rich knight is unwanted by his family and friends. They wish him dead more than they wish anyone else dead. The reason is that they think if the rich man goes on living for long, then there will be little left for them. The man who has accumulated the greatest amount of wealth is the first to be mourned. Presumably the poet means here that as soon as the rich man has drawn his last breath, his heirs rush through the necessary rituals, knowing that the sooner the man is buried, the sooner they may formally take possession of his wealth:

Si fill, si frere e si ami
 Desirent plus la mort de lui
 Cent tans qu'il ne font de l'autrui,
 Qu'il cuident, que qu'il en aviengne,
 K'aucune rien lor en remengne.
 S'il a amassé en sa vie
 Grant richesce e grant manantie,
 Cil qui en a greignor plenté,
 C'est cil que l'en a ains ploré.
 (Bible: ll. 736-44)

As soon as the heirs have gained possession of the dead man's belongings, they quickly squander all in luxurious and ritous living. They never think of celebrating masses to pray for their benefactor's soul. Instead they fight among themselves about the division of the inheritance.

E savez vous que cil en font,
 Qui sa terre e son avoir ont?
 Sausses vers e chaudes pevrées
 E robes plaines e coées.
 En lieu de messes e d'anueus
 Ont guerres e tençons entr'eus:
 (Bible: ll. 745-750)

The poet's sympathy lies with the dead man. Rather surprisingly he expresses pity for one who has spent his life struggling to gain riches with no compensation for his pains. At death it will be snatched away and seized

by his heirs. We assume that Hugues de Berzé is feigning sympathy. His attitude throughout his work would suggest that he could not approve of a life-time spent in the pursuit of wealth. He is merely demonstrating that the best such a life can expect is sympathy, and is, therefore, not worth the effort:

Ha! com ci a mal geu parti,
 Quant cil qui tous jors penera
 Por l'avoir, feste n'en avra,
 Fors ire e angoisse e mesaise,
 (Bible: ll. 752-55)

Moreover the heirs will enjoy easy lives without the slightest effort. The injustice of such an outcome should serve as the supreme deterrent, implies Hugues de Berzé:

E cil après en avront aise
 Cui il n'avra ja riens cousté.
 (Bible: ll. 756-57)

To avoid this, Hugues de Berzé advises the wealthy man to make life-time gifts of his riches to needy, deserving people. Then, at death, his soul will not be damned. Many people lose their soul by selfish hoarding. The irony of the situation is that the rich man, by amassing money, is sacrificing his soul, not for his own benefit, but unwittingly for his heirs. The poet maintains that it would be better to suffer poverty in life than to lose one's soul for the sake of materially benefiting such people:

Or en face don a plenté,
 Qu'il est bien qui le recevra.
 Quant l'ame dou cors partira,
 Ja n'iert esgarés de seignor.
 Assez pert s'ame a grant dolor,
 Qu'il la pert, e le cors de lui,
 Pour avoir querre pour autrui.
 Miex li vaudroit qu'il se soufrist,
 Que pour autrui s'ame perdist.
 (Bible: ll. 758-66)

It is clear that Hugues de Berzé's main criticisms are directed at the greed and callousness of the undeserving heirs. He is, nevertheless, thereby effectively demonstrating the futility of amassing wealth. He also

proposes a practical solution which saves the soul of the rich man, benefits the poor and thwarts his heirs.

Etienne de Fougères presents a very different situation related to heirs in his Livre des Manières. Whereas a miser provides for his children in spite of himself, since he cannot prevent them inheriting if he does not dispose of his treasure before death, other parents consciously seek to help their children, a natural motive for seeking gain. However Etienne shows the lengths to which parents will go. They are so obsessed with acquiring wealth that they do not hesitate to borrow and even steal. Inevitably they derive no enjoyment from their riches, leading the same wretched existence as the miser:

Por els ro bent et por els tolent,
 Por els enpruntent et ne solent.
 Lor cors en usent et travaillent,
 Gages prennet et gages baillent;
 Chasteaus aseent, chasteaus asaillent.
 Quant tot ont fet, mourent et faillent.
 (Livre des Manières: ll. 1195-1200)

Here we have two extremes. Both lead men to a dangerous quest for more wealth, even though one kind of parent is motivated by a certain altruism. Both are reprehensible through lust for worldly things, for oneself or for one's children, which puts one's soul in peril. The Poème Moral advises man to steer a middle course. He should not hoard, nor should he give away all his wealth. The poet stresses that a man has a responsibility toward his family. He maintains a rich man should not give away his wealth, if his wife objects to this, or if his children are made to suffer by this gesture. If he does give his money away despite his wife's protests he will not find favour with God, even though his act involves giving to the poor. This conduct based on charity beginning at home was not new, since we may remember that Augustine⁽³⁶⁾ speaks of it, but it was little propagated by the Old French poets.

Ne doit nuz quant k'il at as povres departir,
 Se sa femme nel vult et soi enfant sofrir.
 S'il autrement lo fait, ne puet a Deu plaisir,
 Car, s'il tot done en voie, se savront dont garir.
 (Poème Moral: Stanza 567)

The poet quotes St. Augustin as saying that it is not good to disinherit one's children by giving one's wealth to God:

Et sainz Augustins dist: "Qui vult desheriter
 Ses enfanz et por Deu vult lor avoir doneir,
 Un altre /qu'/ Augustin voist querre et demandeir."
 Il n'avoit soing d'almone dont l'oir veïst plorer!
 (Stanza 570)

Only men who are without families can sacrifice everything and live perfectly. The rest are urged to give alms, but chiefly to do good works.

There is thus a fundamental contrast in attitude between Hugues de Berzé and the author of the Poème Moral. The former shows no sympathy for heirs whom he considers invariably mercenary and undeserving. He urges that the rich man dispose of his wealth before death, ostensibly to thwart his heirs and save his soul. The Poème Moral, however, pities the disinherited son and counsels provision for heirs. This is a tolerant attitude and not typical of these works in general. However we cannot ascribe to this poet any cognizance of advances in moral theology, since he is basing his teaching in this instance upon the writings of St. Augustine. Both poets repeat well-established Church teaching. The essential difference between them lies in their personal choice of aspects of Christian ethics. Such individual and contrasting selection suggests different motives and fundamentally different attitudes to life in general. This could explain this somewhat surprising divergence of opinion.

Hugues de Berzé, elderly knight, former crusader, here assumes the role of spokesman for the Church. He puts the Church before secular interests and preaches almsgiving, and renouncement of wealth before death. In so doing, he is, as are the majority of the sermons of the day, spreading Church standards of conduct.

We know nothing certain about the author of the Poème Moral, but upon internal evidence, we may attribute to him a more tolerant attitude

and, generally, a more psychologically penetrating analysis of current moral issues. While not averse to monasticism, as witness his choice of exempla, (my section 8,c,viii) he does not urge asceticism or great material sacrifices upon the laity. In this he departs from the monastic view-point of other moralists who were more rigorist "contemptus mundi" exponents. We may assume that this poet had no axe to grind. I believe he was no-one's official mouthpiece, but was, on his own initiative, making a serious attempt to reconcile Christian doctrine and a full secular life. Indeed we shall often have occasion to note his broadmindedness and independence of view on other issues discussed by the Old French didactic poets in general.

b) The Rich Man and Death.

Intended to dissuade men from espousing worldly wealth, the arguments of the moralists rely largely on the confrontation between the rich man and death. Death represents the rich man's ultimate punishment. Among the many commonplaces associated with this important topos is a warning of the transience of wealth because of man's mortality.

i. Wealth is powerless against death.

Helinand believes that death, striking quickly makes nonsense of all worldly gain. At the moment of death the rich man is on an equal footing with the poor man. He characterises these two moral types by their clothes, purple and fur for the rich man, sackcloth and hairshirt for the poor man:

Que vaut quanqu'avarice atrait?
 Morz en une eure tot fortrait,
 Qui nul gieu ne peut pas mestratre. . .
 Morz fait valoir et sac et haire,
 Autant com porpre et robe vaire.
 (Vers de la Mort: Stanza XXVIII, ll. 4-6 and 10-11)

Death is the supreme leveller, and takes no account of riches or any other attributes. This is a familiar theme. Thibaud de Marly gives the examples of rich and powerful men, learned bishops and archbishops, young, healthy women, all succumbing to the onslaught of death (Vers: ll. 618-23).

It is a theme to which Hugues de Berzé returns again and again. Early in his Bible he uses expressive imagery to show how death hangs over every man, and that no human force can drive it away, nor predict the time of its arrival (Bible: ll. 24-28). Powerless against death, he says later, are land, gold, silver, family and friends (ll. 43-45). He takes up the theme again, and recounts the story of four powerful emperors whose wealth and position led them to think themselves superior to God and death. They all died suddenly and violently. A deserved result of their vanity and arrogance, concludes the poet (ll. 416-462). The purpose of this story is to warn men of the dangers of putting their faith in wealth:

Ha! qui verroit ce que je vi,
Com pou devroit richece amer
Ecom pou se devroit fier!
(ll. 416-418)

Finally, he again states clearly that wealth cannot combat death⁽³⁷⁾:

Richece d'avoir ne de terre,
Que tous li mons bée a conquerre,
Ne vaut noient contre la mort,
(ll. 707-09)

Guillaume le Clerc also has recourse to the "Ubi sunt?" theme⁽³⁸⁾. His choice of an exemplary figure is King Louis VIII⁽³⁹⁾, rich and powerful, the conqueror of vast territories. Yet even he had to bow before death and be content with six feet of earth:

Onques chastel ne fortelesce
Ne seigneurie ne richesce
Ne bon cheval ne armeure
Ne precieuse vesteure
Ne tur de pierre e de mortier
Ne li pot la aver mestier.
(Besant de Dieu: ll. 183-88)

Although death is all-powerful, rich men will never resign themselves to the fact that they are going to die, and will have to give up their wealth. They are too immersed in worldly affairs to even consider the possibility of death. According to Guillaume le Clerc, they offer a variety of excuses why their lives should be prolonged: a recent marriage, an imminent business venture, a huge land purchase:

Li uns dit qu'il ad femme prise,
 Li autres que marcheandise
 A faite ou il l'estuet aler
 Por saveir e por esprover
 Que il i porra gainer.
 Li tierz se fait essonier
 Qui a achaté une vile.
 Plus de cent mile fiez .c. mile
 S'escusent en ceste maniere
 E si se retraient ariere
 Del convi ou dieus les somont.

(ll. 25-35)

Such excuses do not delay the time of death's arrival which is often sudden. This is, therefore, a reason for giving up all material goods, and for preparing one's death by leading a good life (ll. 49-55).

Hugues de Berzé imagines a situation in which men could choose the time of their death. He shows how if one were able to delay death indefinitely and thus retain one's wealth, one would nevertheless derive no pleasure from such an extension. One's physical decline would mar any enjoyment offered by riches:

E se chascuns vivoit or tant
 Com hom puet vivre par samblant,
 Riches e amés e manans,
 Si seroit il jusqu'a cent ans
 Dou cors si durement kassés,
 Si viex, si frois e si alés,
 Que il meismes se harroit
 Et cil qui plus amé l'avroit.

(Bible: ll. 53-60)

This argument based on the decline of strength with age is not considered by other poets I have studied⁽⁴⁰⁾.

Writing between 1260 and 1270, in the poem Des Règles, Rutebeuf explains that people who think they can buy their way into Heaven are deluded. If this were so, stealing would be desirable as men fought to acquire fortunes and purchase their eternal happiness.

Qui porroit paradis avoir
 Après la mort por son avoir,
 Bon feroit embler et tolir.

(Vol. I, p. 27, ll. 37-39)

If the kingdom of God were to be gained for so little, the martyrs suffered and died to no avail:

S'on a paradis por si pou,
 Je tieng por bareté saint Pou,
 Et si tieng por fol et por nice
 Saint Luc, saint Jaque de Galice
 Qui s'en firent martirier,
 Et saint Pierre crucefier.

(ll. 53-58)

It is interesting to note that this same, somewhat feeble argument, had been used by an earlier poet, Helinand, to refute the beliefs held by the materialists. They declare, he writes, that death is the end of everything and that man should therefore get all he can from life on earth. (Stanza 34, ll. 7-12). Helinand replies that if this were true then there would be no difference between man and animal, so that humans might just as well live like pigs. He adds that the martyrs, such as St. Laurent, would have died in vain. (Vers de la Mort: Stanzas ~~XXXV~~-IX)

ii) Wealth must be abandoned at Death

Another argument against the accumulation of wealth is that one cannot retain riches after death. Bearing this in mind, writes Helinand, one should imitate the wise who are satisfied with little in life⁽⁴¹⁾.

Morz, di l'oncle, di le neveu
 Qu'il nos covient par estroit treu
 Passer a moult petit d'avoir.
 Por ce ont sage assez en peu.

(Vers de la Mort: Stanza IX)

Guillaume le Clerc expresses surprise that as man grows older, and nearer to death, he becomes more avaricious⁽⁴²⁾. The author could understand that the young should hanker after wealth, but he feels that men who will soon have to account for their lives, and to relinquish their fortunes, should not attach such importance to worldly things. (Besant de Dieu; ll. 905-916). Misers will leave this world with only a shroud:

A deus! que pense riche aver?
 Coment se quide il sauver,
 Quant il siet qu'il n'en portera,
 Quant de cest siecle partira,
 Fors un lincel ou un suaire
 Ou une piece d'une haire:

(ll. 923-28)

Hugues de Berzé also makes the point that man leaves this world empty-handed, and that, therefore, the pursuit of wealth is futile:

Ne ja n'avra tant de tresor
De terre ne d'argent ne d'or,
Qu'il enport a la mort noient,
C'un povre drapel seulement;
(Bible: ll. 713-16)

In the Vers de la Mort by Robert le Clerc, Death, personified, addresses itself to the miser asking why he troubles to amass money which will not follow him beyond the grave. (See also Stanza XLVII)

"Que te caut
D'amasser cou que Dieus te taut?
Tes tresors ne te sivra mie. »
(Vers de la Mort: Stanza XCIV)

It is Robert le Clerc who concludes that since the things of this world are transient and since man's life also is but a fleeting moment in eternity, then no-one can really possess anything on earth:

Mors, qui par tout prens sans eslire,
Crie a l'aver, qui tout desire:
"Cou que tu as n'est mie tien".
(Stanza LXXXVI)

It is a conclusion at which Hugues de Berzé arrives by way of the exemplum of Methuselah, who considered another nine hundred years of life insufficient to merit building himself a house. (Bible: 541-551)

c. The Evil Rich Man at the Judgement

The idea of retribution is a favourite one with the moralists who threaten the greedy and godless that they will suffer not only in life, but also, and more, after death. There are numerous references made to the ultimate fate which attends the evil rich man or miser.

The Reclus de Moilliens states boldly and categorically that the miser is bound for Hell: (43)

Auers ses tu quel part iras?
Al enfrun vilain partiras
Cui langue art en infer tous tens.
(Carité: Stanza CCV, ll. 7-9)

This vague threat is representative of most Old French didactic works, who

rarely specify more than that the rich man will pay dearly for his greed⁽⁴⁴⁾. Dramatisations and lurid details of the Day of Judgement and its physical consequences are not frequent in these works, although the Judgement is often mentioned.

With the Poème Moral an attempt at analysis of the issue is made. According to this poet it makes little difference whether money or property has been acquired honestly or not. If the owner becomes obsessed by it, then he is damned, "il en iert confonduz" (line 2015). We have already seen how the moralists confront the ideas of serving God and of serving money. The author of the Poème Moral takes up this idea here. He carries the argument further. If one loves money, one must hate God. One cannot love both. Therefore if one chooses wealth one cannot gain admittance to the Kingdom of Heaven:

Ki si sert a l'avoir, il ne puet Deu servir;
 Qui si aimet l'avoir, lui covient Deu haïr;
 D'iteil avoir lo stuet u de Deu departir;
 Tant qu'il ensi se tient ne puet a Deu venir.
 (Stanza 503)

The poet expresses himself darkly in stanza 505, when he says that he who succumbs to the temptation of pride as a result of his great wealth, and who consequently cares not for the plight of the poor, will pay dearly for this.

"qui d'avoir se fait fier,
 Qui en est orguilhos, qui en mainet dangier,
 Ki repartir n'en vult ceaz qui en ont mestier,
 Sachiez, qui ensi l'at, qu'il lo comparrat chier.
 (Poème Moral: 505)

When we see a rich man, says the Poème Moral, we assume that he has been favoured by God, that it is God who helps him to be so successful in life. This is certainly not true of evil rich men. God bides his time, but punishment will come one day. (Stanza 80):

... se nos veons homme riche et bien aaisiet
 Tot maintenant disommes: "Cestui at Deus aidiet"
 (ll. 318-19)

References to the Day of Judgement when man has to face the supreme Judge and account for his life, abound in the didactic works. Guillaume le Clerc, speaking of avaricious men in general, of greedy churchmen in particular, asks what those, who have misappropriated riches intended for the Church, will reply on the Day of Judgement.

Icest dolent que respondra
 Quant le somoneor vendra
 al daerain jor de juise,
 Qui a les biens de sainte iglise
 E les besanz deu enfoiz?
 (Besant de Dieu: ll. 657-61)⁽⁴⁵⁾

Guillaume translates the words spoken by God to selfish people on the Day of Judgement, as given in the gospel of Matthew 25: 41-46. He condemns them all to Hell because they do not help the poor. We notice that this text shows how God identifies with the poor, a notion we shall consider more fully later in this chapter (section B, ii).

"Alez, malveis! alez, alez,
 Vus maldiz, vus maleurez,
 Qui unques ne me herbergastes
 Ne a mangier ne me donastes,
 Qui onques bien ne me feistes,
 Quant nu e povre me veistes:
 Alez languir el feu durable,
 Qui est as angles au diable
 Aparaille sanz finement
 Desle premier commencement."
 (ll. 391-400)

The New Testament parable used to illustrate the theme of the rich man at the Judgement is that of Dives and Lazarus (Luke 16: 19-25). From this exemplary text we discover the origin of the moralists' prejudice against the rich man. Dives represents the rich man as a moral type and as such he is basically evil. Dives is the greedy, selfish rich man whom God will condemn to everlasting suffering while the poor man will receive eternal joy.

Some poets do attempt an interpretation of this parable. They do not accept that the rich man is necessarily doomed, and attempt to show what flaws in Dives had led him to a well-deserved damnation. The general conclusion is that Dives was punished not for being rich, but because he

did not share his wealth:

Fors qu'il ne fu pas comunals
Des biens que il out temporals.
(Besant de Dieu: ll. 1083-4)

In Carité (Stanzas CCIV-CCV), the Reclus also claims that the rich man's selfishness led him to Hell. In Miserere he modifies the underlying reasons. Here he puts gluttony as the chief cause of God's hatred of Dives:

Dieus se venge ore dou bon vin
Ke tant bells et tant lapas.
(Miserere: Stanza XLV)

The poet continues with a tirade against the sin of gluttony (Stanza XLVII).

8. The Rich Man's Hope of Salvation.

In the preceding sections I have shown how, in general, the Old French didactic poets present only the negative side of the rich man as a moral type. He is a person who is greedy, selfish, proud, Godless and wracked by psychological and physical suffering, reviled by all men, and finally doomed to Hell. Rarely do these poets reveal the other side of the coin. They do not deny the existence of good rich men, but since their aim is to inspire scorn for the material in everyone, only the evil rich man receives attention. Their attack on greed depends greatly on the derogation of contemporary society. Accordingly they prefer to use the rich man as a target for their complaints than as the object of their praise. This emphasis served their "contemptus mundi" objective better, since the rich man, however good he may be, obviously had close contact with the worldly. Nevertheless on a secondary level, some poets do consider how the rich man may redeem himself and aspire to eternity.

a) Renunciation of Wealth

That a rich man may save his soul by divesting himself of his wealth is biblical in origin⁽⁴⁶⁾ and also very much in the monastic tradition.

It is not surprising that men who had entered the cloisters themselves should interpret the words of Christ literally and advocate their own course for others. So narrow and unrealistic an aim was not universal however. Church thought had long since modified the import of Christ's teaching. As early as Clement of Alexandria⁽⁴⁷⁾ the dangers of the text being thoughtlessly followed were apparent, and fulfilment of the order discouraged. Church fathers were careful to distinguish between the disposing of all one's wealth and the psychological detachment from it. The latter course, together with a degree of generosity, was the ideal⁽⁴⁸⁾. That in the Middle Ages men should revert to a literal adoption of the biblical text indicates to what extent there was a reactionary element within the Church, and also how strong was the monastic fervour. (See my Chapter Three, Part 2, A).

Who were the poets who urged the disposal of wealth as a condition for salvation? Firstly there is Thibaud de Marly, a retired knight turned monk, who claims that a rich man is damned unless he disposes of his goods before death:

Honiz ert qui avra avoir ne manandise
 Se, ançoiz que il muire, ne l'a toute demise;
 (Vers: ll. 466-67)

One notes that Thibaud de Marly insists that all wealth should be given away. He, presumably, had done this himself. He does not specify, however, that the wealth should be distributed amongst the poor. Evidently his first concern is for the salvation of the rich man's soul rather than for poor relief. This apparently selfish attitude will be considered later (section 8, c). One could, too, be sceptical about the timing of this shedding of wealth. There is no mention of an early disposal and of a life-time in the performance of good works. Thibaud's priority would appear to be that man should simply be sure to rid himself of riches before death. Thibaud de Marly had left his own conversion rather late,

being more than fifty years of age when he became a Cistercian monk. His case was by no means unusual. Historical records show that it was common for the nobility to enjoy the worldly privileges of their class and in old age turn their thoughts to death and the fate of their souls. Often they would prepare their way to eternity by the endowment of a monastery, where they would end their days.

The overriding concern for the rich man's soul is evident also in the Vers de la Mort of Robert le Clerc. The poet uses figurative language to describe how a rich man might gain admission to the Kingdom of Heaven, or, as he says, how one might steer one's ship to a safe port: Again the salvation of the rich man's soul is all-important. No mention is made of helping the poor at this point:

Se tu veus que te nés adrece
 A boin port, adosse rickece!
 Nus n'en a trop qui n'en soit pire.
 (Vers de la Mort: Stanza XXIII, ll. 10-12)

Failure to abandon wealth will sentence a man to the "gallows", that is, Hell:

Rendre u au gibet encruer!
 (Stanza LXXVII, l. 4)

Later in his work, this author again urges men to strip themselves of their possessions. In this instance, however, he is referring specifically to riches acquired wrongfully, by theft, or usury. Man must make restitution if his soul is to reach Heaven:

Il covient que tu te desnues
 D'avoir, aquis par trekerie,
 Se voler veus en liu de vie.
 (Vers de la Mort: Stanza CXLIII, ll. 9-11)

The theme of restitution of unlawful gains does not concern me here. It will be given more study in Chapter Four with particular reference to the profits of usury. At this point I am referring to legally acquired wealth, and a man's attitudes to it.

The poets who urge men to voluntarily renounce all their wealth are

in the minority. Many poets hint that such a course is desirable by expounding troubles present and future, which arise from the possession of riches. They reinforce this idea by their enthusiastic praise of the poor man and evangelical poverty. However only the two poets quoted above state categorically and unequivocally that the possession of wealth will damn a man. Most poets realise the impracticability of a total renunciation of wealth and so adopt a more moderate approach to the issue, accepting that salvation may be gained by less extreme means.

b) The Rich Man's Attitude towards Wealth determines his Ultimate Fate.

The compatibility of riches and eternal life was not a theme dear to the moralists who, for obvious reasons, found it safer to decry all contact with riches as putting man's soul in peril. A few poets, nevertheless, do admit the self-evident possibility for a good man to own wealth and to remain a devout Christian.

It is perhaps surprising that one of the most tolerant viewpoints should come from the writer who was probably a life-time monk and who ended his days as a religious recluse. At first it would appear that the Reclus is adopting a severe attitude, since he threatens the rich man with damnation unless he becomes "as a poor man":

Rikes pour nient a chel mont tire;
 Se il com povres ne s'atire,
 Ne puet monter a chel deduit.

(Carité: Stanza CLXVI, ll. 10-12)

It is later clear that the rich man need not be materially poor, but must be "poor in spirit" (Matthew 5: 3), that is, detached from wealth, indifferent to his possessions, and, of course, generous to those in need. The poet states clearly that there is nothing wrong in the possession of riches - provided that the owner is not in the grip of avarice. The poet does not condone a life of vain luxury, but allows the rich man sufficient for his needs. He counsels him to give the superfluity to the poor:

Por ricoise n'est pas hom pire
 Se avariche ne l'empire.
 Je ne voel pas de se sustanche
 Rike hom dou tout desconfire.
 Pregne chou ke li puet souffire,
 Dou plus fache au povre pitanche:
 (Carité: Stanza CLXVIII, l. 1-6)

The greatest depth of analysis accorded to this topic is found, as might be expected, in the Poème Moral. It is the probing of psychological motives and behaviour which explains the relatively greater tolerance of this moralist. He heads his section: "ke li Riches Hom se puet salver et si ne semble mie voir", thereby indicating that he has an opinion which will be considered surprising. He admits there are many men who, though comfortably rich, will yet see paradise:

Mut at d'ommes al secle qui bien riche gent sunt
 Ke de ce k'avoi doivent nule besonie n'ont;
 Nul ore ne descauz ne en lanies ne vunt;
 Nequedent en la joie de paradis seront.
 (Poème Moral: Stanza 480)

The poet asks rhetorically how this can be when saintly men such as apostles starved and suffered, martyrs burned or were thrown to the lions, hermits sacrificed home and family, all for the love of God? (We have already seen the use of this argument by Helinand and Rutebeuf, my pages 120-121)⁽⁴⁹⁾.

In contrast, the poet repeats, the rich lack nothing:

Se c'est voirs ke je dis, qu'iert de la rige gent,
 Ki ont si grant planteit de l'or et de l'argent,
 Ki vivent si suëf, serz paine et senz torment?
 S'il ensi vunt a Deu, dont lor vait belement.
 (Stanza 481)

C'om puet a si grant aise lo regne Deu avoir,
 Ki tant par Deu soi painent n'ont gaires de savoir:
 Li apostle guerpirent lor cors et lor avoir
 Tot por ce qu'il poïssent la gloire Deu avoir.
 (Stanza 482)

Again, he asks, why, if rich men can go to Heaven, do those who devote themselves to God inflict so much suffering upon themselves? (Stanzas 485 and 486).

The poet answers these questions with a section headed "Cant li Hom

doit guerpier de cant k'il at." A man must give up his possessions and comforts in life when they stand between him and God, when he feels that God no longer takes first place in his life. If he reaches this point, then he must abandon all his riches, rather than deny Jesus. If he fails to do this, he will burn in Hell:

S'il est en teil point mis et il ne puet cangier,
 Et lui covient u Deu u quant qu'il at laissier,
 Tot doit anzois guerpier ke Jhesum renoier;
 Anzois soi laist ardoir u les membres trenchier.
 (Stanza 489)

At this point the moralist turns to the crux of the matter. Everything depends on the attitude of the rich man to wealth. If a man can possess wealth, without becoming over-fond of it and so ceasing to serve God wholeheartedly, the author of the Poème Moral sees no reason why he should not retain his wealth: (50)

Mais, cant il puet en pais Nostre Sanior servir
 Et om nel destraint mie de Deu a relenquir,
 Dont puet bien ce qu'il at, par raison, retenir
 Ne ne l'en covient mie, s'il ne vult, departir.
 (Stanza 490)

In this connection the poet alludes to the Biblical text, Luke 16: 13, which deals with this dilemma: that one cannot love both God and Mammon (Stanza 497): The Poème Moral then makes a distinction which is overlooked by most of the other didactic poets I have studied, the other notable exception being the Reclus de Moilliens (see above pages 128-129). He points out the difference between being rich and loving money:

Altre chose est ameir, altre chose est avoir.
 Nuz bons hom, nuz sainz hom ne doit ameir avoir.
 Si Deus li vult doneir, tres bien li list avoir,
 Mais unkes ne se doit delitier en avoir.
 (Stanza 499)

One notes that the poet believes wealth to be God-given, so it cannot, therefore, be intrinsically evil. Thus we see that a man's salvation depends not on whether he possesses wealth, but rather on his attitude towards its possession. Only if the rich man becomes obsessed with his

wealth, will he be punished after death. On this point he agrees with other contemporary moralists. However the fine distinctions drawn by the writer of the Poème Moral between possessing and loving, and the decisive part played by attitudes should be compared with the theologians of intention of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries⁽⁵¹⁾. One cannot, however, attribute to this poet any advanced thoughts, since his opinions on this particular issue are largely drawn from the writings of St. Gregory. It is, therefore, Gregory who must be hailed as the precursor of the more enlightened medieval moralists⁽⁵²⁾. A contemporary of the Poème Moral, Innocent III, also considers the combination of wealth and Godliness a possible one, but remarks that it is not often to be observed: De Miseria: Book II, Caput XV, "De licitis opibus".

A third poet, le Sauvage, who composed a short work which he called his Doctrinal⁽⁵³⁾ has a generally more worldly bias. It is described by Bossuat⁽⁵⁴⁾ as: "un traité de morale courante composée dans le troisieme quart du XIII^e siècle par un trouvère picard...." That the ideas of le Sauvage should be considered those of his time, near the end of the thirteenth century, would suggest that the author of the Poème Moral (writing c. 1200) had foreshadowed a tolerance of attitude which was to become more widespread.

Le Sauvage suggests that rich men should be generous first to God and His servants, afterwards to others in the secular world. He is more specific than the Poème Moral in suggesting a list of possible beneficiaries according to merit:

Se vous avez richece, moustrez-le belement
A Dieu et a ses proismes trestout premierement
Et puis apres au siecle si debonement
Que l'en n'en puist tenir nul vilain parlement.
(Jubinal, Nouveau Recueil, Vol. 2, p. 153)

A key-word here is "debonement": The poet seems to be talking of public and social behaviour which must be acceptable to general opinion. This concern for a good name amongst secular folk, based on ways of spending, is

reminiscent of courtly literature, and is unusual in a work purporting to be didactic.

Le Sauvage goes on to say that some are compelled to be rich and own property. We cannot all be monks, as some "contemptus mundi" rigorists would like.

Or i a une gent qui par fin estovoir
 Les covient-il au siecle et tenir et avoir
 Les chevaus et les armes et les chastiaus avoir;
 Por bien tenir justice, moult i puent valoir;
 Ne poons pas tuit estre ne blanc moingne ne noir.
 (page 160)

It is remarkable that the Doctrinal boldly indicates the knightly class as the kind of rich society he exempts from blame. He justifies their rich possessions by claiming that they are needed to be responsible for administering secular justice. It is difficult to see just how these possessions protect justice. Presumably these trappings of wealth consolidate a knight's social standing, and confer power which he exploits to gain credence in his socially superior role as administrator of the law.

We see, therefore, that, although the majority of poets do not consider wealth to be evil in itself, they nevertheless maintain that often wealth can lead to evil, whether it tempts a man to crime or, equally grave, inspires avarice or covetousness in him. Even so, there are a few poets who maintain that the rich man may retain his wealth without provoking moral censure⁽⁵⁵⁾. Those Old French writers who admit that there may be good, rich men, sometimes name exemplary figures from the Bible.

The Reclus de Moilliens cites Job as a model of a good rich man. He did not abuse his wealth, never seeking to amass a treasure:

Job de ricoise pas n'usa,
 Si com li siecles en usa;
 Car plusour malement en usent.
 (Carité: Stanza CCVIII)

Job onkes tresor ne cova
 Tant com a cui doner trova.
 (Stanza CCIX, ll. 4-5)

As we might expect the Poème Moral also gives Job as an exemplary rich

man. He adds the names of Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, Samuel and David whom he describes as being both wealthy and "ami Deu" (line 1973). This list of names coincides partly with that given by Innocent III in his De Miseria.... He too mentions Abraham, Job and David (Book II, caput XV).

As regards the rich man in relation to God, the two extremes of attitude coincide on one issue. Those poets who equate personal wealth with damnation, as well as those able to reconcile private property and Christian ethics, are unanimous about how wealth should be above all used. This brings me to a topic which features in all the didactic works and which represents the positive aspect of the relationship between the rich man and his wealth, that is the good use of riches, usually termed in these works: "charité".

c) Good Use of Wealth

i) The notions of "Good Use" and the "right to own".

Man's attitude of indifference to wealth does not suffice to gain him admission to the kingdom of Heaven. He must exteriorise his attitudes of detachment towards wealth and of compassion for the needy by the practical application of Charity, that is, by almsgiving. This is what the Old French poets understood by a good use of wealth, and it was considered by them to be the only true justification for having riches. Before I study the specific teaching of the moralists on Charity, I propose to show how the insistence on the good use of wealth was a fundamental principle of contemporary medieval ethics.

Christian teaching was to an extent faced with a basic conflict (see my Preliminary Chapter): Accepted doctrine urged community of property⁽⁵⁶⁾, while society was based on private property. Since the total reversal of economic structure was unrealistic, and the modification of Christian doctrine unthinkable, new thinking was required to bridge the gap between the two poles. Hence the concept of "right use" as opposed to the "right to own" developed by the canonists⁽⁵⁷⁾. This notion was furthered by the

theologians who stressed that although God favoured community of property, the ideal could not be achieved by human society. Hence the added concept of private ownership. The approval of the latter did not, however, give the owner of personal wealth a free rein. According to canon law, he could neither amass an unjustly large portion of worldly wealth, nor could he dispose of it in a selfish and vain manner. In practical terms this meant that a man might retain sufficient wealth for his own modest living. The remainder he was morally obliged to give to those in material distress⁽⁵⁸⁾. This duty towards the poor applied to both clergy and laity.

An economic historian, Dr. J. Gilchrist⁽⁵⁹⁾, recently pointed out that although this moral, and, as it later became, juridical obligation was of long standing (see Canon 8 of Chalcedon Council in 451), changed circumstances in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries created new problems. Under the old agricultural system, poor relief was organised by the Church, and part of the diocesan income was destined for this end. Individual contributions were voluntary. This simple arrangement sufficed until the commercial expansion. Then the numbers of poor men increased tremendously, nor could the town dwellers benefit from the local diocesan contributions. The hitherto efficient system of poor relief, based on the diocese, foundered when the monastic orders gradually appropriated parish churches and the tithes attached thereto. This meant that the bishops lost considerable sources of revenue which had previously been employed to provide relief. New sources of charitable income had, therefore, to be found. This end was achieved during the thirteenth century. Dr. Gilchrist lists the new sources: With papal encouragement the parish system was developed. (See my Chapter Three, Part I, section (i).) The monastic orders assumed their share in the responsibility for charitable work. The restitution of illegal gains of usurers also helped swell the funds. (See my Chapter Four, section B,3,d). Charitable donations were not simply a matter of conscience. The system was formally organised and contributions compulsory. Moreover the poor

man who benefited from the charity funds did not regard them as the gift from a compassionate source but as a basic social right⁽⁶⁰⁾.

ii) Position of the Old French didactic poets.

Taking into account that this was a period marked by a changeover in systems for the provision of poor relief, it is not surprising that the Old French didactic poets should seek to promote private almsgiving as much as possible. The end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth centuries would have coincided with the transition period for the organisation of poor relief; the new sources of revenue could not have been firmly established. The Church might then have welcomed an increase in private donations. The sermons of the period certainly suggest this. It seems to me that the Old French poets, in their emphasis on almsgiving, may be adding their voices to those of contemporary preachers. Their reasons? They were, of course, themselves men of the Church in different capacities. The Church was responsible for organizing a system of poor relief. Churchmen were the intermediaries between the donations of the rich and the founding of hospitals, orphanages and so on. The didactic poets, therefore, seem to have been the spokesmen of the Church on this important issue. They were calling for funds. Thus in praising Charity, I believe, they had a practical aim to realise as well as a moral message to communicate to the laity.

The attitudes of the moralists towards charity is one obvious reason why these didactic poems cannot be labelled "anti-wealth". They combat useless wealth, illegally gained wealth, and love of wealth. But they all favour the good use of wealth, that is, almsgiving, and thus they are "ipso facto" pro wealth, not against it.

Among the Old French poets, even the severe Thibaud de Marly concedes that wealth has its uses: this he implies by his terse comment that there is no point in having wealth unless one spends it. We understand by spending the giving of alms:

Por noient a l'avoir cil qui no set despendre
(Vers: line 285)

To this notion, the Reclus de Moilliens adds the reminder that wealth should not be used for an ostentatious and riotous way of life. It should be used for charitable purposes:

Je ne di pas k'il ne te loise
Bien, se tu vieus, avoir ricoise,
Se Carités large et cortoise
Fait ton cuer d'avariche pur.
Je lo l'avoir k'il ne s'envoie
Et k'il ne mueve cri ne noise
Ne ne fache a povre cuer dur.
(Carité: Stanza CLXVII, ll. 6-12)

The necessity of using wealth well in one's life-time, for at death it is too late, is stressed by Helinand:

Morz, qui defenz a estoier
L'avoir, que l'en doit emploier
Ancois qu'en oie tes assauz,
(Vers de la Mort: Stanza 12)

The Poème Moral also urges that wealth should be spent wisely. Vanity should not motivate one's spending, says the poet:

Tot est perdu, de quant c'um donne en vaniteit;
(Stanza 524)

God lends money to man that he may use it in His service. Helping the poor is the best way to serve God:

Deus at l'avoir a l'omme por lui servir presteit;
Par orguil et mal faire ne li at pas presteit.
Qui povres en a'wet, mut sert bien Deu en greit;
Mult aimet Deus teil homme et sovent l'a mostreit.
(Stanza 525)

The Poème Moral here makes an important point: Poor relief is not only a social good for which the rich man is morally responsible. It is also a means of serving God. Since the Scriptures say that the poor are especially dear to God⁽⁶¹⁾ it follows that by aiding the poor one is also serving God.

iii) Charity in the Old French didactic works.

How does Charity appear in the didactic works? It is named either "carité" or "aumosne". Since my task is to deal with attitudes to wealth,

I shall only be concerning myself with charity as a practical concept, in the sense of material aid to the needy, defined thus "l'acte par lequel on aime le prochain par amour pour Dieu sur naturellement aimé"⁽⁶²⁾.

When we meet Charity as an allegorical figure it will be as an abstract personification of the Christian virtue of giving and as such will oppose the vice of avarice. When understood as the act of giving to the poor, Charity is synonymous with almsgiving. Almsgiving, too, is sometimes transposed from the material to the abstract and becomes an allegorical figure in the works I have selected for study. Like Charity it is found in opposition to avarice or covetousness.

According to Catholic theology, alms are the result of charity understood in its spiritual sense of the love for God. They are the "effets extérieurs" of Charity⁽⁶³⁾. St. Thomas Aquinas divides alms into spiritual alms and corporeal alms⁽⁶⁴⁾. The spiritual ones are: "instruire les ignorants, conseiller les hésitants, consoler les affligés, corriger les coupables, pardonner à ceux qui ont offensé, supporter ceux qui sont à charge et prier pour tous"⁽⁶⁵⁾. The Old French moralists, however, seem to concentrate wholly on the corporeal values listed in the St. Matthew text (25: 41-46). They are: to feed the hungry; give drink to the thirsty; clothe the naked; give shelter to the homeless; visit the sick; redeem prisoners. Thomas Aquinas lists them thus: "visito, poto, cibo, redimo, tego, colligo, condo." He adds the seventh, to bury the dead. That the Old French poets should pay most attention to these material aspects of charity is understandable. Their works are addressed to a lay public and aim to give man in society practical advice on how to lead a Christian life. Most moralists are concerned with overt and public behaviour rather than with motive and intent.

The exact nature of practical charity is outlined by some of the poets who based their ideas on the Matthew text. (See Besant de Dieu, ll. 391-7).

Thibaud de Marly:

Mes icel aime Diex de tot son cuer entier
 Qui les povres set pestre et vestir et chaucier.
 Ceuls qui sont sanz hostel rueve Diex herbergier,
 Et rouve visiter le povre en charterier.

(Vers: ll. 830-33)

iv) Charity, the Rich Man's Duty

The Reclus de Moilliens in his Miserere maintains that it is the duty of the rich man to feed the poor in the community:

Sachiés de voir, por nient Dieu prie
 Ki les biens a soi aproprie
 Ke Dame dieus communement
 Por tout le pule paistre crie.
 Quant li povres hom huke et crie
 Ou por pain ou por vestement,
 Doner li doit haitiement
 Ki l'a et mout hastivement

(Miserere: Stanza LIII)

In the Roman de Carité, the Reclus de Moilliens equates the rich man with the nobleman. His advice on the nobleman's duty is the same, however: the care and defence of the poor.

Fai de povre gent te cousine!
 Fai te fille de l'orfenine!
 Deffent le veve et l'orfenin!
 Venge le sac dou drap pourprin!
 Venge Boilliaue de Boivin!

(Stanza LI, ll. 4-8)

Once more it is the Poème Moral which stands out for its attempt to justify and explain moral duties. According to its author, wealth is a gift from God to be used for the poor: (see also stanza 525, my page 136)

Se Deus vos vult doneir l'avoir, si l'en rendeiz;
 La u plus granz mestiers en est, la en donez;
 Unkes, se por bien non, nul avoir n'assemblez;
 Por bien faire l'aiez, qui avoir le voleiz.

(Poème Moral: Stanza 541)

The first line of the above stanza hints at a notion which is stressed more in other works, that the giving of alms is the rich man's acquittal of a debt to God. His wealth has been given for one reason only. If the rich man is to enjoy the privilege of wealth, he must not forget to keep his part of the bargain. This idea is expressed clearly by the Reclus de Moilliens:

Ki done aumosne il se desdete,
 Car aumosne est et dons et dete.
 (Miserere: Stanza LXV)

Guischard de Beaulieu is equally explicit when urging men to give alms:

Seignors co est la dette ke vus demande deus
 (Sermon: line 548)

There is, however, another side to the connection between alms and the payment of a debt. This leads us to a consideration of the rewards to be had from the exercise of charity.

v) Reward of Charity

We have seen above how the rich man was expected to repay the gift of wealth to God by disposing of a large part of his riches to the poor. This was not the end of the transaction. When the rich man had completed his side of the pact, God was seen as being indebted to the rich man. He eliminated this debt by granting the charitable man eternal life.

The origin of the concept is biblical (Proverbs 19: 17). However, mention of "pity for the poor" loses its humanitarian tone in subsequent adaptations, until the arrangement becomes businesslike when concern for the poor is eclipsed by the near commercial "deal" which moralists envisage between God and the rich man. Critics⁽⁶⁶⁾ have noted that the emphasis in this issue lies on the salvation of the rich man's soul rather than on the alleviation of the poor man's suffering. The result of such a subordination of the original reason for almsgiving is to make wealth solely the instrument by which the rich man secures his eternal happiness. Peter Damian was one such moralist who regarded the poor man as the agent of the rich man's salvation, instead of seeing the rich man as the protector of the needy⁽⁶⁷⁾. The attitude persisted for a long time. We find it in Bernard of Morval⁽⁶⁸⁾. R. Bultot accuses this moralist of mechanising the practice of charity and hence robbing^{it} of its spontaneously compassionate nature: the rich man secures terrestrial goods for the poor man; the poor man procures heavenly rewards for the rich man⁽⁶⁹⁾. This view of almsgiving reflected current

theological thought, based on the ethics of justice⁽⁷⁰⁾ so dear to the Middle Ages. Thomas Aquinas in the late thirteenth century regarded almsgiving as an aspect of charity, but thereafter it was associated with penitence, and represented as an act of restitution⁽⁷¹⁾.

The current theological view on the giving of alms is sometimes reflected in the Old French texts, although the finer points are ignored; presumably as being of no interest to a lay public.

The biblical text (Proverbs 19: 17) finds a direct echo in the Sermon of Guischart de Beaulieu: His choice of vocabulary serves to emphasise the resemblance to a commercial transaction, or a wise investment.

Ki ren dune por deu mult par lad ben venduz
Quant mester en aurat trestut li ert renduz
Cil ki ben fait por salme a sei sul rend saluz.
(ll. 1145-47)

Thibaud de Marly also promises a "rich" reward to the charitable man. He sees almsgiving as a feudal service which the lord has an obligation to reward. He describes the symbolic wealth which awaits the good nobleman in Heaven - castles without mortar:

Cil qui o Deu ira molt se doit pou prisier;
Por son petit servise le fera si paier:
De chascun fera roi plus riche que Lohier,
Il lor donra chastiaux sans chاوز et sanz mortier;
Ja lor tres grant richesse ne porra abaissier,
Quar ce est paradis ou sont li aumosnier.
Or nos doint Damedex qu'i puissons repairier.
(Vers: ll. 845-51)

The use of imagery to describe Charity is common in these works. However it is surprising how often the poets associate Charity with wealth, expressing the charitable man's spiritual rewards in very materialistic terms, as in the two examples above. We may compare also the Reclus de Moilliens' portrait of Charity as a merchant, a somewhat unusual choice for a personification of Charity. It shows that the Reclus conceived a merchant as an honourable man. (cf. Miserere: Stanza CLVII and my Chapter Four, Section A). The simile is sustained by extensive use of commercial terminology:

Ki Carité prent a ostesse
 Il herberge bone maistresse.
 Tout markeant sont a li mat;
 Ne crient cochon ne cochonesse
 Ne vendeour ne venderesse
 Ki mius vende ne mius acat,
 Sans repentir et sans racat.
 Carités ne doute barat;
 Ja n'est le presse tant espesse
 Ke coupebourse de li gat.
 Carités set bien quant s'embat
 Sor li trekiere ou trekeresse.

(Carité: Stanza CLVI)

What does Charity as a merchant counsel us to buy? - Heaven, or as the poet puts it, a city on a tall hill, the Heavenly Jerusalem:

Une chités sor un haut mont.
 (Stanza CLVII, line 5)

One notes that in the cases quoted above the results of charity are all seen as being advantageous to the rich man. The plight of the poor man and his subsequent relief appear unimportant. This is not surprising if one considers that these works were addressed to donors, rather than donees. Charity as benefiting chiefly the charitable man is the view taken by Guillaume le Clerc. Almsgiving, he says, secures the love of God for the rich man; implying that such is its main purpose.

Por quei el monde se travaille,
 Se n'est almone qui li vaille
 Ou servise que a deu face
 Por avoir s'amor e sa grace
 (Besant de Dieu: ll. 1451-54)

Again, looking ahead to the Day of Judgement, Guillaume le Clerc predicts that only alms and good deeds will survive from a man's life. (ll. 2910-12) This poet likens Charity to a protecting wall which shelters - not the poor - but the generous rich man:

Car d'almone e de charité
 E d'amer deu en verite
 Font entor els un si bon mur.
 (Besant de Dieu: ll. 3151-53)⁽⁷²⁾

A final word on the benefits derived from practical charity comes from Hugues de Berzé, for whom alms grant the donor a good end. The rich man will be saved:

... les aumosnes e li bien
 Si metent l'omme a bone fin
 (Bible: ll. 796-7)

vi) Alms are not always Acceptable.

The author of the Poème Moral and le Reclus de Moilliens once again agree, making the important point that mere almsgiving does not wipe out sins⁽⁷³⁾. If one has gained riches illegally, one cannot atone for the evil practices used to acquire them by giving alms and yet retaining the greater part of the riches. One has to surrender all one's wealth if it belongs rightfully to another:

"Ni li desconseil mie a Deu mercit proier,
 Ne almones doneir, ne aleir al mostier;
 Mais, s'il, devant, ne vult l'altrui chose laissier,
 Segurs soit qu'en enfer le convenrat plong(n)ier."
 (Poème Moral: Stanza 256)

The Reclus de Moilliens elaborates upon the kind of criminal from whom God will not accept alms, one guilty of shedding blood:

Aumosne ki est presentée
 A dieu de main ensanglente
 Ne dessert pas de pardon grace.
 (Miserere: Stanza LXVIII, ll. 10-12)

The image of the "bloody hand" of the hypocritical almsgiver is applied to other wrongdoers, without actually indicating that killing has been involved: Alms will not automatically buy salvation when given by a man full of hatred; or a man who is rapacious, or dishonest, or proud, or envious; a man who bears false witness, who practises usury, who over-indulges in drink or luxurious living; a liar, a perjurer, or a trickster:

Main sanglente a hom haïnous,
 Main sanglente a hom ravinous,
 Main sanglente a traître lere,
 Main sanglente a hom orguellous
 Main sanglente a hom envious
 Main sanglente a faus acusere,
 Main sanglente a hom usurere.
 Main sanglente a hom trop bevere,
 Main sanglente a hom luxurios,
 Main sanglente a ki est mentere,
 Main sanglente a hom faus jurere,
 Main sanglente a hom engignous.
 (Miserere: Stanza LXIX)

One should not use tainted money for alms. The Poème Moral illustrates this precept with the well-known exemplum of Saint Thais. Once a courtesan, she was converted by a priest and renounced her evil way of life. She burned all her riches. She could have helped the poor and the Church with her wealth (ll. 1143-4), but she thought that money earned in so shameful a fashion was better destroyed:

Kidoit ke Deus ha7st iteil gaanierie
Dont tant maz eret faiz et tante averserie.

(Stanza 290, ll. 1159-1160)

It is interesting that the poet presents the matter indirectly and dramatically through the thoughts and actions of the courtesan.

vii) Laments at the demise of Charity.

A feature of the didactic poets' complaints about the corruption of the times is the alleged disappearance of Charity from society. Once again we see the contrast between the ideal and reality as conceived by these moralists. The cry that Charity is dead is a familiar one in these works and corresponds to the commonplace lament that avarice rules supreme.

The Roman de Carité centres on a vain personal search for this virtue which was once to be found on earth, but which, the poet is forced to conclude, has taken refuge in Heaven. (Carité: Stanza CCXXIX)

Guiot de Provins also laments the absence of charity in the world from his own viewpoint:

... per tout faut si plainnement
c'hariteiz, que je n'en voi point;
molt est li siecles en mal point.
(Bible: ll. 1820-22)

Indeed, this is a common theme. All the moralists attack the wickedness of the world, railing particularly against the covetousness of men and bewailing their lack of charity.

viii) Exempla associated with the topos of Charity.

Since the Old French didactic poets claim that Charity is not to be

found in contemporary society, they are obliged to seek examples of Charity in biblical texts and in exemplary tales, such as the lives of the saints. One of the most popular models for charity is Job, the man for all seasons, who lends himself to every kind of exemplary figure for these didactic poets. The Reclus de Moilliens describes Job thus:

Job fu en Carité ardans,
 Job fu donere non tardans,
 Job fu pere des orfenins,
 Job fu des veves defendans.
 (Carité: Stanza CCVII)

Another well-known exemplary figure is Saint Martin who gave half of his cloak to a poor man and was subsequently rewarded by God⁽⁷⁴⁾. This gesture is recorded by the Poème Moral and the Miserere of the Reclus de Moilliens. The latter describes the event in a style reminiscent of profane literature. The poet is not, however, setting the seal of approval upon courtly mores, he is simply and characteristically using powerful and expressive figurative language:

He Dieus! quel coup de chevalier!
 Chil cous le prova large et fier;
 Onkes tieus cous ne fu ferus.
 Tost donast de dous l'un entier
 Ki le soul ne douta trenkier,
 Ke li povres fust securus;
 Por s'onour remest demi nus.
 Ki est ore si larges? Nus.
 Ichel bel coup daigna nonchier
 A ses angeles li dous Jhesus.
 "Veés," dist il, "com sui vestus
 "De Martin, men bon ami kier."
 (Miserere: Stanza CVII)

The identification of Christ and the poor man is a common one based on biblical texts and will be studied under the heading of the Poor Man (Section B).

In his narration of this exemplary tale, the Poème Moral dramatises a confrontation between God and St. Martin after the event. God reveals that it is He who has received St. Martin's gift⁽⁷⁵⁾. The poet quickly reinforces the moral of the tale with an exhortation to give alms and be rewarded by God:

"Esgardeiz," faisoit il, "cest mantel moi donnat
 Danz Martins, qui batesme ancor reuell n'at."
 Penseiz i, bone gent, a ce que Deus parlat;
 Doneiz li vostre almone, mut bien la vos rendrat.

(Poème Moral: Stanza 539)

The Poème Moral is rich in exempla which demonstrate how charitable acts earn men the grace of God. To show the effectiveness of almsgiving the poet chooses one model whose life before his conversion would not have qualified him for any spiritual salvation. This was a "jongleur", a social type whom the poet strongly attacks in another section. (See my Chapter Four). This jongleur, besides leading his parasitic life, had also committed crimes, and on one occasion had even robbed a church. However he had once performed an act of charity when he had given money to a woman who wanted to free her sons by paying a ransom. (Stanza 590). Following the advice of the preacher Pasnutius, this jongleur became a hermit and so saved his soul.

The second exemplary figure was a rich man of unspecified social estate, although one may assume that he was of the knightly class since the poet is careful to stress that his home life showed no trace of indulgence in activities like hunting or vain entertainment⁽⁷⁶⁾. These were pursuits usually associated with rich men of his rank, and showed that this person did not surround himself with the customary trappings of knightly wealth, nor indulge in the usual recreations of the idle rich:

N'i vit eschac ne tauble, ne ostoir ne faucon,
 Ne rote ne v'felle, juggleour ne garchon.

(Poème Moral: Stanza 595)

The rich man tells Pasnutius that no one is ever turned away from his door. His house and his possessions were available to all comers. He also tended the needy as well as he could:

"Nului n'est escondis mes pains ne ma maison;
 Tot est comunauls choze, de quant que nos avons.
 Povres, floibes, estraignes volentier recivons;
 Solonc nostre poioir, lor mesaise adrechons."

(Stanza 602)

The third person whom the preacher, Pasnutius, converted to the eremitic

life was a merchant both wealthy and generous. Two of his retainers would accompany him through the streets with money to distribute to those in need. (Stanza 621). The hermit, Pasnutius, suggested that he should give all his wealth away. The suggestion was readily acted upon and the merchant ended his days in the humble service of God. (Stanza 624).

In a work remarkable for its tolerance on many moral issues, and, in particular, on the issue of giving up all one's wealth to serve God (see above, my section 8, b), it is surprising to find three exempla where the message would appear to be - "Give away everything if you wish to be perfect." This attitude would appear to be at variance with the more moderate and practical outlook of the poet on other occasions.

On the other hand it is a mark of the tolerance of the poet that his choice of exemplary figures should represent a cross-section of society and should include at least one social type - the jongleur - of whom the poet himself disapproved. Indeed all three models are types habitually under bitter attack by the moralists. The Poème Moral adopts a positive approach and proves that there are good individuals in all professions, even though his method of demonstrating this seems somewhat extreme.

ix) The Wish to Give alms is as meritorious as the actual giving.

In treating the theme of charity, the Poème Moral is perspicacious enough to go a step further than his contemporaries. In a section entitled: 'Autretant vat la Bone volonteit que li doner', its author says that there are many who would willingly give alms if only they had the means to do so:

Il est de teile gent ki volontiers donroient
 Lor almones as povres; volentiers les aidroient
 De ce dont il les sewent besignios, s'il pooient;
 Granz pitiez les (l)en prent, cant lor messaise voient.
 (Stanza 543)

As long as one genuinely wants to help the poor then one is serving God:

Mais il n'est mie povres, ki est de teil bonteit.
 Bien sert Nostre Sanior et bien li at doneit,
 Ki appariliet at la bone volenteit:
 Senz celi, ne li vient nuz servises en greit.
 (Stanza 544)

One is tempted to see in this a psychologically advanced and penetrating viewpoint, one which reflects the twelfth century theological teaching on the ethics of intention. However, once again, the Poème Moral's source was the writings of St. Gregory⁽⁷⁷⁾ although the poet has developed his source material to give it psychological depth. He pursues his subject thus: Lack of money is no excuse for not showing sympathy to the poor. To the troubled, less well-off man who wonders how he can be saved if he cannot give alms, the poet offers a rebuke:

Ne se doit pas defendre nuz hom ne escuser
 k'il diet: "Las! coment poroie moi salveir?
 "Ge ne puis nul bien faire, je n'ai rien ke doner."
 Ki ce dist, trop est simples, ne fait mie a loer.
 (Stanza 545)

One notices that the person speaking here regards alms as a means to salvation unaccompanied by any compassion for those who suffer. (See above, my section 8, c, v). Besides reflecting current attitudes on the subject of almsgiving and its expected rewards, this concrete example of the interested and shallow man implies a sharp appraisal of human behaviour.

The poet points the lesson that motive and intent are the driving force behind charitable action. Summarising the moral responsibilities of the rich, he says they should give generously in alms. Those less well-off should give to the destitute what they can afford. Should they be without any material resources, then good intentions if based on compassion and sympathy will be as meritorious as actual alms-giving:

Largement doit doneir ki asseiz d'avoir at
 Et, cil qui povres est, doinst solonc ce qu'il at.
 Bone volenteit doinst, qui plus ke doner n'at,
 Et alsi grant merite cum cil qui done avrat.
 (Stanza 546)

The Poème Moral's consideration of this matter may not be original, but it still remains that he is, in my experience, the only Old French didactic poet to represent this aspect of charity. It seems unlikely that the works of St. Gregory were unknown to the other moralists, so the

question is: Why did the Poème Moral deal with a topos totally ignored by the other poets? Myself, I believe the reason to be a very simple one: The other poets, as I have already pointed out, were to a certain degree spokesman for the Church. They would, of course, be interested in prompting people to be more generous and to give alms freely. They, therefore, stress the physical act of giving money for poor relief. Good intentions, however meritorious in the eyes of God, do not build hospitals nor feed the needy. It was an inconvenient aspect of Church teaching that was probably played down. Alone the poet of the Poème Moral seeks to allay the fears and feelings of guilt of the less rich, by showing all sides of the issue. Evidently he considered that a full and honest treatment of the matter of almsgiving was called for. He appears first and foremost little interested in calling for Church funds from his audience, or if that is part of his aim, he does not allow it to mar his integrity. He does not falsify the situation and frighten the laity by an extremist stance.

x) False Charity.

Again it is the Poème Moral which alone exposes almsgiving to critical analysis. Charity, says the poet, may be misdirected, or it may be practised for the wrong reasons. In both cases it is not fully charity.

In a section headed: "De ces qui en Vaniteit Donent de Cant qu'il ont", the poet claims that there are some who do not hoard their wealth, but give it away quite freely. However, if they are merely doing it for show then they are not serving God. This attitude is poles apart from the aristocratic love of show mirrored in courtly romance.

De ceaz rest qui n'ont cure d'assembleir grant richise;
 Donent tot quant qu'il ont, dient que c'est frankise;
 Mais si ont lur entente sor vaniteit assise
 Ke, de ce qu'il despendent, poi vien al Deu servise.
 (Stanza 506)

The moralist seems here to be scrutinising the noble squandering of wealth. His main complaint is that nobles do not give to the deserving poor, but

make rich gifts to servants. The poet gives a concrete case of a poor man dying of cold but ignored by the rich man who, ironically, showers fur mantles on his less needy servants.

Tost donent un garzon cheval u palefroit,
 Pelizon engoleit u mantel a orfroit;
 Mais lo povre, qui muert, devant lor uelz, de froit,
 Ne denient regardeir, ja n'iert si en destroit.
 (Stanza 507)

A man may be equally sinful whether he amasses or squanders wealth:

Celui qui l'avoir Deu alowe folement
 Et l'aveir, qui ne donne t nului rien, mais tot prent,
 Ausi bien l'un ke l'autre metrat Deus en torment,
 Car cil l'assemblat mal et cil mal le despent.
 (Stanza 512)

In short, the poet counsels men to show moderation in the acquisition and the use of their riches. The rich man should strive to disperse his fortune in the knowledge that it is God's gift to him. He will then spontaneously acquire and dispense wealth in the right way.

Mais li honestes hom, qui Deu aimet et Deu crient,
 Al doneir, al tenir, totens mesure tient;
 Bien seit, de quant qu'il at, ke de par Deu li vient;
 Quant il voit son message, volontiers le ritient.
 (Stanza 513)

Bien seit, de quant qu'il at, ke Deus li at donet
 Et, par ce, nel vult il despendre en vaniteit;
 Volontiers lo de_sponse si ke Deu vient en greit,
 Kar malement l'alowet, ki ce fait ke Deus heit.
 (Stanza 514)

B. The Poor Man as Presented in the Didactic Works.

My study of the poor man and his role in the Old French didactic poems will necessarily be brief, because the poets concentrate above all on a denunciation of the evil rich man and on how he might save his soul. The poor man, loving God through all adversity, is praised, and poverty is often extolled as a virtue. However, after the full picture of the rich man, target for numerous, lengthy and often bitter attacks, the portrait of the poor man seems somewhat colourless.

1. Different Aspects of this Moral Type.

The appellation "li povres" is ambiguous in the texts I have chosen, for it is affixed to people of vastly differing status and circumstances in both the didactic and courtly works. My study of these texts has enabled me to identify seven separate categories of poor man. They will not all be dealt with at this juncture, but I list them as follows.

a) Firstly there is the poor man as a social type. He is the poor belonging to the lowliest of the three estates. Yet within the third estate there are differing levels of material status. He may be a comparatively poor peasant or he may be a poverty-stricken serf who does not even have any social franchise. As a social type, this poor man may be judged good or bad according to whether he fulfils his social duties. This is dealt with in my Chapter Three.

b) Poor may refer to the poor of the second estate, the knightly class. In this case the poor man is not poor by birth, but has sunk to a level considered to be poverty by his peers. This may result from misfortune or incompetence. Examples of this type abound in the courtly works ("li povres chevaliers") (See my Chapter Seven).

c) Still on a social plane there are the destitute, those who beg to keep themselves alive. Generally they are not classed as a social type⁽⁷⁸⁾ being beyond the bounds of social classification. They do not figure much in the didactic works I have studied, but when recipients of the rich man's charity they are regarded with sympathy. This is not usually so in didactic literature⁽⁷⁹⁾. Mendicity makes an occasional appearance in the courtly works when the courtly hero is reduced to this state.

(My Chapter Seven).

d) There is also the man poor by vocation. Monks, friars chose lives of varying degrees of asceticism and voluntarily embraced evangelical poverty. (My Chapter Three).

e) We leave social types for the evil man who is poor because he has imposed the suffering of poverty upon himself, although he is, in reality, rich. This miserly man has already been described earlier in this chapter. Such a man is not usually designated as "li povres".

f) Next comes the man who, while possessing a certain amount of wealth, is poor in spirit (see Matthew 5:3), since he despises the luxuries of life and employs his wealth in the service of the poor. We have already met references to such people in an exhortation in the Roman de Carité (see above, page 128) and also as models for all to emulate (pp. 132-133).

g) Lastly there is the moral type who represents the good poor man. This person is lacking in material resources, whether voluntarily or through misfortune, but he suffers his miserable lot gladly, and rejoices in the love and service of God. It is this poor man who plays an important role in the didactic works where he is often evoked as an ideal figure. Frequently he is embodied in Job.

Within the didactic works there is considerable confusion as to which category of poor man emerges at different times, since each is labelled as "povre". In general the poor man as a social type is usually subjected to the same criticisms as all other ranks of society. He, too, is found to be wanting, mainly because he resents his poverty. As such, he is attacked. The poor man as a moral type is the good person. He is the beloved of God and is promised eternal life as a reward for his suffering on earth. It is this type I propose to deal with here immediately.

2. God's Poor.

The New Testament text - Matthew 25: 40 - shows how Christ identifies himself with the poor. There are echoes of this text in the didactic poems. The Reclus de Moilliens refers to the poor man as "Diu eslit" (Carité: Stanza LIII). For them God will reserve his kingdom. The text from Matthew is translated by Guillaume le Clerc in Besant de Dieu

(ll. 391-97. See my page 124). The Poème Moral shows Christ's identification with the poor man by means of an exemplary tale: A rich man generously admitted the poor to his table. On one occasion a poor guest disappeared, but reappeared that night in a vision to the rich man. He revealed to the rich man that his hospitality had been offered to God in the guise of a mere guest (Stanzas 530-536).

With this topic the moralists tend to follow biblical texts closely. God looks after the poor, says the poet of the Roman des Romans, alluding probably to Luke 6: 20-21 or Luke 12: 22-24. Blessed are the poor in spirit, he continues (Matthew 5: 3) for they are satisfied with what they have:

Deus paist ses povres, ceo trovon en escrit,
Beneeiz est povres en esprit
Qui lealment sanz coveitise vit,
Que que il ait, seit grant ou seit petit.
(Roman des Romans: ll. 617-20)

3. The Rewards of the Poor Man's Suffering.

The moralists agree that Heaven awaits the poor man who accepts his suffering joyfully.

As povres sont li manoir vuit
De la chité ki est sans ire.
(Carité: Stanza CLXVI ll. 5-6)

They sometimes illustrate this with the exemplum of Dives and Lazarus (Luke 16: 20-26) where one sees that the poor man receives eternal compensation for his earthly misery. Usually, however, one finds that the poet dwells on the damnation of the rich man, and contents himself with a brief mention of the salvation of the poor man⁽⁸⁰⁾. In contrast, the Reclus de Moilliens lays emphasis on the joy which awaits the poor man after death. Leading up to his account of the parable, the poet uses figurative language: the poor man is the sheep whom God, the Shepherd, protects. The poor man knows that God will not demand his fleece more than once. Once it has been sacrificed, the poor man will be put into

the fresh pasture of Heaven.

Povres, or pense sagement
 Ke Dius par son fort jugement
 Ne pregne a toi double tonture.
 Ton premier viaurre largement
 Done a Diu! car sans targement
 Sera mis en franke pasture
 Qui rien ne doit de retonture.
 Regibers fait double pointure;
 Mais chil desert alegement
 Ki souffrans est en bateüre.

(Carité: Stanza CCIII ll. 1-10)

Continuing his metaphor, the poet states that the torments endured by Lazarus were responsible for the joy he was later to know in Heaven.

(Stanza CCIV)

With his usual bold frankness the Poème Moral points out that poor people, though they may be good, have to suffer privation in this life. Why, he asks, does God treat ~~his~~ this poor in such a cruel way? There are many evil men who escape misfortune. Instead they become rich and enjoy life.

Mut est de malvais hommes qui onkes ne font bin;
 Altrui tolent le lor et poi donent del sien;
 Sovent dient: "za done", onkes ne dient: "Tien";
 Nequedent, il ne soffre, qu'il lor desplace, rien.

(Stanza 72)

Once more the Poème Moral uses direct speech to dramatic effect.

The poor, God-fearing man endures severe suffering and seems to have been overlooked by God:

Mais li hom qui bien fait, qui Nostre Sanior crient,
 qui nului ne fait tort, qui droiture maintient,
 Cil soffret tant de mal, tant de mal li avient,
 C'om puet dire: "Obliét l'at Deus, Deu n'en sovient."

(Stanza 74)

Not so, says the poet: God has not forgotten the poor man. The comforts of the evil rich man will be fleeting pleasures and will soon be replaced by the torments of Hell. (Stanza 76)⁽⁸¹⁾. As for those who suffer without complaint on earth, they will not suffer at all after death. They will be admitted to the Kingdom of Heaven. The Poème Moral faces the problem of earthly suffering and concludes that a small measure of pain is beneficial:

Le bon omme cui Deus vult avoir et salveir,
 En cest secle lo lait un petit tormenteir,
 Cum il venrat en l'autre, qu'il n'ait c'amender,
 Car lo pechiet covient ci u la compareir.

(Poème Moral: Stanza 77)

The inconsistency of the poets on the subject of suffering is remarkable. One remembers that the rich man was overburdened with physical and psychological anxieties which were a severe form of suffering. Then it was the poor man who was carefree and untroubled by such odious fears and responsibilities. In sections devoted to the poor man, we find the poets admitting his earthly suffering, while they describe the rich man as enjoying his gain whether lawful or not.

While most of the Old French didactic poets state explicitly that poverty can be a state of grace, there is a great variety from poet to poet on what degree of suffering is necessary to test a man's fortitude and make him eligible for eternal joy. For poets such as the author of the Poème Moral and the Reclus de Moilliens (see above page 136 and pages 146-148) good intentions will suffice, although the former considers a modicum of suffering salutary, and reinforces this by his choice of exempla. Hugues de Berzé favours the ascetic way of life (Bible: 600-604), while Robert le Clerc is the most extreme and campaigns for self-mortification:

Mais quant cars est desciplinée,
 Aspre drap, povre cusinette,
 Travaus, velléirs, pensee nete
 L'ont tost de grasse enluminee!

(Vers de la Mort: Stanza XCVIII, ll. 9-12)

At the other end of the scale there is Guiot de Provins who by his attitudes, shows that there is no merit in ordinary poverty. He approves only of the vocational poverty of the monastics⁽⁸²⁾. Even Etienne de Fougères who, on one hand, urges the poor man not to be ashamed of his lot (see my page 155), also sees poverty as an undesirable state deserved only by criminals, such as usurers⁽⁸³⁾. There would appear to be no agreement between the poets on this subject.

4. Right and Wrong Attitudes towards Poverty.

The spiritual lessons to be learned from poverty and all earthly suffering are patience and fortitude, teaches the Poème Moral:

Bur fut nez, en cest secle, cui Deus chastier vult,
 Car celui aime il plus cui il plus batre suelt;
 Et cil qui liez en est et en bien lo recult,
 C'est cil qui Deu avrat et qui perir ne puet.
 (Stanza 78)

The Reclus de Moilliens likewise considers the true friend of God to be undaunted by poverty or any form of misfortune. God will comfort him in his misery:

Ki est a Dieu amis chertains
 Ne porroit estre pas estains
 En lui li fus de Carité.
 Viegne poverte, sois et fains,
 Ou autre maus, s'amis n'est fains,
 Dieus est compains en se grieté;
 Il le pramist par pieté.
 Donkes est mieus, par verité,
 Quant Dieus i daigne estre compains,
 Ke on soit en aversité
 Avoec Dieu, ke prosperité
 Avoir et estre a Dieu lointains.
 (Miserere: Stanza XXIV)

Etienne de Fougères advises men not to be ashamed of their poverty:

S'il est povre, n'en ait ja honte.
 (Livre des Manières: line 416)

In Chardri's Le Petit Plet the old man is urged to welcome his new state of poverty. The child argues that we are borne with nothing and take nothing with us when we leave this world: (84)

" Poverte ke vus tant blamez,
 Vus mesfeves si ne l'amez,
 Car primes vus fist ele compaignie,
 Quant entrastes en ceste vie.
 Ren ne i portastes si lui nun,
 Ele fu tute ta possessiun, "
 (ll. 887-92)

It is not surprising that the exemplary biblical figure which didactic writers choose to illustrate the stoic acceptance of poverty is Job. The Reclus de Moliens describes his attitude:

Job bons rikes avoit esté;
 Quant son avoir vit tempesté,
 N'en ot pas le cuer molesté;
 Et sor plumer et sor estramier
 Garda mout bien Job sonesté.
 Job vesqui sans deshonesté,
 Bons ou palais, bons ou fumier.
 (Carité: Stanza CCXII, ll. 6-12)

If all poor men shared Job's attitude, they would be assured of salvation, says Guillaume le Clerc:

S'il rendisent a deu merci
 E loenge de lor poverte
 Que il ont eu e soferte,
 Le halt regne del ciel fust lor.
 (Besant de Dieu: ll. 1152-55)

It is important to note that the poor man of the didactic works is not always spiritually admirable. Attacks against the greedy attitudes of the poor are usually found within the framework of the "Etats du Monde" section of these works. For example, Guillaume le Clerc confesses his dismay at the attitude of the poor man whom he considers to be as ungodly as the rich man of the parable: Besant de Dieu: ll. 1115-20. (See my Chapter Three, section C, 2, b)). Likewise, Hugues de Berzé in his Bible describes tersely the vocal discontent of the poor man at the wealth of the rich (ll. 381-82. See my page 100).

The frustrated greed of the poor man may be considered a form of suffering, but it is not what earns him eternal happiness, for the poor man of Hugues' description does not love and serve God when he thus rails against the injustice of his situation⁽⁸⁵⁾.

Such are the varyingly reprehensible attitudes attributed by the poets to the poor man. It is interesting to find a first-hand account of unwelcome poverty from an Old French poet, Rutebeuf. This poet describes his lack of material resources and his miserable life. His poems are not here didactic, nor is Rutebeuf to be considered a moral type. He nevertheless does typify the resentful poor man of the Old French moralists. His poverty results mainly from gambling, which would not make him the kind

of poor man to arouse the sympathy of the didactic poets proper. Nor would his way of earning a living, as a professional poet, endear him to them.

In la Povreté Rutebeuf⁽⁸⁶⁾ the poet sketches his own poverty: He is without heat or food:

Vivres me faut et est failliz;
Nuns ne me tent, nuns ne me baille,
Je touz de froit, de fain baaille,
(Vol. I, p. 572, ll. 27-29)

All the good things of life are to be had in Paris, but Rutebeuf cannot afford any of them:

Sire, je vos fais a savoir
Je n'ai de quoi do pain avoir.
A Paris sui entre touz biens,
Et n'i a nul qui i soit miens.
(ll. 37-40)

In La Complainte Rutebeuf, he shows the poor man harassed mercilessly by creditors, among them his landlord:

Si esbahiz ne fu més hom
Com je sui, voir,
C'onques ne fui a mains d'avoir.
Mes ostes veut l'argent avoir
De son osté,
Et j'en ai presque tout osté,
Et si me sont nu li costé
Contre l'yver.

(ll. 72-79. ed. Faral et Bastin. Vol. I, p. 555)

Rutebeuf continues in this self-pitying vein, when he lists some social consequences of his misfortune. Poverty, for example, does not encourage friendships. When the poet found himself without wealth, he also discovered he was friendless (ll. 119-133). The theme seems a commonplace, occurring also in such works as Le Roman de la Rose⁽⁸⁷⁾. It also reflects the current attitude of society according to some poets. One remembers the commonplace

"Se rien n'avez, ren ne valdrez."
(Besant de Dieu: line 473)

How can one assess the attitude of this poet towards his poverty? Evidently he is suffering certain privations. It would seem that he resents his

plight and has not accepted his poverty with a glad heart. The poet himself, however, denies any bitterness. It is ironical that he should compare himself to Job, since he is not truly resigned:

Diex m'a fet compaignon a Job,
Qu'il m'a tolu a un seul cop
Quanques j'avoie.

(ll. 20-22.) La Complainte Rutebeuf, Vol. I, p. 553.

He claims, however, that he is resigned to the course taken by Fortune:

Or lerai donc fortune corre.
(line 134)

In La Griesche d'Yver, his attitude resembles more that of a didactic poet.

He again claims that his own suffering does not arouse resentment in him (ll. 40-42). He then takes up the commonplace didactic theme of the transience of worldly goods. Only good deeds survive:

Tout venir, tout aler covient,
Fors que bienfet

(ll. 50-51, ed. Faral & Bastin, Vol. I, p. 523 5)

Thus we find a mixture of attitudes towards poverty in Rutebeuf. He was perhaps sincere in lamenting his poverty, but at the same time felt obliged to assume the approved stoical attitude preached by Christian moralists.

We see that the poor man as a moral type receives scant sympathy from the didactic poets. The poor man as a social type, to be studied in the next chapter, does inspire pity in some poets, as well as much criticism for his shortcomings. However, as a moral type, the poor man is expected to accept his lot joyfully, and to be content with the promise of spiritual gain. On the part of the poets this is not a humane attitude but one which is wholly derived from religious teaching.

This extensive review of the treatment of the topic of wealth and of moral types has shown that the didactic poets, in dealing with the subject of wealth, went far beyond the mere denunciation of avarice. We have seen how they faced the moral implications of man's attitudes towards wealth;

how they dealt with the provenance of wealth, men's attitudes towards its acquisition, towards its actual possession and potential loss, and also the utilisation of it; how they outlined what they considered reprehensible attitudes and reacted in a variety of ways to them, ranging from trenchant condemnation to a more tolerant, psychologically penetrating, analytical consideration.

All these poets lay charges against the evil rich man, who loves his wealth above God, who is ruthless in pursuit of wealth, and obsessive in the unjust retention of it. Their case against the accumulation of great wealth rests largely on their portrayal of the punishment incurred thereby, physical and psychological suffering during life, spiritual damnation at death, and a further deterrent in the prediction of the fate of their wealth in the hands of undeserving heirs. We note that some prejudice against wealth is prevalent in that the evil rich man is opposed to the good rich man less often than to the good poor man. It is the last named who proves the touchstone of right conduct.

One cannot claim that the Old French poets were original in their ideas, but I have attempted to show some originality of style and presentation, particularly in the elegant works of the Reclus de Moilliens. Originality of attitude we can attribute only to the author of Poème Moral and even this originality lies largely in the poet's individual selection from literary and religious works. It is the Poème Moral alone which relaxes rigid Church doctrine sufficiently for it to have some practical application to life in the world.

The didactic poets were, in those sections of their works I have employed for this chapter, at their most moralistic. They were preaching, urging an ideal, which could never conceivably be translated into reality without incurring social chaos. These sermons could only have been intended to point man in the right direction, to prick consciences, and with it all

to increase donations to the Church.

Were the poets to be judged by their sermons alone, one would be forced to dismiss them as unrealistic propagandists, content to echo hackneyed ideas and expressions in a mindless exposition of Church teaching, with the notable exception of the Poème Moral. We shall see, however, in the next chapters that mere moralising was but one level of the message of the didactic poets. Their treatment of the topic of wealth does not end with biblical text. They apply themselves also to social reality.

Chapter Three: Social Types and Wealth

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CHAPTER THREE

Social Types and Wealth1. Introduction to the "Etats du Monde" Poems.

Thus far I have attempted to analyse the attitudes of the Old French didactic poets towards wealth in connection with moral types. I have tried to show how the writers felt towards the love and accumulation of riches, and to what extent their attitudes were conditioned by various influences. We have seen how the poets were often reiterating traditional Christian teachings, and any originality lay in treatment rather than attitude or philosophy. This aspect is but one side of the picture. These same didactic poets also tackled the topic of wealth in a more concrete and particular way. They applied their moralising not only to universal types but linked it to the social reality of the time, or at least to their version of contemporary society. This brings me to a study of medieval man in his social environment, as seen through the eyes of contemporary moralists.

For this study we remain with the works so far used in this thesis. We, however, concentrate on that section of the works which are known as "les Etats du Monde". This entails, basically, a critical review of the three estates of society, their duties, their defects and sometimes remedies for their shortcomings.

In order to accomplish a social review the poet could no longer fall back upon Christian commonplace. He had to do more than express universal truths; he had to become a critical social observer. Thus we find that in the longer works so far mentioned, such as Le Livre des Manières of Etienne de Fougères, the Bible of Hugues de Berzé and a number of others, there are at least two literary genres within the framework of a single

work.

In the preceding section we studied that part of the works which may properly be called the sermon. Based on Church teaching and inspired by Christian principles, the sermon dealt with moral types and with general and abstract concepts such as vice, virtue, death. Man figured therein as a universal type, a moral type, little more than the personification of a vice or virtue.

What, then of the "Etats du Monde" section of these didactic works? Here the poets are dealing with man in his social context. He is still a Christian, he should still be regarded as a man before God in the very religious society of the time. But he becomes an individual, or at least the representative of a class, of a group of men, rather than the representative of an abstract ideal. As the poet moves away from the general to the particular, we may often distinguish a change in tone, in approach. The sermon yields to satire or complaint. The social types are often attacked with bitter invective, or they may be ridiculed with subtle irony. Man is regarded as having a well-defined social function, and any deviation from his social duty is pounced upon. Man is judged not in relation to God, to a standard of perfection, as with moral types, but his value as a worthy social being is assessed.

In this section of the Old French poems, we shall see also that the topic of wealth is treated somewhat differently. It is no longer an abstraction. It becomes a tool in the hand of social man. While avarice and covetousness are terms still bandied about, rarely do we find allusion to moral types such as the miser. Predominant in this section of the poems is a consideration of the means of acquiring wealth, and the use made of it when possessed. The teaching of "contemptus mundi" as found in the sermon section is hard to reconcile with social practicalities. Thus we find that poets often adopt an ambivalent attitude. On the one

hand they preach total scorn of the world and renunciation of riches, but then, in connection with social issues, they tacitly admit the possession of wealth and limit their criticisms to the evil acquisition and misuse thereof. Thereby they abandon the sober style of the clerical preacher for the more vigorous one of the social reformer.

2. Origins of the Three Estates Idea.

The three Estates of society as defined in the Old French works corresponded to the three estates of Feudal Society, that is, the Church, the nobility and the peasantry. The origin of this concept of a tripartite division of society is not clear. J. Batany⁽¹⁾ has attempted to trace its history. He finds the first mention of three distinct classes in ninth century England, in Alfred the Great's adaptation of Boethius (Chap. XVII) where it is said that the king "sceal habban gebedmen & fyrdmen & weorcmen". Further references were to be found in the next century and are attributed to Aelfric⁽²⁾. They appear in both Latin and Anglo-Saxon texts. How the idea first developed in England remains a mystery although M. Batany favours the theory of an oral celtic tradition coming from Ireland. What concerns us more is the first record of the concept on the continent. M. Batany dates this at about 1017 in the Carmen ad Robertum Regem by Adalbéron de Laon⁽³⁾. It is next mentioned in 1036 by Bishop Gerard de Cambrai⁽⁴⁾. Henceforth the firmly fixed notion of the three estates, "oratores, bellatores and laboratores", was extensively referred to in literature.

An historian⁽⁵⁾ explains that the terms used were originally "oratores, bellatores and agricultores", but that by the end of the twelfth century the third estate was known by the more general term of "laboratores". This would include not only the land-workers, the peasantry of traditional feudal society, but also encompass the steadily increasing ranks of the townspeople - merchants, artisans, who until this time had no clearly defined place in

the three estates.

The popularity of the social concept of the Three Estates is reflected in the many works produced which may collectively be termed "Les Etats du Monde". Since the divisions harmonised so well with the elements of feudal society at this period, these works have been called the literature of feudalism⁽⁶⁾. The social reality and literary genre certainly flourished concurrently.

The earliest known work of the "Etats du Monde" type was the Latin De Statibus Mundi attributed to Gautier de Chatillon and Walter Map⁽⁷⁾. The earliest extant version in Old French is probably that of Etienne de Fougères, Le Livre des Manières of 1174. An earlier work, le Roman des Romans⁽⁸⁾ announces its intention of examining "les treis ordres" (line 30), but the poet stops short after his survey of the Secular Church.

3. Main Characteristics of the "Etats du Monde" poems.

Although of differing lengths, these works all have many points in common. Firstly a complete review of the three estates and all the members thereof. The order favoured was Church, Nobility, peasantry. Each estate was examined hierarchically, most often in descending order. Thus the second estate would deal with emperors and kings, then dukes, counts and, finally, knights.

The typical procedure adopted by a poet was to enumerate the duties of each estate and then to demonstrate its shortcomings. The ideal is always contrasted with reality, and the present is always compared unfavourably with the past. Some poets profess a belief in the divine origin of tripartite society (e.g. Hugues de Berzé, Bible: ll. 179-186), whereby God had decreed that society was to function by means of a system of interdependence. The priests were to look after the spiritual well-being of all; the nobles and knights assured the protection of the Church and of the weak; the third estate, the land-workers, provided food for all.

Although the third estate was gradually enlarged to include the town-dwellers, the function of the new members of society was never fixed within this theory of interdependence. Idyllic as the notion of mutual aid and dependence was, the Old French moralists claim that the theory was not realised in practical terms: the system was invalidated by the evils of the present time.

Altruism is replaced by personal greed. It is therefore with bitter anger or deep sorrow that the poets attempt to show why society no longer functions as it should.

4. Individual "Etats du Monde" poems.

Among the works so far quoted in this study, many qualify as "Etats du Monde" poems, in part at least. The Roman des Romans (1150), we know, was intended to give a complete social review, but the poet proceeded no further than the Church. The Vers of Thibaud de Marly (between 1182-85) may be described chiefly as a sermon, but he mentions certain elements of the estates: archbishops and bishops, kings and counts. However his is by no means a systematic or comprehensive review. Le Livre des Manières (1174) is the first vernacular "Etats du Monde" poem proper and deals with almost all members of society, with the greatest attention given to the secular church. Part of le Roman de Carité (1183-87) contains a critical appraisal of various social types. The other work by the Reclus de Moilliens, Miserere (c.1200) also contains some social attacks, but this material is not arranged in any systematic way and cannot properly be called an "Etats du Monde" poem. The Bible of Hugues de Berzé (1220) aims at completeness in its social review. Guiot de Provins' Bible (1206) omits the peasantry. The former is more balanced in its arrangement, Guiot's tending to concentrate on the nobility and then on the regular clergy. Guillaume le Clerc's Besant de Dieu (1226) is predominantly sermon, and contains a great deal of allegory. It remains general in tone, except for brief comments on the three estates. The review to be found in the Sermon en Vers (1250) is also brief. In Les Vers

de la Mort of Robert le Clerc (1275) moral types and social types are treated indiscriminately and there is little coherence in the organisation of the criticism of society. However the poet switches from general moralising to bitter invective for certain social categories. Other works from the second half of the thirteenth century include Le Contenz dou Monde by Renaut d'Andon (the second half of the thirteenth century) where emphasis is laid firmly on one social type: the lawyer. Some of Rutebeuf's works are short examples of the genre: La Vie du Monde; les Plaies du Monde; les Etats du Monde. Other works which do not belong to the group of "Etats du Monde" poems may, however, be included in my study of social types although they deal exclusively with one social type.

5. Interest of this Genre for Wealth Themes.

These works are particularly relevant to my study, because according to the Old French poets, the root of all social evil lay in contemporary attitudes to wealth. We have already noticed the importance of the poets' role as 'Laudatores Temporis Acti'. In this section of his work the poet can claim to prove that his assertions of a good past and evil present are true by a vivid depiction of contemporary manners and attitudes. Furthermore the corrosive influence of an attachment to wealth becomes less abstract as we see it in action amidst specific social types. The topic of wealth, when set in a social context, also shows a greater variety, and provides in some ways light relief to the ponderous sermonizing of the poets when they are treating wealth as an evil abstraction.

The study of wealth and social types has proved to be a vast undertaking, largely due to the degree of detail afforded by the various poets. I have, therefore, decided to divide the subject in two. The current chapter will deal with wealth and the three traditional estates: Church, Nobles and peasantry. This decision has been, in part, dictated by the approach of

the poets themselves. Some poets limit their social survey to the 'oratores', 'bellatores' and 'agricultores'; a few add the merchant, apparently as an afterthought. More often the merchant is studied apart and linked more closely with usury, hence with social crime or vice rather than with a social type having his place in the theory of interdependence. According to these works - there is no ideal for the merchant and bourgeois - they do not fit into the original tripartite division of social responsibility.

In view of this, and also because the merchant is so often confused with the usurer who receives a treatment which makes him more of a moral type than a social one, I have devoted the following chapter to the merchant, the usurer and attitudes towards commerce. In Chapter Four I have also included a social figure who although by no means new to society was to provoke great moral censure rather than social criticism in these works - that is the professional entertainer or "jongleur".

The remainder of this chapter will therefore be devoted to a study of the Church, the Nobility and the peasantry of feudal society as depicted in the Old French didactic verse works. These three elements were each assigned a specific role in society and hence had an ideal to which they should aspire. It is the ever increasing distance between their ideal and their reality which angers or saddens our poets and inspires them to speak out against the contemporary ills.

A. The First Estate: The Church.

Of the three estates, the Church and its representatives constitute for most poets the first estate, and are, accordingly, at the head of their social review.

Li plus halz ordres de la crestiente
 Ceo sont li cleric beneeit e sacre,
 (Roman des Romans, ll. 765-66)

Following this pattern are Le Roman de Carité of the Reclus de Moillens, Le Besant de Dieu of Guillaume le Clerc, the anonymous Sermon en Vers.

Etienne de Fougères (Le Livre des Manières) varies the order slightly by putting the King at the head of his review, then proceeding to the Church hierarchy, later returning to the nobility. Other poets, notably the author of le Roman des Romans, Guiot de Provins (Bible) and Hugues de Berzé (Bible) give no systematic review of the three estates, but devote most of their energies to a comprehensive survey of the Church.

This first Estate is composed of secular and regular clergy. We shall see that, on the whole, more attention is given to the secular clergy by poets of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, while the monks, and especially friars, attract more criticism in later works. The obvious exceptions to this general rule are Guiot de Provins and Hugues de Berzé who both provide full accounts of the monastic orders at the beginning of the thirteenth century. In other works, the regular clergy have an ill-defined place in the social order. Sometimes they are to be found at the end of the section on the Church. Sometimes a poet will omit them entirely from his review of the three estates. Such a poet may, however, have opportunity to refer to monks and monasticism outside the framework of the "Etats du Monde" section of his work. I have also observed a distinction between these two elements of the Church and propose to deal first with the secular clergy. The regular clergy which pose certain problems as to their treatment in these works, will be considered in the following section.

1. The Secular Clergy.

The ecclesiastical hierarchy of the secular clergy ranges from its head, the Pope and the papal curia in Rome, down to the parish priest and the untensured clerks. Many poets follow this hierarchical order and deal with each rank in turn; others, particularly in the shorter works which do not come under the heading of "Etats du Monde" poems, treat the clergy in general. Those poets who aim at a complete review of the first Estate may tackle their subject from either end: in ascending order, like Etienne de Fougères

(Livre des Manières), or in descending order like Guillaume le Clerc (Besant de Dieu).

It is invariably the Church which attracts most detailed and lengthy criticism in the "Etats du Monde" poems. Also it is this element of society which is the most popular subject for shorter works. Indeed the twelfth and thirteenth centuries saw a marked trend towards anti-clericalism in literature.

a) Anti-clerical literature.

Many literary historians⁽⁹⁾ record the intensification of attacks made in literature on the Church at this time. Indeed there survive many works of differing nature which have in common the desire to shout their contempt for ecclesiastical corruption - based chiefly on attitudes to, and use of, wealth. We shall see this trend amply demonstrated in the Old French didactic works. It will also be featured in my section on the courtly works, where anti-clericalism also makes an occasional and incongruous appearance. Condemnation of avaricious priests recurs unendingly in the fabliaux⁽¹⁰⁾.

Such attacks on the Church and its alleged corruption were certainly not new in literature. Early Christian Latin poets made this a subject of their works; for example Prudentius (AD. 348-405) who seized upon the heinous crime of simony and its presence amongst contemporary Churchmen⁽¹¹⁾.

Churchmen, in particular, have been vociferous in their attacks on erring colleagues. In the eleventh century men such as Peter Damian and Hildebert of Lavardin were fired with the desire to reform and spoke out frankly against the abuses current in ecclesiastical circles⁽¹²⁾. They were echoed by more popular poets, such as the author of the eleventh century work who laments that all ranks of the clergy are corrupt⁽¹³⁾:

omnis ordo clericorum est absque praesidio.

(Line 9)

In the twelfth century the shower of criticism directed against the Church becomes a torrent. At this time we find French Churchmen still

writing in Latin about the corruption of the Church: Petrus Pictor's De Simonia⁽¹⁴⁾ which aims specifically at abuses in the papal court; Cur ultra studeam?⁽¹⁵⁾ which accuses the clergy of abandoning their studies in favour of perfecting the art of making money and capturing bishoprics. The tone of these works becomes more bitter and probably culminates, for the Latin works at least, in the fierce complaint of Bernard de Morval's De Contemptu Mundi, which includes a lengthy and impassioned attack on the papal court⁽¹⁶⁾.

In the later part of the century, Latin poems written against the clergy continue to abound, and we find such works as those of Gautier de Chatillon⁽¹⁷⁾, an influential secular poet; also the Speculum Stultorum⁽¹⁸⁾ of Nigel Wireker (1179-80), which, while concentrating on the monastic orders, gives some highly critical consideration to the Roman court and to priests in general. Extant manuscripts testify to a proliferation of anti-clerical verse in Latin at this time.

From the late twelfth century, through the thirteenth century, complaint against the Church and its enslavement to wealth continued in Latin mostly in the form of sermons delivered in churches⁽¹⁹⁾. It is at this time that much of the attack on Church venality is expressed in the vernacular and so became more accessible to society as a whole. It is with verse works of this kind that I am primarily concerned.

We have thus far seen ample evidence of a strong anti-clerical feeling present in the literature of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. My period covers the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and we shall find that this literary trend, far from waning, gathers yet more impetus and seems to be an unavoidable topic at this time. Poets, for the most part Churchmen, protest with one voice against the vice they see undermining the contemporary Church. Their combined efforts serve to furnish a very black picture indeed of the ecclesiastical way of life⁽²⁰⁾.

It is my intention in this chapter to analyse the complaints of the Old

secular Churchmen

French poets, to show in what ways they considered/to be defective, and to show how their complaints are all related to contemporary attitudes to wealth. Having established a complete picture of the vices prevalent, I shall then attempt to discover why there were so many complaints against the Church, what prompted the poets to express their views so forcibly; and finally I shall try to gauge to what extent their complaints and their attacks were justified, and how accurate is the picture they present of the contemporary Church.

b) Historical Church Background to the Old French Works

Before examining the poets' view of the Church, let us consider the historical reality at this time. We know that the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were a time of expansion in the western world, when commerce became increasingly important, and when the feudal system co-existed with the emergent town population and their communal movement. Various factors made it a time of prosperity for some, of impoverishment for others. How then did the secular Church stand in these money-conscious times? How did it keep abreast of current changes in society? How did it react to the rapid replacement of a subsistence economy by a money economy?

The Roman Church was rich, but its great wealth was based on land⁽²¹⁾. With the changeover to a partially money economy the Church encountered problems. The mass exodus from rural areas to the towns deprived the Church of farm labour upon which it largely depended for production of revenues⁽²²⁾. With rising prices, the Church's economy began to suffer because it was slow to adapt to changing circumstances. Consequently in order to avoid disastrous impoverishment, the Church had to modify its source of revenues. It did this, says one historian⁽²³⁾, by means of "indulgences, dispensations, fees and annates". However this tactic may have had the desired result of replenishing Church finance, but it produced an unwanted reaction. It forfeited much respect and attracted accusations of avarice and corruption⁽²⁴⁾.

There are two distinct points here. Respect was lost because the Church, whose wealth had for so long rested discreetly in land, was now overtly turning to more modern and obvious methods in order to gain wealth. Such an open quest for wealth would not unnaturally provoke some criticism from those who ignored practicalities, and resolutely believed that the Church should not soil its hands with money and should renounce all involvement with it. Such a vast organisation which had multifarious social responsibilities requiring enormous funds could not, however, afford to joyfully embrace real poverty. We shall see that not even the monks were able to do that. So the Church became inevitably more and more involved in the temporal in order to remain solvent. This was accomplished with a remarkable degree of success, and the Church in the Middle Ages became very versatile at combining its spiritual and temporal roles: "The Roman Church in the Middle Ages was a governor, a landed proprietor, a rent collector, an imposer of taxes, a material producer, an employer of labor on an enormous scale, a merchant man, a tradesman, a banker and mortgage broker, a custodian of morals, a maker of sumptuary laws, a school-master, a compeller of conscience - all in one!"⁽²⁵⁾

It is conceivable that the Church could have accomplished new roles in a perfectly legitimate fashion. The great wealth derived from the various activities was not to be the hoarded wealth of the miser; nor was it to be frittered away on worldly pleasures. It was gained in order to meet essential expenditure, such as: salaries for Church officials, financing crusades, bridge-building, education, almsgiving and poor relief, and administrative expenses⁽²⁶⁾. However more and more Churchmen became associated with covetousness and preoccupation with temporal riches, as Thompson pointed out above. Were these charges true, and what were they exactly? Could the Old French poets have mistaken a necessary contact with wealth and money-making activities for something dishonourable and vicious? Or were there abuses rampant in the Church which sprang from a contact with

money? In a period of increased wealth, the temptations must have been there. How did the Churchmen react to this moral dilemma? Did they abandon their principles when confronted with the possibility of personal enrichment? It was a new problem⁽²⁷⁾. How did they tackle it? Let the Old French moralists and satirists have the first word.

c) Wealth and Churchmen in the Old French Didactic Poems.

General observations

I begin with general comments on Churchmen made by poets, and shall attempt to highlight the most common themes relating to wealth. Then I shall deal with each rank of the Church separately, as do many of the poets I have studied.

i. The Ideal of the Clergy

In a few words, as a prelude to their attack on the clergy, poets will point out the duties of a Churchman and the ideal to which he should aspire. The Reclus de Moilliens simply states the basic function of a man of God:

Labours de clerc est Dieu priier
(Miserere: Stanza CLVI, line 6)

That is his social duty - the spiritual care of souls, to act as intermediary, via prayer, between God and man. On a more moral note, the poet of C'est li mariages des filles au diable⁽²⁸⁾ stresses that the Churchman should have no interest in worldly matters. He urges highly placed ecclesiastics to demonstrate a positive contempt for the material, for money:

Prelat doivent haïr argent,
(ed. Jubinal, ^{N.R.}Vol. I, p. 288, stanza 13)

This contempt for all things worldly does not seem to be much in evidence among contemporary clergy. This is the unanimous verdict of the poets.

ii. Contemporary Reality: Their Covetousness

In his assessment of the corrupt present in respect of the Church, the poet sometimes has recourse to the well-known theme of past virtue and

present decline. So the poet of Sermon en Vers recalls a time when both clergy and laity were without fault. The clergy, especially, set a good example to the rest of society (Stanza XIII). Times have changed, however. The clergy, claims the poet, have lost all interest in spiritual matters. The fate of a man's soul is no longer their prime consideration. They are obsessed by material gain. They show great zeal in the collecting of offerings and the "dîme" and great indifference to spiritual salvation.

Aient il de primes
 Offrendes e dimes,
 Puis ne lur chaut
 L'alme ke devenge,
 Quel veie ele tenge
 Qu'el voit bas u haut.
 (Stanza XXIII)

They devote more attention to "dead men" than to those who are leading saintly lives. From the former they hope to make a profit:

Plus aiment un mort,
 A dreit ou a tort,
 K'un vif dreiturel,
 E li quident prendre
 Plus ke despendre:
 Lur corage est itel.
 (Stanza XXIV)

The poet presumably means that the clergy ignore the living man for whom they have certain responsibilities, perhaps in the form of financial assistance, whereas from a dead man, they hope to receive a legacy. This was a common practice amongst the laity who made death-bed donations to the Church in order to atone for a sinful life and secure their salvation. The Church encouraged the practice. As a literary theme, legacy-hunting reached its highest peak in the late thirteenth century in anti-mendicant literature.

The poet of le Roman des Romans also accuses the clergy of being obsessed by material wealth. They preach not to spread the word of God, but to extort money from their listeners:

Oez des clers trestot primerement
 Qui essemplaire sont a la laie gent:
 La maire entente de lor prêchement
 Est ui cest jor por or ou por argent.
 (ll. 297-300)

One notices that the poet, as was customary, attributes this trait particularly to his own day and age. (line 300). He continues with the greatest literary commonplace of these works - The clergy are covetous! This is an accusation levelled by all the didactic writers without exception. And yet we shall see in the ensuing chapters that the clergy are not the only people guilty of this failing. It is attributed to all classes of society.

In this case, the poet adds to covetousness, lechery. The clergy should avoid both like fire:

Coveitos sont li plusor e aver,
 Molt volent prendre e poi volent doner;
 De lecherie se font trop escrier
 Qu'il deüssent plus que feu eschivier.
 (Roman des Romans: ll. 301-304)

Thibaud de Marly accuses the clergy of debasing the religion upon which the Holy Church is founded. This they do by their sins, notably by their pride and covetousness:

Quar la religion qu'il ont de Deu emprise
 Ont malement faussee et enfrainte et malmise,
 Quant orgueil en recovrent, larrecin, covoitise
 Et molt plus les pechiez que deffent sãnte eglise.
 (Vers, ll. 445-48)

Pride, however, takes second place to avarice, in the eyes of most Old French poets, as the distinguishing trait of contemporary clergy. Indeed it would be tedious to record all the allusions to clerical avarice for they abound in these texts. Let a few examples suffice to illustrate the general theme.

The author of the Poème Moral takes up the theme of the present moral decline. Times have changed, he says; Churchmen have become so greedy and money-grabbing that the traditional image of a Churchman being a shepherd who protects his flock no longer holds good. Nowadays the Churchman is the wolf who attacks the defenceless fold:

Ki les berbis Deu gardent, lent sunt et perizos;
 Des salvemenz des anrmes ne sunt guaires sonios.
 Muit est mueiz li secles, li tensmut perillos,
 Carteiz diut estre pastres, qui est devenuz los.
 (Stanza 116)

So attached are the Churchmen to worldly things that they dread the time when they will have to die. Guillaume le Clerc confesses his amazement that a man of God should share the attitude of a layman towards death.

Dont jeo me merveil durement.
 Car ceo est merveillose chose
 Del bon clerc qui entent la glose.
 (ll. 574-76)

Qu'il se retrait tut ensement
 Del convi com un home lai
 E ensement requiert deslai.
Besant de Dieu (ll. 580-82)

Rutebeuf claims that all clergy are in the grip of avarice, but he makes an exception in the case of "escoliers". As the champion of the poor student, whose condition he has known and can sympathize with, Rutebeuf attributes to this lowly rank of the Church an anti-materialism which is current among present-day students and which indeed is often reflected in the youthful idealism of all students.

Fors escoliers, autre clergie
 Sont tuit d'avarisce vergié.
 Plus est bons clers qui plus est riches;
 Et qui plus a s'est li plus chiches.
 (Les Plaies du Monde: ll. 37-40)
 ed. Faral et Bastin, Vol. I, p. 379)

The clergy are greedy for wealth, and are indeed rich. What is more, the richer they are, the meaner they become. (Cf. Chapter Two, section A, 3). Here the Churchman is equated with the moral type, the miser. Also the line "Plus est bons..." reveals an interesting attitude to wealth which we have already encountered in the preceding chapter, namely that society estimates the worth of a man according to his wealth. Here wealth is a criterion of goodness applied to a man of the Church, and all the more reprehensible for that.

Leaving aside the "Etats du Monde" poems, we find that shorter works

carry the same message. The author of the short allegorical work De Triacle et de Venin⁽²⁹⁾ describes the clergy as being fighters for the cause of avarice:

Li clergiez, ou honor deust estre pleniere,
Portent mes d'avarisce l'escu et la baniere.
(p. 363, quatrain 18)

They amass money and possessions. They are never content with a single living. They practice pluralism, while deserving priests are left with nothing:

S'uns clers a sa provende, ce ne li soufist mie,
Une autre en veut avoir, ce est grant derverie.
Encore fust il miex que cil qui n'en a mie
L'eust et deservist pour soustenir sa vie.
(p. 363, quatrain 20)

The poet of the short work Des Prelats qui sont orendroit⁽³⁰⁾ describes the greed and the miserliness of these Churchmen. Dealing specifically with higher-ranking Churchmen, he claims that they will go to degrading lengths to avoid personal expenditure. When benefiting from another's hospitality they will snatch at all in sight, crumbs and crusts:

Tant par sont plain de coveitise
Et de tout panre sont si aigre
Que le gras vuelent et le meigre,
Et les croutes et la miete.
(page 322)

In the poem, C'est de Dan Denier⁽³¹⁾, the poet lists those who are materially wealthy in the world. The clergy are associated with kings and princes in the accumulation of money:

Denier se prent aus riches mains
Aus rois, aus contes primerains,
Aus clers, aus moines, aus nonnains
Si com je pens.
(pp. 95-96)

Another vice associated with clerical avarice is hypocrisy. This is the charge made by Robert le Clerc. He alleges that the clergy have a far greater attachment to wealth than laymen.

L'argens lor est plus dous que lais."
(Vers de la Mort, Stanza LXIV, line 12)

This love of riches contradicts their spiritual calling, and the fact that they preach poverty and charity while behaving somewhat differently themselves is proof of their hypocrisy.

Cou qu'il preecent ne font mie.
Ce sanle uns rains d'ypocrisie.
(Stanza XL ll. 4-5)

By encouraging these false priests and by giving them money and gifts, a man is not only wasting his money, but is also bringing dishonour upon himself.

Qui plus lor done de monoie
Et plus biaux presens lor envoie,
Plus pert le sien et s'en cunchie.
(Stanza XL, ll. 7-9)

Thus we see that covetousness was very much associated with contemporary Churchmen by the Old French poets. They stress their greed, their love of money, sometimes their miserliness, their hypocritical attitude towards the wealth which they profess to despise. The desire for wealth is, therefore, established. How then do the Clergy get rich? In the days of the Old French poets the means of enrichment for a Cleric must be corrupt and may be resumed in one word - Simony.

iii. Their Simony.

Simony is the social malpractice which Old French writers associate with clerical avarice. The word simony is an inclusive term covering a wide range of activities. Before turning to the didactic texts, it would be useful to consider some of the different aspects of simony.

It is the act of "buying or selling spiritual gifts or offices". In its primary sense simony is the buying or selling of sacraments or sacramental ordinances - e.g. the exacting or paying of money for baptism or the Eucharist, or especially for the conferring or receiving of holy orders, including the episcopate."⁽³²⁾ Thus simony named after Simon Magus⁽³³⁾ could entail a cleric receiving money for any part of his duties that were to be freely available to the laity. It could also mean that a cleric would himself pay

money to someone who had a bishopric to confer. By thus buying a holy office, the priest was assuring himself of a secure income and comfortable living. (See section A, 1, e).

We learn that simony was ever a problem to the Church. I have already referred to works written in the early years of Christianity which condemned the vice. In the medieval period it was no less of a problem and was one of the main targets of the Gregorian reforms of the eleventh century. It survived, however, to be the scourge of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

One historian⁽³⁵⁾ stresses the aspect of simony which rests in the selling of indulgences. Thereby a covetous priest could trade upon the guilt, fear or gullibility of a sinful man and sell him a pardon for his misdeeds. He adds that whereas this practice was not new, nevertheless the attitude that remission of sins could be bought was typical of the commercial spirit of the Middle Ages.

The same historian claims that although such practices were never sanctioned by the Church, they were indeed widespread, and were considered a normal way for the Church to assure revenues⁽³⁶⁾. There can be no doubt that simony was a malpractice well-rooted in ecclesiastical society. The Church authorities, aware of the abuses, tried twice in the late twelfth century to legislate against simony. The council of Tours in 1163 forbade "the exaction of payment for the admission of monks, or for appointments to monastic or clerical posts, or for burials, chrism, and unction with holy oil." The third Lateran council of 1179 condemns the exaction of money for "enthroning bishops, installing abbots, instituting presbyters to benefices, burials, benediction or marriages, or for the other sacraments."⁽³⁷⁾ The publication of these canons testify that simony was a subject of concern to the directors of Church affairs. That they met with little success is suggested by the regular re-issue of these or similarly worded canons⁽³⁸⁾.

Turning to the Old French texts and to a study of the ways in which

the clergy acquired their wealth, we shall find that several of the practices would come under the heading of simony, although the Old French poets do not always label them thus.

Guiot de Provins (Bible) speaks of three maidens once married to the Church - Charitei, Verteiz, Droiture (ll. 1137-39). These have now been replaced by "Traïsons, Ypocresie, Symonie" (ll. 1148-50). Simony is practised openly says the poet (ll. 1154-55). Such an allegorical personification of the vice of simony is not uncommon in these works⁽³⁹⁾.

The poet of C'est li Mariages des Filles au Diable also refers to simony and the Church. Covetousness corrupts all the estates. In the case of the clergy, covetousness manifests itself as simony:

On voit corrompre les estas;
En clerks, en prestres, en prelas,
Là maint volentiers symonie:
(ed. Jubinal, Vol. I, page 283, Stanza 2)

The Anglo-Norman work, le Manuel des Pecheiz⁽⁴⁰⁾ also describes simony as being the result of covetousness. The practices the poet associates with simony are the buying of churches (line 4777), the use of money to gain admission to a monastic order (line 4780) and bribing church officials to confer ecclesiastical preferment (line 4781). The poet adds that those involved in such transactions will pay dearly for them, and they will have cause to regret their sins.

A coveitise apent symonie,
Qe grant peché est, e folie.
Cil sunt qe, pur eglises aver,
Funt la gent pur euz prier,
E lur deners veillent duner
Pur estre presenté a un muster,
E pur estre plus tost ordené
Aucune chose unt duné,
Deu! cum se repentirunt
Quant de ceo acupé serrunt.
Encontre cest peche unt mult parlé
Les seinz Deu qe l'unt dampné,
Car il vendent le seint Esprit,
Qe est Deus od le pere Ihesu Crist.
(ll. 4775-88)

The reference to selling God or the Holy Spirit ("... vendent le seint

Esprit") is common in connection with the practice of simony, more especially as regards the selling of pardons. In the Old French poems I have also found several instances of the phrase "vendre Dieu" with regard to the selling of justice in ecclesiastical law-courts. i.e. it is the person willing and able to bribe the ecclesiastical judge who will be pronounced innocent⁽⁴¹⁾.

Etienne de Fougères refers to the practice of selling Churches or monasteries to the highest bidder, instead of awarding them to the most deserving applicant:

Si bon clierc est de bon tesmoing
Et n'a deniers plus de plein poig,
N'aura mostier ne presne loig,
Si einz la paume ne li oig.

(Livre des Manières: Stanza LXVI, ll. 261-4)

The phrase in line 4 - to grease one's palm - occurs quite frequently in the Old French texts, particularly in connection with the Church⁽⁴²⁾. It suggests secret, underhand financial transactions such as would be made by greedy churchmen who were anxious to acquire a rich living and could only achieve this by compensating for a lack of spiritual suitability by a material bribe. Variations on the phrase include to grease someone's mouth or tongue. We shall be meeting other examples later in this work.

Other mentions of the nature of simony occur in the Poème Moral, where the poet gives the example of charging fees for the performing of church services, and also the practice of selling churches and prebends:

C'est ses conseaus c'on chante la messe par lowier,
C'on les eglizes vent et les provende chier.

(Stanza 772, ll. 3087-88)

The short work De Dan Denier briefly mentions the custom of selling pardons and indulgences, yet another form of simony:

Por deniers fet on les pardons.
(ed. Jubinal, Jongleurs et Trouvères: p. 98)

and

Denier rachate les pechiéz.
(ed. Jubinal, p. 99)

Guillaume le Clerc points out that a man who commits simony is so avaricious that he soon deteriorates into the awesome miser, the moral pervert, described in the preceding chapter. When a Churchman has acquired a lucrative bishopric by means of simoniacal payment, his covetousness will not be checked. Thus the desire for wealth leads to a moral decline:

Et quant aucun est tant hauce
 Par symonie ou par pecche
 Qu'il a un evesche en garde,
 Tantost vers les deners esgarde
 Maintenant aune tresor
 E comence a coillier estor.
 (Besant de Dieu: ll. 597-602)

It is not only simony which contributes to the wealth of the greedy priests. We shall see in greater detail the other methods employed when we study the individual ranks of the Church. Here, however, are a few general observations and hints made by poets about the clergy in general.

The Reclus de Moilliens expresses in imagery the overall attitude of these false Churchmen. Their vocation would have them be shepherds to their flocks, their personal inclination makes them sellers of milk and wool. In other words clergy who should offer protection and spiritual comfort to people, instead exploit those in their care for ill-earned profit:

Peu voi pastours, mout mercheniers.
 Car, ausi com li taverniers
 N'a cure fors de riens venaus
 Dont on voelle doner deniers,
 Tant voi de laitiers, de laniers,
 N'i a mais mestiers reponaus.
 (Roman de Carité: Stanza CXXVI)

In l'Enseignement des Princes⁽⁴³⁾ Robert de Blois appears to accuse the Church of being a centre for much commercial and even usurious activity. It, therefore, attracts the kind of person who, far from helping the poor, would rob them.

Qui plus puet d'avoir amasser
 Et frans homes desserietter,
 Povre genz rainbre et dechacier,
 S'il se vuet plus faire prisier,

Saint Yglise formant s'afiche,
 C'or a premiers iert ele riche
 Por acheter, por plus chier vendre
 Et por prester a monte et randre.
 Tant ont acheté et vandu,
 Que mout sont riche devenu,
 Mout font a prisier tel prelat,
 Qui tant conquierent par achat.
 (ll. 95-106)

The association of Church and commerce is repugnant to most moralists, since the making of money should not be an ecclesiastical preoccupation. The charge of usury is, however, far more serious. For this was a sin not only in Churchmen, but in laity, too. It was universally condemned from the Bible (Old and New Testaments) to the Middle Ages. (See my Chapter Four, B). Yet we shall find other instances of the link between Church and criminal usury.

iv. Their Use of Wealth.

Having acquired their riches by whatever dubious means chosen, what use do these churchmen make of them? Ideally all Church funds should be available for the relief of the poor, sick or distressed. They should also be spent on public works - hospitals, bridges, education. A part would also go towards the running expenses of, and repairs to, the Churches. The Old French poets, however, maintain that the riches accumulated are not destined for altruistic causes. They gain sinfully and spend sinfully, says the poet of le Roman des Romans:

De l'une part od pecchie recevez,
 En malveis us d'autre par despendez.
 (ll. 355-6)

They should use their wealth for charitable purposes, as they urge laymen to do:

Estreitement estrovad raison rendre
 A nos trestoz del folement despendre;
 Molt se deit donc en charite estendre
 Cui Deus ottroie del son demeine a prendre.
 (ll. 357-60)

Guillaume le Clerc agrees that the riches are not spent honestly or

charitably. Money given for God is not used in His service:

Mes jeo vei clers qui riche sont,
 Qui granz rentes e beles ont,
 Qui en malves us les despendent
 E qui a deu petit en rendent.
 (Besant de Dieu: ll. 593-96)

These sentiments are vividly expressed by the poet of De Triacle et de Venin.

The priest is often heard to say: "Give for god": rarely is he heard saying to the poor: "Take!" Their hands are ever outstretched to receive money, but their fists are firmly closed when it comes to giving:

Li prestre dient bien: "Por Dieu, Seigneur, donez:"
 Mes il dient petit aus pauvres genz: "Tenez;"
 Ainz ont les doiz au prendre ouvers et desnoez
 Et en rendre les ont crampis et engluez.
 (Jubinal, Nouveau Recueil, Vol. I, p. 364)

We learn, therefore, what the clergy do not do with the riches they gain. The poets do not neglect to tell us also what they do do with them. Some are content to amass and to hoard; others are foolish spendthrifts. In both cases the poor man is neglected:

Tuit se painnent de deniers enmasser
 (Clerc et lai sont de ce baton feru)
 L'un pour gaster, l'autre pour entasser,
 Ne ja n'en iert as povres secouru.
Ma douleur Veil alegier en chantant; ll. 29-32⁽⁴⁴⁾

The poet of Trop par est cist monde cruaus⁽⁴⁵⁾ reproaches the ecclesiastics for living like lords and for not being charitable. This is probably one of the most commonplace accusations levelled at Churchmen, secular or regular (cf. my next section, on monks).

Il ont touz les biens corporaus
 Et chevauchent les cras chevaus,
 Mes de lor biens ne vuellent departir
 A cil qui es puet de cest siecle fenir.
 (ll. 21-24)

Likewise the poem Bien mostre Dieu apertement⁽⁴⁶⁾ which refers to the illicit profits priests make at burials and the equally illicit use to which these gains are put. The money feeds and clothes the illegitimate companions of these Churchmen, and also provides the priests with sumptuous meals. The poet reminds them that they should only keep what is absolutely

necessary for a simple, frugal way of life. The remainder of any money that they acquire belongs to God's poor:

E, Dieus! tant metent malement
 Ce c'unt des morz ensevlir
 En lor garces paistre et vestir,
 En boivre et maingier trop sovent.
 Il deüssent tant seulement
 Lor lase vie sostenir,
 E le sorplus par boen talent
 Au besogneus Deu departir.
 (Stanza IV, p. 11)

Thus we hear from the poets that the wealth of the Church is abused. Not only is it diverted to personal and selfish purposes by the clergy, but it also encourages their immoral way of life.

v. The alleged result of their corruption on society.

In failing to perform their duties satisfactorily and in being primarily concerned with the acquisition of personal fortunes, the clergy were betraying society as a whole. They, like the other two estates, had their assigned role to play in the general welfare of society. If one of the mutually dependent elements were to fail, society would crumble. This is what some poets point out. By their immoral ways, their lust for money, the clergy are sowing the seeds of despair in society as a whole and alienating man from God.

The Sermon en Vers has it that such corrupt clergy serve as examples of evil to men and will bring about the downfall of the Roman Church:

Al siecle present
 Sunt cels a la gent
 Essample de mal:
 La lur coveitise
 Confunt seint Eglise
 E tost sunt ostal.
 (Stanza XXV)

Guiot de Provins also accuses contemporary clergy of inspiring disgust and even of depriving men of their faith: Guiot makes it clear that he is referring particularly to the secular clergy:

Per foi lou seculaire clergie
 Voi je malement engignié:
 il font lou siecle a mescroire.
 Se font li clerc et li prevoire
 et li chanoinne seculier;
 Sil font la gent desespereir.
 (Bible: ll. 925-30)

He repeats this later, emphasising the role of covetousness in the moral decline of society and which is initiated by the Church:

mes jes voi si abandoneiz
 en pechié et en covoitise,
 qu'il ont desesperance mise
 en la gent,
 (ll. 1028-31)

Guiot is echoed by Rutebeuf who also links clerical avarice with loss of faith amongst the laity:

Sainte Eglise la noble, qui est fille de roi,
 Espouze Jhesucrit, escole de la loi,
 Cil qui l'ont aservie ont fait mout grant desroi.
 Ce a fait couvoitize et defaute de foi.
 (La Vie du Monde: ll. 9-12)
 Faral et Bastin, Vol. I, pp. 395-99)

We see, therefore, that according to the Old French poets, money was not only misappropriated, but was also misused. They level grave charges at the Church and all concur in signalling the moral turpitude of the clergy. Their attacks appear all the more damning when one considers that they are nearly all made by poets who were themselves Churchmen - of those poets who can be identified only Rutebeuf and Robert de Blois were not in Holy Orders. Thus their own position in the Church, their claim to represent the good element therein, would seem to lend weight to their arguments and observations.

It is not yet the time to come to any definite conclusions on the medieval clergy. So far we have a broad outline of the abuses that the Old French poets allege were current in the Church - namely the love of money, the evil acquisition thereof, the subsequent misuse thereof - all of which contributed to dishonour the Church in the eyes of the laity and to pave the way for a godless society. These accusations are often vague, and aimed at the Church in general. The same poets, however, also make more

specific charges when they examine the Church hierarchy in greater detail.

I now propose to do likewise.

d) The Church at Rome

i. Its place in Medieval literature.

Throughout the works I have studied there is much bitter criticism of the Churchmen in Rome, especially for their alleged avarice. The corruption at the head of the Roman Church was at the time a favourite theme of moralists and satirists⁽⁴⁷⁾, in Latin, French, German and English. The medieval Latin works include such notable attacks as the De Contemptu Mundi of Bernard of Morval (1150)⁽⁴⁸⁾ who painted an eloquent and damning word picture of the state of the Roman curia and its total submission to the love of wealth and associated vices. The attacks made in this impassioned and influential work are echoed elsewhere. In Nigel Wireker's Speculum Stultorum, Rome becomes an ever-open mouth, avid to swallow the wealth of the whole world⁽⁴⁹⁾. Nor does Walter Map's De Nugis Curialium spare Rome. Rome's enslavement to avarice is not surprising, says the author - It's very name spells out the initials of the definition of avarice: "hoc enim nomen Roma ex avaricie sueque diffinicionis formatur principiis, fit enim ex R et O et M et A et diffinicio cum ipsa, radix omnium malorum avaricia."⁽⁵⁰⁾ And this is the literary portrait of Rome which is either passed down to our Old French poets or recreated by them, as we shall see.

ii. Papal Finances

Before I consider the Old French poets' treatment of this theme, I shall sketch in the historical background of the Papal court with particular reference to events and circumstances which might have provoked the reaction we find from the medieval moralists and satirists.

As Bishop of Rome, the Pope was supreme head of the Church and, as such, responsible for the making of laws, the levying of taxes and the rendering of justice⁽⁵¹⁾. The period I am studying (1150-1300) was, says the Church

historian G. Lebras⁽⁵²⁾ a crucial time for Papal finances. A considerable expansion of activity necessitated a corresponding expansion of revenue. The previous sources of income were no longer sufficient. Such a state of affairs called for a complete reorganisation of papal finances. Hence the creation in Rome of a "ministry of finance", the apostolic camera to deal with the increasingly complex means of acquiring and using Church funds.

There were various sources of income available to the Roman Court. I shall briefly outline the chief of these⁽⁵³⁾. In the first place there was domanial income, that is rent from farmers who leased Church estates. This source of income was, however, rapidly diminishing, since by the middle of the eleventh century the Church estates were greatly reduced, having passed into lay hands⁽⁵⁴⁾. However the temporal rulers and feudal overlords did contribute something to the Church at Rome. There were special tributes and levies, such as Peter's Pence, associated particularly with England.

The clergy, too, were expected to pay money to the head of the Church: One of the more important taxes was an "income tax" instituted by Innocent III in 1199 for a noble cause: The clergy were obliged to pay "one fortieth of their ecclesiastical incomes for one year in aid of the Holy Land"⁽⁵⁵⁾. The clergy grumbled, but in vain. There was no hope of evasion "because the ecclesiastical penalties which they incurred thereby were so heavy"⁽⁵⁶⁾.

"Services", too, helped to boost the papal income. These were benefice taxes paid by patriarchs, archbishops, bishops and abbots. Visitation taxes were levied when Churchmen visited the tombs of the apostles, pilgrimages which were obligatory. Then there were spoils - the right to the estates of dead ecclesiastics, a right usually exercised only in the case of private property. Another form of papal tax which seems to have rankled the Old French poets particularly was the fines and fees levied by the papal court of justice. We shall find many allusions to this and the abuses connected with it later in this section.

Such widespread economic activity on the part of the spiritual head of the Church was bound to be unfavourably interpreted by many. Whatever their motives for doing so, the Old French poets illustrate what would appear to be the typical reaction of churchmen at least. Motives we shall consider later, attitudes we shall now attempt to assess.

iii Covetousness and Rome.

In many instances in the Old French texts, attack is not made directly on the Pope, or the cardinals or other Roman ecclesiastical officials but on the whole nerve-centre of the Church in Rome. To this end "Rome" becomes the symbol of all that is evil in the Christian Church. Rome becomes an allegorical place peopled by grasping, corrupt clergy⁽⁵⁷⁾. The attitude of Guiot de Provins to the Roman curia seems to be particularly bitter. He launches his attack with vigorous, impassioned language, and we notice that for him "Rome" is synonymous with Avarice, being the source of all vice:

Rome nos assote et transglout,
 Rome traft et destruit tout,
 Rome c'est les doiz de malice
 dont sordent tuit li malvais vice.
 C'est uns viviers plains de vermine.
 (Bible: ll. 769-73)

For Guiot, Rome is a destructive force and to it he implicitly attributes the decline of the Church in France. We assume he is referring to a moral decline occasioned by the corrupt head of the Church, but he could also be inferring that Rome is destroying France, not only by its bad example, but also by its exorbitant demands for money from all social categories. That Rome's corruption is primarily associated with money is obvious when Guiot takes up his theme again: money rules in Rome, and the greedy tricksters hold sway over other men. Contemporary Rome is steeped in sin; it was not always so:

Tout ceu nos vient, tout muet de Romme
 Or ne vaut rien vois de prodome,
 quar contre avoir n'i ait nus voiz.
 C'est la fontaine, c'est la doiz

dont sordent tuit li leit pechié;
 bien nos ont lou siecle chaingié
 et tornei ceu d'avant darriere.
 Guille n'est tant en nul lieu chiere:
 la sont coronei a honor
 trestuit li maistre guilleor.
 (Bible: ll. 915-24)

Guiot calls out for reform. He wants the covetousness of the Romans stamped out, as well as the other sins of which they are guilty.

Je di que ce seroit raisons
 C'on destrusce la covoitise
 qui en Rome s'est toute mise,
 et l'orguel, et la felonie:
 ou mont n'ait tant de trecherie.
 (ll. 778-82)

The lack of Charity in Rome is an important theme in the works of the Reclus de Moilliens. The poet finds in his quest for Charity that she has moved from Rome and has been replaced by "Covoitise", represented as the holder of the purse-strings:

"Car on te (Carité) mist a le foriere
 Par conseil d'une pautoniere:
 Ch'est Covoitise, le boursiere,
 Ki ne redoute traïson
 Faire, tant a pecune kiere.
 Fauscuers tapist sous bele kiere,
 Quant on li fait d'argent poison."
 (Carité: Stanza VIII, ll. 6-12)

The picture of covetousness as purse-bearer at Rome occurs again in the Besant de Dieu of Guillaume le Clerc. The poet describes Rome in allegorical terms and says that personified vices rule supreme. Avarice is the mean server at meals. Miserliness is the cook. (ll. 1909-1913) Covetousness controls finances, and handles the profits earned by her colleagues Usury and Fraud. (ll. 1953-57) (See Chapter One, section C, 4) Guillaume le Clerc elsewhere in this work presents the traditional image of the Christian Church as a ship. Some of the Christians on board are, by their greed for money, "rocking the boat" and turning it off course. The poet is referring to the Roman contingent driven by lust for gold and silver:

Sachiez que en ceste nef sont
 Trestuit li crestien del mont.
 Mes il i a tant d'une gent

Coveitose d'or e d'argent
 Qu'il font la nef croistre e branler
 E hors de dreite veie aler.
 (ll. 2273-78)

Another allegorical presentation of the Romans in connection with avarice is to be found in the Tournoiement de l'Antecrit (Date c. 1230) by Huon de Méry. Avarice is the leader of a military force and his recruits are made up largely of "Romans".

Ja estoit prime et plus, ce cuit,
 Quant je vi vèner a grant bruit
 Avarice, et a grant desroi.
 Avarice ot en son conroi
 grant gent, mes molt i ot Romains.
 (ll. 761-65)

Thus one sees that the overall picture is, as Robert le Clerc expresses it, that Rome has espoused Money.

Couvoitise s'est vantée
 K'ele a Rome les ieus cilliés
 Par le monioie envenimée
 A cui ele l'a mariée
 (Vers de la Mort: Stanza LXXII, ll. 2-5)

iv. Simony and Rome.

The Old French poets do not fail to level the charge of simony at the churchmen of Rome. The monk Helinand makes general accusations regarding simony but couches them in powerful images. He establishes an etymological link between "Rome" and "ronger" and claims that Rome is a ravaging predator to some, but to those guilty of simony, Rome provides a convenient shield. The poet invokes Death and asks it to visit Rome:

Va moi saluer la grant Romme,
 Qui de rongier a droit se romme,
 Car les os ronge et le cuir poile,
 Et fait a simoniaus voile
 De chardonai et d'apostoile:
 Romme est li mauz qui tot asomme,
 (Vers de la Mort: Stanza XIII, ll. 4-9)

Helinand continues by maintaining that everything at Rome has been debased. For this he uses the terminology of forgery: Rome produces false coins, silvers lead, so that one cannot tell the false from the true:

Romme emploie maint denièr faus
 Et tot fraitin et tot seon,
 Et si sorargente le plon
 Qu'en ne conoist les bons des maus.
 (Stanza XIV, ll. 9-12)

Rutebeuf, too, refers to the simonical practices of Rome:

Roume, qui delst estre de nostre loi la fonde,
 Symonie, avarice, et touz maux y abonde
 Cil sunt plus conchié qui doivent estre monde
 Et par mauvais essample honissent tout le monde.
 (De la Vie du Monde: ll. 17-20
 ed. Faral et Bastin, Vol. I, p. 395)

Anyone going to Rome well-provided with money can be sure of being granted a prebend:

Qui argent porte a Roume, asseiz tost provende a:
 (line 21)

Is this Rutebeuf's interpretation of the "services", one wonders. We know that dues were paid by the higher Churchmen "for the confirmation of their appointments and by archbishops on receipt of the pallium"⁽⁵⁸⁾. Rutebeuf^e could be referring to this tax on benefices - which was very unpopular with the clergy⁽⁵⁹⁾. The charge of simony should be levelled at both participants in the agreement: the Papal officials for demanding money for ecclesiastical preferment, the would-be bishop for thinking he could buy himself into office. History would suggest, however, that only Rome was to blame, since the tax was initiated there, and new incumbents to Church prebends had no choice but to pay.

An identical accusation is made in the short work, Des Prelaz qui sont orendroit (ed. Jubinal, N.R., II, pp. 316-25), which claims that the deserving clergy are not awarded prebends; they go instead to the highest bidder:

Je voi les preus, je voi les sages,
 Qui volantiers deserviroient
 Les provandes, s'il les avoient,
 Et si n'em pueent mie avoir;
 Einz les ont cil, par leur avoir,
 Qui n'aiment Dieu ne ne le servent,
 Ne lor provandes ne deservent:
 (ed. Jubinal, N.R., II, p. 323)

Consequently the undeserving prelates revel in the profits yielded by their

benefices, while the saintly Churchman is obliged to beg with the poor at their gates:

Il ont de roi les palefrois
 Et les coupes d'or et d'argent;
 Et tu avec la povre gent
 Dou pain demandes a lor porte.
 (ed. Jubinal, N.R., II, p. 325)

Another anonymous work, Bien mostre Deus apertement, lists briefly some of the abuses based on simony prevalent in Rome: What is condemned as a sin will be pardoned and sanctioned for money. They sell what God intended to be given. They allow consanguine marriages, thus flouting Church law for payment:

Rome, doñ nostre loi descent,
 Nos par fait del tot esbañr,
 C'a son hues veaut tot retenir.
 Ce que por pechié nos deffent:
 Por loier asq̄t et sospent,
 Et vant ce que Deus roue ofrir
 Et mariesi pres parent
 Que la loi nò doit consentir.
 (ll. 33-40)
 (ed. Jeanroy & Langfors, pièce VI, pages 10-11)

v. The Papal Law Courts

It is without doubt the dubious administering of justice in the papal law courts which inspires in the Old French poets the strongest complaints. That these courts were corrupt was a grave charge, but one which was made repeatedly, and the venality of the ecclesiastical lawyers proves a commonplace theme in the works I am studying.

Up to the twelfth century the Pope had been solely responsible for judging legal cases brought before the consistory. But as cases grew rapidly in number, the Pope was obliged to delegate his powers. By the middle of the thirteenth century, the Pope appointed permanent lawyers and officials⁽⁶⁰⁾. Prior to the strictly organized courts, things would appear to have been in a sorry state, if the medieval poets are to be believed. There is many a protest about the cost of appeal to Rome⁽⁶¹⁾. That the cost must have been considerable is borne out by the fact that the fees exacted by the

advocates and auditors of the judicial division of the curia were an important source of income for the papacy.

The medieval poets, however, do not merely complain that costs were exorbitantly high. They often openly accuse the courts of being corrupt and awarding "justice" to the richest plaintiff. This selling of "justice" was particularly abhorrent and there are many allusions to it⁽⁶²⁾.

Etienne de Fougères expresses the medieval view of selling justice in general. It is the crime of Judas, and is tantamount to selling Christ:

Vendre justice est Jhesum vendre
 Per a Judas qu'il seit entendre
 Qui de Jhesu velt deniers prendre,
 Peis se corut au sellr-pendre.
 (Livre des Manières: Stanza LXXVIII)

It is the Roman de Carité which develops most fully the theme of venality of the court of Rome. In this court, he states, money talks and the law listens. The poet uses vivid imagery to express this idea:

Rome mesure home coment
 Le bourse est grans, non l'estature;
 Le lois se taist quant ors murmure;
 Drois se tapist a son d'argent.
 (Stanza XVIII: ll. 3-6)

Ecclesiastical lawyers will not defend anyone unless they are bribed to do so: The poet here uses the familiar phrase "to grease" - "oignement" - which appears so often in this context.

Romains a langue seke et dure,
 Ne puet parler sans oignement;
 Et ses huis siet tant sekement
 K'il me puet ovrir sans ointure.
 (Stanza XVIII, ll. 9-12)

When such a state of affairs exists, it is always the rich man who easily finds legal representation and who wins his case - regardless of whether or not he is the innocent party⁽⁶³⁾.

Romans a le langue legiere.
 Quant ele est ointe, est bien parliere,
 Et a langue desointe est mus;
 Et ki bien li oint se carniere,
 Entre ens; se non, voist s'ent/arriere!
 Li povres s'en reva confus,
 Li rikes entre ens sans refus.

Bien ses tu ki a Rome fus
 Coment tel ointure i est kiere.
 Quant plus est d'oint d'argent emplus
 Li Romains, tant seke il plus.
 Romains fu fuis d'une orde ointiere.
 (Stanza XIX)

This leads the poet onto the more general consideration of the corrupting influence of gold and love of it. The more a man has, the more lacking in good human qualities he becomes:

Romains, en grant ordure mains;
 Ors est ors et desordenés,
 Et plus ors li plus afinés;
 Ki plus a or, mains est humains.
 (Stanza XX, ll. 9-12)

The Reclus de Moilliens demonstrates the ill-treatment received by a poor man who goes to Rome seeking justice. He cannot even gain entry.- one is only admitted when one has proved the extent of one's wealth by tipping the porter handsomely⁽⁶⁴⁾.

Bele kiere fait a l'entrée
 Li portiers, quant voit ens entrer
 Dont espoire argent ou ventrée.
 Covoitise est toute esventrée
 Adès, tant ne set enventrer.
 (Stanza X, ll. 8-12)

The poet recounts an amusing anecdote of a woman who goes to Rome in order to fight a law-suit. Beforehand she is advised by someone more worldly-wise than she that she should "grease the palms of the lawyer".

"Suer," dist-il, "ses tu ton essoigne?
 Chil hom aidier pas ne s'aloigne
 Chelui ki le paume li oint.
 Il a appris ke on li oigne;))
 Oign li, si fera te besoigne.
 (Stanza XVI, ll. 7-11)

Unfortunately the naive woman takes this advice literally, with disastrous results.

The Roman des Romains shares the views of the Reclus about the so-called justice at Rome. The only way one can hope for "justice" is to take along plenty of gold and thus buy a favourable verdict:

Qui volt a Rome sa cause bien traitier,
 Si porte od sei alcun rouge denier:
 Mielz en porrad sa besoigne espleitier!
 (ll. 365-68)

Similarly, Dan Denier:

Denier fet sa besoingne à Romme,
 Por nient i vait;
 Qui dant denier maine à son plait,
 Quanqu'il commande si est fait.

(ed. Jubinal, Jongleurs et Trouvères, p. 96)

Thus it is money which rules supreme at Rome, cry most of the moralists. It is this greed for money which is destroying the Church. The papal ecclesiastics have to answer grave charges. Although the attacks are often made at Rome in general, by which we understand all the Church officials which make up the central administration of the Church, quite often the different ranks are named.

vi The Pope.

On the whole the Pope comes off lightly. Rarely is he attacked directly. The moralists seem loth to attack one individual, particularly the head of the Church, of which they are, for the most part, members. They satisfy themselves with general complaints aimed at Rome, a vague general all-embracing term, or more particularly the cardinals and legates.

Indeed, nearly all the moralists, if they mention the Pope at all, adopt the tactic of John of Salisbury who, as recorded in his Polycraticus, frankly told Pope Hadrian IV of the evil reputation of the Roman curia, but was careful to absolve the Pope himself of the crimes of his satellites. This record of an apparently real conversation between the Pope and John of Salisbury is a particularly interesting document since it dates from the beginning of the period I am studying (1159) and so predates most of the criticisms of the Old French poets. However the observations and complaints made by John of Salisbury coincide exactly with those voiced by the later poets and those of his contemporary Bernard of Morval. The originality of this particular catalogue of complaints is that it was presented directly to the Pope and we have his recorded reaction: John's complaints are the commonplace ones: the evident wealth and lordly life-style of the Roman clergy; their contempt and, hence, avoidance of the poor; oppression of the

churches by extortion; their obsession for gain. There is tentative criticism of the Pope when John says that the people resent his sumptuous palaces and rich garments. John confesses that he, too, believes that there is truth behind the complaints since one who should know, Guido Dens, the Cardinal Presbyter of St. Polentiana, has testified to the same abuses and has noted the hold avarice has on the Roman clergy. John, however, believes that not all the clergy are guilty, but the reputation of all is sullied by the wrongdoing of a few. More daringly, John asks the pope why he extorts gifts and payment from his subjects, why he hesitates to reform those around him. He makes a special point of saying that justice is the queen of virtues and should never be sold. These were the things with which John of Salisbury reproached the Pope⁽⁶⁵⁾. Public opinion, the writer and at least one cardinal concur in believing the abuses to be real. The Pope himself cannot deny the charges, but attempts to justify some of the papal activities. Here is a summary of his reply.

The Pope's reply took the form of an allegory - where the members of the body conspired against the stomach which they claimed was greedy and devoured everything, while doing nothing in return. Those parts of the body who toiled to provide food for the stomach staged a strike in order to starve it. The inevitable result was that all parts of the body grew weak and ill. The conclusion is, therefore, that the stomach must receive plenty in order to nourish the whole body. So with the Church, the Roman court, the stomach, consumes a great deal of wealth, but it is not for selfish reasons but for the general well-being of Christendom. The magistrates may be grasping, says the Pope, but they demand huge fees not for themselves, but for others⁽⁶⁶⁾. We know that the Old French poets interpreted their motives quite differently. John of Salisbury, however, concludes that the Pope is in an extremely difficult and vulnerable position to be at the centre of such controversy, and responsible for such complex spiritual and

material matters. No man can be considered more wretched than he⁽⁶⁷⁾.

I return now to the Old French texts to see which of the moralists follow John of Salisbury's diplomatic path in distinguishing between the Pope and the other clergy under him.

Some of the poets were writing during the time of Pope Innocent III, one of the greatest popes of the medieval period⁽⁶⁸⁾. We have already had occasion to refer to him in relation to his "contemptus mundi" treatise De Miseria Humane Conditionis⁽⁶⁹⁾. He appeared then as a saintly man who preached the scorn and avoidance of all things material and who lauded evangelical poverty⁽⁷⁰⁾. There was, however, another side to Innocent III. When pope, he was not, and indeed could not be, a religious recluse. He had to direct the activities of a rapidly expanding Church at a time of great economic upheaval and change. His achievements were many. On the temporal side he "drove the Emperor from Italy; he appointed himself guardian of Sicily and suzerain of England; he disposed of the German crown; he controlled Hungary, Aragon and Castile; he revived the crusade."⁽⁷¹⁾ As a Churchman he was charitable, and an instigator of reforms designed to stamp out simony⁽⁷²⁾. He condemned the extravagant dress of the clergy, and their loose morals, drunkenness and gluttony. His personal crusade against abuses within the Church are shown in the canons of the fourth Lateran council of 1215⁽⁷³⁾. It was he who encouraged the two saintly men who had returned to evangelical poverty - Saint Francis and Saint Dominic. At the same time it was Innocent III who greatly increased the power of the Church over temporal rulers and who fostered a complex financial organisation which would safeguard the wealth of the Church⁽⁷⁴⁾. It was during his period of office that the tax on clerical income was introduced (1199).

Which aspects of this religious leader do the poets chose to comment on? Of those writing between 1198 and 1216 there are mixed reactions.

The Reclus de Moilliens excludes the Pope from his criticisms. He clears the Pope of any connection with mercenary dealings, and blames the Pope's tarnished reputation on his associates and subordinates.

Papes ne set com argens sone;
 Onkes n'i tendi son giron.
 Mais chil ki li sont environ
 Font souvent blasmer se persone;
 Tieus maisnie entor lui fuisone
 Dont male novele resone."
 (Carité: Stanza IX, ll. 3-8)

Guiot de Provins (Bible, 1206)^{ca.} is more directly critical of the Pope. While admitting that the cardinals and other officials are responsible for the corruption at Rome, he nevertheless reproaches the Pope for not doing something to curb the activities of the cardinals.

Grant pechié est qu'il n'ait consoil
 d'autre gent; et molt me mervoil
 quant il es boins ne se consoille.
 (ll. 739-41)

Thus for Guiot the Pope may be well-intentioned, but he is misguided. However Guiot's work predates the greater part of Innocent's reform measures, and certainly the Lateran council of 1215. He continues by advising the Pope not to follow a path of self-destruction by listening to the Roman clergy, but he should take his lead from Christ and the Virgin Mary. (ll. 756-61; 783-84).

Etienne de Fougères wrote at the time of Alexander III⁽⁷⁵⁾. As a bishop he was not in a position to give vent to outspoken criticism. He contents himself with setting out the duty of the Pope. That such a reminder should be necessary in his opinion is perhaps significant of the moralists' attitude and veils a subtle suggestion that the Pope was guilty of the things listed which he should not do.

He must not value worldly glory for it is worthless and unreliable:

Ne deit preisier glorie del monde,
 Plus tot vole que nule arunde,
 Tot redefist quant que habunde
 Et quant que vit, mort, qui qu'en gronde.
 (Livre des Manières: ll. 469-72)

The Pope is in a very elevated position. Should he fall, his wealth will be of no use to him. Surely there is a hint of criticism here: namely that the Pope has too much useless wealth:

Nostre chef est, nostre salu;
Molt est posé sor haut talu,
Et s'il rechiet en la palu,
Que li aura son or valu?
(ll. 481-84)

Guillaume le Clerc⁽⁷⁶⁾ wrote at the time of Honorius III⁽⁷⁷⁾ and in his comparison of the Church with a ship, he says that the Pope is surrounded by unworthy crew members. It is they who are responsible for the corruption of the Church (Basant de Dieu: ll. 2302-07). How can the Pope, asks the poet, remain so oblivious to the danger which surrounds him in these evil men?

Car quant cil qui la nef gouverne,
Quant bel fait et quant il yverne,
Est de tel gent avirone
Qui li ont a mangier done
E a beuvre cent mile feiz
E sont ades a ses conseiz,
Coment se porra il por rien
De lor venim garder si ben
Qu'il n'en sente aucune estencele?
(ll. 2327-35)

The incomplete work, Sur les Etats du Monde⁽⁷⁸⁾ is the only Old French work which offers frank and damning criticism of the Pope: The anonymous poet accuses him of being more covetous than any other man. He grants his favour to anyone ready to give him money. A man who will pay money readily will never be punished for any sin.

Veez l'apostolie de Rume,
Plus est cuvoitus que altre hume;
Qui cinc cenz mars d'argent li nume,
Tostli charra del dos grant sume.
Ja n'ert grevez
Pur nul forfet qui des diners dune a plenté.
(Stanza VII, ll. 37-42)

The Pope can make a humble clerk a legate or an archbishop, whether the latter wishes it or not. There will be a heavy price to pay however and yet it is an easy acquisition when only money is needed.

Quanque il dist tut est raisun;
 Legat pot faire d'un clerjun,
 U arcevesques; voille u nun .
 Mult li vent chier le palliun;
 N'est pas emblé,
 Ja nel'avra si quitement qu'il n'ait custé.
 (Stanza VIII, ll. 43-48)

This poet lays the blame for such simonical transactions firmly on the Pope. The new incumbent is pictured as an unwilling victim of his ecclesiastical leader. He is forced to accept an archbishopric and a large sum of money is demanded from him.

Representing the second half of the thirteenth century, there is Rutebeuf⁽⁷⁹⁾. Apart from a short attack on Rome in general in La Vie du Monde (see above page 195) there is little reference to the Pope. Rutebeuf, a supporter of Guillaume de St. Amour in the quarrel between the secular teachers and the mendicants at the University of Paris (see section 2,C,2,h) had no reason to praise the Pope who banned Guillaume and was deaf to all appeal for mercy. Thus all references to the Pope⁽⁸⁰⁾ in the works of Rutebeuf tend to be motivated by an animosity springing from political allegiance rather than any sense of moral outrage - as for example his grumble that if the Pope could have someone banished from a country where he was not temporal ruler, then the power of the actual rulers counted for nought. (Le Dit de Guillaume de Saint-Amour: ll. 16-20: Faral et Bastin, Vol. I, p. 244).

vii. Cardinals

Although the Pope himself was not often the target for any harsh criticism, other church officials at Rome certainly were. We have already met instances where the poets refer to the Pope's entourage as being the corruptive influence in Rome. Other poets are more precise, and attack the cardinals.

The cardinals were a very powerful body in Rome in the period I am studying, and played an important part in the government of the Church.

They were appointed by the Pope and his choice was apparently often influenced by temporal considerations⁽⁸¹⁾.

Exercising the higher functions at the Roman curia, the cardinals usually controlled the distribution of benefices, episcopal elections and other responsible tasks⁽⁸²⁾. They also organized crusades, and passed judgement in legal matters arising from disputes about benefices, etc.⁽⁸³⁾

The cardinals seem to have had quite considerable financial resources. The Pope gave them benefits and rich gifts, says Lebras⁽⁸⁴⁾, and they also received pensions from princes, and if they were from a monastic order, they received payment from this quarter also.

The Pope relied a great deal upon the cardinals not only for practical administration, but also for advice - the very advice which poets such as Guiot de Provins (my page 202) urged the Pope to avoid. The cardinals also managed the law courts, which earned them a suspect reputation.

In his review of the cardinals, Etienne de Fougères does not offer overt criticism. He begins by listing some of their functions of these officers aboard the Church-ship, namely their role as judges in civil and criminal law (Livre des Manières: ll. 513-16). In the performance of their juridical duties, they should be beyond reproach and should not accept payment for rendering justice:

Moult deivent a reison entendre
 Que sor els n'i ait que reprendre.
 Vilanie est de loier prendre
 Et justise por deniers vendre.
 (ll. 517-20)

They should avoid the lure of covetousness:

Garder deivent que coveitise
 A loier prendre nes atise;
 Q de raine leial justice,
 E poi dure malveise prise.
 (ll. 521-24)

It seems likely that Etienne de Fougères in telling cardinals what not to do, is probably hinting that they are in fact guilty of these malpractices. We remember that Etienne was Bishop of Rennes and, presumably, could not

jeopardise his own position in the Church hierarchy by openly attacking those Church officials who could so easily depose him.

Guiot de Provins is more outspoken. He does not hesitate to accuse them of being in the grip of covetousness:

Tout est alei tout est perdu
quant li chardenal sont venu,
qui viennent sai tuit alumei
de covoitise, et embrasé.
(Bible:ll.665-668)

He goes further: they are perpetrators of simony, they lead evil lives, they betray their faith by selling God and His mother. The last is evidently a reference to their selling justice:

Sa viennent plain de simonie
et comble de malvaise vie,
sa viennent sens nulle raison,
Sans foi, et sens religion,
Car il vendent Deu et sa meire
(ll. 669-73)

Guillaume le Clerc reverts to the image of the Church-ship and refers to the cardinals as sailors and pirates (galioz) who are too fond of gold. He compares the cardinals' greed for money to the overwhelming thirst of the feverish man, an image often evoked in the case of the miser. (See Chapter Two, A, 3).

Ces galioz, ces mariners,
Cil aiment trop roges deniers.
Onques uncore nul fevros
Ne ydropique ne lepros
Ne but autresi volontiers
Com cil prenent les deners.
(Besant de Dieu: ll. 2283-88)

In the short work Du Denier et de la Brebis⁽⁸⁵⁾ the denier claims that he is coveted by the cardinals of Rome:

"Covoitiez sui par tout le mont,
Nels des chardonaus de Romme;
Il n'a el monde si haut homme,
Se je li fail, ne soit hontex
Et si ne sui pas trop coustex:
(Jubinal, vol. II, p. 2678)

Helinand gives a fictitious etymology to the word 'chardonaus': He compares cardinals to lumps of coal which glow when given gifts:

Morz, fai enseler tes chevaux

Por sus metre les chardonaus,
 Qui luisent comme mort charbon
 Por la clarté qu'il ont en aus:
 Di lor que mout ies dure a çaus
 Qui plus aerdent que chardon
 A bel present et a grant don.
 Et por ce ont chardonal non.
 (Vers de la Mort: Stanza XIV, ll. 1-8)

viii. Legates.

As a sort of extension to the cardinals were the legates. They were often cardinals themselves but they travelled away from Rome usually with a special mission⁽⁸⁶⁾. There were legates of different ranks, however, and each rank had a particular function⁽⁸⁷⁾. Those drawn from the lower orders - archdeacons, canons, priors and abbots, were given assignments such as the collection of taxes levied by the Pope.

From the direct evidence of the poets, the nature of the cardinals and papal legates was greatly instrumental in forming the picture held by French society of the papacy. The legates, in particular, were responsible for tarnishing the reputation of the Roman Church, since their travels brought them into close contact with the ordinary Churchmen of countries like France. Upon these official representatives, the image of the Pope relied. The impression these Churchmen seem to have left with our poets is certainly not a favourable one⁽⁸⁸⁾. Few mention them directly. The characteristic which rankles, however, is their function as tax collectors. Guiot de Provins seems particularly aggrieved that they take money out of France.

L'avoir enportent li legat
 dont tant i ait guille et barat.
 (Bible: ll. 707-8)

In his section on cardinals, at one point Guiot is obviously referring to cardinal-legates since he speaks of them travelling. He asks what they do with the money they carry off. They certainly do not use it to build bridges, roads and hospitals:

Que font de l'or et de l'argent
 qu'il enportent outre les mons?
 Chauciées, hospitals ne pons
 n'an font il pas, ce m'est a vis.
 (ll. 680-3)

Guillaume le Clerc also accuses the legates of shady dealing⁽⁸⁹⁾. To him they appear to be greedy, self-seeking, forgetful of their papal mission for their own interests. They take over churches and pass them onto relations, they perform their duties only in return for silver, or, better, gold:

Il m'est avis qu'il ne font mie
 Tut solonc dieu lor legacie.
 Les riches iglises conquerent
 E les riches evesquiez quarent
 A lor nevoz, a lor parenz.
 Ne semblent mie saint Lorenz.
 Ja bien ne feront lor mestier,
 S'il n'i prenent aucun loier.
 Mult aiment la blanche moneie
 E plus icele qui rogeie .
 Plus que autres coveitos sont.
 (Besant de Dieu, ll. 2359-69)

To sum up, many of the Old French poets complain of the greed of the ecclesiastics of the Roman Curia, their overriding interest in money which spurs them to abuse their position in order to enrich themselves. Most poets maintain a discreet silence when dealing with the Pope himself, but do not contain their resentment when dealing with the cardinals. They are most outspoken, however, when attacking the entire administration of the papal court, which they label collectively as "Rome". The vices, simony and the selling of justice, were the chief causes of complaint. Inevitably the charge of covetousness is applied to all Roman officials.

Of all the sections of the secular Church to come under attack, the Roman church is one which appears to inspire great anger and even hatred. I propose next to examine the reaction of the Old French poets to the other sections of the ecclesiastical hierarchy before trying to assess in what ways different sectors of the Church are associated with peculiar vices and failings and why some inspire more fury in the moralists than others.

e) Archbishops and Bishops

Archbishops are very rarely mentioned in the works I am studying. When they do appear they are usually grouped with the bishops. I propose

to do likewise and to treat them in one section. The emphasis, however, will be on the bishops.

i. Duties of a Bishop.

The duties of the medieval bishop were numerous. They involved not only ecclesiastical responsibilities, but also temporal functions. The duties are given in the Handbook of Church History⁽⁹⁰⁾ and I shall summarize them: On the spiritual side, he ordained, confirmed, and baptised; he consecrated holy places and articles; he was a teacher in that he was responsible for the education of the clergy and had to preach himself. He saw that Church laws were enforced and observed - the keeping of holy days, attendance at mass, fasting, and the payment of tithes. He supervised the charitable works, and controlled the morals of the clergy and laity: As ecclesiastical judge he could impose penalties, and even depose clerics. Moreover the bishop was responsible for the repression of brigandage and often had to use arms to do so⁽⁹¹⁾.

ii. Privileges and Income.

The bishop was head of a diocese, a position which brought great prestige and a substantial income. The privileges that accompanied his standing were those accorded to a temporal power, because the bishops were drawn chiefly from the nobility and as such remained powerful feudal lords. In his travels he was always well received and treated as a nobleman⁽⁹²⁾. Indeed, it would appear that the outward show put on by a bishop would emphasise his temporal authority rather than his spiritual calling⁽⁹³⁾. Bishops were very much of the world. When we turn to the Old French texts we shall see that it is chiefly the bishop's strong involvement with temporal matters which provoked the ire of the moralists.

The bishops were generally wealthy⁽⁹⁴⁾. How did they acquire their wealth? The chief source of revenues was the Church estates which paid part of their income to the bishop as overlord⁽⁹⁵⁾. The bishop might

also supplement his patrimony by gifts and legacies, although they could not be counted as a regular form of revenue. The bishop was, however, entitled to certain taxes. He received one quarter of the "dime". Another sort of tax was the ruling that any expenses incurred by the bishop on visitation should be borne by the local priests⁽⁹⁶⁾, a practice open to abuse.

Such is the picture of the medieval bishop as it is presented by modern historians. The Old French didactic poets cannot view the bishop and his dual role of temporal ruler and spiritual guide in such an objective manner. Emotion and prejudice colour their writing and so often in these works the bishop takes his turn with all the other ecclesiastics and is cast as the villain of the piece.

iii. Duties according to the Poets.

Etienne de Fougères takes a reasonable approach to the subject of the bishop. Etienne was himself the bishop of Rennes and we may assume that he speaks "en connaissance de cause". Following his own established pattern, he begins by setting out the duties of his subject: The bishop's sole motive for amassing money should be in order to relieve the poor. Etienne evidently approves of an ascetic way of life. Far from enjoying his privileged position and attendant wealth, the bishop should fast and inflict upon himself great physical suffering:

Por son pople deit jellner,
 Sa char destreindre et rancuner;
 Nis tensor ne deit alner,
 Fors por aus povres comuner.
 (Livre des Manières: Stanza LXXXVIII)

In times of need caused by famine or war, the bishop should use his wealth to alleviate the sufferings of the hungry:

Si cherté torne en celle terre
 Ou par mal tens ou par grant guerre,
 Dont fait bien qui tensor desserre
 Et done a cals qui vont peïn querre.
 (Stanza LXXXIX)

Guiot de Provins refers to the great learning of the archbishops and bishops. They at least should know right from wrong, for they have the guidance of the scriptures. They should therefore aim unerringly for their spiritual target, and should not be waylaid by covetousness and pride.

Icist pastor sont li evesque
 et meismes li archevesque,
 qui voient es escriis la voie
 ou Deus nos mette, ou Deus nos voie!
 La devroient estre lor oeul
 sens covoitise et sens orguel,
 qu'il ne peüssent desvoier.

(Bible: ll. 819-25)

iv. Simony and Nepotism in the Awarding of Bishoprics.

The Old French poets often accuse the bishops of acquiring their bishoprics by unlawful means. Once more we hear the commonplace cry of Simony. The poets allege that simony is still rife, in spite of the canons which forbid it.

In principle the bishop was fairly elected by the diocesan Chapter. He should have worked his way up the rungs of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. However it would appear that these rules were sometimes overlooked. Wealth and social standing seem to have played an important part in the appointment of a bishop⁽⁹⁷⁾. Church and state found it advantageous to award bishoprics to noblemen whose spiritual qualifications, if existent, came second to his social and political usefulness.

When historians confirm that the nobility had a vested interest in the awarding of bishoprics, it is quite conceivable that there is a basis of truth in the assertions of the Roman des Romans, that the bishop either bought his way into the episcopate, or used the influence of powerful relations or patrons to the same end:

Plusors evesque sont par avoir pose,
 E li alquant par lor grant parente;
 Por estre riche sont a ceo ordene.
 (ll. 374-76)

This moralist complains that the nobles meddle in Church affairs even to the point of electing bishops themselves:

Li rei, li duc, li prince et li conte
 Vont departant les evesquiez a honte;
 Grant peril est qui a tel henor monte
 Qui n'en set rendre ne raison ne aconté.
 (ll. 377-80)

Such bishops are often completely unqualified for the office they have acquired. One may therefore be sure that their only motive was self-interest.

Lay interference with ecclesiastical matters seems to have been a real problem in the Middle Ages. The business of lay investiture was a subject of contention for a long time and culminated in the famous "Investitures Quarrel"⁽⁹⁸⁾. However by the time the Old French poets were writing, the practice, in theory at least, was no longer to be found. The ninth General Council, Lateran I, of 1123 decreed that no lay person should dispose of Church office⁽⁹⁹⁾. The poet of Le Roman des Romans (1150) claims that lay princes still continued to appoint ecclesiastical primates - and very unsuitable ones too!

Avez oï com fait ordenement
 D'itels en font li riche home sovent;
 Arcevesque ont tost fait d'un lor parent
 De fole vie e de poi escient.
 (ll. 397-400)

The word of a rich baron can make a lecherous cleric a bishop:

D'un eveschie ont sempres fait le don
 A un clergastre lecheor e bricon,
 Por la preiere d'alcun riche baron
 Qu'il n'en serrad fait altre election.
 (ll. 401-404)

Such bishops are allies of the devil. Once again the Roman des Romans claims that their only qualification is wealth: hardly suitable for the making of a good spiritual leader:

Tels est evesque qui ne deit gre saveir
 Fors a sa borse e a son grant avoir;
 D'iteil dolent, ceo sachiez vos por veir,
 Ont li diable en tere fait lor heir.
 (ll. 405-408)

In my experience it is only this poet who accuses bishops and feudal lords of collusion in the appointment of the former. Simony is often

associated with bishops in other ways, as we shall see. Since le Roman des Romans is an early work we may presume that it is indicating a survival of the old practice of lay investiture which was in principle curtailed in 1123 but which doubtless took some considerable time to die away completely. It must have been a privilege and an expedient which the lay powers were reluctant to surrender. In support of the claim of one historian⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ that the simoniacal buying of bishoprics from princes was no longer a problem, in the twelfth and thirteenth century we have the evidence of the poets themselves. They do not, however, confirm his belief in the raising of moral standards in the awarding of bishoprics. Their works merely suggest that the power was taken from the temporal powers and restored to ecclesiastical powers in Rome. We have seen that the poets still regard the appointments made by Roman officials as simoniacal, since they accuse the cardinals of selling Church office to would-be prelates (see my pages 195, 208). However lay rulers no longer benefit. This illicit profit is now grabbed by the Church. Thus the poets, if they are recording accurately, have even greater cause for complaint.

The poet of the Roman des Romans continues his study of bishops: High offices in the Church were greatly coveted, and the attitude of the candidate would seem to be inevitably one of self-interest. There are some clergy who are so ambitious that they would not deign to accept a bishopric. They insist upon an archbishopric:

"
Oir poet l'om grant surfaict de clergie:
Se nus se veit a cort sureshalcié,
Ne deignereit mie prendre evesquié;
En atente est d'aveir arcevesquié.
(ll. 385-88)

He further claims that bishoprics are treated as personal property by their holders, and are consequently passed from father to son⁽¹⁰¹⁾. The attitude of the son is described as being one of impatience. He is anxious for his father to die so that he may inherit the bishopric and all the material profits thereto attached. This is an anti-wealth commonplace theme which

we have already met in the section on the rich man and his heirs
(Chapter Two, A,7,a).

Molt li ennuie que li peres vit tant
Del cel henor que il vait atendant;
Li quels de nos lui volt estre garant
Que il ne seit homicides entant?
(ll.389-92)

The poet thus maintains that the son's wish for his father's death is tantamount to patricide.

v. Simony and the Installed Bishop.

Moving from the dubious means by which a bishopric may be obtained, and the reasons for which it is desired, let us consider how the bishop, once appointed carries out his responsibilities. In the opinion of the Old French moralists his conduct is by no means creditable. It would appear that a bishop's first concern upon assuming office is to recoup the money he has expended in acquiring his position! So he practices simony again, this time selling so that he may reap the monetary profits⁽¹⁰²⁾. One negociable item is God (vendre Dieu) by which we understand either the sale of sacraments or the sale of justice, the phrase being used for both. It is probably the latter in the Vers of Thibaud de Marly:

Arcevesque et evesque qui sont symonial,
Soz aus ont lor menistres qui maintiennent le mal,
Deu vendent et achatent, molt font que desloial;
Forfet en ont dou ciel la corone roial.
(ll. 367-70)

It is evil to sell Churches, says Etienne de Fougères, speaking of Bishops, and thereby intimating that that is what they do:

Noalz est des iglises vendre:
(Livre des Manières: line 257)

A saintly life is no reason for being granted a church prebend. The bishop is sensitive only to money. So knowledge and goodness count for nothing beside a substantial sum of money:

Escience n'i vaut ne leitre,
Ne bien feire, ne mal demestre;
Si en iglise te velz meitre,
Prente au doner, lei le premeitre.
(ll. 265-68)

The Roman des Romans also speaks of the distribution of prebends by bishops. In this case, the bishops are accused not of awarding church livings to the highest bidder, but of nepotism, that is they appoint their relatives and thus, presumably, keep all the profits within the family:

Quant uns evesques depart ses dignetez
 Ja nus sainz hom n'i serrad apelez:
 A ses parenz e a ses clers privez
 Done provendes e arcedi'acnez.
 (ll. 461-64)

Similarly in the short, incomplete work, Sur les Etats du Monde, prebends go to the relatives of the bishop including his illegitimate sons!

Quant il est evesques esliz
 Denques esl/e/ve filies et fiz,
 Et ses parenz e ses norriz;
 (ll. 67-69)

Such concern for the well-being of his family is, however, second to the bishop's love of money, says the poet of the Roman des Romans. If the bishop needs money, the relatives are quickly deposed and their churches sold for a quick profit.

E si revolt a la fiée vendre,
 Car il estoet, por los aveir, despendre;
 Qui issi monte molt redeit bien descendre:
 (ll. 465-67)

Line 466 is interesting for the courtly attitude to wealth expressed therein: In order to win praise and renown, one must spend one's wealth. This is an attitude commonly found in the courtly romances where extravagant spending is extolled as a courtly virtue. It is not, however, suited to a bishop. Doubtless the author is here making a deliberate, but subtle, connection between the rich courtly nobles and the bishops who emulate them.

The Roman des Romans next compares the man who sells churches to Judas, and those who buy them to his evil companions:

Qui vent Iglise donques fait il que las,
 Car compainz ert al traître Judas.
 Cil qui l'achatent reserront compaignon
 As felons Jueus qui, por la traïson,
 Trente deniers donerent al felon,
 Puis le dampnerent de mortel passion.
 (ll. 495-500)

The moralist urges the bishops to make amends for having ordained imbeciles and children to Church office for personal gain:

E vos, evesque, quin avez enpense,
 Pernez conrei que seiez amende;
 Maint clerc avez par avoir ordene
 De poi de sens et de trop jofne eé.
 (ll. 509-12)

According to the poets, bishops found illicit ways of adding to their already substantial incomes. To what end were these great sums of money amassed?

Use of Wealth

We have already had one clue in the texts to what was the life-style of a bishop - It was modelled on courtly lines. (See Roman des Romans, ll. 465-67, my page 215). The worldliness of the bishops is a favourite target for the moralists, who accuse the bishops of living like lords and of having no thought for the suffering of the poor. The writers claim that the bishops use their ecclesiastical incomes exclusively for their own enjoyment and do not reserve anything for alms.

In the opinion of Guillaume le Clerc bishops are able to combine the life-style of a lord with extreme miserliness. They spare no effort in order to amass wealth, but do not use it for others:

Mes il ne voleit fors hautece.
 Et quant il ot la grant richece,
 Les rentes de la haute iglise,
 Dom il deust a ma devise
 Le plus por amur deu partir
 E le mains a sei retenir,
 De trestut ceo ne fist il rien:
 (Besant de Dieu: ll. 629-35)

Instead they guard their wealth more jealously than does a dog a bone.

They hoard.

Ainz fu plus avoir que un chien
 Qui un grant os a en sa gole
 Ou il cuide bone... moole.
 Poi dona e poi despendi,
 A grant borse faire entendi.
 (ll. 636-40)

How then do they live so well and yet spend so little? They exploit their

subordinates. They avoid even minor expenses by living off their unwilling clergy:

E manga en ses priories
 E en ses povres abeies
 E od cels qui ostels li durent,
 Qui par estoveir le recurrent.
 (ll. 641-44)

These lines probably refer to episcopal visitations, when a bishop could demand hospitality from priories and abbeys, etc. while he travelled. According to some of the Old French poets I have read, this right was abused. It would seem that bishops often descended upon poor churches, expecting lavish hospitality and entertainment. They would arrive with a considerable retinue, which the poor prior had to feed as well. That this was a well-known and widespread practice is demonstrated by the fact that the third Lateran council of 1215 took note of it and issued a decree with the intention of curbing the greed of the bishops. The text of Canon 4 may be resumed thus: that it was a serious matter that bishops should make such unreasonable demands on their subordinates that the latter are forced to sell Church possessions in order to provide what is demanded. It was decreed that archbishops should limit their retinue to forty or fifty horses, bishops to twenty or thirty. ... They should not take with them hunting dogs and birds ... They should not expect rich, expensive fare ... Bishops were forbidden to exact heavy taxes and dues. In certain circumstances they may, however, make an appeal for charity ... Bishops should protect their subjects and not oppress them⁽¹⁰³⁾.

Continuing his account of the episcopal visitations, Guillaume le Clerc mentions the large retinue the bishops bring:

E donc mena sa roncaille
 Etrestote sa garconaille
 Qui as ostels firent dangier:
 (ll. 645-47)

After the meal, the bishop and all his companions expect gifts; a horse, cup or ring.

E quant vint apres le mengier,
 Si volt chesun d'els avoir don,

Neis le plus petit garçon:
 L'evesqe coupe ou palefrei.
 E chescun clerc anel en dei.
 (ll. 648-52)

Guillaume affirms that if they had to travel at their own expense, then the entourage would not exceed two pack-horses and very few servants.

E s'il errast a ses deniers,
 Il ne menast que dous somers
 E poi de cust e poi de gent.
 (ll. 653-55)

Le Besant de Dieu is dated by its editor, Ernst Martin, at 1226, twelve years after the Lateran decree quoted above. The author was probably familiar with the canon. He is evidently referring to it here, as is suggested by the mention of two pack-horses, permitted by the decree to the cathedral dean. That Guillaume should consider there was still cause for complaint would suggest that bishops were exceeding the allowance of twenty to thirty horses allowed them. In that case the Lateran decree could have had little effect.

Guiot de Provins, like Guillaume le Clerc, assimilates the traits of the miser to the bishops. They are extremely mean and prefer to live off the poor rather than spend their own money. Therefore their standard of living is not as high as they could afford. This is not pious asceticism but self-inflicted suffering for ignoble ends, a characteristic, as we have seen, of the miser.

Deus! tant vilain morsaus transglotént
 es povres maisons qu'il destruent
 quant il dou lor les despens fuent.
 (Bible: ll. 836-38)

The Roman des Romans also refers to the bishops' desire to be rich. They seek high office for what it will bring them. They neglect God's poor. Thus the shepherd becomes the wolf - an image used also by the Poème Moral (Stanza 116) (my page 228)⁽¹⁰⁴⁾.

Por estre riche porchacent les henors,
 Nient por muer lor vies ne lor mors,
 N'a ses oeilles tramettre Deu socors;
 Car hom lor fait de cruels lous pastors.
 (ll. 413-16)

The bishops do spend their wealth, according to this poet,^{but} on very worldly things such as hunting-dogs and horses. It should be used to provide a modest living, the greater part thus being left over for poor relief:

Ne lor sont pas granz rentes establies
 Por pestre chiens, ne por galoberies;
 Mes simplement en sustengent lor vies,
 Del surplus facent as povres departies.
 (ll. 437-50)

We conclude the section on bishops with advice on justice and charity from a bishop, Etienne de Fougères: Let the bishop not delight in his fine mansion, or his large income. May he use his wisdom in the giving of judgement.

N'ainge pas tant son bel meneir
 Ne sa rende, ne son aveir;
 Qu'a toz raisson ne face aveir
 E jugement a son saveir.
 (Livre des Manières, ll. 293-96)

A bishop lives on alms, he should also be a giver of alms. He should share his comforts with those in need:

D'aumones vit, aumonier seit;
 Quant il menjue et quant il beit,
 A cels en donge que il veit
 Qui mestier ont et feire el deit.
 (ll. 357-60)

This is the ideal, but the poets concur in considering it far removed from reality.

f) Canons and Provosts

i. Canons. In the reviews of the Churchmen made by the Old French didactic writers, the bishops are usually followed by the canons.

The canons constituted the entourage of the bishop. From antiquity the canons formed "presbyteria" and led a monastic life. However there were changes in the Middle Ages. From the ninth century onwards desire for personal property prompted the breaking up of the "presbyteria" which were divided into prebends⁽¹⁰⁵⁾. The communal life was abandoned by many. Attempts were made at reform, and these led to there being two different camps, as

it were: the regular canons who continued to conform to monastic ideals (see Part 2 of this chapter) and the secular canons, who held their individual prebends. We are here concerned with the secular canons.

ii. Duties. The canons were members of the cathedral chapter, and their function was to assist the government of the bishop. They were very wealthy and enjoyed great prestige⁽¹⁰⁶⁾.

iii. Income. The wealth which gave the canons so much power came from various sources. In part, the canons depended on the generosity of the bishop. They also received feudal dues from their estates. Legacies and gifts supplemented their regular income. It has been said⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ that they were very conscious of their social standing and matched their prestige with an outward show of wealth.

In the history of the canons, wealth was, as so often, a bone of contention. Their evident wealth and implication in feudal economics provoked widespread criticism⁽¹⁰⁸⁾. This critical attitude is reflected in the Old French didactic works, as we shall see.

iv. Provosts. Chief of the cathedral chapter was either a dean or a provost. His duties were not clearly defined, but he was the spiritual guide of the cathedral clergy, and was in charge of the moral supervision of the clergy. He had a tribunal to deal with judicial matters arising from abuses of Church rules etc. The provost was rich since he received a double prebend⁽¹⁰⁹⁾.

v. Their presentation in the Old French texts. Guiot de Provins groups together provosts and secular canons. He describes them as being rich nobles, far too interested in worldly things for ecclesiastics. Although rich, they are proud and mean:

Molt en voi des desmesurez
per ses chastials per ses citeiz:
molt sont noble, molt font le riche,
molt sont et orguilloz et chiche.
Molt les ait bien li monde pris.

(Bible: ll. 931-35)

Living in cathedral cities, the canons would inevitably come in contact with the commercial life of those busy trade centres. Such a contact would seem to have left its mark, for Guiot continues by describing them as able merchants, who deal in church property as well as agricultural produce. They practice usury and are such past masters at the business that they even lend to Jews:

Provendes, eglises achatent,
 en mainte maniere baratent.
 Achater seivent et revendre,
 et les termes molt bien atendra,
 et la bone vante de bleif;
 et s'ai bien oï et tasté
 qu'as juifs prestant lors deniers.
 (ll. 965-71)

Guiot tempers his criticisms by adding that not all canons from these "citeinnes eglises" are so corrupt (ll. 974-5).

The commonplace accusation that alms given to Churchmen are never used for the relief of the poor is also levelled at the canons.

Dedens ces citeinnes eglises
 furent les provendes asises
 d'aumosne, per iteil covent
 c'on les donaist honestement,
 mais on les vent ou les achate;
 ici ait vilaine barate.
 (ll. 989-94)

The poet of Sur les Etats du Monde claims that the canons, "riches chanunes seculers", give clothes to prostitutes. The poet adds that if such men see Heaven, then he, the poet, will certainly be saved. (Stanza XX).

The longer didactic works do not all refer to the canons. Moreover Rutebeuf has more to say than most of them. He echoes commonplace charges, namely that the canons live off money intended for the poor.

Més il verront le cuer partir
 Au povre, de male aventure,
 De grant fain et de grant froidure.
 Quant chascuns a chape forree
 Et de deniers la grant borsee.
 (De L'Estate dou Monde: ll. 56-60;
 ed. Faral et Bastin, Vol. I, p. 385).

Why such hard-heartedness? They are controlled by avarice.

... Avarisce li commande,
(line 64)

When they go to mass, they have no pious motive. They are hoping for money. If they thought that they would not profit from the service, they would never attend Church again.

Et se il vait la messe oïr,
Ce n'est pas por Dieu conjoïr,
Ainz est por des deniers avoir,
Quar, tant vous faz je a savoir,
S'il n'en cuidoit riens raporter,
Ja n'i querroit les piez porter.
(ll. 73-78)

In another work of a similar nature, Rutebeuf again refers to the wealth of the canons and their worldly life-style.

Chenoine seculair mainnent trop bone vie:
Chacuns a son hostel, son leu et sa maisnie.
(De la Vie dou Monde: ll. 53-4)
(Vol. I, p. 397)

It is Rutebeuf, too, who refers specifically to the provosts in their judiciary capacity. The poet makes them confess that their overriding interest is in personal gain and not in rendering justice. They explain why they want money. They have spent a great deal in order to acquire their offices, and therefore have to find some means, however unscrupulous, to compensate for this expenditure!

Quar je regart que li provost
Qui acenssent les provostez,
que il plument toz les costez
A cels qui sont en lor justise,
Et se deffendent en tel guise;
"Nous les acenssons chierement,
Si nous covient communement,"
Font il, "partout tolir et prendre.
Sanz droit ne sanz reson atendre;
Trop avrions mauvés marchié
Se perdons en nostre marchié."
(De l'Etat du Monde: ll. 96-106)

p. 386

g. Archdeacons and Deans.

Archdeacons and deans were members of the cathedral chapter. They are often grouped together in the "Etats du Monde" poems. They differed, however, in function and prestige.

i. Archdeacon.

The more important was the Archdeacon, the most powerful holder of a prebend within the chapter⁽¹¹⁰⁾. He was the official who worked closest to the bishop. Innocent III described his functions: he was responsible for the examination of ordinands and candidates for benefices; he was in charge of the deacons and under-deacons; with the collaboration of the bishop he nominated rural deans; he instated the holders of benefices; he supervised parishes, and deans were responsible to him. As the bishop's principal assistant he takes care of the clergy and the churches. He should also correct any wrongs⁽¹¹¹⁾. By the twelfth century, the archdeacon had acquired an important judicial function.

Various means of acquiring wealth were available to the archdeacon. He held^a benefice, and, if he were a canon, he also had a prebend. In addition there was a revenue derived from the process of rendering justice in the form of fees and fines. Like the bishop, the archdeacon could tax his subjects when making a visitation. It has been said that archdeacons were usually conscious of their prestige and behaved accordingly, demanding lavish hospitality and travelling with an impressive retinue⁽¹¹²⁾.

ii. Dean.

Subject to the archdeacon, the dean was responsible for a number of ecclesiastical duties. He organized inquiries into the private lives of candidates to the clergy. He employed priests who did not hold a benefice. He was to help all clergy who were in difficulties. He also acted as intermediary between the bishop and archdeacon and the lower clergy, transmitting the orders of the first two to their subordinates, and reporting the misdeeds and problems of the priests and clerics to the bishop. Like the archdeacon, the dean had judiciary powers⁽¹¹³⁾.

The dean's source of income is not well-defined. He levied numerous taxes, and received the fines from judicial cases⁽¹¹⁴⁾. The Church historian, Lebras, also suggests that there were more suspect means of making money

employed by the deans, namely the practice of extortion. This prompted bishops to establish a list of fixed charges to be used for fines, also to demand a complete and accurate statement of accounts in an attempt to curb the greed and dishonest activities of the deans⁽¹¹⁵⁾. Lebras comments thus on the deans, as they are portrayed in the statutes of the times: "Par toutes ces extensions de leurs moyens il ont amoindri leur prestige moral, pendant que grandissait leur fortune."⁽¹¹⁶⁾

iii. Their presentation in the Old French texts.

What then was the "moral prestige" of the archdeacons and deans in the opinion of the Old French moralists? Etienne de Fougères expresses his view of them strongly:

Il sunt peire que li paien.
(Livre des Manières: line 236)

One wonders whether this is the bitter cry of a bishop who has witnessed himself the corruption in the cathedral chapter and has had to find means to combat their covetous criminality? He continues: although archdeacons and deans are responsible for clerical discipline they are often guilty of the failings they condemn in others. For example, they were supposed to stamp out concubinage amidst the clergy, yet they set a poor example. They themselves consort with prostitutes (ll. 237-40). Etienne also accuses the deans of accepting bribes to overlook the immoral activities of the clergy.

Quant li deiens a tot juré
Que l'ostel en sera curé,
Ce ne pout mais estre endureé,
V sols l'ont tost aseuré.
(ll. 245-48)

He also accuses the deans of nepotism:

A lor nevouz, qui rien ne valent,
Qui en lor lez encor estalent
Donent provendes et trigalent
Por les deniers qu'il en emalent.
(ll. 273-76)

This is a particularly selfish form of nepotism being not for the sake of

family ties, but entirely for personal gain, since the lazy, worthless men who receive the prebends are themselves exploited. The revenues revert to the dean.

Guillaume le Clerc accuses archdeacons and deans of similar failings.

He adds to his list the selling of justice:

Arcediacres e diens
 E officiaus e les maiens
 Qui as chapitres sont les sires,
 Qui consentent les avoltires,
 Les causes jugent et terminent
 E as loiers prendre s'enclinent,
 Les fornicacions cunsentent,
 Les povres chapeleins tormentent,
 Justise vendent et dreiture:
 (Besant de Dieu: ll. 673-81)

Guillaume wonders what will be the fate of these clerics who cumulate church prebends and misuse the revenues therefrom, and who feed mistresses and provide dowries for their children with church funds:

Mult en avront cil chere cure
 E les persones que feront,
 Qui les riches iglises ont
 Treis ou quatre en une province,
 Que dirront il devant le prince?
 Qui lor femmes avront peues
 Des granz rentes qu'il ont eues,
 E marie filles e fiz
 Del patrimonie au crucefiz?
 (ll. 682-90)

There is mention of archdeacons and deans in Sur les Etats du Monde:

They are in collusion over the underhand acquisition of wealth:

Quant l'arcediaquene a fait(e) sa fin,
 Li daien sunt a lui enclin;
 Ja n'avront beü de cel vin,
 Que il i aportent faus bacin
 Qui seit soné,
 Mes bons denier, tuz vielz musiz d'antiquité.
 (ll. 79-84)

When the greed of the archdeacon has been sated, the deans look to their own personal profit. They spy on the lower clergy until they find one who has committed an infraction of the rules - by singing when forbidden to

do so (ll. 85-90). The dean will pounce on this victim who knows his misdeed will be forgotten for a bribe.

Al daien durra quei que seit
 Pur ço que le mainteg/n/e a droit.
 (ll. 91-92)

The poet accuses them all of coveting more than God has lent them.

Tut unt turné
 Al cuvoiter plus que Deus ne lor a presté.
 (ll. 95-96)

Here we see a common attitude, which we have already encountered in an earlier section - that rich men do not possess their wealth. It has been loaned by God and should be used in his service. This would be even more appropriate and pertinent in the case of a man of God⁽¹¹⁷⁾.

h) The Parish Priest.

We descend further the ecclesiastical hierarchy to find the parish priest. More so than any of the churchmen we have thus far considered, the parish priest came into direct contact with the laity.

i. Duties.

The spiritual function of the parish priest was to aim for the salvation of his parishioners. On a more practical level his duties included: the holding of Church services; the giving of the sacraments; the instruction of the faithful; moral supervision of the parish⁽¹¹⁸⁾. The priest was also responsible for visiting the sick and for providing for the poor. They would also urge dying men to leave legacies to the Church⁽¹¹⁹⁾.

The parish priest was obliged to pay taxes to his ecclesiastical superiors - to the papacy and also to the bishop. The former, in particular, often proved to be extremely burdensome.

ii. Revenues.

The parish priest was the receiver of a benefice. He also received the "dîme" from the lay parishioners, and occasionally gifts. Lebras remarks that certain services rendered by the priests prompted gifts from people,

but that these gifts gradually lost their spontaneity and became regarded as the right of the priest. The fourth Lateran council fought against this tendency by stipulating what functions could be rewarded: weddings, funerals could, the administering of the sacrament could not⁽¹²⁰⁾. Finally, upon the death of a parishioner, the priest had the right to seize his possessions.⁽¹²¹⁾

Despite these multiple sources of income, the parish priest was certainly not particularly rich. Usually of peasant origin, he enjoyed no special prestige. Indeed he was, to the constant chagrin of the Church, often illiterate. As to his revenues, there may have been scope for money-making, but the parish priest at the foot of the ecclesiastical hierarchy was prey to his greedy superiors. Rural parishes were, therefore, in effect, extremely poor⁽¹²²⁾.

It is to their poverty that one writer on Church history attributes the abuses current at the time⁽¹²³⁾. It was not necessarily greed but simply the instinct for survival which drove penniless, overtaxed priests to charge fees for the performance of certain of their church duties.

iii. Duties of Parish Priest according to Old French poets.

The Reclus de Moilliens lists the duties of the priest. He should correct his parishioners and should not be afraid to do so⁽¹²⁴⁾:

Ne doit douter chiaus ki mal font,
Rien mondaine, ki faut et font.
(Carité: LVI, ll. 6-7)

The Poème Moral echoes this: he should without fear or favour condemn the thief, the usurer, the fraudulent bourgeois, the proud knight, the foolish woman:

Por sanior ne soi doit, ne por amis, coisier;
Blameir doit lo larron, lo robur, l'usurier,
Lo delit del borjois, l'orguil del chevalier,
La folie des femes, des dammes lo dangier.
(Stanza 328)

Similarly la Vie du Monde by Rutebeuf says that priests should combat vice in his parishioners. They neglect this duty however to the point where the

bishop is made to realise that he has appointed not a shepherd but a wolf to guard his flock (a commonplace image. cf. pages 179, 218)⁽¹²⁵⁾.

Cil qui doivent les vices blameir et laidengier,
 Qui sunt prestre curei, i sueffrent molt dongier,
 Et s'en i at de teiz qui par sont si legier
 Que l'evesques puet dire: "Je fas do lou bergier."
 (ll. 57-60)

Another of the duties of the priest is to give alms to the poor. If the priest does not set a good example in the exercise of this duty, who else would give alms? asks the Reclus de Moiliens:

Et ki donra se tu ravis?
 (Carité: LXI, line 8)

iv. Failings of the Parish Priest.

The poets of the "Etats du Monde" works show little mercy in their assessment of the parish priest. Poor he may have been, but his attitude towards his poverty, his desire for wealth, his attempts to acquire it, all are reprehensible.

Etienne de Fougères refers to their avariciousness: In their ardent wish to amass money they take payment or extort it. They are adept at emptying the purses of their parishioners:

Bien sevent prendre et estoier
 Que par tolte, que par loier;
 Lor funt cil le borses voier
 Que au plus menant deit ennoier.
 (Livre de Manières: ll. 217-220)

Etienne de Fougères also accuses them of consorting with usurers. While they condemn the practice of usury on the one hand, on the other the fine fare which is served on their tables comes from usurious profits:

Celui commandent au diable
 Qui de usure rien aruable;
 Mes le miuz qui vient a lor table
 Lor vient de monte et de jable.
 (ll. 221-24)

This poet also accuses priests of failing in their roles as moral guides to the laity: concubinage is another of the ways in which they betray their calling. Church funds are used for the upkeep of their mistresses and

children:

Lor soignanz: peissent, lor mestriz
 Del patre moine au crucefiz
 Et lor effanconez petiz
 Des trentéus: qu'il n'ont deserviz.
 (ll. 209-212)

Far from giving alms to the poor, priests take money from them. Etienne de Fougères claims that he has himself heard the complaints of the poor who have suffered at the hands of the priests:

La povre gent funt toz raindre;
 Quar trop sovent les en oi pleindre:
 Ne lor pout rien nule remeindre
 O il peisent par pleit ateindre.
 (ll. 213-216)

In the case of Bishop Etienne de Fougères we would expect a first-hand account of the parish priest rather than the repetition of commonplace accusations. His verdict is that the parish priests are rich, merciless and dishonest. How far we can accept this judgement as being a true reflection of parish priests in general, even when it comes from a bishop, is a problem to which we shall return at the end of this chapter.

How do other poets view the parish priest? For Guillaume le Clerc, simony rears its head in this sector of ecclesiastical society, too. The priests charge for holding Church services, and even add to their crime by failing to keep their bargain: they demand the money in advance and then frequently do not hold the service.

E les prestres parroisserez,
 Qui au prendre sont tut dis prez,
 Qui les confessions receivent
 Des doloros que il deceivent
 E lor enjoignent les anuels,
 E des messes e destrentels
 Pernent les deniers avant main,
 E lor pramettent que demain
 Le servise comenceront
 E puis apres rien ne feront.
 (ll. 691-700)

The poet of the short work de Dan Denier also accuses priests of extorting payment for holding mass.

Denier fet prestres desréer,
 Et iij messes le jor chanter.
 (page 97)

The Reclus de Moilliens deals very fully with the case of the parish priest. He first reproaches them with their hypocrisy in preaching against stealing but themselves practising what is tantamount to stealing:

Car tes sermons n'est mie biaux,
 Ki reprens autrui de rober,
 Et dont t'en vas par nuit garber
 Et fais messon d'autrui garbiaus.
 (Carité: LXXII, ll. 3-6)

His language becomes more vivid and heated as he likens priests to bloodsuckers who are driven by "stinking covetousness" to amass as much money as possible:

Prestre, jou ai mout vell ans,
 Ne vi dous prestres sanc suans.
 Por coi remaint ke sanc ne suent?
 Por coi? Covoitise puans
 A fait tous les prestres truans;
 En messonnant deniers tressuent.
 Tant messonent deniers k'il puent.
 (Carité: LXXXVI, ll. 1-7)

The Reclus de Moilliens gives a dramatic presentation of the attitude of the priest towards wealth. The poet urges the priest to stay in his parish and to be content with his lot. The priest replies - "I shall become poor"

Prestre, ki curer dois gens laies,
 Garde te mes ou tu le laies.
 Mais tu dis: "J'apovrierai."
 (XC, ll. 1-3)

Like a player of "briche"⁽¹²⁶⁾ the priest tests his parish before accepting it. If it is likely to prove a lucrative position, he will stay. The Reclus criticizes the priest for delighting in the profit he can make from his parish. It is better to be poor than to answer for one's riches before God on the day of Judgement.

Prestre, ki tant aimes et prises
 Les mes ke tu as a Diu prises,
 Por si grant muison paier
 N'est pas sens se tu te felises
 Des rentes ke tu as aquisés
 Mout te devroies esmaier.
 Chou n'est pas brike a ensaier,

Soit dou tenir ou dou laier,
 Selonc les devines assises.
 Chou k'en pens hui, en pensai ier;
 Je te lo, por Diu apaier,
 De dous maus le menour eslise\$.

(XCI)

The poet defends poverty. It is wiser to choose poverty than to risk one's life in the pursuit of wealth, as do poor knights, who enter tournaments insufficiently armed.

Prestre, fous est chil ki poverte
 Het tant ke a le descouverte
 Por gaaigner joustte au tornoi.
 Prestre, ensement est cose aperte
 Ke mains maus est et menre perte
 Estre sans rente ke sans toi.

(Stanza XCII, ll. 1-6)

The simile is between the poor knight who risks his life in tournaments for money and the priest who for the same covetous motive risks his after-life. The poet stresses this by using the parable of Dives and Lazarus, a common feature of these works (Stanza XCII - ll. 9-12). In so doing, the poet would apparently make of the priest a moral, rather than a social type. His vocation casts him in the role of Lazarus. He is poor and should accept it. However the contemporary priest in his lust for wealth resembles more Dives, since although he may not be a very wealthy man, such is his ambition. With a heart thus inclined, he is the evil rich man, that is, the covetous man. The Reclus openly accuses the priest of being mercenary and dishonest in that he puts material things above matters of the spirit:

Prestre, tu ies faus mercheniers,
 Et apertement menchogniers,
 Se tu salu d'ame et de cors
 Prises mains ke rentes et deniers.

(Stanza XCIII, ll. 1-4)

The poet develops his section on priests at great length (Stanzas LV-CII), and reverts to this subject briefly later to conclude that the chief preoccupation of modern priests is their worldly and physical comforts. Bad shepherds, they neglect their flock who are left to roam at will. Their attention is riveted to money and its acquisition:

Mercheniers, tes cuers est apers;
 Toi poise quant ton boivre pers.
 Ne pues muer ke ne te poist
 Quant tu pers chou por coi tu sers.
 O mercheniers, covoitous sers,
 Boif asses tant com il te loist!
 Et le berbis com puet si voist!
 Bien te sert ki te mers aoist;
 En covoitise est tes cuers mers!
 Tel joie as quant te mers acroist
 Toi ne caut dou foc s'il descroit.
 JA n'avras duel sauve te mers!

(Stanza CXXV)

The Poème Moral, although not an "Etats du Monde" poem, has criticism to offer of contemporary priests and preachers. Etienne de Fougères suggested that priests model themselves on St. Gacien and St. Martin. For the Poème Moral, the exemplary priest is Pasnutius who converted the brigand Moÿse and the courtesan Thafs. The poet says that Pasnutius must have been a good preacher to achieve such results. More important he was an honest priest. He did not accept payment for his sermons. Nor did he carry relics as a means to extort money from the faithful:

N'aloit pas sermonant por avoir passembleir;
 Ne voloit philateres ne reliques porter:
 Bien sevent qu'il demandent, qui les suelent porter.
 (Poème Moral: Stanza 138, ll. 550-52)

Not all priests are like Pasnutius, says the poet. Some are rich and interested only in worldly things:

Icil qui prodom est, sachiez que mut m'agnee
 Et, ke je mal en die, ainc ne l'ou en penseie;
 Mais teiz est, puis qu'il at la burse alques enflee,
 Ce ke puet soit de l'anrme, a Deu soit commandee!
 (Stanza 140)

Thus we see that although the parish priests were often poor, their lot does not inspire sympathy in the didactic poets. Seeing only their faults, they concentrate on these. They attribute failings not to necessity, but to covetousness, the same urge which drives all evil men to acquire wealth at any cost. That the priests were indeed lacking in spiritual zeal and concerned very much with money-making seems to have been a historical fact. Modern historians affirm this (see my note 12). Amongst our poets

we have churchmen who speak from first-hand knowledge. Of them we must certainly accord some credence to the bishop Etienne de Fougères. Moreover contemporary documents confirm these accusations: In the diary of Odo Rigaldi (Eudes Rigaud), Archbishop of Rouen in 1248, there are specific instances of priestly misdeeds, giving names, places and dates. This diary covers the years 1248-69 and records many, many cases of drunkenness, trading and simony amongst the priesthood⁽¹²⁷⁾. The well-known medieval preacher, Etienne de Bourbon felt it necessary to speak out against the practice of exacting payment for holding burials etc.⁽¹²⁸⁾ That this was widespread we know already from the canon of the Lateran council of 1179 (see my page 182 above). Abuses evidently persisted to judge by the later records. In 1274 Pope Gregory X held an ecumenical Council for the reform of Christendom. In preparation he delegated certain churchmen to furnish reports on current abuse within the Church. Two of these reports have survived: that of Humbert de Romans, Minister General of the Dominicans; that of Bishop of Olmütz⁽¹²⁹⁾. Their findings were the same and were in short: that priests were reluctant to accept poor parishes; that the priests of rich parishes were often absent and merely collected the revenues and dues; vicars were chosen according to their cheapness rather than their other qualifications; sometimes money transactions were involved with the transfer of a parish; the corrupt clergy went unpunished thanks to bribes; finally, many priests were ignorant of the scriptures. Indeed this was a picture as black as any painted by a gloomy, moralizing poet, and we can only conclude that any exaggeration on their part did not distort the reality of the day to any significant degree.

j) Concluding remarks on the section on Secular Clergy.

We have, therefore, seen that the Old French didactic poets pick out and lament the faults and failings of all members of the secular clergy, and

that that the misdeeds and vices of which they are all accused - from Pope to parish priest - stem from a suspect involvement with wealth.

No section of the Church escapes criticism, and, indeed, it is difficult to judge which rank, if any, inspires the greatest horror in the Old French didactic poets. I think that it is the head of the Church which receives the main impact of the onslaught when it is attacked under the impersonal title of "Rome". The Pope himself, however, is not a primary target, and specific references to cardinals and legates are not numerous. But "Rome" becomes, in these works, the symbol of the head of the Church and as such the source of all ecclesiastical vice. It, therefore, provokes the heaviest storm of protest.

Various reasons may be suggested for this. One critic attributes the repeated virulent attacks on Rome to a basic misunderstanding of the economic changes of the times; chiefly the shift of the administrative centre of the Church at Rome from a dependence on landed wealth for its income to a more modern and complex association with high finance and multiple taxes. In an article we have already quoted, J.A. Yunck⁽¹³⁰⁾ writes to show that the "satires" spring from something more serious than the greed of minor officials at Rome. He believes that the protests testify to an "angry conservative reaction to economic changes not clearly understood by the moralists and satirists who wrote them." Thus Yunck would appear to be asserting that it was not primarily abuses in the Church which outraged the didactic poets, but rather that their works arose from a bitter resentment and sense of personal frustration that the Church should be part of the recent trend towards an economy based on money, rather than the age-old and easily understood land system. The changes may have been simply practical and necessary, but the traditionalists were offended by them. Yunck goes on to give reasons for the incomprehension of twelfth century critics: "The papacy had burst the bonds of feudal economics in its rapid growth, but

the fact went unrecognised by the satirists, or even by those who were instrumental in the development. It is tempting to see in the repeated satirical assaults on the high cost of ecclesiastical attention at the Curia the implied contrast with a feudal court supported by its own domanial revenues. Economic theory lagged notoriously behind economic fact in the Middle Ages. I suggest that this lag lies at the heart of the medieval satire on Rome" (page 342). This view would appear to be a valid explanation, but, of course, does not account for the attacks on the rest of the clergy, which are only marginally less heated. However, for the moment, let us remain with the case of Rome.

Another reason for the prolific attacks on Rome suggested by Yunck was that these poets may have misinterpreted the cause and nature of taxes on benefices. They did not see them as taxes, but as simoniacal payments made by would-be incumbents and sanctioned by Rome. This payment provoked great bitterness amidst those Christians who believed that holy office should be conferred without charge. Speaking of the medieval satirists, Yunck defines what they meant by simony: "The Apostolic privilege of consecration was a gift of the Holy Spirit, and, in their eyes the enforced 'gratuities' in connection with these rites were sheer simony."⁽¹³¹⁾ In support of this theory, I should like to add another point: The poets I have studied were themselves Churchmen. One of them, Etienne de Fougères, the bishop, would have had to pay this tax to the papal court and would, therefore, have had a motive for feeling bitter towards Rome, perhaps. Other poets occupied humble places in the Church hierarchy, such as that of "clerc". Yet they would have been affected by the "income tax" of 1199 (see my page 191). With this in mind, one could surmise that personal resentment might have played a part in the formulation of hostile attitudes which were translated into cries of simony.

Yet another reason for the concentrated attack on Rome, would be the

medieval view of the Church. The Pope's influence was more far-reaching than it is today and life was lived in closer contact with the Church. Rome housed the head of the Church which so dominated the lives of medieval Christians. They looked to Rome as the example of purity for all Christendom. Any stain on the character of the head of the Church, the Pope and his immediate associates cast a shadow over the whole Church. Thus Rome was expected to be perfect, the fount of all good from which holy source the entire Church was to be inspired. Any hint of corruption at Rome would inevitably provoke an immediate protest, more so than if any other part of the Church had been guilty of it. Therefore, if we believe that the Roman curia was judged by the didactic poets according to the standards of perfection, it is easier to understand their bitterness and their vicious attacks when they see their belief in Roman spirituality and purity shaken.

Above we have what may be considered some valid reasons for the many expressions of anti-clericalism directed at Rome. However these reasons will not in my opinion satisfactorily explain the whole of anti-clerical literature and the criticisms made of other sectors of the Church, nor indeed do they fully explain the attacks on Rome.

As to Yunck's thesis that the new papal finances were a mystery and therefore an evil to the poets, this is not borne out in the works I have studied. There is not a hint of criticism of any new mode of acquiring revenues. Not one poet makes the point that landed wealth was acceptable, whereas riches derived from business and taxes were reprehensible. All the moralising poets concentrate on one aspect of papal wealth - that is the abuse of Christian ethics associated with it. They do not attack wealth in itself. They attack corruption associated with it, namely the irreligious obsession with the accumulation of money, the dishonest means adopted to acquire it and the unchristian use made of it.

If it were merely the tax system set up at Rome which angered the poets,

why then do they attack with almost equal fury the bishops and the parish priest among others? The bishop certainly was still firmly entrenched in the feudal system and gleaned his income largely from domanial dues. The priest would be a victim of the taxes too, and moreover he had no landed wealth to console him. Why do the moralists show him no sympathy? There can be only one reason why all ranks of the Church join the Roman officials in the firing line. They all had something in common; they all fell far short of their ideal, and they all did so in a way that involved worldly wealth. The scourge of the Church was simony in its various forms, and it infiltrated all ranks. It is their use of simony which gained illicit supplementary incomes for the bishop and the parish priest. It is on this account that they were attacked by the didactic poets chiefly. So, too, with Rome, it is the venality of the Roman officials which roused the poets, not their involvement in the machinery of high finance. The poets only speak out against abuses.

Throughout my study of the secular Church, I have made reference to contemporary documents and to the findings of modern historians which corroborate the charges of the moralists. Be it the conversation between John of Salisbury and Pope Hadrian, where the Pope is unable to categorically deny the truth of current rumours, or the catalogue of crimes of lower clergy kept in records of visitations, all testify to massive and widespread corruption. The poets did not invent tales of corruption. Like historians, they merely recorded the manifestations of corruption, in their own way. If one were to completely discount their testimony, there is still ample proof that the Church standards were very low during the period I am studying. There are no documents or works of literature to contradict the charges of the Old French poets. We must therefore conclude that they had cause for complaint.

This "cause for complaint" brings me to a final point. One can argue

with Yunck that a certain disapproval of modern Church finances might have been behind some of the criticisms, even if this is never explicitly stated, and that certain necessary taxes might have seemed simoniacal without actually being so. One is obliged to take into consideration the historical evidence, of which I have indicated such a small part, and one cannot but acknowledge that there were many abuses current in the secular Church.

However the attitude and approach of the Old French didactic poets may well serve to distort the reality they are recording. Yunck constantly refers to the "satirists" when talking of anti-clerical literature. I prefer to call the work of these poets complaints rather than satires. Upon occasion it is difficult to distinguish between the two, and indeed the work of one such as Guiot de Provins might well be called satire in parts at least. Moreover the use of irony would often lead one to think that the poet was treating his subject lightly. However I believe that these poets were more serious in their views than are satirists. Theirs is "no token desire for reform"⁽¹³²⁾ but sincere complaint about the state of the times with a heartfelt desire to correct contemporary corruption. The use of irony, for example, may bring a light touch to a serious charge, but it makes the charge no less damning.

Satire tends to ridicule in order to reform, but the picture of the contemporary Church presented by the Old French didactic poets certainly does not make us laugh nor is it intended to. Rarely do the churchmen appear ridiculous. Rather they appear as repugnant money-grabbers, personifications of avarice and hypocrisy who are trampling under foot the ideals of Christianity. The poets claim that they are shocked and saddened by such churchmen, and they doubtless expect us to react in the same way. Those who were churchmen themselves have greater cause for sorrow and more reason to speak out against the corruption they see at close quarters and which bring the whole of the Church into disrepute. Witness the attitude of Etienne de Fougères, who is

surely not reacting selfishly to the taxes he has to pay, but rather to the debauchery of the Church in general. He wants to correct and to do so he must tell people what is wrong⁽¹³³⁾:

Dex! ce que di ne di par ire,
Ne por haor ne voil escrire,
Mes verité li convient dire
Qui autre chastier desire.

(Livre des Manières: ll. 277-80)

It is, however, this personal involvement with the Church and the sincerity of their expressed sorrow and disgust which makes them suspect as recorders of reality. Their complaints paint a very black picture and it must be said, a distorted picture. Very few poets pause, like Guillaume le Clerc⁽¹³⁴⁾, to say that not all churchmen are corrupt. Their desire to reform, their inclination to complain inevitably makes them present only the bad side of the Church. It is not in their interests to counterbalance this with an account of those who are above criticism. This would defeat their purpose. Here is one Church historian who gives reasons why the value of didactic works as historical documents is hard to gauge⁽¹³⁵⁾. "Il faut mettre à part les traités d'édification et de morale qui sont fort nombreux: morigéner est à la mode; volontiers on met la société en face de ses défauts, avec plus ou moins d'esprit, avec plus ou moins d'exagération, par besoin de réagir contre un laisser-aller général. Rares sont ceux de ces écrits qui ont une valeur réelle, la plupart rabâchent des banalités, mais, au moins, ils révèlent chez beaucoup d'écrivains, clercs ou laïques, un grand désir de perfection: le seigneur de Berzé, le normand Guillaume et tant d'autres énumèrent les travers de leurs contemporains et s'en affligent profondément; ils sont très sensibles à la puissance du mal, à la faiblesse de tous les hommes dans l'observation de la loi divine; déçus ou effrayés par ce spectacle, ils ne voient de recours que dans la miséricorde de Dieu, et souvent leur livre s'achève par une prière." Thus this critic puts little faith in these works for accurate historical detail, but she

admits that they are interesting for an insight into the attitude of the writers. The attitude of the poets would seem to be a genuine concern about the shortcomings of their fellow churchmen and a desire to try, with God's help, to bring them back to the path of righteousness. The poems may have been full of commonplaces, but this does not mean that they were repeated without sincerity nor that they did not have at least a basis of truth.

I have chosen to study the problem of the sincerity and accuracy of the Old French didactic poets at this stage because it is of particular relevance to the secular Church with which so many of them were personally associated. The criteria by which these poems may be judged to be a well-intentioned but somewhat distorted reflection of reality will, of course, apply to other social categories, and we shall have occasion to allude to the problem again.

2. The Regular Clergy.

A. Monasticism in the period 1150-1300.

The years 1150 to 1300 were significant in the history of monasticism. Since the tenth century it had undergone a vast expansion in the western world, reaching a peak in the twelfth century. This period saw the founding of new orders⁽¹³⁶⁾ and the rapid increase in numbers of abbeys subsidiary to the mother house of each order. The movement, however, exhausted itself and, by the end of the thirteenth century, a decline in the older monastic orders was evident, while power and popularity devolved upon the new orders of friars.

One cannot but wonder why there was this sudden gravitation to life in the cloisters. One has merely to note the general feelings of men such as the Old French moralising poets to see why flight from the world should have seemed to many to be preferable to life in the world. For we shall

see that these poets, no strangers to the Church, not only despair of life in the secular sector, but also condemn all aspects of the life of the laity. Since both lay society and the secular clergy offered nothing but corruption to its members, it would not be far-fetched to assume that men who hankered after lost ideals, such as these moralists, would be inspired to flee the evil temporal and to secure their bid for spiritual salvation by resolutely turning their backs on all things worldly and by withdrawing to the seclusion of the monastic orders. This indeed appears to be the case of many Christians judging by the upsurge in monasticism of this period.

Dissatisfaction with society and its rapidly changing aspect is then the obvious reason for men to leave the world. One must also remember that to leave the world implied contempt of, and hence renunciation of, all things worldly. It is therefore the practical application of the "contemptus mundi" ideal preached so consistently and ubiquitously at this time (see my Chapter One, sections C, 4 and D, and also later in this section, B, 1 and 2).

Historians⁽¹³⁷⁾ agree on the reasons for the move away from the world: that it was partly attributable to changes in lay society, that is, the rise in "capitalism", the increase in commerce, the development of the towns, in short, the modern obsession with money matters. These social changes would doubtless be contributory factors to the desire to leave the world. People who respected old traditions, life patterns and ideals, and who were forced to witness the increasing preoccupation with the material, would quite naturally recoil from the new life-style and from this new set of values⁽¹³⁸⁾. The ultimate expression of their disapproval would be to leave the society they despised and pursue their ideals elsewhere, that is, in holy orders.

We note, however, that these same historians lay more emphasis on the decline in standards of the secular church as a motivating force for the expansion of the monasteries. People who turned to the Church for solace in the face of bewildering social changes which moved away from Christian

ideals were inevitably disappointed. My study of the secular church will have shown how little the secular church could claim to be maintaining old ideals. While its members succumbed to the temptations offered by the new society and so neglected their spiritual duties, so too did the head of the church become increasingly involved in temporal matters. We have seen that while official church doctrine still maintained reservations about too close an involvement with wealth, in practice the Church, from the Pope downwards, exploited to the full current commercial possibilities, and was in fact wealthier during this period than at any other time. Is it surprising, therefore, that the more reactionary members of Christendom, who still based their ideals on the teaching of Christ and interpreted his words literally, should break away in disgust from the secular church and flock to swell the ranks of the regular clergy? Evidently for many it was the answer to their problem and so they went to join the existing orders, and later founded new orders. They all doubtless intended to live up to the ideals of poverty, chastity and obedience to which they formally vowed themselves.

Another reason for the mushrooming of the monasteries at this time reflects the current attitude to alms and good deeds (see Chapter Two, 8,c). Rich, powerful men, anxious to compensate for a life of luxury and ease, or wishing to do penance for any killing that a life of chivalry had occasioned, and thus to earn the salvation of their soul, found a very convenient way of doing this, either by making a pious legacy in their wills or by endowing a monastery in their life-time⁽¹³⁹⁾. The former course of action would, according to the Church, earn for a man some remission of his time spent in purgatory, but pious deeds during life were always considered of greater value (see my Chapter Two, section 8, c). The endowing of a monastery was a particularly painless way of insuring one's soul, since the author of this pious action incurred no great financial loss. He remained overlord

of the abbey he founded and had by law the right to a percentage of the revenues.⁽¹⁴⁰⁾

This self-interested attitude on the part of the lay founder is clearly demonstrated in the charter by which Duke William of Aquitaine made over land for the establishment of the abbey of Cluny on September 11, 910. The document begins thus⁽¹⁴¹⁾:

"Plainly God has supplied rich men with an avenue to eternal reward if they rightly employ their transitory possessions. Wherefore, I William, by Grace of God duke and count, earnestly considering how I may further my salvation, while yet there is time, have deemed it expedient, in fact eminently necessary, that I should devote some of my temporal goods to the profit of my soul. No better way to this end appears than that, in the words of the Lord, I should make the poor my friends (Luke 16: 9), and should support a company of monks out of my substance in perpetuity."

Such a candid admission of self-interest would suggest that this motive for a good deed was by no means unusual and certainly not reprehensible. This is a tenth century example, but two centuries later the attitude to pious deeds seems to have been very much the same, the only difference being that the Church preached charity in return for spiritual salvation with even greater insistence.

So much, therefore, for the self-interested materialistic attitude of a typical founder. We assume it differs greatly from that of the men who actually fled the world and opted for a life of hardship and spiritual devotion in the cloisters. In theory, at least, these men abdicated all right to personal property. Upon entering holy orders they swore to embrace a life of poverty. The monk's existence was to be frugal; he could never lay claim to a possession, however modest, and the meagre resources of the abbey should be common to all.

The flight from wealth and associated temptations was, however, doomed to be thwarted, as history has shown time and time again. The usual pattern

of events for medieval monasticism was this: once established, a monastic order would gradually relax its strict adherence to ideals. The dedication of the monks who laboured on the land produced plentiful harvests. Disposal of the produce posed a problem, until the solution of selling the surplus was arrived at. From this first tentative step into the world of commerce, the wealth of the monasteries grew apace. Profits were recycled and produced yet more wealth. The result was that very possession of riches which was theoretically rejected. Circumstances appear to conspire in other ways, too, to override the original intent of the religious. Apart from their agricultural success which resulted in profit, monasteries tended to attract wealth in other ways. The chief of these we have already alluded to, that is the gifts and legacies from the laity who sought their own salvation by means of such pious donations.

Let us take the not untypical case of the abbey of Bec⁽¹⁴²⁾ founded in 1034 by Herlwin. The originator of this abbey chose a site as far from civilisation as he could find, and lived simply as a hermit in the forest. He was later joined by the great Lanfranc of Pavia and other scholars. The learned Lanfranc attracted attention and people came to hear him teach. All too soon Bec had become a famous school and henceforward it was a target for pious donations. Gifts poured in, and so the renunciation of wealth ideal was lost in the subsequent evolution of the monastery.

It is, therefore, ironical that these monastic orders, vowed to poverty, should, in spite of their original wishes, find themselves rich, indeed prosperous to such an extent that the material wealth of monasteries in general far outweighed that of the secular church in the period we are studying⁽¹⁴³⁾.

Of course the monasteries had expenses for which some profit was essential. There were the day to day living expenses for the monks, which were in theory modest; there was the upkeep of the abbey and dependent

churches. More important were the charitable works undertaken by the monasteries⁽¹⁴⁴⁾. At this time the Church, secular and regular, was alone responsible for all kinds of social security and public assistance and also for education. Moreover religious establishments were available to all as hotels and resting places for travellers, whether lay or religious. There were many calls on church funds, and these were rapidly depleted in times of trouble when society was at the mercy of plague, famine or war. Another costly service for which Church, and in particular, the monasteries, made themselves responsible was bridge-building.

Thus we see that contact with money and financial matters was not easy to avoid if a monastery was not to shirk its social duties. So, as each order reached maturity, its involvement, however undesired, in worldly affairs became greater. Links with commerce and industry became stronger⁽¹⁴⁵⁾. As a money economy supplanted a subsistence economy, the monasteries adapted accordingly and "we find the monasteries developing a mortgage and loan business and finally becoming the earliest banking corporations of the Middle Ages."⁽¹⁴⁶⁾

To what extent the business of loans could be considered legitimate financial transactions according to canon law, is in dispute. Thompson⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ claims that usury was practised but that the monasteries indulged in terminological juggling to avoid involving themselves openly in this contravention of Church law. Daniel-Rops⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ takes a somewhat different view, insisting that Church loans were made without interest. He concludes that the economic activity of the monasteries was, on a practical level, beneficial to medieval economy⁽¹⁴⁹⁾. We shall later see that more than one Old French moralist hints at a connection between monastics and usury. Whatever was the true situation, it is certain that monastic inroads into high finance were considerable, and inevitably necessitated the organisation of bodies within the cloisters to deal with such transactions. These

special workers were called obedientiaries and were officials engaged in managerial tasks⁽¹⁵⁰⁾. Moreover some large monasteries instituted the formation of juridical and administrative structures which employed people to deal with taxes and other financial matters⁽¹⁵¹⁾.

We have indeed come a long way from the revulsion for monetary matters and the "contemptus mundi" ideal which originally prompted men to leave the world for the religious life of poverty in the cloisters. Such professional involvement with money and business is certainly incongruous in those vowed to the total renunciation of worldly wealth. The very fact that monks exercised such temporal activities might well have provoked a storm of protest from the Old French moralists, conscious of the breach between ideal and actual. Yet it is not the involvement with high finance which primarily worries our poets. They are almost uniquely concerned with the more minor lapses from the ideal, those which have a greater moral import. They attack the moral vices and social evils which arise from too great a contact with wealth, not the actual involvement with wealth. We shall see several examples of this. There is also historical evidence for the moral decline consequent upon involvement in money matters. In 1223, a report from the Council of Béziers⁽¹⁵²⁾ remarks on the corrupting influence of trade, that in the interests of commerce the monks maintained taverns and that the clientèle were not those with whom one would expect monks to choose to consort - jongleurs, gamblers, thieves and prostitutes.

Among the most unequivocal denunciations of corruption in the monasteries were those made implicitly by men who left a monastery and formed a new order with the intention to revert to old ideals of asceticism. The desire for reform is an indication of corruption. So, during the late eleventh to thirteenth centuries we see a strange kind of chain reaction. Followers of Christ leave a lax monastic order in disgust to form a new idealistic group. This new order in turns falls into the trap of wealth and thereby inspires

at least one of its flock to leave and found yet another order elsewhere. And so the vicious circle continued. Hardly any, it would appear, were strong-minded enough to resist expansion, then wealth and the inevitable consequences. The monks' participation in this decline was initially active since it was usually their agricultural success which produced the first profits, or their teaching which attracted gifts. Thereafter, however, they could stand passively by as wealth poured into the abbey from outside sources. Once they were caught up in the machinery of commerce, withdrawal seemed impossible for them.

This then was the background against which the Old French moralists lived. Many of them had first-hand experience of life in the orders. It is not, therefore, surprising that the monks should inspire complaint and criticism as do all other sectors of society, even less surprising since they aspire to an ideal which is so remote from the reality of their situation⁽¹⁵³⁾.

B. Monasticism as a Literary Theme

I. Dual Aspect.

Monasticism as a literary theme has a dual aspect in the works I am studying. On the one hand monks are treated as a social type and so appear in the critical review of society in those poems called collectively the "Etats du Monde". In this context, monks are either treated in general, as part of the first estate, the Church, or in some works individual orders are criticised. Guiot de Provins takes the initiative in Old French for conducting a detailed survey of the various orders, but medieval Latin writers preceded him in this⁽¹⁵⁴⁾. He is followed by Hugues de Berzé (Bible) and other minor poets who devoted short works to the subject, such as La Descriission des Religions by Hues li Rois de Cambrai⁽¹⁵⁵⁾. Guiot de Provins' list nevertheless remains the most exhaustive and varied. Later poets tended to concentrate on one particular order and so the second half of the thirteenth century saw many short works dealing with the mendicant

orders which were a focus of interest at that time.

The other aspect of monasticism as a literary topos is that of an extension to the "contemptus mundi" theme, always so prevalent in these works. This aspect is also a feature of the "Etats du Monde" poems, but does not occur in the social review. Instead it finds a place in that part of these works which one may call sermons; here satire of the particular is overshadowed by pure moralising on Christian teaching, values and life. The message is in varying degrees, that one should turn one's back on the material and seek salvation in the spiritual. The expression of Christian doctrine as befits a sermon often includes consideration of monasticism, since the practical renunciation of the world and its wealth was the perfect illustration of "contemptus mundi". The fundamental condition of the monk was, in theory at least, one of poverty. This may have meant a modest, frugal, communal existence, or it may be in reality taken further to strict asceticism with rigorous self-abnegation. Whatever the degree of asceticism, the monastic ideal was always anti-secular, and anti-wealth. Poverty was a necessary condition for the true service of God. The exodus from the world to the cloisters was the logical conclusion of the practice of seorn of the world, and it is therefore not surprising that poets link the theme of "contemptus mundi" with the preaching of the monastic ideal. Evidently their words, and all the sermons of the age which carried the same message, did not fall upon deaf ears. The rise of the monastic orders attest to this.

2. The Personal Link between the Old French Didactic Poets and monasticism.

Before studying the texts of the Old French poets to see their views on monasticism^{as} an ideal and on contemporary monastic orders, let us consider the standpoint of the poets themselves to gauge how their personal circumstances might colour their views. On the one hand a close connection with monasticism would suggest that the poet was competent to assess the

life of the monks and to accurately record the abuses and vices to be found in the cloisters. On the other hand, this same connection with a holy order implies a personal vocation for life outside the world. The person who has left society and chosen to live in poverty will naturally go beyond the general themes of "contemptus mundi" with their commonplaces, and will openly advocate life in holy orders and the renunciation of all aspects of secular life.

It is, therefore, interesting to examine each poet's personal link with monasticism, and to see how an intimate knowledge may affect his work. Sometimes such a knowledge will make him a well-informed observer of the vice prevalent in the cloisters which he exposes presumably in order to effect some measure of reform; sometimes a personal link will prompt him to preach the monastic ideal, in spite of current abuses of it. We shall also see that those poets with least connection with monastic orders offer the least harsh criticism of the secular.

Thibaud de Marly (Vers, between 1173 and 1189), a knight, was, when he wrote his work, about to enter holy orders at an advanced age to prepare for a good death. His action speaks in favour of monasticism, and in his social criticism, he is reticent about monks, although the secular Church comes under heavy fire (see Section A, 1). His restraint can therefore be attributed to circumstances. He was not yet out of the world, and could speak with no authority on the life in the cloisters, moreover it would hardly have been appropriate for him to pour scorn on an institution he was about to join. On a social level, therefore, he merely acknowledges that some monks may be evil, and forecasts that they together with the dregs of every social category will experience the torments of Hell (ll. 573 sqq.)

Guichart de Beaulieu (Sermon: late twelfth century) was probably in the same situation as Thibaud de Marly, that of elderly knight turned monk. Like Thibaud he does not single out monks for individual criticism, but

contents himself with propaganda for life in the cloisters, thus not commenting directly on contemporary conditions. He is more concerned with moral ideas than social observation on this topic, as we shall see.

Etienne de Fougères (Livre des Manières: 1174) was the Bishop of Rennes and, as we have seen, dealt in great detail with the secular Church hierarchy. He has little to say about monks. Not surprisingly he does not, in his position as well-established secular churchman extol the monastic ideal. ~~On one occasion he claims that bad monks should not be allowed to hold office (Stanza 45).~~ Elsewhere he asks rhetorically why God does not strike down false clergy, including evil monks (ll. 229-32). Beyond this he has no comment or complaint to make.

The Reclus de Moilliens (Roman de Carité, bet. 1183-1187 and Miserere, c. 1200) was probably a monk before becoming a religious recluse. His criticism of life in the cloisters, which he presumably knew well and had rejected in favour of the eremitical life is extensive. He combines this, as we shall see, with praise of monasticism in its ideal state.

Helinand (Vers de la Mort: bet. 1192-1197) was also a monk. His work is not an "Etats du Monde" poem, and so there is no conspicuous absence of monks in any social review. One notes, however, that when invoking death and its consequences to sinners, he wishes death upon princes; Rome, especially the cardinals; bishops, some by name; prelates in general, and in particular those of France, England and Italy. He does not threaten monks in this work. As to the monastic ideal, we shall see that this, his own chosen path, is lauded by him.

Guiot de Provins (Bible: 1206) is a unique case. As a professional jongleur, he led a worldly existence in the courts. He eventually found himself poor, unable to attract a patron and it would appear to be these difficult circumstances rather than any compulsive religious fervour which drove this bitter, disillusioned man to the cloisters. He samples one or

two of them before opting for the abbey at Cluny. His monastic life, not being inspired by a true vocation, does not prompt him to preach the monastic ideal on ethical grounds. Instead we owe to his final choice, a vivid, first-hand account of life in the cloisters and a survey of the vices associated with the various orders.

With Hugues de Berzé (Bible: 1220-1224) we return to the case of the ageing knight who turns to religion in order to end his days in the grace of God. He combines praise of monasticism with a severe review of the orders which compares unfavourably with Guiot's, being in far less detail, less vividly presented and lacking in any systematic or chronological order.

In Guillaume le Clerc's Besant de Dieu (1226), there are no allusions to monks, although the secular Church is fully examined. Guillaume professes to be a strong advocate of "contemptus mundi", and closely follows, in part, the treatise of Innocent III: De Miseria.... Guillaume had no cause to preach the monastic ideal. As a professional entertainer like Guiot de Provins, his outlook was primarily secular.

There would now appear to be a gap in the history of literary religious complaint. This ends in the 1250s with the beginning of a wave of protest against the mendicant orders.

Rutebeuf, whose literary activity covers the period from 1249 to 1275, has no good word for monks, least of all for mendicants, nor for monasticism in general. As a penniless student, and not a member of the Church hierarchy, he remained firmly rooted in secular life.

Of Robert le Clerc, to whom les Vers de la Mort (1268) are attributed, very little is known. He was a town-dweller, a citizen of Arras. As a cleric, he was not necessarily closely involved with the Church, having opted not to take holy orders, probably like Guillaume le Clerc.

Of Jean de Meung, poet of the second part of the Roman de la Rose (1269-78), there is no biographical evidence (see Lecoy's edition: Introduction,

pages IX-X), but his work tells us that he was fiercely anti-mendicant, probably for political reasons (see later in this section). As for the monastic ideal, he says little on this subject and any personal involvement with life in the cloisters seems highly improbable.

So much for the personal relationship between poet and cloisters. Having ascertained to what degree they were involved with monastic society, let us consider which of them openly preached the monastic ideal, that is total renunciation of temporal and secular, which implies the acceptance of poverty. To do so is important to our study in that it shows how some moralists, by explicitly advising men to leave the world, demonstrate their belief that wealth and connection with it are best avoided. It shows, too, how others do not see life in the cloisters as the solution to man's dilemma in his struggle between temporal and spiritual. Furthermore, it shows us how at least one poet openly disapproves of monasticism as the universal panacea and advocates compromises with the secular. Thus we see that implicit in any confessed attitude to monasticism is an implied attitude to wealth, and the concept of personal property.

3. Preaching of the Monastic Ideal in Old French Didactic Verse Works.

Understandably, those who early chose the monastic life and dedicated their lives to it are most explicit in their praise of life outside the world in the service of God. The Reclus de Moilliens expresses his faith in the regular life in imagery. He compares the world and the cloisters to a threshing floor and a granary respectively. On the threshing floor the wholesome grain is sifted from the worthless chaff and taken to the granary. So it is in the world, where the good are separated from the evil and subsequently admitted to the cloisters.

Le monde cha fors apel aire
 Ke jou voi felon, dur et aire;
 Et le paille est le gens mondaine;
 Et de chou ne cuit pas meffaire,
 Se dou cloistre voel grenier faire;

Et tu, cloistriers, tu ies le graine.
 Si com li vens le paille maine
 Pär mi l'aire, en itele paine
 Est toute le gens seculaire;
 Mais tu, ki tiens vie hermitaine,
 En grenier ies, pais as chertaine,
 Quant aimes vie regulaire.

(Carité: Stanza CXXIX)

The Reclus frankly expresses his belief in the monastic ideal, particularly the eremitical ideal. Yet his eyes are open to the shortcomings of the orders as we shall see in the next section.

The other life-time monk, Helinand, contents himself with the teaching of the "contemptus mundi" ethic stressing one particular theme associated with that subject: the sudden arrival of death which makes nonsense of all worldly possessions and attainments. His advocacy of monasticism is implicit in his lack of censure of the orders and explicit in a short personal comment: when urging men to shun luxury and a sinful life, he remarks that he himself has no interest in such things, vastly preferring his frugal existence as a monk which he symbolises by his description of his simple fare - peas and (Vers de la Mort: Strophe L. ll. 10-12). purée./ This personal rejection of the riches of worldly life is also a demonstration of an ideal, and such an expression of a desire for poverty occurs nowhere else. Poets who are not themselves monks, see monks as rich and grasping, as traitors to their ideal. The two full-time monks speak out in support of monasticism - for the Reclus it is the home of the good man. He is concerned with the contrast between the ideals of society and those of the cloisters. Helinand's observation is brief, but more down-to-earth. His words extol monastic poverty and hence freedom from the taint of worldly wealth. He sees monasticism in more concrete terms.

We turn next to the two cases of knights who become monks late in life: Thibaud de Marly and Guischart de Beaulieu. One may interpret their expression of pro-monastic views as a justification of their new status, and perhaps we should not accord them so much credence as those who spent their whole

life in holy orders. Circumstances, a degree of self interest dictate their action and also their sentiments. They may be men who have seen the error of their ways and of a secular existence. They may also be men who are attempting to have the best of both worlds, this and the next. One cannot with any certainty assess their sincerity.

Thibaud de Marly voices the "contemptus mundi" commonplaces, and makes a point which not all moralists insist upon: he believes . total renunciation of worldly wealth before death is a prerequisite for spiritual salvation. (Vers: ll. 466-67.) The main theme of his sermon is that a man who does not flee the world will meet his perdition in the world. Although this is often taken on a symbolic level, the world becoming attachment to the material, it is evident that Thibaud de Marly is interpreting the words literally and is acting upon his conviction by physically leaving the secular world.

The Sermon of Guischart de Beaulieu is a very similar work to that of Thibaud de Marly. The main themes recur and are expressed in a similar style. It, too, is a work of "contemptus mundi" inspiration, but there is no explicit encouragement to withdraw from the secular world, even though the poet stresses the importance of putting God before the world:

Ki deu pert por cest secle mult par est nun savanz.
(Sermon, l. 18)

Hugues de Berzé, an elderly seigneur, a crusader, is much more explicit. He gives a great deal of attention to monks as social types and accuses them of the usual vices of their station. Yet current shortcomings do not detract from the ideal and Hugues de Berzé shows his faith in the monastic ideal.

He concurs with historians when he attempts to explain the motivating force of those who leave the secular world - namely that they are demonstrating a violent reaction to the abuses and decadence of the secular Church. Hence the founding of the various orders:

Quant li bon clerc e li saint home
Virent brisier la loi de Romme
E les commandemens faussés
Que Diex nos avoit commandés,

Si penserent qu'il en feroient
 E quel conseil prendre en porroient.
 Iluec trouverent, ce fu voirs,
 L'ordre qui est des moines noirs,
 Li autre celi de Citiaus.
 Mains bons commandemens loiaus
 I ot comandés a tenir
 Pour les pechiés espeneyr.
 Li un ordenerent Templiers
 E tels i ot Ospitaliers,
 Li autre non nains d'abeyes
 Pour amender lor foles vies
 Ou li siecles se delitoit.

(Bible: ll. 237-253)

Hugues commends their actions and their pious intentions.

Elsewhere he speaks out in favour of self-abnegation as being beneficial to the soul. The world urges man to seek his comfort, but it is the man who denies himself bodily comforts who finds favour with God: Bible: ll. 596-604. Hugues is nevertheless aware of the gap between the ideal and the reality of the cloisters. Yet, when he has concluded his list of faults to be found therein, he hastens to add that although the early idealism has waned and many corrupt monasticism by their worldliness, the monk who abides by the rules of his order is certain to find salvation, just as the monk who ignores the monastic ideal will be damned. It is the use made of monastic life which counts:

Seignor, pour Dieu, se j'ai parlé
 Seur les ordres e mal noté,
 Ja pour ce ne les renoiés:
 Car se tenir les volliés
 Si comme eles sont ordenées,
 Vos ames seroient sauvées;
 E s'il nes vous plaist a tenir,
 Mar vous chaille siecle guerpier,
 K'aussi bien s'i puet on dampner,
 Qui bien veut, com s'ame sauver.

(Bible: 349-358)

Hugues concedes that it is probably easier to lead a good life in a monastery than it is in society, where the possession of land leads to problems of management. So corrupt is secular society that if a man has courage enough to abandon it and to give himself entirely to repentance and renunciation, he would be a fool not to do so immediately. With the right motives, this

is the wisest course of action. With the wrong motives, it is pointless.

E si sachies k'en si porroit
 Miex sauver, qui faire volroit,
 K'avoec le siecle pour un cent;
 Car au siecle a tant de torment
 Que nus hon n'i puet tenir terre
 Sans mal ou sans tort ou sans guerre.
 Tant y a d'envie e d'angoisse
 Qu'il n'est nesuns qui ne connoisse
 Que bon delivrer s'en feroit,
 Cui Diex le corage en donroit,
 Fors tant k'avoec la delivrance
 Convenroit bone repentance;
 Car guerpier siecle ne vaut rien
 S'on ne s'atorne a faire bien,
 Ains en fait on son pis de tant,
 Car l'en est tenus de couvent.
 Mais qui por Dieu s'en partiroit
 E en cel bon point se tendroit,
 Cil se travaille trop en vain
 Qui ne s'en part hui ou demain,
 E ce que tous li mons voit bien
 Que li siecles ne vaut mais rien.

(Bible: ll. 359-80)

One notes that although Hugues claims that salvation is not assured simply by becoming a monk, he does not apparently think the contrary is probable - that is, that man might find salvation when in, and of, the world. To live in the world implies attachment to the things of the world and thus danger to the soul. He does not say, however, that it is impossible to lead a good life in the world; he merely claims that it is easier when out of it. In the end, it is man's conduct, whether in the world or out of it, which will determine his fate.

Finally, I should like to consider the thesis of a poet who apparently had no personal link with the church, and who probably lived in the world, the anonymous poet of the Poème Moral (c. 1200). I have already had occasion to single out this work as an example of peculiarly tolerant opinions. As with other issues, this poet's attitude to monasticism is one of practical commonsense. He recognizes the monastic ideal and supports it to a certain degree. This we may assume from his choice of exemplary tales (see my Chapter Two, § c). Both his reformed sinners, Moses the brigand and Thaf's

the courtesan become hermits in order to repent of their sinful lives. While accepting the value of this mode of existence in their respective cases, the poet shows that he does not regard monks or hermits as necessarily being morally and religiously superior to other social types. Another exemplum indicates this: It is the story of the pious hermit who wonders if anyone can equal him in saintliness and devotion to God. He is surprised to learn that he stands no more in God's favour than a jongleur who gave money to a poor woman in distress, a rich man who lived modestly and gave generously, and a wealthy merchant who dispensed charity to the poor. (Sections XVII-XIX). These three men crown their good lives by all renouncing their wealth entirely and adopting the eremitical life, thus attaining true perfection and spiritual salvation.

While the poet accepts as a standard of perfection the desire to leave the world and its comforts, he does not believe that this is a course of action suited to all men. For those who have strong ties with the world, in particular family ties, there are other roads to salvation. Total renunciation is not necessary (Stanza 557). We cannot all be monks.

Ki ne puet estre moines ne chascun jor juneir,
 Ki ne se puet, anz jor, chascune nuit leveir,
 S'entreprendet teil fais qu'il tres bien puist porter;
 Deus rien ne li comandet k'il ne puist endurer.

(Stanza 566)

The poet takes up this theme in Part III of his work and here he expresses more definite views on the adoption of the monastic life. He actively discourages strong-minded virtuous men from leaving the world. They, he says, would be of greater service in society where they could help the weak: "Que li vertuous Hons ne se doit pas partir de la Floibe gent, mais travailhier se doit por eaus aidier" (Stanza 847 sq.). Who then should enter the cloisters? The poet's answer: those people who, beset by the temptations offered by the world, find it difficult to resist them. Such weak-minded but not really evil people would benefit greatly from a

sheltered, pious existence: "Qui crient que li siecle nel perde, si s'en parte" (Stanza 857 sqq.). This is quite an original attitude of which I find no echo elsewhere in the Old French works.

Finally, for this poet, it matters little whether one is a monk or a member of lay society. All depends on one's attitude and conduct. Here he expresses an opinion later to be voiced by Hugues de Berzé (see my pages 255-6) - that to physically leave the secular world counts for little if the heart is not fired by the purest motives. A detachment from love of worldly goods will suffice. "Qui ne puet del cor, del cuer doit del siecle issir." (Stanzas 886-895). Once again we see that this poet addresses himself to the ordinary lay Christian and so he never allows his moral teaching to become remote from social realities or to ignore human frailties.

We have thus far seen the moral aspect of monasticism as a literary "topos". It is evidently an extension of the "contemptus mundi" caucus of themes, but it has a social connotation in that it demands action of man as a social animal. Attitudes and moral aspirations in concord with the "contemptus mundi" ideal have to be translated into practical decisions and arrangements if one is to embrace fully the monastic ideal. Yet we see that not all poets advocate this. Many preach scorn of the world, but stop short of preaching the monastic ideal for all. We have noticed that the degree of fervour for monastic existence corresponds to the personal situation of the moralist. "Contemptus mundi" as a moral ideal may be fully preached by all, because it leaves room for different nuances of interpretation. Monasticism is a more clearly defined path and not everyone can sincerely point his fellow man in that direction.

Let us move on to the next stage. The decision taken, the monastic life chosen, how then do monks appear to these same moralists who recognise in them aspirants to Christian perfection? When set within a social context, when compared with men who have remained in the world, how are they regarded? This we shall consider in the following section.

C. The Monk, as Social Type.

In those works which contain systematic and critical reviews of the social estates, the monks are sometimes included. When this is the case, they come at the bottom of the first estate after the various ranks of the secular Church hierarchy - (Roman de Carité, Bible of Guiot de Provins, Bible of Hugues de Berzé). Other poets, however, do not appear to consider the monks as belonging to the estates of society and so exclude them from their catalogue of social types - (Etienne de Fougères' Livre des Manières, Guillaume le Clerc's Besant de Dieu, and the Sermon en Vers). They are presumably perfectly justified in not counting as social types, or as significant social elements, those who renounce society for the cloisters.

Those who do include monks in their reviews or have some comment to make about their role in society either describe monks in general, thus grouping under one heading the very different orders, or else they attempt to consider each order individually and to ascribe to each one peculiar fault.

1. General Observations

It is not my aim to present a complete picture of the medieval monk as portrayed in Old French didactic works. I am solely concerned with attitudes towards wealth. However this encompasses the misuse of wealth or indeed any association with wealth. Monks by definition are detached from wealth. However critical observers accuse them of a life-style which belies that detachment, and so it is in the measure to which the monks are allegedly falling short of the ideal of evangelical poverty that I am interested. This would appear to cover most aspects of the bad monk's life, with the exception of his sloth, an occasional trait and his lechery, a common feature.

It is in the Roman de Carité that we find the most detailed itemisation of the faults to be found in monks. Having sought Charity in vain in the

secular church at all levels, the poet concludes optimistically that this elusive virtue must be harboured in the seclusion of the cloisters (Stanza CXXVIII). And so he continues his allegorical quest there. He is soon disillusioned, however, and sees that life in the cloisters is far removed from the ideal of simplicity, poverty and spiritual devotion. The poet is moved to warn the monks of the danger of covetousness and an accompanying desire for all the things of the world:

Garde que ja mais ne rafuies
 Au monde por le covoitise
 D'estre frans de serve frankise."
 (Stanza CXXXII, ll. 5-7)

Subsequent observations show clearly that his warning comes too late. Far from being tempted to abandon the cloisters for the world, the monks have imported the world into the monasteries. Their sophistication and worldliness are as distasteful to the poet as sour wine:

Te cointise m'a deshaitié
 Com de boivre vins enaigris.
 (CXXXIX, ll. 11-12)

Evidently conditions have evolved dramatically in the cloisters. There is not a sign of a hair-shirt. The monks not only wear comfortable, expensive clothes, but they are the slaves of current fashion. Thus in the manner of courtly squires they sport short robes:

Cloistriiers ont lor robe escourtée;
 Escuier sanlent et turpin."
 (CXLV, ll. 11-12)

Rich, fashionable clothes imply possession of wealth for their purchase. Moreover interest in such things indicates a love of the material and contempt for the monastic oath of poverty. The poet, however, does not level any such charges directly. He adopts a different tack. Where one would expect to hear him fulminating at such sacrilege and misappropriation of Church funds and betrayal of ideals, the Reclus, with superb irony, congratulates the monks on their new fashions and their aura of courtliness. He pronounces the new-style Benedictines and Augustines beyond reproach:

Jou por mal pas ne lor repruef;
 Por lor cortoisie le suerf.
 Mout ont establi beles lois
 Beneoit, Augustin li nuef.
 Uns des nouviaus vaut des viés neuf.
 Viés Augustins et Beneois
 Ne doivent as nues avoir vois.
 (CXLVI, ll. 1-7)

Allusions to the luxurious living in the cloisters are many in medieval literature⁽¹⁵⁶⁾, and the stereotyped portrait of the monk shows him enjoying copious meals, fine clothes, and all the accessories of the aristocratic life to which they were born but have in theory renounced. We shall have occasion to meet further allusions to this very worldly life-style later, particularly in relation to individual orders, some of which apparently conserved their noble traits more obviously than others.

The Reclus next combines his study of contemporary monks with a theme often met in these didactic works - the lament for the past. In the style of the "laudator temporis acti" he compares the old adherents to the Benedictine and Augustine Rules to their modern counterparts. Firstly there is the matter of diet: The old monks lived on pulses and were occasionally allowed eggs. The new have a wide choice of fish, poultry and meats.

Dur furent chil viel loukepois;
 Lors mes as festes furent uef.
 Mais li novel, come courtois,
 Ne desdaignent d'iaue, de bois
 Poisson, oisel, ne porc ne buef.
 (CXLVI, ll. 8-12)

Gluttony⁽¹⁵⁷⁾ too, was a favourite association with monastic life-style. Like fashionable clothes it testifies to a worldliness of attitude, a scorn of monastic oaths, and the possession and use of money. The topic recurs in the Reclus's Miserere where he allies the five senses to allegorical vices. Gaste_bien is the representative of the monastic world and is known for his excellent taste in rich food and fine wines. Monks, says the poet, eat and drink well and plentifully, and in so doing are quite forgetful of their vows:

Li moine as millours mes s'amordent
 Et es millours mors_iaus mieus mordent,
 Et si boivent bien et sovent.
 De lor veu petit se recordent.
 Des or mais au bon vin s'ac_ordent
 Tuit li ordre et tuit le covent.

(Miserere: Stanza CXLII, ll. 7-12)

The poet of Carité continues his comparison of the two generations of monks. The old monks lived simply in the forest. They dressed in hair-shirts and coarse cloth, and they were infested with vermin. The modern monk disdains all but the finest linen and generally dresses like a lord. Whereas the old monks could only afford to graze an ass, today's monks have fat horses.

Li viel moine, li fill Folain⁽¹⁵⁸⁾
 Et fill Durant, le dur vilain,
 Se soloient es bos logier
 Et haire et lange a gros pelain
 Vestir et de vermine plain;
 Ne ne s'en voloient vengier.
 Li neuf de lor dos enlangier
 N'ont cure, mais bien enlingier
 Se sevent come castelain.
 Li viel un asne a grant dangier
 Paissoient por coust de mangier;
 Mais li neuf paissent cras polain.

(Carité: CXLVII)

It is still with irony that the Reclus concludes his section on monks. He presents a series of events which contradict the natural order of things - penitents receive plenary grace, exiles come home, the wretched rejoice, the coward displays tremendous courage, and, says the poet in mock gratitude, the monks, those living dead, are restored to life in the world. Thus resurrected, may they be spared a second death!

Li cloistrier, li mort sepelit
 Sont, Diu merchi, ressuscité.
 Fous est ki autre cose en dit.
 Mais ke Dius d'autre mort les quit!
 Car de cheste mort sont quité.

(Stanza CXLVIII, ll. 8-12)

Towards the end of the thirteenth century the picture of monastic life as found in literature has not changed. In De l'Etat du Monde (c. 1265),

(176 lines), Rutebeuf associates both black (Benedictine) and white (Cistercian) monks with wealth and a noble life-style. They live in fine buildings and seem to be the disciples of greed rather than God. They are always ready to take, never to give. Moreover they hoard possessions - they buy, but never sell.

Qui maint biau lieu et maint manoir
 Ont et mainte richece assise,
 Qui toz sont sers a Covoitise.
 Toz jors vuelent sanz doner prendre,
 Toz jors achatent sans riens vendre,

(ll. 18-22)

(ed. Faral et Bastin, Vol. I, p. 384)

The charges become more serious when the poet suggests that they take what is not theirs. They are particularly skilled at increasing their wealth:

Il tolent, l'en ne lor tolt rien;
 Il sont fondé sus fort mesrien,
 Bien pueent lor richece acroistre.

(ll. 23-25)

Thus the general complaints about the orders centre on their incongruous worldliness. For men who have renounced the dubious pleasures of the world, they seem, to contemporary critics, too involved with all that money can buy and, indeed, with money itself. Such conduct and attitudes are, of course, in direct opposition to their monastic vows.

The accusations become more particular in those poets who study individual orders. We note that some orders have reprehensible traits which characterize them since they are pin-pointed by many critics. Other orders, however, betray the more general faults associated with monks.

2. Individual Orders.

In my study of the presentation of the individual orders by the Old French poets, I have found it necessary to sketch in a brief historical background in each order. This will permit the reader to understand better why the poets seize upon certain features while neglecting others, and to judge how far the poets were offering an accurate portrait of a particular

order at a specified period in its history.

The most comprehensive list is that of Guiot de Provins, and I have taken his order of presentation since it is more or less chronological and shows how the orders succeeded each other. In addition there are the mendicant orders of friars, formed after the composition of Guiot's Bible, and which receive great attention from later poets.

a) The Benedictines and Cluny.

The Rule of the Black Monks was founded by Saint Benedict (died 543) at Monte Cassino. The monks took the triple vow of obedience, poverty and chastity and divided their time between prayer and agricultural and domestic work. An important point in the Rule of St. Benedict was that every monastery should be self-supporting. Hence the need to produce food etc. and to use, if not possess, money.

Benedictine monasteries multiplied and flourished, but gradually adherence to the Rule weakened. By the end of the ninth century, life in Benedictine monasteries was one of profound decadence. The lay abbot would often live in the abbey with his wife, children, knights and other noble trappings. His example was often taken up by the monks who thought only of food, dress and sport, says a Church historian⁽¹⁵⁹⁾.

The tenth century saw the awakening of a real desire for monastic reform. The wish to revive the lapsed Benedictine Rule became a widespread movement which is best reflected in the reform of Cluny. The abbey of Cluny was founded in 910⁽¹⁶⁰⁾ and was for two centuries the centre of monastic reform. The first abbot was Bernon who adopted the Benedictine Rule and so observed the traditions of religious asceticism which included frugal fare and the rejection of private property.

In 942 Odon succeeded Bernon, and it was his efforts in the area of reform which brought world-wide fame to Cluny. Odon admired St. Martin, the friend of the poor, and strove to emulate him. He willingly sold Church property

in order to provide for the distressed. Cluny became remarkable for its charity. This distribution of charity was well-organized - an almoner administered charitable donations on the premises, and monks would leave the cloisters to seek out the poor in the surrounding neighbourhood.

This ideal state of affairs was able to continue for some time. Cluny was lucky to have good abbots for a period of about a hundred years. However the eleventh century saw Cluny grappling unsuccessfully with the problems caused by wealth, and floundering under the accompanying abuses. The era of reform was over for the Black monks. The Gregorian reform of the late eleventh century brought some improvement to life in the cloisters, but its impetus appears to have weakened during the twelfth century.

How then were conditions in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries?

First of all, let us listen to the opinion and observations of the didactic poets of that age. We turn first to Guiot de Provins, who, himself, was a member of the order of Cluniac monks. He admits that the monks of Cluny have changed considerably, and observes that the practice of fraudulent commerce within the cloisters is becoming more and more usual:

Or i ait tant de feloignie
 c'a tout destruire et a guiler
 voi si nostre afaire atorneir,
 que li baras chescun jor double.
 Or dou peschier qui l'augue trouble
 troublee voi je bien nostre ordre:
 ja, se croi, n'en porons estordre.
 (Bible: ll. 1118-24)

Simony has been welcomed into the order, says the poet and is openly accepted:

Simonie rest si aperte,
 et si destroite, et si ardans.
 (ll. 1154-56)

As to the life-style of the monks, Guiot distinguishes between the ordinary monks and the administrators - abbots, priors and obedientaries. The latter are in holy orders for their profit, while the poor monks ("li clostrier") dare not protest at the abuses they witness, for fear they will

no longer be fed at all:

mais li clostrier que devenront,
 que se sovent tot iceu voient?
 Por folie chantent et proient.
 Et sil por coi en eglise entre
 qui plus n'aimme Deu que son ventre?
 Je di que c'est vie truande,
 que por paor de la viande
 n'osommes parler ne mot dire.
 (ll. 1164-1171)

To associate simony with the governors of a monastery and to absolve from guilt the lower ranks of monks is an unusual distinction and is made only by Guiot. Other poets tend to consider an order in its entirety and not make more specific accusations according to hierarchical position. Perhaps Guiot is reconciling two contradictory instincts: one to show the corruption prevalent in the order of Cluny and to which many other contemporary poets allude⁽¹⁶¹⁾ and which honesty prevented him from denying; the other, to justify his own position and that of his confrères. Guiot can only identify closely with this order and so, unwilling to admit guilt for what he condemns in others, he disinculpates the monks of Cluny, and also himself, and lays Cluny's reputation for corruption at the door of its abbots and priors.

Hugues de Berzé makes no such fine distinction. For him the Black monks are evil to a man, they are the worst of all the orders. If a Benedictine monk were to leave the cloisters, it would in truth be, for him, leaving the world. In the secular, he would find conditions far harder than those to which he was accustomed in the monastery:

Li moine noir sont si mene
 E ce devant derrier torné,
 Que cil qui s'en volroit issir
 Ne porroit miex siecle guerpier,
 Qu'il souferroit au siecle pis
 K'el moniage por un dis
 E plus i menroit aspre vie.
 C'est des ordres la plus faillie.
 (Bible: ll. 327-34)

Thus, in the case of the Benedictines, the adoption of the monastic life is

a contradiction of the "contemptus mundi" ideal.

Several short works allude to the worldliness of black monks. Like Guiot (ll. 1124-621) and Hugues (ll. 327-28), Rutebeuf refers to the transformation that the Benedictine order has undergone and how corrupt it has emerged:

Il soloient Dieu querre, mais il sunt retournei,
Ne Diex n'en trueve nuns, car il sunt destournei
En l'ordre saint Benoit c'on dit le Bestournei.
(La Vie due Monde I, ll. 82-84
ed. Faral and Bastin, Vol. I, p. 398)

The short poem, Trop par est cist mondes cruaus⁽¹⁶²⁾, speaks more specifically of the Benedictine monks' love of food and wine⁽¹⁶³⁾:

Trop par ont souvent generaus
De diverses chars, sans mentir,
Les vins ont blans come cristaus.
A guer soi boivent parigaus,
N'entendent pas fors a la char norir.
Que l'en metra en la terre porir.
(ll. 11-16)

The picture which emerges of the Benedictines is one of worldliness. They appear dedicated to a life of ease, and thus one assumes that they were very wealthy. The Old French poets for the most part stress the change which has taken place in this order. The proverbial gluttony which is attributed in other works to all monks is not overstressed in these works properly called didactic. The moralising poets, Guiot de Provins and Hugues de Berzé, are more concerned with the moral issue of neglect of monastic vows than with a description of life-style of monks, preferred by poets of shorter works. Wherever the emphasis lies, the message is the same. The Benedictine order was corrupt. Is this a true picture?

For historical evidence of the conditions in Benedictine monasteries and at Cluny in particular, I quote the opinion of St. Bernard of Clairvaux who thus describes Cluny in the first half of the twelfth century, that is half a century before the Old French poets chorussed their complaints:

"I marvel that among monks there should be such intemperance in eating and drinking, in clothes, dormitories, stables and

sumptuous buildings. At Cluny frugality is called avarice, sobriety is dubbed austerity.... On the other hand remissness is called discretion, prodigality is liberality, ... soft clothing and elegant houses constitute respectability." (164)

Bernard was a Cistercian and not likely to praise the Cluniacs to the skies. Peter the Venerable (died 1156) however, was a Cluniac abbot and his observation is no less damning. He says of Cluny "that but for a handful of monks the community is no more than a synagogue of Satan." Whereupon he embarked upon a programme of reform (1122-1156). Its effects were, however, of short duration, and the twelfth and thirteenth centuries are generally acknowledged to be a time of decline for the Benedictine order. Abbots became more and more occupied with secular responsibilities and so bore an increasing resemblance to feudal lords⁽¹⁶⁵⁾. From involvement in secular affairs it was a short step to contamination with secular abuses of wealth⁽¹⁶⁶⁾.

Thus we see that Cluny, which once stood for reform of the Black monks, instead joined them in their moral degradation and anti-monastic conduct. Literature and history concur in their assessment of the situation of the erstwhile followers of the Benedictine Rule. A strong indication of the corruption to be found in the Benedictine monasteries at the end of the eleventh century is also offered by the evident need felt by some men to break away and found a new order which would revert to the old standards of monasticism. They were to be the Cistercians.

b) The Cistercians (White monks).

The end of the eleventh century witnessed the establishment of new orders which attempted to escape from the worldly, high-powered organization of Cluny-type abbeys, in favour of the truly ascetic monastic life. Of these new orders, the Cistercians were the most important and the most influential.

It began with the founding (by Robert de Molesme) of an order which aimed to reinstate the Rule of St. Benedict. In 1098 it transferred to Cîteaux, whence the name of the order. Its chosen site was then an inaccessible

wilderness offering no comforts. It was an ideal setting for the monastic renunciation of all things worldly, and, indeed, during the early years the poverty ideal was strictly maintained. The second abbot, Aubri, foresaw the danger of wealth and stipulated that the order should not own property be it churches, or mills, or any feudal dues such as the "dîme"⁽¹⁶⁷⁾. However this innocent desire for religious poverty was doomed to be thwarted. The monks started with a wilderness. By their zeal, they transformed it into rich agricultural land. They produced more crops and wool than they needed. By disposing of the surplus they advanced towards the fatal clutches of commerce. From there on, a thriving business developed, and their prosperity became firmly established. In fairness one must attribute this growth not to covetousness, but to good management and hard work.

This was a chain of events which affected other orders but not to the extent to which it transformed Cîteaux. Between 1050 and 1200 the population of the country doubled and so people spread outwards from the traditional centres to the marginal lands where the would-be hermetic Cistercians had their holding. Commercial contact was established. The newcomers also provided a work force for the monks who began to employ lay brethren⁽¹⁶⁸⁾. This influx of new blood boosted the success of the order.

In 1112 St. Bernard joined the order and it was not long before his personality and renown reflected on the order. He became abbot at Clairvaux in 1115 and made the monastery universally known. He attracted many recruits. St. Bernard kept closely to the principles of the Rule. He abhorred wealth. Thus for a while the Cistercians enjoyed an excellent reputation, although their wealth was increasing steadily. St. Bernard died in 1153. By the end of the century many criticisms were aimed at the apparently corrupt Cistercian order. Let us consider how the order is viewed by the Old French poets around 1200.

Guiot de Provins claims to speak from experience since he spent four

months in the order before leaving them for the order of Cluny. Guiot's chief complaint against them seems to be their hard-heartedness. In spite of their excellent reputation, they are devoid of charity. They may be very rich but they will never part with any of their riches. They disguise their true nature: all that glisters is not gold:

N'est pas tout ors qu'en voit relure;
 lure ne puent il pas mont
 que trop de mal dedens lor ont:
 ou mont n'ait moins fraternitei.
 S'il ont avoir a grant plantei
 ja por ceu muez ne lor en iert.
 (Bible: ll. 1208-13)

Church buildings are adapted to further their money-making activities. Guiot claims that a thousand churches are used as barns for storing agricultural produce.

En mainte maniere desvoient:
 ja conterioie mil eglises
 ou il ont lor grainges assises.
 (ll. 1224-26)

They have acquired many rich holdings -

Per tout ont viles, et parroches,
 et terres, et maisieres frouches
 trop plus que n'avoient devant;
 (ll. 1227-29)

Guiot next refers to their commercial activities and scathingly calls them merchants. They frequent fairs. They have serfs and levy taxes just like feudal lords.

Bien savons con lor ordre va:
 maistre cosson et mercheant
 sont il, certes, et bien errant.
 Granz cherrois moinnent et granz sommes
 parmi ses foires; et ont hommes
 ou il font tailles et grans prises.
 (ll. 1244-49)

A criticism often made of the Cistercians is their greed for land⁽¹⁶⁹⁾. Guiot maintains that they are out to own all they can see. In order to do this they terrorise poor people who live in fear of being evicted from their land and forced to beg their living.

Lor ententes ont toutes mises
 a conquerre quant que il voient;
 la povre. gent molt s'en effroient
 que il gitent fors de lor terre -
 toz les en chescent a pain querre.
 (ll. 1250-54)

All these links with the worldly life combined to drive Guiot from the order. He left them to their covetousness:

mais je lor laissai covoitise.
 (line 1258)

Again Guiot makes the distinction between the different ranks within the order. It is the Cistercian abbots and cellerars who amass money, and who enjoy rich fare:

As abbeis et as salleriers
 laissa l'argent et les deniers
 et lou vin et les gros poissons.
 (ll. 1267-69)

While they drink the good wines, the weary monks who have toiled all day receive the inferior wines: ll. 1272-75. In all they do, they are fired by covetousness.

Molt les agolloigne et atise
 la covoitise de cest monde;
 (ll. 1290-91)

Guiot next returns to his theme of Cistercian lust for land. They lay claim as if by right to other people's land. They use any means to back up their claims, instigating law suits if all else fails.

A male gent ensi conquierent
 et en autrui terre se fierent,
 N'en sont pas legier a hosteir;
 il vuellent saisir et prover
 qu'il doivent tout per droit avoir,
 ou per engig ou per avoir;
 on ne repuet soffrir lors plaiz.
 (ll. 1293-99)

The poet insists that this greed for land is typically Cistercian. He denies that Cluny is guilty of this vice. In fact the Cluniac attitude is one of regret that they have any land at all.

nos n'avons d'autre terre envie
 ne la nostre ne nos plait mie,
 (ll. 1305-06)

Guiot's final charge against the Cistercians concerns their practice of simony. He says that they buy holy office and place their monks in secular office. They pursue bishoprics - we understand that this is purely for personal gain. Whenever a Cistercian accedes to the office of cardinal, he is particularly corrupt.

Ne veez vos les blans abbeiz
 que porchescent les evesqués?
 Et s'en ont fait un chardenal -
 ja ne vairois si desloaul!
 (ll. 1311-14)

We see that Guiot formulates an impressive catalogue of vices allegedly found in Cistercian monasteries. Apart from the worldliness and attachment to wealth which are often applied to monks in general, we note that Guiot goes into greater detail about the Cistercian participation in agriculture and commercial activities. Most characteristic of all is the association between Cistercians and greed for land. Other faults he notes include lack of charity. There is also the sin of simony, here defined as the buying of lucrative Church offices.

A comparison between the above account of the Cistercians and that given by Hugues de Berzé produces some interesting similarities and also differences. Unlike Guiot, Hugues attributes charity to these monks⁽¹⁷⁰⁾ -

E si sont assés communal,
 En lor maison, de lor viande,
 Quant nus i vient qui la demande.
 En aus a molt de charité;
 (ll. 296-99).

In view of subsequent criticisms, one wonders if Hugues was not being ironical in allowing that Cistercians were charitable. He joins Guiot in accusing them of being over-eager to acquire lands, and of exploiting the processes of law in order to do so. They are merciless in their pursuit of their neighbours' land:

Mais tant y a de mal mellié
 Que s'il pueent plain pié de terre
 Seur lor voisins par plait conquerre,
 C'est sans merci qu'il le feront:
 Ja tort ne droit n'i garderont
 Ne pitié ne misericorde.
 (ll. 300-05)

Charity seems incompatible with lack of pity and mercy. Lines 299 and 305 are contradictory and one can only conclude that Hugues, like Guiot, has a very low opinion of Cistercian kindness.

Other poets of shorter works seize upon one or two aspects of Guiot's list of faults. The thirteenth century poem, Descriptions des Religions by Hues li Rois de Cambrai, opts for the worldliness of the Cistercians which is so far removed from the asceticism which leads to salvation. Hues is tempted to join this easy-going order:

A ciaz de Cystiaus me veuil traire.
 Lor ordre me devroit mout plaire,
 Kar luxure toutans m'argle
 Et s'est de moi mestresse et maire:
 Avec cele gent debonnaire,
 Que de tous biens est revestue,
 A maint preudons mesaise elle
 Pour batre la char malostrue
 Et pour vestir laiens la haire,
 Par coi l'ame iert a Dieu rendue.
 (IV, ll. 37-46)

Rutebeuf echoes Guiot in saying that the Cistercians no longer perform charitable works, and, again like Guiot, he classes them as merchants:

Mais de tant me desplaisent que il sunt marcheant
 Et de charitei faire deviennent recreant.
 (La Vie du Monde l. Stanza XXIII, ll. 91-92)
 Faral et Bastin, Vol. I, p. 398

To what extent these poets were justified in dismissing the Cistercians as greedy, uncharitable, land-grabbing hedonists is debatable. Historians do seem to concur with the didactic poets. We have already received the explanation for their contact with commerce (my page 269). This link was intensified with the growth in numbers of the recruited lay brethren, "frères convers", who were largely illiterate, did not take the monastic vows, but served chiefly as a labour force and as intermediaries in the commercial world for the enclosed monks. Thus the monks were able to indulge in large-scale commercial business without involving themselves too personally.

Did the Cistercians covet other people's land? At least one Church historian admits that they did. He is speaking about the end of the twelfth

century: "They were ceasing to keep their statutes and owning serfs and churches; they were rich and grasping; they were harsh neighbours driving out the poor that they might have unbroken expanses for their ploughs and their sheep. The poor men of Cîteaux and Clairvaux, who had lived on grass and roots were now wealthy landowners."⁽¹⁷¹⁾ Abuses within the Cistercian order were brought to the attention of Innocent III and prompted him to administer a sharp rebuke to the offenders. He does not, however, tell us the exact nature of the misdeeds⁽¹⁷²⁾.

On the other hand, if one ignores the moral aspect of worldly involvement on the part of monks, it would appear that the expansion and commerce of the Cistercians rendered service to the Middle Ages in that they founded a sound basis for commercial capitalism, and thus helped to establish a thriving economy⁽¹⁷³⁾. We are not, however, surprised that the Old French moralists do not share this view. As Churchmen they were in full revolt against the commercial activity they found flourishing in the monasteries. They could not be expected to have the tolerance of attitude or professional hindsight of modern economists. They merely baulked at the incongruity of religious orders, sworn to poverty, becoming major capitalistic enterprises.

c) The Carthusians.

On the whole, minor monastic orders, not as important as the Benedictines and Cistercians, receive scant attention from the Old French poets. Often it is only Guiot de Provins, and occasionally Hugues de Berzé, who attribute to them specific vices and failings. I shall therefore deal with them briefly.

The Carthusians were a hermit order founded in 1084 by Bruno of Cologne. It was a silent order and was spared none of the rigours of a truly ascetic life. It began in a forest near Grenoble where the founder and six companions fled to avoid human and worldly contact.

Historians do not testify to any significant lapses in the order. The Charterhouse Rule seems to have survived the temptation of the times and

this order did not follow the expansionary trend of other orders. Agricultural work was not organized on a grand scale and did not overflow into embarrassing wealth and commerce.

Neither Guiot nor Hugues can level the ubiquitous charge of covetousness or worldliness at these hermits, and this appears to be the case of other poets of the age⁽¹⁷⁴⁾. Guiot claims to find their self-abnegation exaggerated and thus repugnant. He would not like to be a member of the order (ll. 1330-35).

Their income derives from the collect of Church services and gifts. They do not possess cows or horses and are aware of the danger of so doing. They declare themselves content with the little they have, and Guiot commends their attitude and their hard work.

Amendé se sont en l'englise
 et des messes et dou servise;
 il ont assez dons et porches;
 Vaiches ne gemens n'ont il pes;
 d'outre lor terme laboreir
 de ceüse vuellent bien gardeir;
 il ont asseiz, et si ont po;
 bien laborent, por ce les lo.
 (ll. 1367-74)

Guiot admits that there are no rumours of vice or corruption circulating in society about them. (ll. 1377-1379). Their life-style is there for all to see. They do not have avaricious cellerars or administrators.

Li lor oeuvre point ne se cuevre,
 bien mostrent lor vie et lor estre;
 ne il n'ont celerier ne mestre
 qui face borces ni avoir.
 (ll. 1380-83)

Guiot can find only one thing with which to reproach them. Their abstinence is forced upon their sick brothers who die as a result of lack of food. The poet concludes from this that the Carthusians are basically hard-hearted and strangers to charity (ll. 1390-1420). He urges them to remedy this trait and so adhere completely to the Rule of St. Benedict (ll. 1432-1440).

Hugues de Berzé's assessment of the Carthusians is almost unequivocally

favourable. They do not covet land, they do not instigate law-suits for profit, they do not wage private war. They are content with what they have:

Cil de Chartrouse n'ont de terre
 Couvoitise ne plait ne guerre;
 A ce se suefrent que il ont.
 (Bible: ll. 319-21)

The poet, then, somewhat insidiously, introduces a note of doubt. He acknowledges that to judge by outward appearance they are beyond criticism, but he says that one cannot read into their hearts. The poet's attitude is one of disbelief that the order could be so free from corruption. Yet he can offer no justification for his cynicism.

C'est des ordres cele dou mont
 Ou l'en puet mains de mal noter,
 Se n'est de cuer ou de penser:
 Mais as oevres e as samblans
 Pert il qu'il soient bones jans.
 (ll. 322-26)

Like Guiot, Hues li Rois expresses horror at the rigours of Carthusian life, and will not contemplate joining their order. Not for him the starvation diet and hair shirt (ll. 97-103). If he were to follow their Rule he would not be pleasant to look at:

S'aveuc teus gens iere rendus
 Ma char seroit pou delitable.
 (Descrission..., ll. 104-5)

In this one case, the Old French poets cannot link monasticism with worldliness. The order of the Carthusians defies criticism on those lines (175). The earlier poets, too, must content themselves either with grudging praise or veiled and vague criticism which they do not develop. The Carthusians are, therefore, particularly interesting since they alone succeed in not being carried along by the current of materialism which so plagued the Middle Ages to the despair of contemporary Christian moralists.

d) The Grandimontanes.

This order was founded in 1076 by Etienne de Muret. It was an eremitical order which entrusted its secular affairs to lay brethren. The founder lived

like a hermit, practising absolute renunciation of wealth. This was the ideal of the order and hence there were no collects, and no preaching outside the cloisters. While the monks devoted their entire life to prayer, all practical matters were dealt with by the lay "convers". From the second half of the twelfth century these "convers" abrogated more and more power within the order⁽¹⁷⁶⁾. This state of affairs resulted in a series of clashes between monks and convers, which culminated in a major clash in 1188⁽¹⁷⁷⁾. The convers plotted against the hermits and drove many of them out. An attempt was made by them to elect a lay prior of their own dubious choice. Pope Urban III intervened. Later it was Pope Clement III who also had to lend his support to the monks in their struggle against the powerful lay element of the order. As a result of these interventions the power of the convers was weakened but not eliminated. Trouble continued to flare up within the order until 1218 when a new papal inquiry was set up to reform the order.

When Guiot wrote his Bible, the order of Grandimontanes was in a state of turmoil. He first attacked their lapse in ideals and present association with wealth. They now possess cows, horses and goats:

Mais de tant lor ordre remuent,
 car ont or vaiches et jumens
 et barbis. Plus de deus cens ans
 ont il si lor ordre tenue
 que tel beste ne fut vëue.

(ll. 1450-54)

They became the overlords of feudal nobility They accumulated more land than other churches:

Molt les vi signors des barons,
 molt per fu grans d'aus li renons,
 maistres les vi, iceu fut voirs,
 et des princes et des avoires;
 il avoient plus commandises
 quant toutes les autres eglises.

(ll. 1457-62)

Guiot claims that it was the public scandal occasioned by the conflict between the hermits and convers which brought to light the lapses in the Grandimontane

order (ll. 1463-1467). Outward appearances still create a misleading impression. They are lavish with their hospitality, and in their hostel show charity to all-comers:

Molt offrent biaul lor charitei,
 a maingier donent bellement;
 iceu font il adroitement
 de ceaus defors en un hostel.
 (ll. 1498-1501)

Yet the appointed abbots and priors go in fear and trepidation of their lay recruits who have snatched the power and who now rule the order.

(ll. 1544-1560). All is topsy-turvy in this order⁽¹⁷⁸⁾:

(Maistre et seignor sont li convers:
 icist ordres va en travers.).
 (ll. 1561-62)

Guiot then makes a serious charge. He asks why such a state of affairs should be allowed to continue. His answer: the convers have appropriated all the riches of the order and have used it to bribe the authorities in Rome to leave things as they are.

Teil ordre Romme lor consent;
 por coi? de l'or et de l'argent
 estoient saisi li conveirs
 quant il mirent les clers en fers.
 Tant en donerent, qu'a Grant mont
 clerc et provoivre sosgit sont;
 (ll. 1567-72)

Rome, says Guiot, readily agrees to turn a blind eye to the abuses in return for money:

a tot lou desordenement
 consent bien Rome por argent.
 (ll. 1577-78)

Guiot's accusations against Church authorities at Rome are perfectly in keeping with the current barrage of criticism levelled at the Papal curia for its venality. However historical evidence (see page 277) would appear to contradict Guiot and invalidate his claim - since the Papal curia intervened on the side of the hermits not on that of the convers. Since the whole affair had not been settled by the time Guiot was writing, he may just be echoing rumours which were circulating, but which had little

basis in fact. Current opinion, we may assume, would readily put Rome in the wrong, until proved erroneous.

e) The Premonstratensians.

These were originally secular clergy, canons who served in cathedral chapters. From the time of the Gregorian reform they gradually formed themselves into groups leading a communal life and following the Rule of St. Augustine. These Austin canons did pastoral work in the parish and although they became a regular order they were never enclosed. Teaching was one of their chief preoccupations.

The Premonstratensian order of Austin canons was founded in 1120 by Norbert of Xanten. The order bore some Cistercian characteristics, but since they preached, taught and heard confessions, their contact with the secular accorded more with the Augustine than with the Benedictine Rule⁽¹⁷⁹⁾. Besides this contact was all the more necessary since the main aim was the reform of the secular. They were nevertheless bound by the monastic oath of poverty.

Guiot's approach to this order must surely be ironical. He claims that they were once a rich, flourishing order, but made their goings-on too public and so declined.

Deus! con les vi signors des cors!
 Molt fu lor ordre de grant bruit;
 en pou de t'ens se sont destruit:
 trop ont lor covine mostrei.
 Ice sont sil de Prei mostrei.
 Ne lor vint pas de grant savoir;
 il i ont perdu grant avoir.
 (ll. 1584-90)

Guiot therefore adopts an attitude of mock admiration for the erstwhile glory and wealth of the courtly Premonstratensians. His allegation that they have now become poor is not borne out by historical records however⁽¹⁸⁰⁾. And yet Guiot persists in extolling their former wealth.

Ha Deus! con nobles abaïes
 avoient, et belles maisons
 et terres et possessions!
 (ll. 1596-98)

Their wealth brought them great prestige:

Molt furent ja de biaul ator,
 et de grant riches ce comblei,
 et trop prisie et honorei;
 (ll. 1604-06)

But they were forced to sell and pawn their magnificent possessions, and Guiot begs God to have mercy on them:

trop ont vendu et enwagié.
 Nostre Sires en ait pitié!
 (ll. 1607-08)

Guiot cannot seriously be singing the praises of a monastic order because it was very wealthy and aristocratic. A court poet he may have been, but here his courtly attitude does not blend with his opinions on other religious orders. In Guiot's case, his background always leaves room for doubt as to the sincerity of his opinions. Nevertheless, I prefer to consider his expression of admiration of the wealth and noble worldliness of the Premonstratensians as being tongue in cheek and an example of his irony. Surely the association of great riches and a monastic order is a satirical comment and not a mere observation. We note that the earlier Latin work, Speculum Stultorum⁽¹⁸¹⁾ records a more likely evolution from monastic poverty to secular wealth within this order. Furthermore some half a century after Guiot, Rutebeuf refers to the pride and covetousness of the corrupt order of the Premonstratensians, whose white habits hid black hearts.

De ciaux de Preimoutrei me couvient dire voir:
 Orgueulz et couvoitize les seit bien desouvoir.
 Il sunt par dehors blanc, et par dedens sunt noir:
 (La Vie du Monde: ll. 85-87)
 Faral et Bastin, Vol. I, p. 398.

Evidently this order had declined morally, but not materially.

Of another order of canons, known simply as Regular Canons, Guiot again makes ironical comment. He claims to be drawn to this order because they are well dressed and well fed.

L'ordre des chanoines rigleiz
 poroie je soffrir asseiz,
 qu'il sont molt natement vestu,
 et bien chauciet et bien pû.
 (ll. 1641-44)

Like the Premonstratensians, the Regular Canons followed the Rule of St. Augustine and maintained some contact with the secular. However Guiot must be hinting at more than links with society when he says of them that they belong completely to the secular!

Il sont dou siecle plainnement,
(line 1645)

Subsequent comments show us how we are meant to interpret this line; for the Regular Canons are indeed very worldly in their tastes:

il sont molt noble vivandier
il parollent bien au maingier;
(ll. 1653-54)

Guiot compares the hardships that he has to endure at Cluny: the fasting, night prayers, frugal fare etc., (ll. 1655-88) with the easy life of the

Austin Canons:

Beneois soit Sainz Augustins!
des boins morciaus et des clers vins
ont sui chanoine a grant plantei;
cortoisement sont ordenei -
(ll. 1689-1692)

The choice of the word "cortoisement" is ironically significant. Indeed within the order of canons, life is organized as at court, with emphasis on comfort and enjoyment. These canons behave more like the idle rich than monks.

It is the worldly comforts which characterize the Regular Canons for Hues li Rois. His description of them alludes only to their good food and wine and their fine clothes (182):

Bon pain, bon vin ont et cras pot
Chascuns tant com user en pot.
Bien menjuent char et safn
Et vestent chemises de lin;
Couvertours ont, coute et cousin:
(Descriission: ll. 124-28)

So too it is with Rutebeuf who portrays them as living quietly and luxuriously.

He adds that by indulging the flesh, one poisons the soul:

En l'ordre des chanoines c'om dit saint Augustin
Il vivent en plantei sens noise et ses hustin.
De Jhesu lor souvaingne au soir et au matin:
La chars soeif norrie trait a l'arme venin.
(La Vie du Monde: ll. 93-96, Vol. I, page 398)

So with the canons the abuses may be resumed as an over-close contact with the secular in their own life-style. They are not the coarse monks characterised by gluttony, but the aristocratic ones who appreciate the best that the world can offer in material comforts and pleasures, regardless of their religious obligation to live in poverty.

f) The Templars and Hospitallers.

Guiot de Provins next considers the military orders of the Templars and the Hospitallers.

The order of Templars was founded in 1118 by Hugues de Payens, and was represented by a small group of knights who vowed themselves to the protection of the kingdom of Jerusalem. It was organised as a military body with a hierarchy of officers. In an era of crusades, this order corresponded to three dominant trends of contemporary society - the predilection for monasticism, chivalry and the defence of the Holy Land. We have already seen examples of monastic orders who became too involved with chivalry in the worldly sense. This is not, however, the original aim of the Templars who strove not to reconcile the worldly, courtly knight and the austere monk. They supported chivalry in the sense that they bore arms only in defence of Christianity. Otherwise they were bound by the monastic oath of poverty, and so the courtly life-style was not, in theory at least, theirs. This aim earned them the patronage of St. Bernard who saw in them the poor soldiers of Christ and a shining example to the dissipated knights of secular society.

The ideal of the Templars was, however, short-lived. The monastic oath of poverty was soon forgotten. The order became an important banking house. Having begun by making loans to pilgrims and crusaders, they later acquired control over princes and barons who owed them money. Doubts were raised as to their commercial honesty⁽¹⁸³⁾. They apparently became obsessed with money and neglected their duties towards Christendom⁽¹⁸⁴⁾. Finally the order prompted so much envy by its wealth that it was suppressed in 1312.

Let us now see how this dramatic history is reflected in the didactic poems of the thirteenth century.

Guiot begins by admitting that he is far too much of a coward to join this bellicose order (ll. 1695-1700). He professes approval of their communism:

La ne fait pas borce chescuns,
a toz est li avoires communs.
(Bible: ll. 1707-08)

After tentative praise of some of their points, the poet wipes all this away with one comment - they are victims of the vice God hates most: they are covetous.

Mais d'une chose sont criei
mainte fois et sovent blasmei
dont il ne sont pas conoissant,
ne Deus ne heit nul vice tant:
covoitous sont, se dient tuit.
(ll. 1745-49)

Guiot goes on to voice vague praise, and then to cancel it out by a damning criticism: With mock admiration and approbation he describes them as rich, wise and well-loved:

Riche gent sont et bien sennei,
et chier tenu, et bien amei,
(ll. 1753-54)

But they are also cruel and evil!

mais trop sont et crueil et mal.
(line 1755)

Hugues de Berzé treats the Templars and Hospitallers as one category of monks. His approach is also somewhat ironical. If these orders were content to live together in harmony, sharing their resources, free from covetousness Hugues says that he would have nothing to reproach them with (ll. 261-267). He thereby intimates that this is not the case. His next accusation is not merely hinted at. He openly accuses these orders of using their religious establishments as fortresses. Therein they harbour murderers and thieves (ll. 273-280). Furthermore they sell their military

services for private feuds and provide hired assassins. So anyone with a grudge can appeal to the Templars and pay them to kill the offender, be he guilty of anything or not (ll. 281-290). Hugues seems particularly upset by the decadence of these orders. As an elderly knight who had himself crusaded, he was doubtless personally distressed that such noble orders should have evolved so shamefully.

S'en sui dolantant com je puS, (line 291)

In a short work De l'Estat du Monde (185), Templars are also associated with love of money (186), and this mars their otherwise noble order. Their covetousness prompts them to sell their corn at a high price in times of need. They will not lend it.

Mult sunt prudome li templer
 E bien se sevent purchacer,
 Mes trop par aiment le diner.
 /E/ quant li tens est alques chiers
 Si vendent blé
 Plus volentiers que il nel prestant a lur menie.
 (ll. 139-144)

Although the Templars are associated with an overriding love of money, there is no hint of any association with usury made by the Old French poets. Had the Templars been engaged on such financial dishonesty, these moralists would hardly have let it pass without comment. Therefore at the beginning of the thirteenth century their affairs had not yet progressed that far, or at least the general public were unaware of any such activity in this order. Nevertheless the love of money label heralds their involvement in high finance.

The Hospitallers provoked much the same reaction as the Templars, being a somewhat similar order, although a poor second to the Templars in the possession of riches. Originally a charitable order formed to assure the protection of pilgrims to the Holy Land, it became a military order in about 1120 under Raymond of Puy. Their evolution followed that of the Templars but on a more modest scale. The two orders were great and bitter rivals, and were known to fight each other over very unspiritual issues - dîmes and

land possessions (cf. Berze, ll. 261-267). On more than one occasion the pope had to intercede in their disputes⁽¹⁸⁷⁾. During the time of Innocent III they came to blows over the possession of a fief. Thus history attests to their craving for wealth and property.

In his description of the Hospitallers, Guiot refers to their sharing of common resources. Recently, he says, their standards have fallen, and in spite of their name, they no longer have anything to do with hospitality⁽¹⁸⁸⁾.

Trop ont lor afaire chaingié,
qu'hospitalitei n'i voi gié.
(ll. 1801-02)

No hospitality, hence no charity, concludes Guiot, and considers the demise of charity generally (ll. 1813-1829). A monk devoid of charity is worthless. All other attributes and discipline will not compensate for this basic lack:

Uns moignes puet soffrir grant painne,
trop puet lire, trop puet chanter
et travillier et j'èuner,
mais /se/ n'ait charitei en soi,
molt li vaut po, si con je croi.
(ll. 1860-64)

When the Hospitallers were a charitable institution, they outshone other orders, as gold outshines other metals.

Si con li ors^{sor}/tous metaus
est plus chiers, fu li hospitaus
dou mont la plus chiere maison:
chiers fu li lieus, chiers fu li nons
tant con chariteiz lor durait.
(ll. 1893-97)

Their worth has diminished with the accumulation of great wealth. Instead of dispensing charity, they perform only lucrative works - they take collects, they take over land, they acquire rents etc. Guiot advises them to return to the practice of hospitality and charity.

forment preoichent, forment quierent,
molt porchessent, et molt conquierent,
con fraires ont et grans rentes.
Toutes devroient lor ententes
torneir en hospitalitei
et en veraie charitei.
(ll. 1921-26)

g) The Converts of St. Anthony.

In his review of the monastic orders, Guiot mentions other minor orders which have little relevance or interest to this study. I shall, however, record his comments on the converts of St. Anthony. In my experience, Guiot is the only Old French poet to include these in a study of the orders. Their history is not particularly interesting. What is interesting is the ire they evoke in Guiot who devotes much of his work to them, and also of special relevance to this section of my work is their resemblance to the mendicant orders of friars which were to come later. It started as a lay order⁽¹⁸⁹⁾ but gradually attracted more and more priests. It was founded in 1095 by Gaston, a nobleman, who had been cured of a fever by the relics of St. Anthony. Thereafter he devoted his life and wealth to the service of the saint and to caring for those afflicted with the same illness. With a number of followers a hospital was set up.

It was not until 1209 that this order was granted permission to build an oratory. The order became increasingly monastic in character and was finally formally organized according to the Rule of St. Augustine in 1247. All this, however, occurred after the time that Guiot wrote. At what stage were they then in 1206? They were probably a mixture of lay men and ordained priests. We know⁽¹⁹⁰⁾ that their way of life was later to attract the censure of a papal legate who, in 1231, drew up a set of rules for the order. Perhaps the vices and abuses of which Guiot complains were those which prompted the reformatory measures.

What were the complaints our poet makes against this once charitable organisation? He immediately launches into a harsh attack. They are all tricksters, he cries:

tuit li plus maistre guilleor
c'onques veïssiez et peor.
(ll. 1939-40)

They have set up a hospital in the town, but it is merely a front to deceive

people. They do not have ordained priests and yet they trick gullible people into believing in their pure intentions (ll. 1941-47). They obtain moneys ostensibly for their good works and their churches, but the funds are deviated for more selfish purposes:

Ja en s'uevre ne en s'englise
 nen iert une meaille mise
 de tout l'avoir que il conquierent.
 (ll. 1957-59)

They swarm everywhere in their relentless pursuit of money. There is nowhere, says Guiot, where one does not see their pigs (ll. 1960-63⁽¹⁹¹⁾).

Guiot deals next with their gluttony.

l'mervelle moinnt riche vie:
 tous en vait per goule ou per ventre
 l'avoir qui en teil maison entre.
 (ll. 1972-74)

Those inmates of the hospitals, allegedly seriously ill, live well, produce children (ll. 1977-82). They grow fat on pious donations (ll. 1983-85). Worse still, these cripples engage in usury in the town. Guiot agrees that this sounds far-fetched, and admits that he found it hard to believe when first told of it.

Li contrait prestant en la vile,
 si oi dire, molt lor deniers:
 ne sai quans contrais usuriez.
 i ait il, se n'est pas monçonge;
 je lou tig a fable et a songe
 quant on lou me conta premiers.
 (ll. 1988-93)

Guiot thus skilfully persuades us that what he says is true. Having anticipated our incredulity, he confesses his own when he first heard tell of such practices. He thereby intimates he has heard these charges since, and now believes them, and, moreover, expects us to do likewise.

The cripples are exploited in other ways. Whatever the cause of their illness, they are passed off as sufferers of St. Anthony's disease. They are cured, and all credit goes to the holy patron and his followers who are thus able to reap great profits from the admiring populace (ll. 1996-2009).

They are ingenious at inducing people to part with money or gifts. By flattery they will persuade a pepper merchant to donate a pound of pepper.

En mainte guise font deniers;
 il enlosangent les pevriers:
 chescuns done livre de poivre;
 molt seivent bien la gent desoivre.
 (ll. 2045-48)

Women are particularly gullible and susceptible to their flattery. They readily part with money, food or even personal trinkets and articles of adornment.

Les femmes ont trouvees simples:
 toelles, et aneals, et guiples
 fermaus, et cintures ferrées,
 fromages, et jambes salées
 en traient, avuec la monoie.
 (ll. 2049-53)

Guiot calculates that these flattering beggars receive more money than any other order:

Plus conquierent, se Deus me voie,
 que toutes les ordres qui sont:
 (ll. 2054-55)

The pigs donated in one year, he estimates at a value of 3,000 silver marks (ll. 2056-57).

Equally shameful as the methods of obtaining riches is the use made of them. They eat well, spend lavishly. They engage in commercial dealings:

molt mainjuent et molt despendent,
 [et] molt achatent et revendent;
 il sont mercheant et coson;
 (ll. 2059-61)

They lay claim to personal property and leave their houses in their wills to their children. They show nothing but contempt for St. Anthony (ll. 2062-67).

They are too rich, and too dishonest in their ways of becoming wealthy. Their profits should be passed on to honest monks who would use them for what they were intended: the building of holy establishments in the name of St. Anthony. These would be for the benefit of all, but particularly the sick. That would be money well employed.

Trop conquierent, trop ont avoir,
 trop sovent desoivent la gent.
 Mais je lo c'on pregne l'argent
 des porceaus et des confrairies,
 et soit commandé en parties
 es prodomes et es loaus;
 que les deniers et les porceaus
 ait l'on Saint Antoine promis;
 a l'uevre dou mostier soit mis
 li argens c'on i fait belle oeuvre.
 (ll. 2068-77)

One wonders why this order seems to particularly anger Guiot. There is apparently no historical evidence to suggest that they were especially rich or corrupt. His criticism of other more flagrantly abusive orders seems mild in comparison to the hatred he displays for this modest order. Could it be because they professed to be healers and were charlatans? Possibly. Greed is a common fault in holy orders, but dishonesty and exploitation of the poor and credulous in order to satisfy that greed is not often seen. Perhaps, too, there was the factor that the considerable wealth accumulated was not earned. It is not the result of hard work (as in the case of the Cistercians, for example). It is acquired by wheedling and trickery, that is, in an undignified and dishonourable way. Furthermore the money once dishonestly gained is dishonestly used - for a purpose other than that for which it was intended. Guiot seems to strongly disapprove of these mendicant monks, and in his review of this order we see a foreshadowing of the hatred and scorn which animated the poets of fifty years later when describing the two great mendicant orders, the Franciscans and the Dominicans. It is those two orders I propose to study next.

h) The Mendicant Orders

Guiot's Bible predated the formation of the Franciscan and Dominican orders of friars and so they can have no place in his review. However in later works, they, above all other orders, were to provoke the wrath and bitter satire of didactic writers.

The Friars Minor, or Franciscans⁽¹⁹²⁾, were founded by Francis Bernardone of Assisi, the son of a rich Italian merchant. The order was granted the patronage of Innocent III in 1210 and was officially formed in 1215. Unlike the monastic orders which tended to be aristocratic, the Franciscan friars represented a cross-section of society. Their chief characteristic was their complete dedication to absolute poverty⁽¹⁹³⁾.

The Dominicans take their name from their Spanish founder, Dominic Guzman. Their order was also sanctioned by Innocent III and finally ratified by Honorius III in 1217. The Dominicans embraced poverty, but were also engaged upon teaching. Hence their appellation - Friar Preachers⁽¹⁹⁴⁾.

Both mendicant orders had extraordinary success. By the second half of the thirteenth century the Franciscans had 1,100 houses and although the Dominican expansion was less rapid, they also boasted some 7000 members by 1256⁽¹⁹⁵⁾. Since they were both vowed to poverty, they depended on alms for their existence. Both orders were to become important in European universities⁽¹⁹⁶⁾.

The orders did not evolve without encountering some problems. The Franciscans were involved in great internal conflicts over poverty. Theory and practice were hard to reconcile. St. Francis had set impossibly high standards, and the poverty of the order was a subject of much debate⁽¹⁹⁷⁾. Eventually it was decided that while personal handling of money by the friars was prohibited, the possession of common property was not. It was the concept of private ownership which was anathema to the Franciscan Rule. However as the order developed, circumstances and external influences served to modify the concept of Franciscan poverty, and there was certainly an increasing breach between theory and practice⁽¹⁹⁸⁾.

The most profound effect made by the friars was upon the common people. They went out to meet the people, and the sight of the barefooted beggars appealed to those who met them⁽¹⁹⁹⁾. Their non-aristocratic character

removed the barriers which separated the traditional, monastic orders and the humble third estate.

Popular they certainly were with the more modest element of society, but they quickly made enemies in other sectors. Firstly the secular clergy hated them: from the parish priest whose rivals they became in the matter of the administration of the sacraments, preaching and parochial work, to the bishops who mistrusted their association with the Pope, regarding them as spies of the Roman curia. Other monastic orders resented their popularity with the people, and must have felt overshadowed by this new influx of religious, and jaded by the sight of their fervent idealism and its impact on society.

Feudal aristocracy was no more enthusiastic. The friars were essentially of the town, and supported the communal movement. Thus they endeared themselves to the king who also favoured the movement, hoping thus to win back some of the power currently detained by the feudal barons of great fiefs. Therefore both as champions of the town dwellers and of the third estate, they alienated the sympathies of the landed nobility⁽²⁰⁰⁾.

It is understandable that, flouting the conventions of feudalism, these friars who made enemies of all the traditional feudal powers, should also be heartily disliked by the Old French poets - themselves representatives of either secular Church or traditional monastic orders and products of feudal aristocracy. However the mendicant orders appeared too late for the bulk of the poets I am studying. Those who were later to complain of the orders were not opposed to them on the counts already suggested. By the second half of the thirteenth century the orders had evolved in such a way as to offer even more grounds for censure.

The ideal of the orders could not apparently be maintained. Seeds of corruption were sown and soon the fate that had befallen the earlier monastic orders also affected the mendicants. We learn from historians⁽²⁰¹⁾ that

the scorn for property and love of poverty was soon, for many, merely a front. The friars became avid in their quest for funds and in order to satisfy their covetousness employed dubious methods. One church historian⁽²⁰²⁾ dates their moral decline from the middle of the fourteenth century, but the poets I have studied are unanimous in their accusations of corruption from the 1260s.

There was one other major reason for the unpopularity of the friars in the eyes of the didactic poets such as Rutebeuf, Jean de Meung and Robert le Clerc. The mendicants became very influential in the intellectual field and rapidly infiltrated the great places of learning. This caused conflict with the secular teachers, particularly in the University of Paris. Here in 1256 Guillaume de St. Amour wrote a harshly-worded treatise attacking the orders - De periculis novissimorum temporum⁽²⁰³⁾. In answer, St. Bonaventure wrote his De paupertate Christi in defence of the mendicant teachers. Thomas Aquinas also lent his support to the friars. Finally Pope Alexander III intervened, on the side of the mendicants. Guillaume de St. Amour was dismissed from the University. This series of events and its outcome caused a furor amongst secular teachers and their sympathisers. These included Rutebeuf and Jean de Meung, who henceforth spared no effort in attacking every possible aspect of the mendicant orders.

Above I have given the major reasons why the mendicant orders would not find favour with didactic poets. I turn now to a study of how these orders are portrayed in the verse works of the thirteenth century. The poets upon whom this study is centred are Rutebeuf who was the most vociferous in his condemnation of the friars⁽²⁰⁴⁾ and who composed between 1260 and 1270; then there is the Roman de la Rose of Jean de Meung (1275). Robert le Clerc's Vers de la Mort (1276) contribute some criticisms of the order, as do some shorter works which we shall introduce as they are quoted.

Although the dislike of the mendicant orders stemmed largely from their

political influence, the means of attacking them adopted by the poets was very like that used against the monks. Thus wealth, its acquisition and use, play an important part in anti-mendicant works⁽²⁰⁵⁾. Indeed the friars' attachment to wealth is the most widely-criticized aspect of the orders, and the one exploited most readily by the poets who perhaps had other reasons to dislike the friars. The dropping of the poverty ideal by religious who once put it above all else served as a useful weapon with which to beleaguer these apparent enemies of feudal society.

The anti-mendicant themes of these works, correspond to many of the themes associated with wealth. So great was the attack upon friars and their involvement with wealth that I have subdivided this major theme into various characteristics.

i. The friars and covetousness for worldly possessions.

Evidently the vice or deadly sin most often associated with the mendicant was covetousness or avarice. So says Rutebeuf:

Covoitex sont, si com moi samble,
(l'Etat du Monde: line 41. Vol. I, p. 384)

Speaking more particularly of the Dominicans, he accuses them indirectly of being the disciples of Pride, Covetousness, Avarice and Envy (ll. 5-6, Des Jacobins). He traces their development from poverty to wealth, from satisfaction with little to greed for riches.

Premier ne demanderent c'un poi' de repostaille
Atout un pou d'estrain ou de chaume ou de paille.
(ll. 21-22. Des Jacobins, Vol. I, p. 315)

They have received so much money from both clergy and laity that they have built huge palaces, so spacious that mounted knights could make a full charge⁽²⁰⁶⁾.

Tant ont eu deniers et de clers et de lais
Et d'execucions, d'aumosnes et de lais,
Que des basses mesons ont fet si granz palais
C'uns hom, lance sor fautre, i feroit un eslais.
(ll. 25-28)

Allusions are made elsewhere in Rutebeuf's poems to the fine buildings of the mendicants⁽²⁰⁷⁾. In La Bataille des Vices contre les Vertus, it is with irony that he commends Humility and her mendicant servants for building fine palaces.

Et Humilitez vient avant;
Et or est bien droiz et resons
Que si granz dame ait granz mesons
Et biaux palais et beles sales.
(ll. 78-81) Vol. I, page 308.

Alms from the king have largely enabled them to build these magnificent places. They do well to invest their wealth in such things, for the favour of the king might falter (ll. 119-123).

In Le Roman de la Rose, Jean de Meung puts his views on friars into the mouth of one of them. Hence a very frank confession where the mendicant happily admits that he is wholly geared to worldly gain. His flattery enables him to acquire riches with which he can eat well and build palaces.

"Par ma lobe entas et amasse
grant tresor en tas et en masse,
qui ne peut por riens affonder;
car se j'en faz palés fonder
et acomplis touz mes deliz
de compaignies ou de liz,
de tables plaines d'entremés
(car ne veill autre vie mes),
recroist mes argenz et mes ors;
car ainz que soit vuiz mes tresors,
denier me vienent a resours.
Ne faz je bien tunber mes ours?
En aquerre est toute m'entente,
mieuz vaut mes porchaz que ma rente."
(ll. 11523-11536) Vol. 2, ed. Lecoy.

In les Vers de la Mort, the Jacobins appear as money-grabbing. They preach the good life, but they think only of getting rich. And indeed they are much richer than they appear, says the poet, Robert le Clerc:

Rendu sont por avoir contraire:
s'en ont assés, plus qu'il ne paire;
(Stanza XLIII, ll. 10-11)

Thus far the charges are commonplace - we have references to friars and worldliness, gluttony, possession of fine houses, all of which is inspired by covetousness. All this has been said of earlier monastic orders.

ii. Friars and Hypocrisy.

Hypocrisy is one of the main vices or moral defects of the friar. All monks are vowed to poverty, but as we have seen nearly all succumbed to the temptation of wealth, and allowed themselves to become involved in great commercial enterprises. Yet they were self-supporting and made no claims upon society. The friars, however, were completely dedicated to poverty. Possessing nothing of their own, they depended for their subsistence on alms. When their ideal was undermined by the corruptive influence of a desire for wealth, and they indeed became very wealthy, they did not abandon their outward show of poverty. Still they walked barefoot in the streets begging for alms, and preaching evangelical poverty. It is this hypocrisy and downright dishonesty which our poets cannot tolerate.

Their disgust for the rich beggar friars is expressed by the appellation of *Faus Semblant* applied to the mendicant by both Rutebeuf and Jean de Meung. Rutebeuf's *Complainte de Guillaume* associates hypocrisy and false-seeming with the Friars Preachers who were responsible for the dismissal of Guillaume de St. Amour from the University of Paris:

Morte est Pitiez
Et Charitez et Amistiez;
Fors du regne les ont getiez
Ypocrisie
Et Vaine Gloire et Tricherie
Et Faus Semblant et dame Envie
Qui tout enflame.
(ll. 73-79) Vol. I, p. 261.

The hypocrisy of the Jacobins is also the subject of *Des Jacobins*, where Rutebeuf contrasts the vow of poverty made by the mendicants and their application of it. They may preach poverty and humility, but they do not believe a word of what they say.

Por l'amor Jhesucrist lessierent la chemise
Et pristrent povreté qu'a l'Ordre estoit promise;
Més il ont povreté glosee en autre guise:
Humilité sermonent, qu'il ont en terre mise.
(ll. 37-40). Vol. I, p. 316.

In *La Chanson des Ordres*, the poet accuses them of wearing simple clothes,

but secreting money in hidden places.

Frere Predicator
 Sont de moult simple ator
 Et s'ont en lor destor,
 Sachiez, maint parisi.
 (ll. 13-16) Vol. I, p. 331.

Similarly in Du Pharisien, Hypocrisy has become the scourge of the land and has won over the Friars in particular (ll. 80-86, Vol. I, p. 253).

The mendicant in Le Roman de la Rose is qualified to speak about the hypocrisy of friars which he does without shame. Appearances are deceptive, he says - the habit does not make the monk:

"la robe ne fet pas le moine."
 (line 11028)

Nor indeed do his words. The preaching of a friar will often differ greatly from his deeds (ll. 11043-11047). Amours points out to Faus Semblant that he appears to be a saintly hermit (ll. 11200-01). Yes, answers he, but I am a hypocrite, and goes on to show how his appearance and words correspond very little to his real self and actions.

" - C'est voirs, mes je suis ypocrites.
 (Amours speaks)- Tu vas preeschant atenance.
 - Voire voir, mes j'emple ma pance
 de tres bons morseaus et de vins
 tex con il affiert a devins.
 - Tu vas preeschant povreté.
 - Voire, riches a poeté.
 mes combien que povres me faigne,
 nul povre je ne contredaigne.
 (ll. 11202-11210) Vol. 2, ed. Lecoy.

The mendicant's attitude is portrayed as being hypocritical, since, while preaching abstinence and poverty, he indulges in gluttony and enjoys great wealth.

ii. The Mendicant's illicit wealth.

We have seen that the mendicant was accused of being overinterested in personal gain and of amassing a private fortune and of leading a very worldly life. We have seen also that he epitomised hypocrisy, since by his religious habit, he stood for the contrary of all that. A further point made by the

satirists of the mendicants was that not only was the desire for wealth and its possession wrong for a man of the Church, but the means of acquisition were evil. It is therefore not uncommon for mendicants to be equated with thieves, since they acquire money under false pretences and by various unscrupulous means.

Rutebeuf describes them as being worse than robbers:

Fors leres est qu'a larron emble,
 Et cil lobent les lobeors
 Et desrobent les robeors
 Et servent lobeors de lobes,
 Ostent aus robeors lor robes.

(L'Etat du Monde: ll. 42-46) Vol. I, p. 384

This point is similarly expressed in Le Roman de la Rose. Faus Semblant notes how evil, greedy men such as usurers, swindlers, money-lenders, bailiffs, beadles, provosts and mayors amass great wealth by preying on the weak and by exploiting their power over them. Faus Semblant boasts that he in his guise of mendicant can triumph over both strong and weak. His victims include not only the humble, but the rich scoundrels who rob them (ll. 11507-11522).

How does the mendicant thus manage to bleed rich and poor, powerful and weak? He robs the poor man by appropriating money intended as alms for their relief. Faus Semblant admits that he will not help a poor man and indeed flees his company for he knows that there is no gain for him in such frequentations:

"Quant je voi touz nuz ces truanz
 trembler sus ces fumiers puanz
 de froit, de fain crier et brere,
 ne m'entremet de leur affere.
 S'il sunt a l'Ostel Dieu porté,
 ja n'ierent par moi conforté,
 car d'une aumosne toute seule
 ne me pestroient il la gueule,
 qu'il n'ont pas vaillant une sèche:
 Que donra qui son cousteau leiche?"
 (ll. 11215 - 11224)

The rich scoundrel falls victim to the mendicant when he is tempted by an offer of absolution in return for payment. This selling of indulgences

is a frequent charge levelled at the friars: Rutebeuf accuses them of pardoning even unrepentant, but rich, usurers, who by Church law were excommunicate and thus unable to receive absolution. Not that such a detail would deter the rapacious friar:

Ausi, vous di a brief parole,
 Cil nous ont mort et afolé
 Qui paradis ont acolé.
 A cels le donent et delivrent
 Qui les aboïrent et enyvrent
 Et qui lor engressent les pances,
 D'autrui chatels, d'autrui substances,
 Qui sont, espër, bougre parfet
 Et par paroles et par fet.
 Ou usurier mal et divers,
 Dont el sautier nous dit li vers
 Qu'il sont ja dampné et perdu.

(Des Règles: ll. 16-27) Vol.I pp. 269-70.

Rutebeuf argues that to attain the Kingdom of Heaven by one's wealth, illicitly gained and ignobly donated to hypocritical thieves is impossible. It would encourage everyone to steal and amass money (ll. 37-39, page 271). It would also make nonsense of all the men who led saintly lives in the service of God, and who scorned riches in favour of a spiritual reward (ll. 40-61).

Faus Semblant also sees the usurer as a source of profit, and will readily rush to his sick bed confident of being able to play upon his fear of death in order to sell him divine forgiveness.

"Mes du riche usurier malade
 la visitance est bone et sade;
 celui vois je reconforter,
 car j'en cuit deniers aporter;
 et se la male mort l'enosse,
 bien le convoi jusqu'a la fosse."
 (ll. 11225-30)

To anyone who should criticise his readiness to help a usurer while neglecting an honest poor man - the friar has a glib excuse: He claims that the rich man's soul is so tainted by his great wealth that he has far greater need than the poor man of spiritual counsel in order to make a good death.

iv. The Friar as Legacy-Hunter

The friar's enthusiasm for helping the usurer to make restitution before

death was, of course, motivated by self-interest. It is this success at deathbeds which aroused most criticism of mendicants. They became known as notorious legacy-hunters⁽²⁰⁸⁾. Accordingly the Old French poets do not neglect this aspect in their attacks.

Rutebeuf argues that it is their role as executors of rich men's wills that they secure their personal fortunes and are able to construct such fine houses:

...il ont des riche houmes les executions,
Dont il sunt bien fondei et en font granz maisons.
(la Vie du Monde: ll. 103-104) Vol. I, page 398.

He develops this point in Les Règles and claims that the dying rich man in the grip of remorse will not have his fate in any way changed by calling the mendicants. Not one penny of the money he gives will be destined for the salvation of his soul:

Quant maladie ces genz prent
Et conscience les reprent
Et Anemis les haste fort,
Qui ja les voudroit trover mort,
Lors si metent lor testament
Sor cile gent que Diex ament:
Puis qu'il sont saisi et vestu,
La montance d'un seul festu
N'en donront ja puis por lor ame.
Ainsi requeut qui ainsi same.
(ll. 115-124) pp. 273-274

Fear haunted those who approached death and who had not called upon the services of the Jacobins or Cordeliers, the religious elite of the day:

Et qui se muert, s'il ne les nomme
Por executor, s'ame afole;
(Les Ordres de Paris: ll. 53-4) page 325

The short work Les Droiz au Clerc de Voudai⁽²⁰⁹⁾ also links Jacobins and Cordeliers with legacy-hunting, especially from usurers. Whereas they once cursed them for their evil ways, now they curry favour with them, anxious to serve as executors of their wills. Their only motive is greed for personal gain.

Droiz dit, et j'en sui amparliers,
Des jacobins, des cordeliers,

Que il ont abessié droiture;
 Il seulent maudire premiers
 Les prestéors, les useriers,
 • Ceus qui prestoient a usure:
 Or ont lor ames pris en cure,
 Executor por lor ardure
 Sont d'aus por avoir lor deniers;
 (Jubinal N.R. vol. 2, p. 148)

v. The Friar's preference for the company of rich men.

The mendicants did not, however, limit their hypocritical ministering to the evil dying. All rich men were potential victims of their guile. Hence the allusions in contemporary literature to their marked preference for the company of rich men, rather than poor. On the one hand this is in anticipation of legacies at death in return for absolution: so says Rutebeuf:

Helas! tant en corent a cort
 Qu'a povre gent font si le sort
 Et au riches font feste et joie
 Et promettent a un mot cort
 Saint paradis a coi que tort!
 Ja ne diront se Diex l'otroie.
 (Le Dit de Sainte Eglise: ll. 91-96) Vol. I, p. 283.

Also, from rich men they can expect the standard of hospitality to which this new, worldly breed of religious have become accustomed. Consequently they ignore those who go on foot, the poor, and seek their comfort at the houses of rich men.

Més or n'ont m'és que fere d'omme qui a pié aille.
 (Des Jacobins: line 24) Vol. I, p. 315.

In Le Roman de la Rose, Faus Semblant is frank about his preference for rich clients. Hence his desire to confess emperors, kings, dukes, barons, counts, and his antipathy for poor people.

"S'en me devoit tuer ou batre,
 Si me veill je par tout enbatre,
 Si ne querroie ja cessier
 ou d'empeereurs confessier,
 ou rois, ou dux, ou bers, ou contes.
 Mes des povres genz est ce hontes,
 je n'aim pas tel confession.
 Se n'est por autre occasion,
 je n'ai cure de povre gent:
 leur estat n'est ne bel ne gent."
 (ll. 11537-46)

This alleged association between mendicant and the rich and powerful was based on fact. The friars did indeed accede to high places and won the coveted posts of confessors to kings and princes⁽¹²⁰⁾. Whether or not personal gain was an element in their ardent cultivating of such positions, their motives were certainly seen in a poor light by the satirical poets. They literally take over the houses of the rich:

Encor est ceste gent si chiene,
 Quant un riche homme vont entor,
 Seignor de chastel ou de tor,
 Ou userier ou clerc trop riche
 (Qu'il aiment miex grant pain que miche),
 Si sont tuit seignor de leenz:
 Ja n'enterront clerc ne lai enz
 Qu'il nes truisent en la meson.
 A ci granz seignors sanz reson!
 (Des Règles: ll. 106-114) Vol. I, p. 273)

Rutebeuf echoes this charge in La Bataille des Vices contre les Vertus:

Que li Frere, sont or seignor
 Des rois, des prelas et des contes.
 (ll. 68-9). Vol. I, p. 308.

vi. The Friar and the Parish Priest.

However ignoble the motives of the mendicants and however base their morals, their practical means of acquiring wealth was through the hypocritical performance of Church rites, or so say the poets. Thus we have seen that the friars' wealth derived largely from their monopoly of the confessions of the rich. They usurped the right to carry out other religious services and thence also made a living. In so doing, they greatly encroached upon the territory of the secular clergy, in particular the parish priest. This apparent injustice is taken up by the poets⁽²¹¹⁾.

Rutebeuf claims that the mendicants bleed a parish dry, and the rightful priest is consequently deprived of his living.

Sanz avoir cure or ont l'avoir,
 Et li curez n'en puet avoir,
 Sa paine non, du pain por vivre
 Ne achater un petit livre
 Ou il puisse dire complies;
 (Des Règles: ll. 125-29) Vol. I, p. 274.

In Le Roman de la Rose, Faus Semblant boasts of how he deceives people into baring their souls to him. He first persuades them that their priests are stupid compared to himself. He can reveal to them secrets unknown to the ignorant secular clergy:

Et por le sauvement des ames
 g'enquier des seigneurs et des dames
 et de tretoutes leur mairies
 les proprietez et les vies,
 et leur faz croire et met es testes
 que leur prestres curez sunt bestes
 envers moi et mes compaignons,
 don j'ai mout de mauvés gaignons,
 a cui je seull, sanz riens celer,
 les secrez aus genz reveler;
 et eus ausinc tout me revelent,
 que riens du monde il ne me celent.
 (ll. 11557-568)

Later we see Faus Semblant giving an example of his sales talk as he urges his listener to confess to him rather than to any parish priest. He is vastly superior not only in knowledge, but also in connections. As confessor of the great, he is not to be lightly dismissed. Ordained by God not just to the care of one parish, but the whole world, he is unsurpassed in the granting of effective absolution: moreover he is far more concerned with the fate of a man's soul than is the ordinary parish priest (ll. 12309-23426). By thus trading on his worldly connections, the friar gains the confidence of men and proceeds to extort money from them.

These then are the main grounds for complaint against the mendicants as formulated by some Old French poets: they are covetous, hypocritical, the friend of the rich, but the enemy of the poor; they court the powerful, ignore the crimes of the evil rich, and they trespass mercilessly on the living of the poor parish priests. A ruthless desire for wealth motivates all their actions and attitudes.

Thus we find that during the second half of the thirteenth century, the traditional monastic orders are left in comparative peace, while the fury of the poets is directed against the mendicants. We have seen that

Rutebeuf occasionally refers to abuses in other orders (La Vie du Monde: ll. 81-96) but how mild this seems when compared to the torrent of abuse he pours on the "Jacobins" in so many other poems.

The gluttony and worldliness of monks are minor aspects of corruption and lose in ground as the satirists and moralists react against the political side of the mendicant orders. All abuses within the order, apparently ^{bring}grist to their mill, and help them to pour scorn on men they hate not only on moral grounds.

It is important to note this essential difference between the attacks on the earlier monastic orders and those on the mendicants. Guiot de Provins and his contemporaries viewed the monks as representatives of an ideal or at least aspirants thereto. When they failed the ideal, they were criticized. Worldliness in those who purported to have renounced the world was sufficient to provoke the moralist to anger and despair, and so they protested or lamented, on moral grounds.

Later poets, like Rutebeuf and Jean de Meung, may also react to such relaxing of ideals, and they certainly have a fount of didactic commonplace to draw on in order to make their complaints seem as if they spring from moral outrage. However they have in addition to their moral standpoint, their political position. The mendicants had become to men of their leanings a grave political danger. They were ousting the secular teachers from the universities, had the ear of the Pope in all matters and so had a certain domination over the secular Church. They encroached upon the religious functions of the secular Church. Moreover they worked hand in glove with the king against the ruling class of feudal society. They were no respecters of the established order, and were hated for it. Thus I submit that the later poets, especially Rutebeuf and Jean de Meung, were not the moralists of the Etienne de Fougères kind, but were satirists who had personal axes to grind and attacked with bitter invective not solely to bring men back

to the path of Christianity, but also in order to stamp out what they considered a disruptive element in society. Whereas the earlier moralists regretted an increasing involvement with wealth and the material, the later poets seized upon this as a further weapon in their hands which might discredit their opponents. The friars probably did not have a greater or more reprehensive involvement with wealth than the earlier monks, but their wealth and power represented more of a threat to the traditional elements of society. They almost certainly betrayed their ideals as others had done before them, but this did not affect their influence in the corridors of power. They had close links with the Pope and the king, and it was this power which worried the poets more than their wealth, the means of acquiring it or the use made of it. That was merely an obvious excuse for their attacks. Attitudes to wealth and associated abuses, and a religious, moral rectitude did not entirely explain the hatred with which the mendicant orders were attacked.

In conclusion, I would point out that the poets' section on monks and the monastic life evidently has a triple message. On social terms, the monks apparently succumbed to the temptations of the world and so became increasingly involved in economic matters. For the traditional monasteries and monks this was the betrayal of an ideal and therefore a subject of complaint. Secondly, the lapse from the original Rule had more far-reaching effects in the case of the mendicant friars. They, as we have seen, provoked moral outrage and also political fury. Thus the attacks made against them are to be seen on two levels. Finally, there is the preaching of the monastic ideal, as being in keeping with the ideal of "contemptus mundi", a concept so dear to the heart of contemporary moralists.

The monastic ideal represented the spiritual, the rejection of the worldly, and hence the renunciation of wealth. Yet when we study monks as

social types we see that the chief criticisms have some bearing on their attitudes to, contact with and use of wealth. Thus the study of monks in Old French didactic verse is in itself a resumé of the medieval dilemma - the struggle between the spiritual and the material. The whole issue is encapsulated in this survey of monks and the monastic ideal. When those who are ideologically opposed to contact with the material and organize their lives to avoid this contact, succumb to the all-pervading influence of material wealth, we see only too clearly the immense chasm between the ideal and the real in medieval society, and we sense the anger, frustration and despair of those upright men who try either to stamp out the evil influence or, equally difficult, to reconcile the two elements of human nature and society. Attitudes become all the more intense in the treatment of monks, for they, above all others, profess to aspire to perfection. Thus they are judged according to a standard of perfection. When they fall short of their aim, or worse, abandon their aim, the resulting roar of protest is deafening.

B. The Second Estate.

Kings, Lords, Knights.

To the medieval writers the nobility constituted the second estate. As described in the Old French didactic works, this second estate comprised the king, the various ranks of the nobility down to the untitled knights.

"Roi, conte, duc et prince, chastelein, vavassor".
(Vers, Thibaud de Marly, line 486)

Although the nobles and knights were in reality separate classes, public opinion often confused them⁽²¹²⁾. This is certainly true of the Old French didactic poems where not all the poets make the fine distinction of Thibaud de Marly quoted above. A nobleman himself, he was doubtless more sensitive to the social and titular differences within the noble estate than would be

a mere "clerc". For the most part the second estate is known collectively as "li prince"⁽²¹³⁾ or "li chevalier"⁽²¹⁴⁾.

As regards the order of the three estates, we find great variation within the poems. Some works position the kings and nobles after the Church (e.g. Besant de Dieu; Sermon en Vers). Others are less inclined to generalise about a whole estate. Thus we find that Etienne de Fougères gives priority to the king, then considers the clergy and progresses from them to the nobility. One notes that it is unusual for a bishop to put a temporal power before the Pope as chief spiritual power. At this period the Popes were very concerned that their supremacy over all temporal powers should be generally acknowledged.⁽²¹⁵⁾ The order adopted by the Reclus de Moilliens is more in line with this - he deals first with the Pope and other Roman officials, then the king, followed by the nobles. Only then does he consider the other ranks of the Church hierarchy.

Other poets do not respect the traditional order. Guiot's work is exceptional in that it falls into two distinct parts - one devoted to the nobles, the second to the Church. When Hugues de Berzé lists the three divinely-ordained orders, he follows the traditional pattern:

La premiere fu sans mentir
 Des provoires pour Dieu servir
 Es chapeles e es moustiers,
 E li autre des chevaliers
 Pour justicier les robeours,
 Li autre des laboreours.
 (Bible: ll. 181-86)

The order in which he subsequently deals with each estate is possibly dictated by a regard for literary style. He summarily dismisses the nobles and peasants and achieves a climactic effect with his third subject the Church, which he treats in far greater detail.

Despite the variation found in these works the bulk of "Etats du Monde" poems of the period, whether in French, English or Latin, assume the nobility to be the second estate and usually count the humblest churchman before the most powerful temporal lord⁽²¹⁶⁾.

1. Economic and Social Background of the Second Estate.

The nobility are characterised as landowners and as men of arms. The powerful barons, the feudal "seigneurs" divided their land into fiefs which were held by vassals, themselves usually knights. In theory the vassal owed both material dues and loyal service to his overlord and thus assured him of a good income and a degree of security. In practice, it was the position of the vassal which was the more enviable since he actually possessed the land and enjoyed all profits thereof. Gradually the vassal established a hereditary right to the land, and it became very difficult for a seigneur to alienate the fief of a faithful vassal⁽²¹⁷⁾. So the real wealth of the country was technically in the hands of the lower ranks of the nobility, although the prestige remained with the overlords.

In the twelfth century the vassals had very little source of profit other than that yielded by their land. Unlike the "seigneurs" they did not possess a great variety of taxes - simply one or two local taxes, and, as a result of ecclesiastical reforms, they no longer possessed churches, and the "dîme" was often restored as an ecclesiastical tax⁽²¹⁸⁾. They, therefore, depended chiefly on direct profits from their land property.

The financial situation changed somewhat in the thirteenth century. This was a time of great economic development which favoured some, but ruined others. Usually the wealthy nobles were able to establish relations with the bourgeoisie and so retain their wealth through business concerns. The more modest knights on remote, rural estates were, however, not so fortunate. Consequently the thirteenth century seems to find the "chevalerie" considerably impoverished. For this there were several contributory factors. We shall consider the matter at greater length in relation to the Old French texts later in this chapter.

2. The King.

a) Royal Duties.

Like Etienne de Fougères, I shall make a distinction between the king and the rest of the nobility and deal with them separately.

Following his usual pattern, this poet begins by stating the duties of kings in general, and by listing what they should not do, thereby offering subtle, implied criticism. I shall summarize the main points of his picture of the ideal king.

The king, being in such an elevated position, is an example to all men, and should, therefore, strive to set a good example to knights, bourgeois, villeins and courtiers. (Livre des Manières: ll. 149-52). One notes that the king is to be an example only to the laity. The clergy are omitted, presumably because they take their example from the Pope. If the king's conduct is blameworthy, he cannot expect his subjects to behave any better. Thus when a villein is challenged about some misdeed of his, he is justified in retorting: "I am merely doing what the king does." (ll. 157-160). Etienne de Fougères describes the king as being, as it were, common property. He should live for the wellbeing of his subjects. (ll. 161-164).

The poet then makes the initially surprising suggestion that a king should amass great treasures. However, from the context and from one's overall acquaintance with the attitudes to wealth of Etienne de Fougères, one may assume that this moralist is not advocating that the king should use his wealth for his own enjoyment, but rather for necessary expenses incurred while travelling, and generally for the good of his people.

Por ce deit chier tenir son cors.
Et alner les granz tresors;
Quant mestier ert qu'il ait illors
Qu'il peise mestre enz et hors.
(ll. 169-72)

Although a spokesman for the Church, Etienne de Fougères is evidently far too practical to preach evangelical poverty to a temporal power like the king. He merely counsels him on the proper reasons for his accumulation

of wealth and suggests that he make good, altruistic use of it. This is in marked contrast to the attitude of the Reclus de Moilliens, who, somewhat unrealistically, advises the king to shun all contact with wealth:

A present de rouge metal
 Di "fui!" et "fi!" come a fumier.
 (Carité: Stanza XXX, ll. 11-12)

Here we see a contrast in attitude between the secular viewpoint, represented by Bishop Etienne de Fougères, and the monastic viewpoint taken by the hermit, le Reclus de Moilliens.

To the duties of a king, the Reclus de Moilliens adds that he should cherish his vassals:

Rois, entierement dois traitier
 Chiaus sor cui tu as maiestiere:
 Por chou sont il a toi rentier.
 Rois, tu ies mis haut pour gaitier
 Le basse gent a toi rentiere.
 (Stanza XXXII, ll. 8-12)

b) Anti-wealth themes.

In the list of things a king should not do, and also in any direct criticism of kings in general, we encounter many of the commonplace anti-wealth themes.

Etienne de Fougères says that a king should not show greed by endeavouring to extend the boundaries of his kingdom. To discourage the king from such an ambition he has recourse to the moral idea that great wealth is vanity⁽²¹⁹⁾ and combines this with a more practical consideration: the acquisition of vast territories brings with it many worries (ll. 97-100). The worry occasioned by wealth and power is a commonplace anti-wealth theme (see Chapter Two, section A, 5). This idea will be seen to differ very greatly from the attitude prevalent in the courtly works which glorify conquest and sing the praises of the two greatest conquerors: Alexander and Arthur.

The poet next appeals to the king to abstain from enlarging his kingdom on humanitarian grounds. The taking of another's land by force involves the suffering of many people.

N'eit pas envie de autrui terre
 Esgaugrinier n'a tort conquerre;
 Quar por itant mout sovent guerre
 Qui gent essille et gent enterre.
 (ll. 93-96)

A king is also the supreme administrator of justice and should perform this duty with integrity. However, Etienne accuses kings of neglecting this duty. They are not accused, like the clergy, of selling justice, but of simply omitting to perform this kingly duty. They prefer to spend their time hunting. (ll. 61-64). Etienne mocks the king who indulges in such an undignified pastime. Hunting is more suited to servants. The king has more important matters to attend to - the welfare of his subjects. (ll. 65-76). In the matter of ministering justice, the Reclus does apparently see the danger of dishonesty occurring. He accordingly begs the king to be sure to render justice fairly and humanely. (Carité: XXXI, ll. 3-6; XXXIV, ll. 7-8).

The Reclus de Moilliens continues by urging the king not to shut himself away from the world in order to enjoy his wealth in private. He urges the king to be generous, and not to put his faith in worldly things for they are transient.

Rois, ne croi as biens empenés;
 Ains ke ti bien pregnant lor vol,
 Done ent assés, et rien ne tol.
 Car bien est en sauf dons donés.
 (Carité: XXXVI, ll. 9-12)

He develops this commonplace theme further: the king within his castle walls and surrounded by riches is no more secure than the poor peasant. In fact he is less so, since he has further to fall, and more to lose, when his worldly possessions are snatched away. Thus we have the usual commonplace reference to the instability of the rich.

Rois, se plus ies enclos de mur,
 Se plus as dras, vin et pain pur
 K'uns autres, ies pour chou empains
 En orguel ne plus assés.
 Et d'orge pailous est ses pains,
 Et tous desclos maint en ches plains?
 Plus seürs est vuis cars ke plains.
 Rois, je pruis ke tu dois peür
 Avoir plus grant ke uns vilains,

Car tu pues cafr, et il ains
 Puet trover plus mol ke plus dur.
 (Stanza XXXVII)

This theme is also taken up by Etienne de Fougères. He points out that even landed property may fall victim to accidents and natural phenomena: flood and fire. Nothing material is ever safe. (Livre des Manières: ll. 1720. See Chapter Two, A, 5). Great wealth can disappear suddenly in war.

Quant ont grant tensor amassé
 Et ça et la se sunt lassé,
 Quant il l'aurunt mioz amassé,
 Tort un bestenc, tost ert passé.
 (ll. 45-48)

Etienne, too, emphasises the worries incurred by the possession of great wealth. When a king rules over a very extensive territory, its supervision is physically exhausting.

Ça et la veit, sovent se torne,
 Ne repose ne ne sejourne;
 Chasteaus abat, chasteaus aorne,
 Sovent haitié, plus sovent morne.
 (ll. 101-104)

In addition to the worry and fatigue, there is the ever-present fear of an assassination attempt. Wealthy and powerful men attract enemies and their food and drink are always suspect.

Ça et la veit, pas ne repose
 Que sa marche ne seit desclose.
 Nendis mengie ne beivre ose
 Por venin et por male chose.
 (ll. 105-108)

Etienne shows how a rich king may possess great wealth and power, but he can never know peace of mind. He remains alone and friendless. He can trust no-one, even those who profess to be his friends (ll. 29-32). Witness Alexander who was murdered at the height of his career (ll. 33-36).

Another familiar anti-wealth theme which occurs in connection here with the king is that death takes away all worldly goods. They will pass to the king's heir.

Le regne le rei
 Que li vaut e quei
 Kant il n'i est mes?
 Sun fiz susvendra
 Ke ja ne lui fra
 Ben pur sun deces.

(Sermon en Vers: Stanza CCVII)

Helinand says that even kings die. Wealth has no power against death.

Morz, tu abaz a un seul tor
 Aussi le roi dedenz sa tor
 Com le povre dedenz son toit:
 Tu erres adès sanz sejour.

(Vers de la Mort: Stanza XXI)

Death is the great leveller says Guillaume le Clerc, who uses the exemplum of a King Louis⁽²²⁰⁾ who conquered many lands, but finished up with just seven feet of earth. (Besant de Dieu: ll. 166-74).

There are in my experience, almost no instances of a didactic poet openly criticizing a specific king. Criticism of the monarch remains veiled. There is, for example, an attack on kings in general to be found in the Vers de la Mort of Robert le Clerc. Having touched upon the theme that death snatches all away, Robert le Clerc returns to direct attack and accuses kings of robbery and urges them to mend their ways:

D'autrui reuber sont vo buffoi.
 Hastés vos d'amender vo vie!
 Car qui pis sert pis a par loi;
 Et qui plus vit, n'est çou c'un poi:
 Dont, est plus faus qui plus detrie.

(Stanza XXXIX, ll. 8-12)

Perhaps he has one particular king in mind - he wrote during the reign of Philippe III⁽²²¹⁾, but he is careful to make his criticisms impersonal.

Indeed, this is the general attitude of all the Old French poets who speak of kings. They avoid direct criticism and make generalisations rather than critical observations. This may be because outspoken attack on the reigning monarch was not a wise course of action for the identifiable poet. However, one receives the impression that the king is viewed by the moralists not as a personality, nor even as a social type. In these works, the king appears to transcend social barriers. Although put at the head of the second estate, he is regarded as a figurehead for lay society. His should

be the example to be followed. Thus the king becomes less of a social type and is treated by the poets as a moral type. He is the rich man, always in danger of becoming the evil rich man. Hence his association with a group of commonplace anti-wealth themes.

3. Lords and Knights.

The subject of nobles and knights, whether under the inclusive term "li prince" or "li chevalier" is particularly interesting to my study, since it receives two very different kinds of treatment at the hands of the didactic and the courtly poets. We shall note a wide divergence of attitude amongst poets who are themselves products of the same age and society. Whereas the moralists condemn much that characterizes a knight, a courtly poet will glorify those same traits and activities. Here, however, I am concerned only with the knights as social types and their portrayal in the didactic works.

a) Their Ideal.

Inevitably the ideals of knighthood differ in the didactic and courtly works. There are, however, some points shared between the two. In both genres, the knight is ideally altruistic. He is in the service of God and is vowed to defend the weak and distressed. There, however, the similarity ends. The whole scale of values of the courtly knight is not that which the moralist would like to see in a perfect specimen of knighthood.

In this age of crusades the knight took on a quasi-religious function within society and to him were attributed moral virtues which were far removed from the worldliness and social graces of the perfect courtly knight. Churchmen⁽²²²⁾ defined the ideal knight of Christendom. For St. Bernard⁽²²³⁾, the knight reconciled chivalry and monasticism. They should combine the use of arms with a noble Christian cause and an ascetic way of life. The Templars, he believed, incarnated this ideal, before they became rich and

corrupt.

Bishop John of Salisbury in his Policraticus⁽²²⁴⁾ criticized contemporary knights and gave a detailed portrait of how they should be. Their function is to defend the Church, to combat infidelity and to honour the poor clergy, to protect the poor. ... all as part of their service to God. Consideration of all selfish motives is to be found also in Alan de Lille⁽²²⁵⁾, who says that "they prostitute their knighthood who fight for profit."

The ideal of the knight is much the same in the Old French didactic poems. Etienne de Fougères gives a list of the duties of knights: they include the maintaining of justice, the protection of his inferiors, the repression of plundering.

Chevalier deit espée prendre,
 Por justisier et por defendre
 Cels qui d'els funt les autres pleindre;
 Force et ravine deit est_eindre.
 (Livre des Manières: ll. 537-40)

Similarly, the Reclus de Moilliens describes the knight as wielding the sword of justice with which he defends both clergy and peasantry.

Chou dist l'espée a dous trencans:
 "Chil ki me chaint soit justichans.
 "De dous pars, ch'est k'il garandise
 "Chiaus ki font au moustier les cans
 "E chiaus ki labourent as cans."
 (Carité: Stanza XL)

Speaking of "contes, duc, princhier" the Reclus de Moilliens urges them to be fair. Justice should not be sold.

Justiche n'esgarde persone
 Por pou d'avoir ne por foison.
 Justiche n'a k'une saison;
 Yvers n'estés nel dessaisone.
 (Carité: Stanza L, ll. 9-12)

The nobleman has a special duty towards the poor, and by protecting them, he will find favour with God. He should shield the "waterdrinker" from the "winedrinker" (Stanza LI). If nobles were the defenders of the poor and free from avarice, then the poet claims he would at last have achieved his goal - to find charity.

Se vrais juges vous ai trovés,
 Dont ai jou Carité trovée
 En court d'avariche lavée,
 Ou sainte eglise est alevée.
 La est chevaliers bons provés,
 Ki sor povre n'a main levée
 Ne ne veut recueillir levée
 Par coi povres soit agrevés.
 (Stanza LIV, ll. 5-11)

When, however, the judge despises the poor man in his rags and inclines his favour to rich robes, justice is not done. The poet begs God to ensure that the rich do not crush the poor, and that the course of justice is not hindered. This, he acknowledges, would be a miracle and thereby suggests that reality is very different from the ideal.

Quant jugiere son cuer n'aploie
 Au povre ki vers lui souploie
 Por chou ke en son sac palist,
 Et dou rouge vestu fait joie,
 Chou poise moi k'il ne roujoie
 Tant ke li fus fors en salist.
 Uns tius miracles mout valist
 Por trois coses, se Dius volist
 Se volonté metre a le moie:
 Por orguel de dras, k'i falist,
 Et rikes povre n'assalist,
 Et justiche alast droite voie.
 (Stanza LII)

Other references to the knightly role of justiciary are to be found in the Bible of Hugues de Berzé where they are to bring robbers to task:

Por justicier les robeours.
 (line 185)

Also in the poem C'est li mariages des filles au Diable:

Chevalier (doivent) vivre bel et gent,
 Par justice mener lor gent.
 (Nouveau Recueil, ed. Jubinal, Vol. I, p. 288.)

Rutebeuf does not directly accuse the knights of making false judgement, but warns them against corrupt practice. If they are dishonest in their handling of cases, they will answer for their crimes on the Day of Judgement, for God will always repay goodness or wickedness appropriately:

Par vos faites voz jugemens,
 Qui sera votres dampnemens
 Se li jugemens n'est loiaus,
 Boens et honestes et feaus.

Qui plus vos done, si at droit;
 Ce faites que Diex ne voudroit.
 Ainsi defineiz votre vie
 E lors que li cors se devie,
 Si trueve l'arme tant a faire
 Que je nel porroie retraire.
 Car Diex vos rent la faucetei
 Par jugement; car achetei
 Aveiz enfer et vos l'aveiz
 Car ceste choze bien saveiz:
 Diex rent de tout le guerredon,
 Soit biens, soit maux: il en a don.

(La Nouvelle Complainte d'Outremer: ll. 265-80)

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b) Their failings.

In the works that I have studied and which may be called didactic to some degree, I note that nobles and knights are attacked from two different standpoints. Although all the poems superficially resemble each other in that they claim to be aiming at the salvation of men in society, different motives and different attitudes are discernible. It is particularly in the case of the knights that one is able to separate the poets into two categories - those who are pure moralists, and those who have a more personal, even selfish, reason for criticizing the world about them. Let us consider this dual aspect with regard to the knight: on the one hand there is the strictly moral view of the knights as keepers of law and order and as justiciaries. The poets who hold this view reproach the knights for not living up to this ideal and thus betraying their calling and failing in their duty towards the first and third estates. On the other hand there is the more worldly and even courtly view that the aristocracy's main function was to hold fine courts, rejoice in their wealth and above all to be generous to all in their entourage. I propose to deal first with the latter viewpoint.

c) Worldly or "courtly" view.

I use the term "courtly" poets in this section not to mean those poets who wrote courtly romances, but rather those poets who, while outwardly purporting to wish to edify and reform, are sometimes inconsistent and allow

courtly attitudes to hold sway over moralising attitudes. When such poets tackle the subject of the knights, this is one occasion when their personal interests show through the moralising commonplaces.

The poets who take a courtly view of the second estate are usually not Churchmen. They are professional entertainers, "jongleurs" who see the knights in a subjective light as patrons and providers for themselves and their kind. Obviously the greatest fault which knights could commit in the eyes of these poets would be to withdraw their patronage by no longer encouraging the jongleurs with gifts. So the poet is pleading his own case when he earnestly urges nobles to be generous.

This attitude of self-interest is not found often in the didactic works. It is seen far more frequently in the romances where the courtly poet will often begin or end his work with a personal plea for generosity from his noble patron. In the courtly romances this personal propaganda may take the form of an eulogy of liberality. In the so-called didactic works, the poet is likely to disguise his vested interest somewhat and to encourage generosity in a more subtle and oblique fashion: adopting a pseudo-moralizing tone he attacks contemporary avarice. He thus remains within the 'contemptus mundi' literary tradition which he adapts for his own selfish ends. In spite of the outwardly didactic tone, the courtly attitude and personal motives can be detected.

We have thus far seen Guiot de Provins as a moralist-satirist. He also has a courtly side. To him the holding of fine courts and the extravagant spending of money was not worldly vanity and as such reprehensible. He thoroughly approved of it. However, he and poets like him, are unanimous in their opinion that the days of such splendour have passed. They all reproach the nobles their avarice.

i. Avarice and the knightly use of wealth.

Guiot de Provins devotes the first part of his Bible to a lament on

the disappearance of generous patrons at courts. One should, of course, remember that Guiot, before he entered holy orders, was a jongleur, a habitué of the courts and dependent for his livelihood upon the generosity of the nobles. The editor of the Bible, John Orr, suggests that there may have been a lapse of time between the first and second parts of Guiot's work. Hence the first part could have been written when Guiot was still a disillusioned jongleur. This would make his fiery outbursts against the avarice of the nobles more understandable. They would spring, in the main, from self-interest.

Guiot begins by commenting on the general corruption of the times, a literary commonplace, but goes on to say that he is most shocked by the conduct of the princely rulers (ll. 102-04). Prosperity allied with liberality used to be a feature of the nobility:

Or plorent les belles maisons
 les boins princes, les boins barons,
 qui les grans cors i assembloient
 et les biaux avoires i donoient.
 (ll. 115-18)

Whereas they were once rich, wise, brave and generous (ll. 119-20) they are now mean, cowardly and dishonest:

Et sil sont si nice et si fol,
 et guileor, et lesche, et mol.
 (ll. 121-22)

Using imagery based on the minting of coins, Guiot claims that the present day nobility were but poor imitations of their predecessors from all points of view:

Ne furent pas ou coig feru
 dont les menoes sont loaus;
 (ll. 128-9)

In his praises of the former lords, Guiot returns time and again to their generosity, to the rich gifts which they bestowed. It is quite obvious where this poet's interest lies:

s'il faisoient les dons doneir
 et les riches cors assembler.
 (ll. 195-6)

He reminisces endlessly on the fine courts of the past, on the carefree spending of the nobles. He adopts a moralising tone to say that no man is worthy to hold a court who does not give generously:

Les cors tindrent li ancessor,
 Et as festes firent honor
 et biau despendre, et de doner,
 et de riche vie mener.
 Tant vos puis je dire de feste
 que sil ne sont digne ne honeste
 qui tiennent cort, se il ne donent.
 (ll. 251-57)

Guiot adopts a moralising technique when he describes the nobles as moraltypes: He equates them with misers. They are greedy for money which they hoard. They are more enslaved by their money than a serf is enslaved by a lord who burdens him with taxes:

Chevalier sont aserveti
 plus que sil ou om fait les tailles.
 (ll. 212-3)

When Guiot de Provins names men who, for him, are exemplary figures, he does not opt for the generous St. Martin or the patient Job. He chooses renowned courtly heroes such as Arthur and Alexander (ll. 271-281) Again Guiot has recourse to the terminology of forgery to describe the debasement of courtly virtues:

... Or esgardez
 quels eschanges nost en avons,
 que argens est devenus plons!
 Trop belle oeuvre fait on d'argent.
 (ll. 306-09)

Guiot apparently does not think that the financial situation of the nobles had changed. He regards their present behaviour merely as a change of attitude. They wish to keep their money. They no longer have any thought for the personal honour and glory of spending and giving money. This is a purely courtly attitude, such use of money would be dismissed as vanity by a true moralist:

anz ne bee a honor avoir
 tant sont angoissous sor avoir.
 (ll. 497-8)

Hugues de Berzé was a nobleman, and he, therefore, lived in the same society as Guiot de Provins, although at a different level. They must have both known court life. Although one may explain Guiot's attitude of admiration for the erstwhile splendour of the courts and for the generosity of the nobles by attributing it to self-interest, this is certainly not the case with Hugues de Berzé. The latter's work is far more uniform in tone than is Guiot's. Hugues moralises consistently and with apparent good faith. Yet he cannot repress a twinge of regret for the demise of fine courts. Like Guiot, he attributes this to a new wave of covetousness which makes people mean and miserable: Bible: ll. 90-97. (See also my Chapter Seven, section C, 5).

The late thirteenth century work of Robert de Blois - L'Enseignement aux Princes - may be called a courtly didactic work. It is addressed only to the second estate and is a sort of handbook of social behaviour. He echoes the sentiments of Guiot de Provins but with more concrete examples, listing the gifts formerly made of furs, silk, money and jewels:

Nos veïmes jadis tenir
 Les riches cors, et departir
 Vair et gris, pailles et cendaz,
 Or et argent et bel joiaz,
 Et par les riches dons doner
 Se façoient mout honorer.
 "d. Ulrich (ll. 41-46)

The princes now close their doors when they eat⁽²²⁶⁾. They do not admit jongleurs. They are not poor, just close-fisted.

Crs et argens est lor solaz.
 Es biens terriens beent tant,
 Es souverains ne tant ne quant.
 (ll. 88-90)

Robert de Blois coincides with Guiot de Provins in his opinion that the rich do not really possess their wealth unless they spend it. Stinginess, hoarding bring dishonour and alienate friends:

Por nul avoir n'est enrechis
 Princes d'escharceté sospris.
 Richesce n'est se d'amis non;

Je le vos mostra par raison,
 Qu'avers hons por tot son avoir
 Ne puet nul fin ami avoir,
 Por mon avoir qui m'amera,
 Quant por ce muez ne l'an sera?
 ed. Ulrich (ll. 1383-90)

The Doctrinal of Le Sauvage⁽²²⁷⁾ expresses approval of the wealth of nobles. His is not a courtly attitude, but rather a very tolerant moralistic one. He acknowledges the fact that we cannot all be monks, so let the nobles have their castles etc. ...

Or i a une gent qui par fin estovoir
 Les covient il au siecle et tenir et avoir
 Les chevaus et les armes et les chastiaus avoir;
 Por bien tenir justice, moult i pueent valoir;
 Ne poons pas tuit estre ne blanc moigné ne noir.
 (ed. Jubinal, p. 160)

This attitude is interesting in that it stands midway between that of a Guiot de Provins and a Reclus de Moilliens. Le Sauvage accepts the world as it is, that is a secular society not a monastic one. Yet he favours the Christian view of society rather than the courtly one. Some men have to possess the wealth of the world. To what end should they use it - not to gain personal honour and friends, and to feed jongleurs, as Guiot would advocate. Le Sauvage ignores this worldly aspect of knights. He is concerned only with their primary social function as determined by a moralist - they should minister justice worthily.

ii. Historical reasons for alleged miserliness.

Guiot de Provins and Robert de Blois and many courtly poets (see Part II) attribute the change in the habits of the nobles to miserliness, that is a change of attitude to wealth, rather than to any change of circumstances.

There are two possible explanations for this. Either the poets' charges were completely unfounded. Thus the denunciation of contemporary avarice in the nobles was simply a means of persuading one's patron not to do likewise, but rather to show his generosity by richly rewarding the jongleur⁽²²⁸⁾.

Alternatively the poets may be accurately recording a decline in

patronage, but misattributing its cause. What they interpret as miserliness could simply have been caution born of impoverishment. Before I consider the historical evidence to support this theory, I shall cite instances where the poets themselves acknowledge that the knights were poorer than their fathers.

The Roman des Romans is the first to bear witness to the impoverishment of the nobles and to the rise of the other classes. He claims that their superiority is being usurped by upstarts, presumably from the ranks of the bourgeoisie.

N'ont mais que prendre, ne altrui que doner
 Cil qui soleient grant barnage mener;
 Mais cels veons manantir^{et} monter
 Dont l'em sout poi en bone cort parler,
 (ll. 285-88)

Similarly in the short poem, Li Xours commence xordement ⁽²²⁹⁾, we find an attitude of sympathy for the knights. The poet seems to be saying that they can hardly afford to eat or make a small gift once a year:

Duel ai des povres chevellers
 Dont si haus suet estre li nons,
 Car on les soloit tenir chiers
 Et faire signors des barons.
 Or est grans chose li maingiers
 Or en tout l'an uns petis dons,
 Et s'un pouc monte li dongiers
 Aincor en est li respis lons.
 (ll. 31-38)

This poet admits that knights are poor, but attributes this to the meanness of the powerful barons. The demise of their generosity is not, however, explained.

It could, of course, be argued that the poets' references to the poverty of the nobility were not factual observations but statements designed to provoke a demonstration of wealth in the form of gifts. However, there does seem to be ample evidence that the twelfth, and particularly the thirteenth, centuries were not favourable to the economic circumstances of feudal nobility.

One may make a distinction between the most powerful feudal lords who were able to adapt to changing economic conditions by developing interests in the world of business and those more modest noblemen who lived off the land, and whose possibilities for adaptation were limited⁽²³⁰⁾.

This second group of noblemen were the ones who suffered as a subsistence economy gave way to a money economy. If they continued to farm their lands or to have it farmed by tenant farmers they found that the yield of the land and the dues paid to them by the tenants and by their serfs did not keep abreast of rising prices. Thus the nobleman found himself paying more dearly for his needs without enjoying a corresponding increase in revenue⁽²³¹⁾. They were bound by tradition not to pass on the increase in prices to their tenants and serfs by demanding greater dues.

Many landowners no longer depended on the various dues owed by their land workers. They preferred to exchange their share of the agricultural produce for a fixed rent to be paid in money. They thus moved with the times to a certain extent. However this, too, contributed to their impoverishment. The rents were permanently frozen and soon fell behind rising prices. As time passed the rents were little more than nominal sums compared to the cost of living⁽²³²⁾.

In other cases these noblemen who held their fiefs from the great feudal princes were ousted from their position - they were replaced by professional administrators drawn from the merchant class⁽²³³⁾. This trend further eroded the power and scope for money-making of the lesser nobles.

There were other causes for the comparative poverty of the nobility. As their revenues decreased, so their expenditure increased. The articles needed for the pursuit of a career as a man of arms became much more expensive. Furthermore in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the nobility developed a taste for the luxury products newly imported from the East. To a large degree it was the propaganda of the courtly poets who glorified the rich

and generous life-style of the Romance nobility which encouraged parallel emulation in contemporary society. However the purchase of luxuries and the practice of largesse ruined many a nobleman⁽²³⁴⁾ who strove to gain prestige.

On a more practical level, a nobleman could no longer count on the loyal service of his subordinates to defend his land and rights. From 1160 onwards soldiers fought for pay, not from ideals of loyalty. Thus to maintain an army of however modest proportions was a considerable expense for the nobleman⁽²³⁵⁾.

The crusades also played their part in the collapse of noble budgets. For some it was a lucrative business when plunder was plentiful. But the crusades of this period were not notably successful. They served merely to encourage a liking for the objects of luxury to be found in the near East and so prompted further expenditure. Chiefly, of course, they were an enormous drain on the resources of those who took an army of soldiers so far afield.

Thus we see that there are many reasons why the nobility should be tempted to close their purses to 'jongleurs', or simply to have empty purses. At this time many estates were sold and passed into the hands of enriched peasants. These new owners of fine castles were not likely to take over the role of literary patrons. Moreover there has been recorded a dramatic rise in the number of wandering minstrels - who travelled from court to court. Thus their number increased just at the time literary patronage declined because of financial difficulties. It is, therefore, little wonder that the poets protest as their revenues, too, diminished drastically. Hence the cries of avarice in contemporary literature.

d) The Second Estate judged by the moralists.

I turn now to the view of the nobles held by the moralists proper. This is often in complete contrast to what I have termed the courtly attitude.

i. Its vain love of wealth.

To a moralist the possession of great wealth is not a source of honour, but rather a problem. Moreover to delight in riches is morally wrong. For example in C'est li mariages des Filles au Diable, the poet completely contradicts a viewpoint such as that given by Guiot de Provins. He maintains that knights hold fine courts and spend their money, and that this was a wicked manifestation of their worldly vanity.

Maint chevalier vont pute voie:
 En vanité, eu fausse joie,
 Tens et cors et avoir despendent •
 (ed. Jubinal, Nouveau Recueil, Vol. I, p. 285, stanza 6)

To illustrate the vanity of possessing great wealth and putting it to selfish use, some poets employ the familiar anti-wealth commonplaces. With reference to "seigneurs" Guillaume le Clerc says that their wealth is powerless against death: Besant de Dieu: ll. 183-88. (cf. my Chapter Two, section A, 7, b, i). By a series of rhetorical questions, the Sermon en Vers shows the futility of noble rank and all the riches that accompany it.

Ke vaut baronie
 U vavaserie
 As mors enterrez?
 (Stanza CCIX)

Using the familiar "ubi sunt?" theme, he remarks on the transience of wealth.

U est cel tresor
 Cel argent, cel or
 A teil peine conquis? (Stanza CCXIX)
 Richesses, honurs
 E chateus et turs,
 Ces depeins perins
 U sunt? A la fosse
 Li mort les adosse
 Tant ne seient finz. (Stanza CCXXI)

As the poet continues, his list of the articles associated with the knightly life-style becomes reminiscent of similar lists to be found in the courtly romances, when the poet describes a rich setting or the innumerable gifts bestowed by a courtly hero - brooches, gold, tents, coats and robes, tunics and boots in rich materials:

U sunt li formail
 De cel or vermail
 Tant tres cler lusant?
 U sunt ces manteus
 Od ces riches peus
 Tant ben afublant? (Stanza CCXXIV)

U sunt ces bliaus
 Si sujurnez, si chaus
 Si ben adubbez?
 U sunt cil botun
 D'or fin, environ
 Le col e les leez? (Stanza CCXXVI)

The poet concludes: they are all worthless:

Ne vaut une raie
 Tut itel boban.
 (Stanza CCXXVII, l. 1361-2)

Thus we find a very different attitude towards the possession of wealth from the moralists. They condemn men who are attached to worldly riches and who see no further than their material wealth.

ii. Its rapine.

The moralising poets, like the courtly poets, accuse the nobility of avarice. However the avarice they refer to is rather covetousness. They condemn the desire to acquire wealth which they find too strong in the nobles, whereas the courtly poets condemned the miserliness of the nobles.

The covetousness of the nobles manifests itself in various ways. One of the most common social malpractices associated with the second estate and which is motivated by greed is rapine, the robbing of the weak by powerful armed men. Many poets accuse the knights of not only failing in their duty to protect the helpless and to mete out justice fairly but actually of being themselves the cruel oppressors of the humble and robbing them of what little they possess. They do not combat robbers and plunderers, for they are themselves the guilty ones: Hugues de Berzé:

E li chevalier, qui devoient
 Desfendre de ceus qui roboient
 Les menues gens e garder,
 Sont or plus engrés de rober
 Que li autre e plus angosseus.
 (Bible: ll. 217-21)

Also, C'est li mariages deſ Filles au Diable:

on voit
 En chevaliers maint roberie,
 (Jubinal, N.R., vol. I, 283-4, stanza 2)

Rutebeuf uses the term "rapine" with reference to the knights and claims that they live by it:

Tuit sont noié en un vivier, (line 150)
 Li plus or vivent de rapine. (line 154)
 (De l'Estat du Monde: Vol. I, page 388)

Whereas rapine is usually considered, in these works, to be the social malpractice associated with knights and to be the outward manifestation of the vice of avarice or covetousness, the Poème Moral attributes robbery with violence to their pride.

Li orguez fait robeir, l'orguez fait tolir
 Por un cop, vuet orguez quatre foiz referir.
 Li orguez fait turnois et guerres maintenir.
 (Stanza 470)

The last line of the above stanza brings me to the next fault of which the knights are accused, that is the waging of war for personal gain.

iii. Its private warfare.

In a way the practice of private warfare is an extension of rapine, because it is always the poor and weak who suffer most, or so claims Guillaume le Clerc. He condemns nobles who involve their subjects in cruel wars for their own ignoble ends.

Si vus dirrai des plus puissanz,
 Des plus riches e des plus granz,
 Des reiz, des contes e des dus,
 Qui des regnes ont le desus,
 Qui s'entretolent e guerreient
 E lor povre gent desconreient,
 Qui tutes lor guerres compirent,
 Sovent en plorent et sospirent.
 (Besant de Dieu: ll. 765-72)

Disputes between powerful men, for instance a king of Germany, France, Spain or Denmark or a rich count inevitably entail the suffering of the lower orders, who often find themselves homeless as a result:

Se l'un a l'autre ^amesfait,
 Li vilains qui est al garait,
 Le compire a un jor si cher
 Que il n'a la nuit ou cochier:
 (ll. 777-780)

Speaking particularly of kings, Guillaume le Clerc accuses them of an inhumane and unchristian indifference to the death of their subjects. These men die unconfessed when they meet a sudden, violent end, and leave behind widows and orphans (ll. 787-92). Kings care only about the outcome of their struggle, and do not count the number of those who lay down their lives for their masters (ll. 793-800).

The short work De Triacle et de Venin attributes such fighting over land to covetousness in great rulers:

Vez les rois et les princes, les contes et les dus,
 Venins de coveitise les a si toz ferus;
 L'un de sérîte l'autre selonc ce qu'il puet plus:
 Le fort chace le foible et met quainqu'il puet jus.
 (Jubinal, N.R., Vol. I, p. 365)

The complaints of these and other poets about private warfare were evidently well-founded. In the twelfth century particularly this practice was the scourge of the country and most wars at this time were private ones⁽²³⁶⁾. Such wars might be instigated for trivial and selfish purposes, and seem to have been one way open to the nobility of supplementing their income⁽²³⁷⁾. The problem was not a new one, and the Church had been struggling to suppress such violence for some time. In 969 there was the Pax Dei, in 1027 the Truga Dei. By this means, in the eleventh century, the Church organised a militia in defence of peace. It was to punish offenders of the peace laws enforced by the Church. The Truce of God was further upheld by the first three Lateran councils of 1123, 1139 and 1179⁽²³⁸⁾. These measures seem to have had some effect and in the thirteenth century a decline in petty, territorial warfare is recorded⁽²³⁹⁾. War became the prerogative of the great princes or more often of kings. Thus a knight who wished to exercise his military skill could no longer attack his neighbour and snatch some of his land. He had either to enrol in a royal army or to find consolation in the combats to be found at tournaments, although these too were actively discouraged by the Church⁽²⁴⁰⁾. The other outlet for his military skills and inclinations was,

of course, the crusades, which had the full support of the Church.

iv. Its Taxes.

Another fault of the feudal nobility is also associated with their greed and their failure to protect the weak: the poets often accuse them of overtaxing their serfs. In view of the historical evidence for the poverty of the nobility, this at first seems surprising. However, whereas feudal dues were fixed, as were the sums of money decided upon for rent, the more powerful noblemen nevertheless still held the right to levy taxes⁽²⁴¹⁾. Some of these were long-established⁽²⁴²⁾, others were occasional taxes and could be made to correspond to the extent of the nobleman's need⁽²⁴³⁾. The system was, therefore, open to abuse.

Overtaxing by greedy nobles is one of the faults mentioned by Etienne de Fougères:

Quant li dolent de fein baillent,
 Il les robent et il les taillent,
 Il les peinent, il les travaillent,
 Moultes corvées ne lor faillent.
 (Livre des Manières: ll. 545-48)

The monk Helinand makes a similar accusation:

Mors, tu defies et guerroies
 çaus qui des tailles et des proies
 Font les sorfai~~z~~ et les outrages:
 (Vers de la Mort: Stanza XLI)

Helinand adopts an attitude of contempt towards those lords who delight in the hardships of their subjects and who spend what they have taken by force from someone else.

Toz les tormenz en çaus emploies
 Qui d'autrui doleur font lor joies.
 Ne porquant c'est mais li usages
 (ce pert par tot as seignorages),
 Icist tempez, icist orages
 Chace lor ames males voies.
 He! certes, c'est uns vasselages
 Faire son preu d'autrui damages
 Et d'autrui cuir larges coroies!
 (Stanza XLI), ll. 4-12

It is apparent, therefore, that the moralists had a very low opinion of the

way the second estate went about their social responsibility of protecting the third estate. How then do the nobles acquit their duties towards the first estate, which they were also supposed to protect?

v. Its links with the Church.

Thibaud de Marly says the second estate does not fulfil its social responsibilities towards the Church, but he does not specify how they fail in this duty:

Une gent a ou siecle qui molt avront dolor:
Roi, conte, duc et prince, chastelain, vavassor,
Qui les comandemenz enfreignent chascun jor
Que Dex lor commanda quant les mist en l'enor:
De garder sainte eglise come lor creator,
De deporter hermite et nonnain et prior
Et orphelin et vuede et povre home en langor.
(Vers: ll. 485-91)

There is a similar vague accusation in the Sermon en Vers. The poet states the duty of the nobility towards the Church (Stanza XXXVII). Then he claims that they are proud and cruel and ill-treat the clergy:

Ore sunt itels
Orgoilus, cruels,
Et trop surquidez;
Nul ne set le cunte
Dire de la hunte
K'il funt a clergie.
(Stanza XXXIX)

We can only surmise as to the malpractices alluded to by the poet. A number of possibilities are suggested by historical fact. Perhaps the nobles prevented the donation of land to the Church. A historian claims that this was frequent during this period⁽²⁴⁴⁾. Vassals would surrender land as alms to the Church before they died in order to save their souls. However the feudal overlord often tried to prevent this alienation of the fief. Consequently there were legal proceedings.

Another historian⁽²⁴⁵⁾ also claims that knights were not good almsgivers in the thirteenth century. They gave only at death and even then they were not generous. Testaments show that they gave proportionately less

than the bourgeois and sometimes less than peasants. M. Duby does not, however, ascribe this to miserliness, but rather to a refinement of moral feeling. People tended less to believe that they could simply buy salvation. They realised that their deeds and intentions counted for more⁽²⁴⁶⁾. This is an attitude, we have noted, which only occasionally is reflected in these works. (See Chapter Two, section 8, c, ix).

Finally M. Perroy⁽²⁴⁷⁾ declares the knights guilty of robbing churches. This is one charge made by the poet of C'est li Mariages des Filles au Diable (Jubinal, N.R., Vol. I, pp. 285-6, Stanza 6, quoted below).

These were the malpractices of which the nobility were accused in the didactic works. In all respects they betrayed their social function, and always for personal gain. The poem C'est li Mariages des Filles au Diable lists all their crimes:

Et puis si vivent il de proie:
 Taillent homes, traient monnoie;
 A destre et a senestre prenent,
 Loiauté et justice vendent,
 Cloistiers destruisent, là descendent :
 D'autrui cuir font large corroie.
 Bien ne font ne mal ne desfendent;
 Assez doivent et petit rendent.
 (ed. Jubinal, vol. I, pp. 285-86, Stanza 6).

vi. Its misuse of wealth.

Having acquired their wealth by wicked and violent means, or having at least supplemented their income thereby, the use made of the accumulated riches is also condemned by the moralists. Unlike the "courtly" poets, they do not accuse the nobles of being self-denying misers who delight in the contemplation of their hoarded wealth. To the moralist proper the nobles were free-spending and led luxurious lives.

Helinand accuses them of spending their wealth on material comforts. They eat rich food until their bodies become ugly and overweight. They do not serve God and thus damn themselves:

Cil qui tant livres et tant mars
 De l'avoir, par le monde espars,
 Toloit a destre e a senestre,
 Qui les vendouses et les chars,
 Mulez, saumons, esturjons, bars
 Faisait desor sa table nestre,
 Qui tant mist en vestir et pestre
 Son cors vil et puant et flestre,
 Qui n'aloit onques sanz mil chars,
 Qui sogiez a Dieu ne vout estre;
 Or a le feu d'enfer a mestre:
 Mal est chaufez qui toz est ars.
 (Vers de la Mort: Stanza XLVII)

Thus the poet concludes proverbially that one does not get warm by burning oneself. Over-indulgence results in suffering, not well-being. Helinand invokes Death and wishes it upon the nobles so that they might be deprived of their luxuries:

Morz.....
 As princes te vueil envoier

 Morz, tu venges les bas des hauz
 Qui tuit se sont pris a la sauz
 Por saint Martin mieuz guerroier:
 Tu trenches par mi a ta fauz
 Faucons et ostoirs et girfauz
 Que tu vois al ciel coloier.
 (Stanza XII) ll. 1, 4 & 7-12)

Etienne de Fougères also accuses the nobles of over-eating and over-drinking, *at the people's expense*.

Lor dreites rentes en receivent,
 Peis les menjuent et les beivent;
 (Livre des Manières: ll. 549-50)

Etienne describes the rotting of well-fed flesh after death:

Com plus belle est sa char et tendre,
 Plus tost porist et devient cendre;
 Qui ce vodreit par cor entendre,
 Ja ne devreit rien a tort prendre.
 (ll. 141-144)

Among those who will not see Heaven according to the Poème Moral are rich men who delight in the vain pursuits associated with nobles - hawking and hunting.

Cil qui tant soi delitent d'ostoirs et d'esperviers,
 Qui si grant joie mainnent de chies et de levriers,
 Je cui, puis ke li secles plus ke Deus les at chiers,
 Ja nul n'en conistrat saiz Pierres, li portiers.
 (Stanza 18)

The Poème Moral also criticizes the foolish spending of the nobles who present rich gifts, such as horse or mantle to a servant, but ignore the deserving poor. (Stanza 507).

On the whole the second estate does not provoke as much anger or criticism in the moralising poets as did the Church. In the case of the king, most are content to outline his duties and to warn him against any deviation from the ideal. He is treated as a moral rather than a social type and prompts the poets to apply to him many of the warnings against the corrupting influence of wealth.

As regards the nobles and knights we noted an ambivalence of attitude in these works, which depended on the personal status and motivation of the poets. Both "courtly" and moralistic poets had severe criticism to offer but their viewpoints differed greatly: the courtly poets approved their worldliness but lamented its decline and protested vehemently at the simpler, more modest life-style of the nobles which prevented the great shows of liberality from which they as entertainers benefited. The severe moralists, however, would have applauded this change, but their observations of the contemporary nobility do not acknowledge it. They see the nobility as being as rich as ever, largely due to ignoble means, and indulging themselves in the splendours bought by worldly wealth and so damning themselves.

It would appear that neither viewpoint gives us an accurate portrait of the contemporary nobility; yet both reflect elements of reality.

The charges of miserliness levelled by the courtly poets are surely provoked by the impoverished nobles' more restrained life-style. They, being dependent upon the noble's largesse, would not be likely to sympathise with his financial difficulties. Nor indeed would one expect this from the moralists, who in order to attack successfully and so to correct, can only complain, rarely praise or offer sympathetic understanding. That the nobles were driven to illicit means of gaining wealth was to these poets grounds

for complaint. It also suggests to us a need to do so, and in its way testifies to the money troubles of the thirteenth century nobility.

C. The Third Estate: the Peasants.

The peasants who worked the land, the "laboratores", were traditionally regarded as the third estate. This is reflected in the "Etats du Monde" poems, where most of the poets who set out to describe the three estates limit themselves to Church, Nobility and peasantry⁽²⁴⁸⁾. This is true of the Reclus de Moilliens whose "petites gens" (Carité, stanza CL) are peasants; Hugues de Berzé refers only to "les laboureours" of the third estate (Bible: line 224). Guillaume le Clerc talks of "li vilains" (Besant de Dieu, line 778) and likewise the author of the Sermon en Vers ("li vilein", stanza L).

In reality, however, the third estate of society was far more complex than this⁽²⁴⁹⁾. It included merchants and artisans residing in the towns and who were largely drawn from the ranks of the rural peasantry. The poets, nevertheless, tend to ignore these fast developing elements of society, and to concentrate on the traditional orders of feudal society. They may, however, deal with merchants etc. in another part of their work. There are, of course, exceptions to this, and one notes that town poets in particular extend the third estate to embrace the town inhabitants. e.g. Etienne de Fougères, Livre des Manières, deals at length with merchants, and Rutebeuf, a poet of Paris and out of touch with rural society, omits the peasantry altogether, leaving merchants and tradesmen to form his third estate (De l'Estat du Monde).

The overall impression given by most of the poets is that there was an invisible dividing line between the three traditional social estates and the divers social types who peopled the towns. This is well illustrated by the Sermon en Vers: When the poet has described the Church, the knights and the peasants, he pauses, before he goes on to the artisans:

De treis ordres ai
 Dit, e plus dirrai
 Ceo ke jeo entent:
 Nul endroit de sai
 Ne tint dreite lai,
 Ne vit lealment.
 (Stanza LXVII)

He then makes it obvious that he is conscious of a "them" and "us" situation, whereby the artisans etc. do not really belong in the long-established social order:

Ore ai dit de nus;
 Ore dirrai de vus,
 Plusurs menestaus,
 Vus ne celez mie
 Vostre tricherie
 As Deus enfernaus.
 (Stanza LXXIII)

In this study I have observed a similar division, and will consider only the peasantry in my section of the third estate.

1. Social and Economic Background of the Third Estate.

Throughout the Middle Ages, the rural population dominated in numbers. Yet there is very little documentation on the mode of life, activities and financial situation of the lowest elements of feudal society⁽²⁵⁰⁾. It is, therefore, difficult to consider them historically in any great detail.

We know that the peasants were bound to a feudal lord. They were either freemen, with certain privileges, or serfs, and so treated as part of the master's possessions. From the feudal lord they received land which they cultivated. Every peasant possessed a few strips of land, which were often very small in area, and usually scattered. In the Old French texts, the poets refer to the peasants as "vileins" thereby telling us that they are speaking of the freemen, rather than the serfs, who presumably do not count as having any social status.

To his feudal lord ("seigneur"), the peasant owed certain dues. These were apparently very reasonable⁽²⁵¹⁾. By the thirteenth century they were usually paid in money, rather than kind, and rarely exceeded four "deniers"

a year. Having acquitted himself of this payment the peasant was in normal circumstances, left in peace to lead his own life.

The attitudes of the peasantry to money was, says M. Duby⁽²⁵²⁾ one of indifference. Even in the thirteenth century, a period of great economic change when the money economy developed considerably, the attitude of the peasant did not change: he used money only to pay his feudal dues, and was thus able to keep all his crops. These he could dispose of himself at the local markets and so engage in some profitable commercial activity.

On the whole, this historian does not consider the lot of the peasant a hard one. The feudal dues were hardly exorbitant and could not be raised. Fines imposed for any breach of the law could be reduced on appeal, and often were. The only hardship which the peasant had to bear was the levy of the "taille". (See above, my page 329).

The "taille", an occasional tax collected by the feudal lord when a need arose, was not fixed and varied according to the sum required by the lord. Presumably the burden put upon the peasant in respect of this tax depended largely on the character of the "seigneur" and on his financial situation.

During the period when the "petite noblesse" was becoming increasingly impoverished as the result of a rise in prices, unaccompanied by a corresponding rise in feudal revenues, it was inevitable that this occasional tax should be imposed more often⁽²⁵³⁾. In the preceding section of this chapter, we saw that the nobles were often accused of imposing crippling taxes upon their subjects.

Another commitment of the peasantry was the payment of the "dîme" or tithe. This was originally intended for the Church but was often seized by the feudal landowners in the early Middle Ages. From the eleventh century, largely as a result of the Gregorian reforms, the "dîme" was in most instances recovered from the lay land-owners and restored not to the

secular Church, but rather to the monasteries who enjoyed more prestige and papal patronage at that time⁽²⁵⁴⁾.

2. The Third Estate in the Old French Didactic Poems.

a) Its Duties.

The primary function of the peasant, as depicted in the didactic works, was to provide food for the whole of society by his labours.

li vilein
ke gaint le grein
Dunt nus vivum tuz.
(Sermon en Vers, Stanza L, ll. 298-300)

(see also Livre des Manières: line 676; Miserere: stanza CLVI).

One may well wonder what was the attitude of the peasant to the role imposed upon him. Etienne de Fougères expresses firmly what his attitude should be: one of gratitude. The peasant should thank God for his lot, however hard.

Dire devreit: "Dex, vostre grace,
Si je faz rien qui a vos place;
Et si ge treis qu' mal me face,
Biu m'est por vaïr vostre face. 2
(Livre des Manières: ll. 721-24)

If the peasant can view his lot with a joyful resignation, he may be assured that God will reward him a hundredfold:

Si aviez ferme creance
En celui qui toz biens avance,
Vos queldriez et sans dotance
A cent doubles vostre feisance.
(ll. 789-92)

We note that this poet is equating the social type, the peasant, with the moral type, the poor man, ideally the virtuous poor man such as the biblical Lazarus. Etienne sympathises with the peasant as a social type because he is poor and victimised (ll. 677-712). He maintains, however, that as a poor man and as the victim of others, the peasant is in an enviable position, for he is one of God's poor, and will accordingly be rewarded, if he accepts his poverty. The ideal visualised by Etienne de Fougères is not, however, reflected in reality.

b) Its attitude to Poverty.

The peasants apparently do not show signs of such faith and stoicism. According to Etienne de Fougères, they resent their poverty and cry out in anger against God:

Mes ne prent rien en pacience,
 Ainceis s'irest et ou Dé tence:
 "Et Dex", fet il, "par quel consence
 M'avez doné tau pestilence?
 (Livre des Manières: ll. 713-16)

They are quick to blame God for their hardships, but, if their fortune changes, it is not God they thank. Any improvement in their situation they attribute to their own capabilities.

Et se il fet qui tort a bien,
 Il n'en merci Dé de rien;
 Ne l'en set gré quel a un chien
 "Or l'ai bien fet," fet il, "do mien."
 (ll. 717-20)

Guillaume le Clerc also comments upon the attitude of protest that he perceives in the peasants. He talks of "les povres", but is referring to the poor as a social type and not as a moral type. The poor man as a moral figure is never the target for criticism in the didactic works.

Guillaume here accuses the peasants of many vices - a keen desire for wealth, and the inability to use it well when they do acquire some money⁽²⁵⁵⁾:

Car il ne pernent mie a gre
 Lor sofreite e lor powrete
 E sont felons et envies
 E mesdisant et orguillos
 E plains d'envie e de luxure,
 Tant come un denjer lur dure.
 (Besant de Dieu: ll. 1115-20)

Covetousness is not mentioned by name, but is implied in the alleged lust for wealth, and, in this instance, termed "envie".

Like Etienne de Fougères, Guillaume le Clerc recommends that the poor peasants should thank God for their poverty, and thus secure for themselves the kingdom of Heaven:

S'il rendisent a deu merci
 E loenge de lor poverte
 Que il ont eu e soferte,
 Le halt regne del ciel fust lor.
 (Besant de Dieu: ll. 1152-55)

The short allegorical poem De Triacle et de Venin, also remarks upon the discontent of the peasants. This poet also refers to "li povre", but as he includes them in a social review, placing them after the "chevaliers" we may assume he is referring to the peasants.

Li povre sont honi por lor chetiveté,
 Quar il n'aorent mie Dieu de lor povreté.
 Ainz tencent et estrivent (si n'en sevent Dieu gré),
 Dieu, preudons et le siecle par grant maleurté.
 (ed. Jubinal, N.R., vol. I, page 365)

Thus the attitude of the peasantry to their poverty and to their lowly station appears not to have been one of resignation. Although historians may say that the medieval peasant did not suffer unduly, the peasant, as portrayed in the "Etats du monde" poems⁽²⁵⁶⁾, was by no means content with his lot.

c) Attitude of the poets to the Third Estate.

We have seen that the protests of the peasants were viewed with disapproval by the moralists. They counselled a quite different attitude. Etienne de Fougères, however, does, at one point, concede that they do have to bear several hardships and he expresses sympathy for them.

The peasant, he says, can never enjoy the fruits of his labour. The best of what he produces must be presented to his "seigneur" (an early work, Le Livre des Manières, was evidently written before the custom of money payments was generally established). He is left with the poor quality goods. Etienne enumerates the produce which the peasant has to surrender:

Ne mengera ja de bon pain;
 Nos en avon le meillor grein
 Et le plus lies et le plus sein;
 La droe remeint au vilain.
 (ll. 687-90)

In line 688 the poet acknowledges that he is one of those who benefits from the toil of the peasant. As the bishop of Rennes he was a member of the first estate.

As with the bread, the best poultry and cake go to his lord:

S'il a grasse oie ou geline
 Ne gastel de blanche farine,
 A son saignor tot la destine
 Ou a sa dome en sa gesine.
 (ll. 693-96)

The lord also manages to appropriate the best of the wine produced by the peasant. Here the poet claims that this would not normally form part of the feudal dues, but that the lord was exploiting the peasant in forcing him to hand it over.

E se il a vin de sa vingne,
Sis sires enerde. et engingne:
Ou par losenge ou par grinne,
En quanque sens qu'il l'esgaugine.
(ll. 697-700)

Etienne praises the peasant who fulfils his feudal dues and accepts his poor life.

Et quant plus vit de povre vite,
De tant a il grainor merite,
Se il rent partot sa debite
Et leialment sa fei aquite.
(ll. 705-08)

The Reclus de Moilliens also sympathises with the lot of the peasant who works so hard.

Vous, laboreous terriien,
Ki por ce terriiene rien,
Querre nuit et jour estrivés,
Mes dis en vos cuers escrivés!
Vous ki peu ou nient oidivés,
(Carité: Stanza CLI, ll. 4-8)

He urges the peasant to care for spiritual matters as well as the provision of food for physical well-being. If he does this, he is leading a good life:

Se vous de l'ame tant combien
Dou cors norrir vous avivés,
Dont di jou ke a droit vivés;
Se non, vous falés a tout bien.
(Stanza CLI, ll. 9-12)

The industry of the peasant is also praised by the poet of the incomplete work Sur les Etats du Monde (Romania, 1875, pp. 388-391, ed. P. Meyer). This poet also remarks that the peasant can lose in one day all that he possesses:

Puis /Deus/ establi le vilain
Pur gaanier/as autres pain;
Cum plus labure de sa main
Tant est plus halegre et sain;
Ja n'ert lassé.
En un jur pert quanque ad aunié.
(ll. 25-30)

Praise for the peasant is, however, rare. More often, the peasant, like every other social class is severely criticised. Few works, however, display the scorn and hatred for the villein which appears in the short work, Le Despit au Vilain⁽²⁵⁷⁾, although, as we shall see later, there are traces of this attitude to be found in the courtly works⁽²⁵⁸⁾. In this work the poet is complaining to a "seignor" of the affluence of the "vilain" who eat very well - meat, beef, goose etc. They should eat thistles, says the poet:

Il deussent mengier chardons,
(ed. Jubinal, p. 107)

He continues: Villeins should be treated like animals. They should be put out to grass, should live in the woods etc. If a villein were to possess all the gold in the world, he would never compensate for his base nature. He would always remain a villein.

"Deussent il mengier viandes?
Il deussent parmi les landes
Pestres herbe avoec les bues cornus,
A iiiij piez aler toz nus. (ed. Jubinal, p. 108)

Vilains deust manoir en bos,
Et estre de seu enclos.
Vilains est fols et sos et ors;
Se toz li avoires et li ors
De cest monde estoit siens, par non,
N'ert li vilains se vilains non"
(ed. Jubinal, p. 109)

One wonders what prompted such an extreme attitude. Perhaps the poet is protesting against the fortunes being made in the thirteenth century by the bourgeois who were of peasant stock and even serfs who had bought their liberty⁽²⁵⁹⁾. The poet would resent the transfer of wealth from the nobility to whom it rightly belonged to the enriched villeins who were totally unworthy to possess it. One can only surmise on the poet's motives.

Such unconcealed hatred is very rare. More often the moralists proper criticize the peasants for their failings and do not attack the whole estate for reasons of personal dislike.

d) Its Failings

i. Unwillingness to work.

While some poets commend the peasants for their industry, at least one accuses them of being lazy and uncooperative. They will never do anything with a good grace:

Ja un sul ne fra
 Por nul ke serra,
 Ceo ke fere deit
 De sun bon corage;
 Tel est ja l'usage
 De tuz ke l'em veit.
 (Sermon en Vers: Stanza II)

ii. Cheating.

According to Guillaume le Clerc, the peasants are notorious cheats. They never miss an opportunity to give short measure without repenting⁽²⁶⁰⁾.

Quant un por foir ou por batre
 Deit prendre treis deniers ou quatre,
 Petit fera si l'em nel gaitte.
 E se il a chose sustraite,
 Volentiers le consentira.
 James a prestre nel dira.
 (Besant de Dieu: ll. 1121-26)

Here the peasant receives money for his produce, and the poet is doubtless referring to his cheating at a local market. The attitude of the peasant would appear to be that cheating the rich is not a sin because they can afford to pay extra:

Ainceis li est avis por veir,
 Que se il puet del riche aveir,
 Coment que seit, n'est pas pecche.
 (ll. 1127-29)

Cheating on measures is cheating God, says Etienne de Fougères:

Ha! com a cil perdue honte
 Qui a Dé triche ne mea conte,
 Qui set quanz greins et quant semonte
 A en la jarbe que il conte.
 (Livre des Manières: ll. 733-36)

iii. Stealing.

Hugues de Berzé accuses the peasants of encroaching upon the land of their neighbours with intent to appropriate the land. They move the boundaries.

Que li uns conquiert volentiers.
 Seur son compaignon deus quartiers
 De terre, s'il puet, en emblant
 E boute ades la bone avant.
 (Bible: ll. 225-28)

They put their livestock out to graze on other people's pasture, says
 (261)
 the poem C'est li mariages des Filles au Diable (ed. Jubinal, Nouveau Recueil,
 vol. I, pp. 283-292).

Bestes en autrui biens menez. (p. 287, stanza 9)

iv. Refusal to pay tithes.

The most serious charge which is brought against the peasants is their refusal to pay the dîme. No mention is ever made of them defaulting with their feudal dues to their lord. However several poets express shock that they should neglect to pay their dues to God in the form of the "dime".

This is one of the complaints of C'est li mariages...

Les dimes par vo convoitise
 Retenez.
 (p. 287, stanza 9)

Likewise Thibaud de Marly, who includes in his list of people who will go to Hell, those peasants who will not pay the "dîme".

Et qui sa disme tient et doner ne l'endure.
 (Vers: line 586)

Etienne de Fougères also regards refusal to pay the "dime" as a grave crime. He advises the peasant to be honest in this matter for evasion of this due is tantamount to cheating God.

Gardez donc, franc gaïneor,
 Que vos seiez bon desmeor;
 Sor autres estes pecheor,
 Si vers Dé estes tricheor.
 (Livre des Manières: ll. 785-88)

The poet traces the "dime" back to Cain who, he claims, first refused to pay it.

Primes dona deme Caïn
 Do premier et do regaïn;
 (ll. 745-6)

The Sermon en Vers devotes a great deal of attention to the payment of the tithe: The villeins do not pay the "dîme" to God, says the poet. They sell their produce instead of giving it freely. Obviously the "dîme" was paid in kind in the experience of this poet, since he refers to the peasants selling it:

Ja a sun seignur
 Deu ne fra honur
 S'il n'est par destreit;
 Ne doune l'offrende
 Ke trop cher nel vende,
 Quant doner le deit.
 (Stanza LII)

The produce is sold at a high price to the clergy collecting the tithe:

Tant enviz le rendent
 Ke trop cher le vendent
 A bailliz Jhesu:
 Pur ceo sunt copable
 Tuz, e meins durable
 Li mund k'il ne fud.
 (Stanza LIII)

According to this poet, Abel was the first person to pay the dîme. He gave his first fruits to God. Nowadays, says the poet, the custom of giving first fruits has died out. Villeins are loth even to give the "dîme" which is obligatory (Stanza LXI). No amount of persuasion will induce the peasants to pay the tithe.

Li gaimur en tere
 Dreit ne veolent fere
 Pur nul apreiner,
 Ne suppliant estre
 A Deu n'a lur prestre
 Par nule duzur.
 (Stanza LXIV)

Like Etienne de Fougères, this poet maintains that refusing to pay the "dîme" was equal to robbing God. Those who do pay it will be saved.

Cil est Deu tolur
 Ke n'est dreit donur
 De kanke il ad:
 Seit petit u grant
 Seit a dreit dunant
 E salvé serra.
 (Stanza LXVI)

Thus we see that the attitude of the peasant is presented as one of resentment that he did not have any wealth. This demonstrates his covetousness. He is criticized by the moralists on that account and also for employing unscrupulous means in order to acquire wealth, if only in a modest way by dishonestly extending the limits of his strips of land and by giving short measure in the market place. The most serious charge brought against the peasant is the refusal to pay the "dîme". Since this was religious in origin and destiny, the moralists regard the failure to pay it as a violation of his service to God, indeed a sacrilege.

According to the moralists, the peasant is guilty of not fulfilling his social function and of letting down those who depend for their subsistence on his labours. The poets deal briefly with the peasant for he has limited scope for abuses of wealth. They can only criticize his attitude and his attempts to acquire wealth. There is some evidence of an attitude of sympathy for the peasant and his hard lot. However the predominant attitude of the moralists is that the peasant should be grateful for what little he has. Far from envisaging any amelioration in the condition of the peasant or even wishing for it, the moralists accept the established social order and urge the peasant to do likewise. They go even further - they mention that the peasant should be pleased to be poor, thus implying that they believe the peasants' poverty affords him a means of securing salvation which is denied the rich man. In this attitude we see the peasant as the moral type, the Poor Man. (cf. my Chapter Two, section B).

CHAPTER FOUR

Wealth and the Non-feudal Third Estate

- A. The Merchant as Social Type
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 - 2. The Merchant and Economic History
 - 3. The Attitude of the Church to Commerce
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- B. The Usurer
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 - a) The usurer and society.
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 - i. Usury a sin; ii. the suffering of the usurer; iii. the usurer cursed by God; iv. further consequences of usury.
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- C. The Jongleur.
 - 1. Social Background
 - 2. Favourable Attitude of Some Poets towards him
 - 3. The Attitude of Moralists towards him.

CHAPTER FOUR

Wealth and the Non-feudal Third Estate

For the purposes of this study I have divided society into two distinct parts. So far I have considered the three traditional estates which do not, however, give a full picture of feudal society.

As we have seen, the concept of the three estates was based on a divinely-ordained structure of interdependence. Ideally each estate contributed to the well-being of the whole of society. An estate clearly had an altruistic, social function which was expressed in specific duties, the whole making up an ideal. This is not true of the social types which I propose to consider in this chapter: the merchant, the usurer, the "jongleur".

These three types have no apparent function in a mutually dependent feudal society. They are excluded from the traditional tripartite division, with no apparent social justification in contemporary eyes. One may speak of the ideal knight, the ideal priest or the ideal peasant, but there is no obvious ideal for the merchant, the usurer or the "jongleur". This is undoubtedly true of the usurer and the "jongleur" as portrayed in the Old French didactic works. Social types in one sense, both are treated more as anti-social types: the usurer being the social pervert, the "jongleur" the social parasite. The case of the merchant is more complex, and it is this social type I shall consider first.

A. The Merchant as Social Type1. The Merchant in Relation to the Three Estates.

To study the merchant as presented in the Old French didactic poets,

one moves from a predominantly rural background to a town setting. Although merchants travelled around and exercised their commercial activities at country markets, the image of the merchant associated with medieval satire and complaint is the town-dweller, the business man who operates from one place by means of his own peripatetic employees.

How does the merchant fit into the social system conceived of by the didactic poets? For most writers, he does not. His activities could never be interpreted by them as favouring the common good. The other estates have ideals, although these may be shamelessly betrayed. The merchant has no such strictly formulated social function. He works for himself, if he works at all. He can, therefore, only be immorally acquisitive. He is not a member of an altruistic society. He is the product of the town where all men look no further than their selfish gain. By his contemporaries, the merchant could, therefore, be considered as self-interested, parasitic, frankly covetous in attitude and action, since profit was held by him to be the greatest good. He and all he stood for would seem to be totally alien to traditional standards of ethical behaviour.

Before considering how far the merchant roused the antipathy of the Old French moralists, I intend to trace the rise of the merchant class, and then to assess their place in society. For this purpose I have, of necessity, consulted many learned authorities. I shall not, however, attempt to detail their conclusions. My aim is to sketch in a background so that the attitudes of the poets may be better situated and explained.

2. The Merchant and Economic History.

As my preliminary chapter pointed out, town-dwellers grew in number and importance during the medieval period. In the twelfth and more especially the thirteenth centuries they became an element important enough to challenge the established social order. This applied particularly to the successful merchants, enriched by commerce, who became wealthy, influential bourgeois.

The artisans do not fall into the same category since they did not make great personal fortunes in the towns. That was the province of the businessmen. It is the evolution of the merchants which made an impact in life and on contemporary literature, whereas the artisans are largely ignored by the poets of the time⁽¹⁾.

How then did the long-established merchant as a social element achieve this new ascendancy which forced the moralists to give careful thought to his position in society?

Commerce as a means of livelihood was practically unknown in France from the eighth century when the Islamic invasion cut off the Mediterranean trade routes. Only some Jewish merchants imported chiefly luxury goods⁽²⁾. Buying and selling was practised locally on a very small scale to satisfy essential needs. Otherwise feudal society was agrarian and self-subsisting.

From the time of the first crusade in 1096 the Mediterranean was reopened to Western shipping, and created internationally a commercial revival. Prior to this, commerce had been renewed in the West by the Norman conquest of 1066 which established trade relations between France and England. Merchants soon began to increase in number.

Who, one might ask, were the merchants to establish themselves in the towns, thus securing their liberty from feudal ties? They were, says Pirenne⁽³⁾, wanderers, perhaps the younger sons of villeins. They were, therefore, members of the Third Estate. Such a person might become a hired sailor, for example, and gradually acquire a small trading capital. With such a humble beginning, many were to make huge fortunes.

The twelfth century was the period of greatest activity for medieval traders. The towns continued to grow and were quite independent of any feudal system. Their citizens organised their own social life, and devised their own system of taxes⁽⁴⁾. At this point commercial expansion did not occasion any great opposition from feudal society. Both the Church and

the Nobility were drawn into the commercial activities of the day⁽⁵⁾, the Church chiefly through the monasteries (see Chapter Three, A, 2), while the nobility enjoyed the luxury goods made available to them.

By the thirteenth century, circumstances changed somewhat. The burghers continued to grow rich and powerful, at the expense of the traditional feudal estates. Commercial activity no longer benefited the whole of society. The less wealthy ranks of the nobility grew poorer (see preceding chapter, B, 1), monastic trade passed its peak. Great fortunes were now being made by the townsmen, who owed no allegiance to the traditional feudal powers. This was the position in the thirteenth century.

Not surprisingly there was a wave of resentment from the impoverished feudal society, envious of the wealth and freedom of this new class⁽⁶⁾ which became steadily richer as others became poorer. This was not only the case of the nobility. The Church, too, seemed to have had second thoughts. In spite of its involvement in commercial activities, it apparently felt called upon to condemn the "bourgeois" who lived on money transactions⁽⁷⁾ and who did little real work. Churchmen pointed out the dangers of living for profit and of possessing great wealth.

The Church, however, was in an awkward position: It had to a great extent fostered commercial activity, by the protection of fairs, by the crusades, by monastic trading. It was itself commercially active while the Papacy, in particular, was deeply implicated in complex financial matters⁽⁸⁾. Yet such economic changes undermined the authority of the Church. The laity, particularly the non-noble laity, were dominating society, so that the clergy felt obliged to offer some resistance⁽⁹⁾. The Church, however, could do this only to a moderate extent, since her interests were inevitably divided⁽¹⁰⁾.

3. The Attitude of the Church to Commerce

Many influences contributed to the formation of the Church's official attitude on commercial profits. There were both theoretical and practical factors to be considered.

On the one hand there was the anti-wealth teaching of the Bible which governed Church doctrine⁽¹¹⁾, as is well illustrated by the biblical description of Christ driving the buyers and sellers from the temple (Matthew 21: 12). The early Church fathers echoed the anti-wealth protests⁽¹²⁾ and most condemned trade as an ignoble, if not immoral, way of earning one's living. Many were convinced that a merchant must be fraudulent to make a profit, and so the general attitude that emerged was that commerce was a "morally risky business"⁽¹³⁾.

The question continued to be debated throughout the medieval period, and there were many nuances of opinion. This controversy did not result in any universally accepted economic doctrine⁽¹⁴⁾. One can only examine the differing views held by the canonists and moral theologians of the time.

The canonists took care of the practical application of Church teaching to commercial transactions whereas the theologians devoted themselves to the moral issues raised by such activities. The canonists legitimised certain commercial transactions by distinguishing three different kinds of sale⁽¹⁵⁾: firstly the sale of personal goods necessitated by unfavourable circumstances; secondly the sale of goods produced by the labour of craftsmen. Both these sales were acceptable. Finally there were the merchants proper who lived by selling dear what had been acquired cheaply and which had not in any way been improved between the two transactions. The view held of this category of trader varied greatly during the medieval period. Gratian and decretists equated the merchants with usurers. The subsequent canonists were more discerning in that they distinguished between "profits made without and those made with some expenditure of time and

labour and money"⁽¹⁶⁾. In the first case, the gain was condemned as "turpe lucrum", in the second it was "honestus questus". Since all merchants invested some time and money in the pursuit of their business, most medieval trade fell into the second and acceptable category.

The problem was not so simply resolved, however. In the thirteenth century, the merchant's motives were probed. Was he exercising his commercial activities to provide himself with a justifiable livelihood or was he merely intent on profit? This was one of the most important questions examined by canonists and theologians⁽¹⁷⁾.

Since trade and commerce was pronounced socially acceptable by the Church, there remained the question of the Just Price, a canonical concept dating from about 1100 onwards⁽¹⁸⁾. "Utility and need were the fundamental determinants of price" says Gilchrist⁽¹⁹⁾. Baldwin⁽²⁰⁾ expands this as follows: "Translated into terms of medieval economic experience, the current or going price would include competitive prices, determined, in the terminology of modern classical economists, by the concurrence of supplies of goods and demands of buyers.... Medieval market regulations outlawed such practices as forestalling, or the private laying up of goods before they reached the market, and regrating, or the buying of goods to be sold again on the same market. These private monopolistic practices would artificially force prices above the competitive level and would not be lawfully authorised."

The moral theologian was more hostile to profit than the canonist. The theologians took up the topic of the just price in the thirteenth century. They also tackled the ethical problem of justifying the position of the merchant. The general conclusions they reached on the function of the merchant himself were that he is useful to society, whose servant he is if he retains only sufficient profit for the modest support of his family⁽²¹⁾, and if he employs his money in charitable gifts and deeds⁽²²⁾. This emphasis on the good use of wealth is one which is fundamental to the

medieval attitudes to wealth and we have already seen ample evidence of it in the works I have studied. Any hint of avarice, say the theologians, and the quest for profit may be counted as wrong.

On the question of the Just Price, the theologians differed from the canonists. Whereas the canonists supported free bargaining, the theologians maintained that the just price should be enforced. How to estimate the just price was, however, a difficult question, and one to which the greatest thirteenth century moral theologian, Thomas Aquinas, applied himself⁽²³⁾. His writings were occupied with the problem of relating the individual concept of the just price to the universal philosophy of justice⁽²⁴⁾. He and other theologians could only agree that by accepting the market price as the just price, the latter would inevitably fluctuate. It could never, therefore, be fixed. Gilchrist quotes an example from the teaching of Thomas Aquinas which illustrates his views on the charging of prices⁽²⁵⁾: Aquinas considered the question of a merchant with a load of grain to sell in a famine-stricken area. Prices are high. The question is whether the merchant is obliged to inform his customers that ample supplies are on the way, which will lower the price. If he tells them this, they will probably cease to buy and his profit will fall. Thomas answers that he is not obliged to tell, although a virtuous merchant would probably do so. This was the view of the majority of the theologians.

The question is, of course, far more complex than my presentation of it. I have merely outlined the current teaching on trade which one may believe to have influenced the vernacular poets. The canonists and especially the theologians linked social activity with moral issues, and we know that this is true also of the Old French didactic poets. It is, therefore, interesting to assess in what measure they echo the current opinions expressed by the Church. We can presume these to be quite tolerant of the merchant. Canonists and theologians agreed that the merchant's activities

were at best, based on honest labour, and provided a service to society, and as such the merchant's place in society was justified⁽²⁶⁾.

The canons issued by Papal Councils reflect this view. For example, Lateran III, 1179 (canon 22) assures protection from highwaymen for the itinerant merchant. This implies the acceptance by the Church of traders as respectable. This is also borne out by the absence of any condemnation of merchants, regarding the sale of goods, in this or subsequent canons of the thirteenth century. As we shall later see, usury was the chief preoccupation of the Church councils at this time.

We remember, too, that any disapproval felt by accepted church opinion as to the activities of merchants and the huge profits being made from commerce would be tempered by the direct involvement of part of the Church itself in commercial dealings. We find, therefore, an ambivalence of attitude: the Church accepted commerce, but frowned upon huge profits which exceeded personal needs. Yet, as we have seen, the Church was a complex profitable institution. On the other hand there is the discrepancy between Church teaching and lay practice. While canonists and theologians furiously debated the ethics of trading, historians suggest that the lay traders went their own way, and that Church teaching and canons were largely ignored⁽²⁷⁾.

Thus, when studying the Old French poets, we have two aspects of their views to consider: firstly how far they propagate Church teaching⁽²⁸⁾ and secondly, to what extent their picture of the contemporary merchant shows that Church teaching was observed or ignored.

4. The Attitudes of the Old French Poets to the Merchant.

a) The merchant in non-didactic literature.

As the social status of the merchant improved, so he became a more familiar figure in contemporary literature of all kinds, including the didactic works.

The role of the merchant or bourgeois in Old French literature has been the subject of some important studies⁽²⁹⁾ which deal with a portrait of the merchant as it emerges from the different literary genres. My study will deal chiefly with the merchant in the didactic works. I shall later consider his role as a secondary character in the courtly romances in Part II. Nevertheless I shall first briefly summarize the findings of the major studies when they are relevant to my study.

Schilperoort considers the merchant in the following genres: "Les drames liturgiques, les chansons de geste, les romans d'aventure, les fabliaux, la poésie lyrique, les moralistes."⁽³⁰⁾ On the whole, the merchant plays a very small role in the first three categories.

The fabliaux, however, are notably "anti-bourgeois and anti-capitalist"⁽³¹⁾ the merchant being often the villain of the piece, ridiculed by the poet. Schilperoort defines his role as: "le riche bourgeois destiné à être cocu pendant qu'il est en voyage pour ses affaires."⁽³²⁾ The aim of the fabliaux is, however, to be "contes à rire"⁽³³⁾ so that there is no serious appraisal of the merchant's social function.

Midway between the fabliaux and the didactic poems proper comes a category of works which belong to different types but share in common their provenance, the town. I refer specifically to the literature which was produced in Arras in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries. This includes satirical ridiculing of merchants and powerful bourgeois in the plays of Adam de la Halle and Jean Bodel⁽³⁴⁾. There are also the short pseudo-moralistic or satirical works which constitute bitter personal attack of those privileged bourgeois who successfully manage tax evasion⁽³⁵⁾. In these poems, however, the moral issues are submerged beneath personal attack. This is not Church condemnation of fraud or dishonesty. It is not the protest of one social class against the abuses in another estate. The poems are personal statements by humble town-dwellers who complain of the

dishonesty of the powerful whose wealth and position have enabled them to abuse their privileges. There is no discussion on the ethics of commerce or the social role of the merchant as such, merely the cries of injustice voiced by the tax-paying citizens against the rich, corrupt patriciate. These works cannot, therefore, be considered truly didactic⁽³⁶⁾.

To the above group of poems, we might add a series of short works which claim no didactic or satirical intent: works which speak of artisans and merchants and which consider them in a positive and favourable light, unlike the moralists. A poem such as the Dit des Marchéans by Phelippot is an apology for the merchant which sings his praises⁽³⁷⁾.

The poet believes that one should respect the merchant above any other social class:

Je di c'on doit les marchéanz
 Deseur toute gent honorer;
 Quar il vont par terre et par mer
 Et en maint estrange païs
 Por querre lain~~et~~ et vair et gris.
 (ll. 12-16)

The poet, Phelippot then shows how the merchant has a social usefulness and how other social types depend on him. He claims that the Church was set up by merchants, that the nobility owe to them the luxury goods which symbolise their high rank. Moreover the rich insignia of Church prelates derive from mercantile toil:

Sainte Yglise premierement
 Fu par marchéanz establee,
 Et sachiez que Chevalerie
 Doivent marchéanz tenir chiers
 Qu'il amainent les bons destriers
 A Laingni, a Bar, a Provins.
 Si i a marchéanz de vins,
 De blé, de sel et de harenc,
 Et de soie, et d'or et d'argent,
 Et de pierres qui bones sont.
 (ll. 22-31)

Et riches croces à evesques,
 A abez et à archevesques,
 Crucefiz et ymagerie
 D'argent et d'yvuire entaillie.
 (ll. 71-74)

The poet asks God to protect merchants from the perilous seas and from all misadventure. Phelippot, at the end of his work, makes no secret of the fact that he expects reward from certain merchants in return for such lavish compliments:

Se Dieu plest, je m'enroberai
Et aus marcheanz conterai
Des diz noviaus si liement
Qu'il me donront de lor argent.
Que Jhesucrist, li Filz Marie,
Doinst aux marcheanz bone vie.
(ll. 163-68)

It is evident that one cannot take this poet's views on merchants very seriously.

Thus far we see that the merchant of literature is often a figure of fun, mildly so in the courtly works (see my Chapter Five, section A, 4, b), violently so in the fabliaux. In the satirical works from Arras he is not morally reprehensible even if his wealth is established by huge commercial profits. Yet he is roundly attacked when he cheats over taxes. In such works we see the merchant personalised and often named. Finally, the merchant may appear as a paragon of all the virtues and as social benefactor to someone who is certainly not disinterested, but rather hoping for material reward for his flattery. The next question must be how does the merchant appear in the didactic works proper?

b) The merchant in the didactic works.

Although the merchant appears consistently in medieval Latin estates literature⁽³⁸⁾, he does not have a clearly defined place in the Old French works. Making distinction between the merchant and the usurer, we find that the former does not figure at all in the works of Guiot de Provins, Hugues de Berzé, Helinand, Guillaume le Clerc or in the Roman de Carité of the Reclus de Moilliens, where these works give us a description of the social estates. If, however, we treat the usurer as an extension of the merchant, counting him as a social type, we see that every post has a comment

to make on him. Indeed it is difficult to separate the merchant from the usurer in these poems⁽³⁹⁾. The poets who wish to criticize the merchant find the most obvious way to do this was to equate him with the usurer. They thus transform him into an evil moral type or social pervert, rather than treating him as a social type like the peasant or knight. The distinction is observed by the more discerning poets and also by those who appear to have knowledge of commerce albeit at second hand.

Who then are the poets who turn their attention to the merchant and include him as a member of society? They are mostly the poets of the later thirteenth century such as Robert le Clerc (Vers de la Mort, c. 1280), Rutebeuf and Jean de Meung (Roman de la Rose), also authors of short poems such as C'est li Mariages des Filles au Diable. However the work which devotes most care and detail to the merchant class is that of Etienne de Fougères, Le Livre des Manières, the earliest Old French estates poem. One may perhaps explain this by remarking that this moralist was bishop of Rennes, presumably residing in that city and, therefore, in close contact with its commercial activity. This is also the case of other town poets, Robert le Clerc of Arras and Rutebeuf of Paris. A more likely reason for the inclusion of the merchant in Etienne de Fougères' social review is not that the poet is noting personal observations, but rather acting as spokesman for the Church which had at this time much to say on the ethics of trade⁽⁴⁰⁾.

Thus far in my study of the social types, we have seen that the Old French didactic poets attacked only the vices and shortcomings of the different social categories. They accepted "a priori" their position and usefulness in society when they achieved their ideal; they complained when the representatives of the estates abused their calling. As to the merchants, there is no place for them within the traditional tripartite division of society presented in this literature. Thus a different approach to the merchants is taken by some poets. Before they can attack the vices to which

this social type, like any other, was victim, they must first situate the merchant in the social order. Do they dismiss him as being a self-interested parasite who lives for easy profit and renders no service? Or are they able to justify his role in society? On the whole the latter is the case, although since the poets felt the need to justify the merchant in society this would appear to indicate some debate about his social usefulness.

i. Justification of the Merchant.

Etienne de Fougères clearly does not begrudge the merchant his profits. He admits that a man may earn his living by trade, but he warns against any dishonesty in commercial transactions:

S'il vet en France ou en Espagne,
Et il aport quanque bargaigne,
Bien deit vivre de sa gaine;
Mes tricherie n'i ateigne.
(Livre des Manières: ll. 813-816)

A similarly tolerant attitude towards the merchant occurs in Miserere by the Reclus de Moiliens (c. 1200). In his review of the estates, he lists the clergy, the knight and the "hom qui fait labour manier", all of whom, he says, perform a useful and necessary function, earning their living honestly. Then, almost as an afterthought, he asks rhetorically whether he would deny the merchant his daily bread⁽⁴¹⁾:

Toil je dont pain au markeant?
(Stanza CLVII, line 3)

The reply is negative; the merchant suffers in his work, and therefore deserves^{his} reward:

Naie; n'en soit pas en esfrois.
Il sueffre les caus et les frois;
Prengre dou pain; je li creant.
(Stanza CLVII, ll. 4-6)

In his other didactic work, the Roman de Carité, this same poet does not include the merchant. He speaks of various grades of the Church hierarchy, of king and of the "peuple menu". However his attitude towards merchants

is indicated in his use of commercial terminology in a metaphorical sense, when he describes charity personified as being honest and shrewd merchant (Stanza CLVII, ll, 1-5). Charity is portrayed as an ideal merchant, but the choice of a merchant to represent this virtue seems to prove that no stigma attached to the profession in this poet's mind.

One cannot, however, draw the same conclusions from a similar instance in the Poème Moral: An honest merchant is the hero of an exemplary tale which the poet entitles "D'un saintisme marchant". In addition to being honest, this generous merchant was charitable with his great wealth: (Stanzas 620, 621). Pasnutius, the preacher, urged him to abandon all his wealth and to live perfectly. The merchant did not hesitate to do as the preacher asked (Stanza 624). This is the only mention of merchants in the Poème Moral, so one has to deduce the poet's attitude on slender evidence. By choosing a merchant as an exemplary figure the poet seems not to condemn merchants in general. However, one cannot affirm this with any certainty, because the hero of another exemplary tale is a "jongleur", and yet the author of this work thoroughly disapproves of "jongleurs" in general (see Section C, 3).

The above examples were all taken from the works of Churchmen whom one might suppose to be the severest critics of commercial profits. They do not, however, attack commerce nor do they view profit unfavourably. They apparently consider that the merchant has a use in society, even though his usefulness might not be so obvious as that of any traditional estate.

ii. The merchant and covetousness.

The merchant may be held to be a respectable member of society, but like all other social types he has his faults. One is his covetousness, a vice he shares with many other social types, as we have seen⁽⁴²⁾.

Etienne de Fougères sees the temptations open to the merchant and so urges him not to be covetous. The price of his wares should correspond to

their value. This is evidently a reflection of Church teaching on the just price:

S'il aporte marchandise
 Devers Garmaise ou devers Pise
 Segont l'achat en seit la prise;
 Que n'i ateine coveistisse.
 (Livre des Manières: ll. 809-12)

Some Old French didactic poets demonstrate a harsher attitude to merchants and to commerce. Guillaume le Clerc in his Besant de Dieu excludes the merchant from his review of the three estates. However, early in his work, when enumerating the reasons for which men are loth to leave this world, he cites the merchant, as being very attached to material things:

Li uns dit qu'il ad femme prise,
 Li autres que marcheandise
 A faite ou il l'estuet aler
 Por saveir e por esprover
 Que il i porra gaainer.
 (ll. 25-29)

This is not an attack on merchants in general, but on all who are imprisoned in this world by material considerations. This could apply to all classes, and indeed Guillaume le Clerc gives examples of other social types guilty of similar greed for worldly things.

The linking of the merchant and covetousness is more frequently made in the late thirteenth century works. For example, in the Sermon en Vers, the poet puts merchants outside the three estates, and speaks of the "menestraus". Of traders, he says that they go to great pains to acquire merchandise for sale at a high price. The poet accuses them of selling God⁽⁴³⁾, thereby implying possibly that they trade dishonestly and ignore justice:

Vus en meinte guise
 Querez marchandise,
 Dunt vus vus tûez;
 E tel, pur cher vendre
 E plus aver prendre,
 Deu meimes vendez.
 (Stanza LXXV)

Furthermore, says the poet, they blaspheme as they attempt to sell their

goods: they swear by Jesus Christ that their product is worth its high price:

Vus pur un dener
 U maille a gainer
 Jurez folement
 Le sanc Jhesu Crist
 E la char k'il prist
 Pur saver la gent.
 (Stanza LXXVI)

Jean de Meung is perhaps least tolerant towards the merchants. He says all are obsessed with gain, without respite from their burning covetousness. He describes the suffering of the greedy trader who becomes the feverish and insatiable miser:

Et si rest voirs, cui qu'il desplese,
 nul marchaant ne vit a ese,
 car son queur a mis en tel guerre
 qu'il art touz vis de plus aquerre
 ne ja n'avra assez aquis;
 si crient perdre l'avoir aquis
 et queurt après le remanant,
 donc ja ne se verra tenant,
 car de riens desirrier n'a tel
 conme d'aquerre autrui chatel.
 Enprise a merveilleuse peine,
 il bee a boivre toute Seine,
 donc ja tant boivre ne pourra
 que toujours plus en demourra.
 c'est la destrece, c'est l'ardure,
 c'est l'angoisse qui toujours dure,
 c'est la douleur, c'est la bataille
 qui li detranche la coraille
 et le destraint en tel default:
 quant plus aquiert, plus li default.

(Roman de la Rose: ll. 5041-60; ed. Lecoy, Vol. I)

We here see the moral type, the evil rich man, cast in a social role.

Inevitably the didactic poets find more to reproach the merchant with than rapacity for profit. His covetousness, they allege, is translated into the social malpractice of fraud.

iii. The merchant and fraud.

Etienne de Fougères warns the merchant against cheating, and gives concrete examples to illustrate his point: he advises the merchant not to lie about his goods:

Ne vende pas eive por vin,
 Pel de livre por de conin,
 Ne foïne por cenbelin,
 Fust de pleine por mazelin.
 (Livre des Manières: ll. 817-20)

Ne deit jurer por son mers vendre,
 (line 825)

In the poem C'est li Mariages des Filles au Diable, the poet claims, like so many others, that times are bad and that all men are corrupt. (Jubinal, Nouveau Recueil, Vol. I, page 283). The merchant receives his share of censure and is associated with trickery.

Et en marcheans tricherie,
 (Jubinal, N.R., vol. I, page 284)

Similarly Rutebeuf accuses merchants of lying about their wares, and so cheating the customers:

Or i a gent d'autres manieres
 Qui de vendre sont coustumieres
 De choses plus de cinq cens paires
 Qui sont au monde necessaires.
 Je vous di bien veraïement
 Il font maint mauvés serement
 Et si jurent que lor denrees
 Sont et bones et esmerees
 Tel foiz que c'est mençonge pure;
 (L'Etat du Monde; ll. 121-129
 Vol. I, page 387 .

On the whole, the poets have little to say about the merchant proper. When he is considered as a social type he is not unduly attacked. He is the victim of covetousness, but no more than other social types in the eyes of the moralists. Those who pause to consider his place in society conclude that he has a useful service to perform and would not deny him his profit if honestly gained.

B. The Usurer.

With the growth of the towns and the increase in the number of merchants, money played a larger part in commerce. This in turn led to the multiplication of usurers and money-changers in the towns. During the thirteenth century, towns attracted merchants from other countries, and there came from Italy

those men well-versed in the financial transactions of the Lombardy banks.

They encouraged the same practices in Northern France. They were chiefly money-changers, but the public were quick to confuse them with usurers and so condemn them. This confusion is to be found also in Old French literature.

1. Usury in the Old French didactic works.

a) Confusion between the Merchant and the Usurer.

We saw in the preceding section how most poets did not condemn commerce. Some poets, however, seemed unable to dissociate the merchant from the usurer. When that is so, the picture of the merchant becomes very different from the tolerant views hitherto expressed. There is ample evidence of the connection between the two types in the minds of the poets: Rutebeuf calls dishonest trading, usury:

Fausse marcheandise est ^ucoverte d'usure,
(De la Vie du Monde: vol. I, p. 400, l. 9)

Similarly in the work, C'est li Mariages des Filles au Diable, we read that commerce comes close to usury, and, as the poet continues, dishonest trading is equated with usury:

Marcheandise n'est pas pure,
Assez chevauche pres d'Usure;
Quant vient le tens, contre la loi
Si serjant ont fausse mesure:
L'un ment et l'autre se parjure:
Il n'i a loiauté ne foi.
Envieus sont, d'amour ont poi;
S'il vendent dras, c'est à requoi,
Sans clarté, a pou d'ouverture.
(Jubinal, N.R. I, page 286)

Again, in Le Dit Moniot de Fortune⁽⁴⁴⁾, the poet equates the cheating merchant with the usurer. By offering false weights and measures he becomes a criminal and will one day pay for his wrong-doing:

Usurier marcheant, faus sanz vraie creance,
Qui faus pois, fausses aunes avez, fausse balance,
Fortune, qui vous a mis en pou de bonbance,
Cele vous appareille honte et grant mescheance.
(Stanza 21, page 198)

Robert le Clerc, who lived in the thriving commercial centre, Arras⁽⁴⁵⁾,

also equates merchants with usurers; when describing usurers, he calls them merchants: they rob men of all they have, and should surrender their ill-gotten gains:

Marceant par estain roié
 Sont tot cil qui sont avoié
 A autrui reuber dusqu'es ners.
 S'il voelent estre ravoïé,
 Rengent mal aquest estoié!
 S'a ten avoir veus estre sers
 Et ne veus rendre autrui depers,
 Crois ne t'ert escus ne haubers.
 (Vers de la Mort: Stanza 161)

Elsewhere this poet connects dishonest trading with usury, and makes no attempt to differentiate between them:

Mors, qui saroit con tu es sure,
 Et con petit cis siecles dure,
 Peu priserait çou qui nos blece;
 C'est mespesers, fausse mesure,
 Mesauners, forconters, usure:
 Pesme est li fins de tel rikece.
 Marcaandise a çou s'adrece.
 Li pluisor en font fausse trece.
 Gloutenie, orgoes et luxure
 Ont fait faire une forterece;
 Si sanle a cascun grant prouece,
 Quant il i puet avoir mesure.
 (Stanza 51)

The portrayal of fraud as usurious is also to be found in the work of a poet who, although writing early in the period I am studying, is usually more discerning, Etienne de Fougères. He maintains that any deception involving the quality of goods for sale is tantamount to usury.

Qui vaudront VII livres a peine,
 Mé de droe por mé de aveine,
 Anone porrie por saine,
 Dras de borre por dras de laine.
 (Livre des Manières: ll. 917-20)

The seller claims that this is not usury. Etienne refutes this and accuses the culprit of doing the devil's work:

Ice ne tient il pas a jable,
 Ainz dit que c'est un vençon raisnable;
 Mes je sai bien que li diable
 Li fet acreire iceste fable.
 (ll. 925-28)

b) Definitions of Usury as found in Old French literature.

We have seen that dishonest trading has been treated by some poets. Although this is an inaccurate view of usury, it would certainly appear that the term covered a far wider range of activities than it does today. G. Borns⁽⁴⁶⁾ puts it thus: "usurier n'a pas exactement le même sens qu'en français moderne: usure et ses dérivés s'appliquent au moyen âge à toute action de prêter à l'intérêt, quel qu'en soit le taux. Il est bien connu que cette activité était alors totalement interdite, et le mot usurier n'est donc pas moins réprobateur que de nos jours."

The thirteenth century prose work, La Somme le Roi (date 1279) of Frère Laurent⁽⁴⁷⁾, confessor to Philippe le Hardi, deals with usury under the heading of avarice. Here he distinguishes seven kinds of usurer. He first mentions the usurers who charge high interest on loans. Secondly, a more subtle form of usury is practised when a man lends money to someone in need. Although no interest is openly demanded, the lender expects to receive gifts and services from the borrower. Others, too, are usurers who inherit goods obtained by usury, and who retain them instead of returning them to their lawful owner. Other men again do not practise usury themselves but employ usurers, and, therefore, they, too, are guilty of wrongdoing. The fifth kind of usurer is the merchant who arranges a system of deferred payment. Buying goods cheaply to sell them at a high price when supply is scarce is a form of usury according to Frère Laurent. Finally, there are those who, having made a loan, afterwards use their position as an excuse to exploit their debtors.

It is interesting to note that some of the accusations of usury are directed against practices considered quite acceptable in modern commerce, such as selling goods at a higher price when supply is limited. That this should be considered usurious in the Old French period explains how merchants and usurers are so closely connected in the minds of some didactic writers. We shall find that the Old French poets do not study usury in

such detail as does Frère Laurent. Apart from the linking of fraud with usury already mentioned above, the didactic poets, for the most part, are not interested by the workings of usury and its different forms. They are more concerned with usury as a moral issue, and it is this aspect we shall consider more fully. Firstly I shall outline the attitudes of the Church with regard to usury, so that the opinions of the moralising poets may be compared with those held by canonists and theologians of the day.

2. Church Teaching on Usury.

The history of Church teaching on usury is one of unequivocal condemnation. The Bible speaks out against the practice of demanding interest on a loan in such texts as Exodus 22: 25; Deuteronomy 23: 19-20; Luke 6: 34-35⁽⁴⁸⁾. The teaching of the early Church fathers echoes the biblical views⁽⁴⁹⁾. On a practical level the early Church councils issued bans on the taking of interest which applied initially to the clergy and from 800 A.D. onwards to the laity as well⁽⁵⁰⁾. There was little development in Church teaching on usury up to and including Gratian. All profits derived from interest were considered usurious and therefore illegal.

From the eleventh century onwards usury became much discussed so that the Church reconsidered the issues involved. This arose directly from increasing economic activity⁽⁵¹⁾. In the eleventh century, usury came to be regarded as a sin against justice. The second Lateran council of 1139 (canon 13)⁽⁵²⁾ prohibited its practice, and so offered some protection to those who were exploited by unscrupulous moneylenders. This prohibition was not, claim historians, an attempt to curb economic expansion⁽⁵³⁾. The third Lateran council of 1179 (canon 25) then reinforced the earlier prohibition. J.T. Noonan⁽⁵⁴⁾ assesses the Church's stand on usury at the end of the twelfth century thus: "(1) Usury is whatever is demanded in return in a loan beyond the loaned good itself; (2) the taking of usury is a sin prohibited by the Old and New Testaments; (3) the very hope of

a return beyond the good itself is sinful; (4) usuries must be restored in full to their true owner; (5) higher prices for credit sales are implicit usury."

This apparently rigorist teaching, especially the two relevant canons of the Lateran councils, received more relaxed interpretation as time went on, and commerce expanded. It became evident that interest was required in commercial transactions as of necessity. Distinctions were, therefore, made between the two basic kinds of borrowing which were practised in the Middle Ages. Firstly there was distress borrowing, when a person in financial distress would apply to a moneylender for a loan secured on land. The risk to the lender was great and the interest demanded correspondingly high. Secondly there was commercial borrowing where merchants borrowed from banking companies. The risk was small, and being regarded as an investment, the interest demanded on the loan was low⁽⁵⁵⁾. Gradually the latter form of loan and interest became exempted from the laws on usury. This first case, however, was still considered usurious and therefore sinful. By the end of the twelfth century the canonists were "narrowing the meaning of usury until for all practical purposes it meant an exorbitant, i.e. an unjust charge, for lending money, which was a serious sin."⁽⁵⁶⁾

According to Gilchrist⁽⁵⁷⁾, the canonists and theologians were concerned with making exceptions to the "law of usury". In other words, the teaching did not basically change, but received some modification. For example Lateran III was less rigorous than Lateran II since it referred only to notorious usurers⁽⁵⁸⁾, thus providing a loophole for many discreet usurers. The Church, not unaware that usury continued to be practised, was itself involved in the practice of interest loans and turned a blind eye⁽⁵⁹⁾. This applied, too, to the secular rulers who gave tacit consent to the usurious practices from which they benefited.

Thus by the middle of the thirteenth century several exceptions to the

law on usury had been accepted so that loans with interest indirectly made⁽⁶⁰⁾ encountered less opposition from the canonists.

The theologians were more rigorist in their approach than the canonists, being more concerned with the moral issues and the confessional⁽⁶¹⁾.

Theologians clung to the premise that money is not a saleable object and cannot be used to make a profit. Hence St. Thomas Aquinas's main argument against usury is that to loan money at interest is to separate the use of money and the substance of money. Thomas Aquinas argued that the use of money was its substance, so that the lender was in fact either selling something which did not exist or was selling the same thing twice. This, he concluded, was against natural justice. (De Malo, Q.13, art. 4c)⁽⁶²⁾

Although Thomas Aquinas admitted interest exceptionally, the principle of interest was not admitted formally until the early fourteenth century. Thus usury was still regarded as a sin against justice at the time the Old French poets were writing.

One other important notion as regards Church teaching on usury was the doctrine of intention, universally preached in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. This bore relevance to usury and particularly to the view of it held by theologians. Thus it was agreed that the intention to defraud, or the intention of reclaiming more than the original loan was equal in sin to the deeds themselves and accounted as usurious, hence sinful, and must accordingly be condemned. This thesis served to distinguish between a personal loan and a business transaction, the former never being made in the expectation of a return greater than the original sum.

We may finally resume the attitudes of the Church towards usury as follows: the Church in the Middle Ages was opposed to usury in any form as it always had been. On the initiative of the canonists certain exceptions to the general rule were admitted and tacitly accepted. Commercial transactions necessitated some form of loan at interest. Quite different was a person to person loan where the majority of authorities, and particularly

the theologians, consistently affirmed that interest should not be demanded or expected. If it were, a sin was committed, a sin against justice.

3. Attitudes to Usurers in the Old French Didactic Poems.

a) The Usurer and Society.

The usurer in the Old French didactic poems is both a social type and a moral type. As a social type he is a "bourgeois". Usury was also widely practised by Jews, but, understandably, it is to the Christian usurers that the moralists address their criticisms and laments.

The poet of C'est li Mariages des Filles au Diable declares:

Usure est as bourgeois amie,
(Jubinal, N.R., Vol. I, page 284)

Rutebeuf, addressing the bourgeois, accuses them of usurious practices:

Je sai toute votre atendue.
Dou bleif ameiz la grant vendue,
Et chier vendre de ci au tans
Seur lettre ou seur plege ou seur nans,
Vil acheteir et vendre chier
Et uzerier et gent trichier
Et faire d'un deable deus,
Por ce que enfers est trop seux.
(La Nouvelle Complainte d'Outremer, ll. 297-304,
Vol. I, page 507)

For this poet the bourgeois combines the fraudulent merchant with the evil usurer. Rutebeuf counts him a usurer not only because he practises deferred payments, but also because he buys cheaply to sell dear with which one may compare the different forms of usury listed in La Somme le Roi (my pages 366-7).

In the opinion of Etienne de Fougères, the bourgeois was not necessarily an evil usurer. He considers that his profits may be legitimate and, provided he makes good use of them by giving alms, the bourgeois may be regarded as a respectable citizen:

Borzeis deit aler a iglise
Et escoter le Dé servise.
De sa gain, de sa conquise,
De sa plus leial menantise
Deit faire au cors Dé offerende.
Que Dex a l'arme la li rende;
Se il a fet dom Dé offende,
Par aumones en face amende.
(Livre des Manières: ll. 873-880)

We know that Etienne is not suggesting that alms should be given from usurious profits because he later states quite categorically that alms cannot atone for usury (my Chapter Two, section A, 8, c, vi). He is, therefore referring to what he considers to be honestly earned income, "leial menantise".

The poet of C'est li Mariages.... also urges the bourgeois to adopt an honourable way of life. He evidently warns the bourgeois of the spiritual dangers of usury since he advises him to lend his wealth to the needy. He must expect no repayment on earth since that will come from God. Thus the lender should not only refrain from exacting interest on his loan, but should not even seek the refund of the loan⁽⁶³⁾.

Bourjois aient les cuers piteus,
 Pour Dieu present as diseteus:
 C'est cil qui tout emprunte et rent.
 (Jubinal, N.R.I., page 288)

b) Varieties of usurer.

The Old French poets do not examine closely usury as a social malpractice. They are far less aware of the different kinds of usurer than was Frère Laurent (see pages 366-7 above). One or two, however, select specific aspects of usury.

In his Bible, Guiot de Provins claims, long before Frère Laurent, that those who protect or employ usurers are themselves guilty of usury. Indeed, he states, such employers are more blameworthy than those who actually practise it.

Mais sil qui les juifs retiennent
 Et qui les usures maintiennent
 Cudent, espoir, que Deus n'ait voiet.
 Assez creantet qui outroie,
 et assez escorche qui tient!
 Sachiez que sil qui la maintient
 Est sire et maistre de l'usure;
 et si, n'ait point de couverture,
 li juif et li usurier
 sont li deciple et li ovrier.
 (ll. 523-32)

In this instance Guiot does not aim at the bourgeois who practised usury.

He considers that usury was the province of the Jews. Those he accuses of patronising usurers are the nobles, a not unfounded accusation, since they did rely greatly on the moneylenders⁽⁶⁴⁾.

Similarly, in the Vers de la Mort, Robert le Clerc attributes to the Count of Arras the responsibility for exterminating the odious practice of usury which he describes as the root of all evil.

Selonc Diu, devés traveillier,
K'usure puissiés escillier,
Dont on voit tous les maus venir.
(Stanza 152, ll. 1-3)

The count, apparently, does not fulfil this duty. Indeed the poet suggests that there is collusion between the count and the usurers with the former enjoying usurious profits:

Mais tant sont souëf orillier
D'argent li desnombré millier
Qui vos tauront le souvenir.
(Stanza 152, ll. 4-6)

The particular malpractice singled out by some poets is deferred payment or credit sales, whereby the seller will agree that an article may be paid for at some future date, with the buyer paying extra for the time lapse. Thus the final price will greatly exceed the original price of the goods. This practice is described in great detail by Etienne de Fougères, and totally condemned⁽⁶⁵⁾. Like Frère Laurent, a hundred years later, he calls it usury:

Ne deit *jurser por son mens vendre*
Ne sorfeire por terme atendre,
Fors tant com pout maintenant prendre;
Quar ce sereit usure rendre.
(Livre des Manières: ll. 825-28)

By allowing the buyer to pay at some future date, the merchant obviously intends to exact more from his client. The buyer who believes that he has struck an advantageous bargain will in fact be bled:

E tel i quide gaaignier
Qui mioz en porreit barguinier,
Et tel s'espeire bien saignier
Qui son destre oil se fet sainier.
(ll. 829-32)

However the cunning merchant can be thwarted by an equally cunning client. As an example, Etienne says that the buyer might seduce his creditor's wife or daughter and so gain her support in the matter.

Il guide aveir chatel ou monte,
 Mes cil li deffet moult son conte;
 Encor li fet il meire honte,
 Sa fame ou sa file li monte.
 (ll. 837-40)

The unsuspecting husband does not mind his wife being in the client's company because he believes that she is making him redeem his debt (ll. 841-45). The client meanwhile is using the wife by giving her worthless goods, hoping to make his credit last and to delay the payment still further:

Mes li damage en est moult meire;
 Dras vriez si done l'an treis peire,
 Por la quitance plus atreire:
 (ll. 846-48)

Completely fooled by these delaying tactics, the husband has a costly bargain:

Por un vriez mantel qu'i li done
 Li fous de creire s'abandone.
 Male denrée, c'il n'en sone,
 Que li coste trop, est el bone?
 (ll. 849-52)

The merchant's long suffering and the losses he sustains are, in Etienne's opinion, punishment enough for his usurious activities. He suffers as if he were doing penance (ll. 853-56). Etienne does not forget the part played by the unfaithful wife, and affirms that she should be severely punished.

Etienne de Fougères has, in this instance, chosen an unusual method of deterring would-be usurers. He does not moralise or condemn, but shows that usury is not necessarily profitable. It is open to abuse by unscrupulous clients so that the seller is the eventual loser. Such preaching shows great psychological insight. No doubt the poet considers that a profit-hungry merchant would be unimpressed by moral tenets. He, therefore, adopts a more practical approach and aims at what the merchant holds dearest, his profits. He attempts to show that ill-earned interest might not finally result.

Later in his work, when speaking of the bourgeois, Etienne returns to

the subject of deferred payment:

Maint i' a qui rien ne reüse
 Et qui s'entente illoc adüse
 Et por ce maint prodome russe.
 Encore est peis qu'il s'encasu.
 (ll. 893-96)

Many men violate an unspoken agreement, and take advantage of innocent clients. Instead of fixing a rate of interest, the seller claims that his intentions are charitable. Therefore he urges the buyer to take his goods immediately and to pay at some unspecified future date. When the time comes for the client to pay, the price may well have soared:

Ne fis pas fet convenant,
 Mes charité par avenant;
 Qui la me fet, prenc meintenant
 D'ome que voi bien contenant.
 Quan le povre a deserité,
 Si dit qu'il la fit charité;
 Miuz poreit dire chanité,
 S'il voleit dire verité.
 (ll. 897-904)

Etienne criticizes this practice of apparent mutual trust which is inevitably betrayed. The seller's intentions never were charitable, and the eventual high price being no accident this was a case of usury. Etienne then makes a rather novel statement. Although the taking of any interest whatsoever was forbidden, Etienne openly advocates the taking of interest by agreement, rather than by the underhand means of deferred payment. Thus the buyer need not pay immediately, but the sum to be paid would be agreed in advance so that there was no deception:

Miuz vodroi ge qu'a dreit conte
 FeEst covenant de la monte;
 Quar covenant neient ne monte,
 Mes le prendre est pechié et honte.
 (ll. 905-908)

This Churchman sees the need for interest in certain commercial transactions and condones it when there is mutual agreement between the two parties. What he unequivocally condemns is the intention to deceive, and he thus echoes contemporary theological ideas. To demand interest from an unsuspecting

client after the lender has advertised his charitable intentions, Etienne finds unforgivable and sinful.

Etienne refers briefly to the rate of interest exacted and condemns exorbitant charges which he calls hideous usury. He gives an example:

Qui dez pur MI fet il preste
 Usure est et trop laide queste,
 Et trop i a lede conqueste,
 Mes a noalz fere ne ceste.
 (ll. 909-12)

Here, the rate of interest is too high and, therefore, unjust:

Quar vendra vos taus IIII mars
 Por deiz livres peseiz et ars
 De si qu'a la feste saint Mars,
 Que de terme ne seit eschars
 (ll. 913-16)

Deferred payment appears to be the form of usury most commonly in use. It is certainly the practice most often referred to by the didactic poets. Guiot de Provins mentions it in his Bible, in connection with provosts and secular canons:

Achater sevent et revendre,
 et les termes molt bien atendre,
 et la bone vante de blief;
 (ll. 967-69)

Guiot does not mince his words when speaking of this practice:

Ja Deus n'arait de ceaus merci
 qui font teil oeuvre et teille ordure,
 C'est fine puant usure.
 (ll. 976-78)

Rutebeuf also describes this form of usury in association with evil merchants:

Si vendent a terme, et usure
 Vient tantost et termoierie
 Qui sont de privee mesnie;
 Lors est li termes achatez
 Et plus cher venduz li chatez.
 (L'Etat du Monde: ll. 130-134, Vol. I, p. 387)

Robert le Clerc refers to the practice with ironic effect. He threatens usurers with the dire consequences which death will bring. Then the arranger of deferred payment will have to settle his account with God. With a play on words, the poet says that God will grant no deferment:

Bien se doivent cil esmaier
 Ki font par fausse coureture
 De lor marcaandise usure
 Par vendre a un an a paier.
 Tels truffes estevra laier,
 S'a Diu se voelent apaier,
 Au jour dont li fins ert tant sure,
 U sans fin seront estraier,
 U il aront, sans delaier,
 Faim et soif et caut et froidure.

(Vers de la Mort: Stanza X, ll. 3-12)

In spite of slight relaxation in the attitude of the Church, particularly of the canonists, towards commercial loans with interest, we note that it is not the late thirteenth century poets like Rutebeuf and Robert le Clerc who display the greatest tolerance to moneylending or credit-giving merchants. Etienne de Fougères's opinion remains the most tolerant and practical, and his approach to the subject is by far the most imaginative and discerning.

The actual workings of usury with details of interest and the various usurious practices were not the main concern of the didactic poets. They did not consider the interest-taking merchant as a member of society. Once connected with usury, he was more of a moral type than a social one. For the poets, usury was not a social activity which could be well or badly exercised, but simply a sin. It is this aspect of the usurer and of usury which predominates in the didactic works.

c) The Usurer as moral type.

In the didactic poems, the usurer is unequivocally condemned with unmistakable hatred and contempt. There was no defence for the usurer. Commerce could be honestly practised, but usury had no place in society and should be extirpated. To express such sentiments the poets have recourse to many of the anti-wealth themes encountered in my first two chapters.

It is not surprising that the usurer should be greatly despised. The poets had Church teaching to draw upon in order to express the contemporary attitudes to the usurer. Moreover they had personal observation to reinforce their opinions. Any contact with usurers would be made in times of distress

if it were not on a commercial basis. Therefore anyone who had had to resort to greedy moneylenders or unscrupulous merchants would be likely to nurture a deep resentment of his treatment at their hands. Town poets would inevitably have witnessed such cases of hardship even if they had not experienced anything of the kind themselves⁽⁶⁶⁾.

i. Usury as a sin.

Usury is described as a sin by the didactic poets, either as a sin in itself or as a sin derived from avarice. Consequently the usurer is associated with other sinners, such as thieves and even murderers.

For Guillaume le Clerc (Besant de Dieu) usury has been sent us by the Devil. God intended man to lend to his fellow man without hope of return or interest. The Devil countered this by introducing the practice of loan-making:

Quant deus sema que l'on prestast
 A som prosme e q'om li aidast
 Quant il serreit en poverte,
 En mesaise e en grant chierete:
 Encontre ceo sema diable
 Usure e le prester a gable
 E les presenz al usurier
 Por faire la dette chargier
 Tant q'aquiter ne se peust
 L'ome qui emprunte eust.
 (ll. 1747-56)

The Poème Moral classes usurers as a type of sinner, along with liars, tricksters, murderers, thieves, all of whom are driven by avarice⁽⁶⁷⁾:

Avarice at issi serjans cui elle guie:
 Parjurement, menchongne, usure, tricherie,
 Musdre, rober, tollir, fasseteit, larrenie,
 Juner, voilhier, puor, laidesteit, vilonie.
 (Stanza 678)

Hugues de Berzé also classes usurers with thieves and murderers:

Si a d'autres pechiés assez
 Que je ne vos ai pas nommés
 Dont on se puet perdre ensement,
 Qui n'en vient a amendement.
 Li un de nous sont usurier,
 Li autre larron e. murdrier,
 Li autre sont plain de luxure.
 E li autre de desmesure..
 (Bible: ll. 773-80)

The connection often made between the usurer and the thief reflects the current theological teaching that usurious profits are stolen goods and that the usurious demanding of interest violates the eighth commandment⁽⁶⁸⁾.

This point is clearly made by the author of the Poème Moral:

A la foi, entrecessant li autre malfaitours,
 Mais li useriers robent et la nuit et le jour;
 Tot dormant, tollent il la povre gent le lour,
 Mais, voillant, en ynfer le rendront a dolour:
 (Stanza 939)

ii. The suffering of the usurer.

In their attack on the usurer, some poets remark how reviled such a person is by his fellow-men, by the whole of society, and how his wrong-doing will cause him life-long suffering. Such a man becomes a social pariah. This was truer of the past, says the poet of the Manuel des Pechés, who expresses his approval of the harsh treatment received formerly by usurers, when they were openly despised.

Jadis en une grant cité
 A peyne fut un userer trové,
 E ceoluy a nul deners prestast
 Qe primes ne luy jurast
 Qe a nul home cuntereit,
 Tant userer estre tenu haëit.
 Car ki tiel fust conu,
 Plus vil esteit qe nul Ju.
 Sa mesun fu dunc apelé
 La mesun al maufé;
 E quant qe a luy apendi,
 Vigne, e autre chose ausi,
 Tut fu tenu escomengé,
 Car el deable furent doné.
 La gent li mustrerent al dey,
 Pur ce qe il vesqui encuntre la ley;
 Pes en muster nel beisereit
 Nul plus qe si il gyus esteit;
 Ne hors de sa meson
 Feu ne portereit nul hom,
 Tant fu de tuz revili.
 (ll. 2861-81)

This is an interesting adaptation of the wellknown theme of the virtuous past. Here it is characterised not by the practice of virtue, but by the public and social attack on vice which succeeded in repressing such wrongs as usury.

Etienne de Fougères claims that this social rejection of the usurer still exists. People treat him as a pagan:

La gent le tiennent por paien
 Et le petit et li maien;
 Le forfet revient au deien,
 Si refet plor ne sei queien.
 (Livre des Manières: ll. 965-68)

Other poets equate the usurer with the evil rich man, the miser, whose lust for hoarded wealth causes him to inflict unnecessary suffering on himself as well as on others. According to Robert le Clerc, the miser starves himself so loth is he to spend any of his money. When possible he will eat at other people's houses and make a glutton of himself:

Useriers a plus d'un mehaing:
 En reubant, en morant de faim
 Sers et hom Antecri devient:
 De plate eue et de saue pain
 N'ose faire sen ventre plain:
 Et quant a grant convive vient,
 Bien fait quanqu'a glouton covient:
 Quant d'aler avant l'i sovient,
 Ses naces sere a l'une main
 Et de l'autre sen ventre tient:
 "Las!" fait il, "Qu'est ce qu'il m'avient?
 Que le me remplira demain?"
 (Vers de la Mort: Stanza CLVIII)

Later in this work, Robert le Clerc again takes up the theme of the miserlines of the usurer: The usurer never gives without thinking of the interest he can make. The poet warns him that such conduct arouses hatred in all men. None will pray for his soul. Because of his meanness he dare not pray to God to whom he is also repugnant:

Useriers n'a cuer d'otriier
 K'au rendre voelle estudiier.
 Quant plus dist on despote cose:
 "Né crois ne te puet neteier,
 Né nus ne doit por toi priier,"
 Tant est plus fort se borse close.
 Usure, qui por li oppose,
 Le tient si court, que dire n'ose
 Orison por Diu grassier.
 (Stanza CCV)

Jean de Meung likewise identifies the usurer with the worry-wracked and starving miser who cannot enjoy his wealth:

car usurier, bien le t'ailloche,
ne porroient pas estre riches,
ainz sunt tuit povre et soffroiteus,
tant sunt aver et covoitous.

(Roman de la Rose: ll. 5037-40.
Vol. I, ed. Lecoy)

iii. The usurer cursed by God.

The usurer's suffering is nothing compared to the torments that await him after death. Most poets make the point that usurers are excommunicates and damned by God, since they are wilfully guilty of a deadly sin. In this view, the poets are merely echoing the teaching of the Bible, and more recently the canons of the Lateran councils of 1139 and 1179 which declared the usurer an outcast of the Church, to be refused communion by priests and denied Christian burial.

Thibaud de Marly describes usurers as an excommunicate race who live by rapine and theft:

Gent escomenie qui maintenez usure,
Qui vivez de rapine, de tort et de tolture.
(Vers: ll. 545-46)

He goes on to say that they are accursed by God and all men (ll. 552-3), as does Guiot de Provins:

Donc est molt puans li mestiers,
Se savons nos, des usuriers,
que Nostre Sires les maudit
et Nostre Sires le nos dit.
(Bible: ll. 545-48)

Etienne de Fougères asks what will happen to the excommunicate usurer when he dies possessed of his ill-earned profits:

Et bien sai que ja n'en jorra;
Escommunger sovent s'ora.
Que fera, las! quant il morra,
Quant toz ce rendre ne porra?
(Livre des Manières: ll. 929-32)

All the didactic poets agree on the answer. He is damned, he will not see Heaven, and this commonplace about the usurer exists from the earliest works onwards⁽⁶⁹⁾. The poem Grant mal fist Adam lists those people who

will not be saved, and includes the usurer:

Ja huem pleins d'usure,
qui de Deu n'ad cure, . . .
(Stanza 105)

iv. Further consequences of the practice of usury.

Two poets mention an additional punishment for the practice of usury. In his Livre des Manières, Etienne de Fougères looks beyond the fate of the usurer himself and considers the lot of his offspring. The son will also pay for his father's sin⁽⁷⁰⁾:

Por la cope do pere aperte
Avient au fiz que il revertte,
Ainz qu'il meire, a grant poverte
Ou de son cors a leide perte.
(ll. 937-40)

He has been fed on the profits of a sinful activity so is firmly rooted in covetousness:

Noriz est de male viande;
Comme ainz pout, autretel demande;
Plus i cort tost que cerf en lande,
Quar coveitise le comande.
(ll. 941-44)

Etienne appeals to the paternal instinct of the usurer, urging him to avoid the damnation of his sons:

A vos effanz faites donc bien,
Que vos amez sor tote rien,
Qu'il ne meirgent comme paien
Et mis en terre comme chien.
(ll. 949-52)

These sentiments are echoed by Guiot de Provins in his Bible. The descendants of the usurer are cursed to the third generation:

Li secuns ou li tiers tout pert
des hoirs, iceu ne puet faillir,
per tout lou voit on avenir.
(ll. 552-54)

d) Expiation of usury.

When crit^{ic}icising the misdeeds of other social types, the poets merely exhort them to mend their ways and to serve God rather than money. Avarice

may have been a deadly sin, but few Old French didactic poets the errant clergy, for example, with the torments of Hell. They practical enough to advise a better conduct in future. In the person of the usurer, we are no longer dealing with a social miscreant, but with a moral sinner. For the usurer to become a respectable member of society, the measures needed are more drastic. To change his way of life does not suffice to erase his past wrongs. Nor can the usurer simply turn to God and pray for forgiveness. Robert le Clerc makes this point. As an excommunicate the usurer can derive no comfort from the Church, not even from confession:

Tout pekié sont vilain et ort:
 A celui plus haïr m'amort
 Qui l'ame met en le prison
 D'usure qui onques ne dort
 Tant aigrement sen seriant mort,
 Que l'erme de contrition,
 Juners, velliers en orison,
 Faire droite confession
 Ne li pueent doner confort.
 (Vers de la Mort: Stanza LXX)

Fasting, prayers and confession will not redeem the usurer. To Etienne de Fougères, not even alms will achieve this:

Quar si vos estes pris en ice,
 Que vos meingiez en ital vice,
 Ne vos vaudra rien sacrifice,
 Messe, aumosne, n'autre service.
 (Livre des Manières: ll. 957-60)

The Reclus de Moilliens also considers that alms will be of no avail to the man guilty of usury. Alms are acceptable only from good men. (See also Chapter Two, section A, 8, c).

Onkes Dieus ne torna se fache
 A aumosne o crime meslée.
 (Miserere: Stanza LXVIII, ll. 2-3)

The poet describes the hand of the sinful man as bloody, and speaks of the blood-stained hand of the usurer⁽⁷¹⁾:

Main sanglente a hom usurere.
 (Miserere: Stanza LXIX, line 7)

How then can the usurer obtain his salvation? The Old French moralists reply with one accord. He must make restitution. This is the only path for the repentant usurer, writes Etienne de Fougères:

A uns aune achaste et vende,
 Som drap ne tinge ne ne estende;
 Si do usure a rien pris, sil rende;
 Quar je n'en saj plus bel amende.
 (Livre des Manières: ll. 889-92)

The author of the Poème Moral treats the subject of restitution in some detail. He presents his argument in the form of a conversation between a priest, Pasnutius, and Thaïs, a courtesan, whom he is converting to an eremitic life of penitence. In the section headed: "om ne se puet a Deu acordeir d'un pechiet tant c'om ne vult laisser l'autre", Pasnutius explains that a good deed is worthless if performed by a man who is wilfully sinful in another respect (Stanza 243). The courtesan replies that if so, then a person guilty of usury must restore all ill-gotten gains before he can be saved (Stanza 244). The preacher confirms her reasoning:

"Damme," dist li sainz om, "n'i aveiz pas mepris.
 Ce ke toloit, embleit et a usure est pris,
 Ne lait onkes nului entreir em paradis,
 Se, promiers, n'at rendut ce que mal at conquis."
 (Stanza 245)

If the usurer, or thief will not restore the money and goods, he will surely be damned:

A tot altrui avoir ne puet en ciel monter.
 (Stanza 246, line 984)

The priest insists that restitution is the only means of salvation open to the usurer and thief:

"Teilz est, cant il est riches devenuz tot d'usure,
 "De tolr, de robeir, d'altre male aventure,
 "Des or en avant, vul" fait il, "tenir mesure;
 Grand pechiez est, n'ai mais d'iteil guaanie cure."
 (Stanza 251)

In the instance mentioned here, the usurer believes that by renouncing usury he has redeemed himself (Stanza 252). Not so, rejoins the priest. If he intends to keep his ill-earned profits, he has not truly repented and will not

be pardoned:

Mais, tant qu'il at et use lo bien qui siens n'est mie,
 Ne quidiez qu'il ne facet pechie et felonie.
 Il en fait son delit, cil cui ce fut vendie:
 Trop est simples, qui quidet ke leus teil mal oblie.
 (Stanza 253)

Ki del mal soi retrait, bien fait il voirement
 Et del bien faire at il bon encommencement.
 Mais, ce qu'il at conquis a tort, se tot ne rent,
 Ne li prometet nulz de s'anrme salvement.
 (Stanza 254)

While the usurer enjoys the profits from his past activities, the man whom he has cheated continues to suffer hunger and cold if restitution is not made (Stanza 255).

This poet maintains that it is too late to make restitution after death, and insists that the dying usurer be truly repentant while making deathbed restitution:

Cant li useriers gist et il quidet morir,
 Devant li fait sa femme et les enfanz venir;
 Son aveir li ensengnie, mais ne s'en vult partir,
 Et quidiez qu'il ait dont cure de repentir?
 (Stanza 216)

Often the usurer does not wish to surrender his riches even at death. He shows no evidence of any genuine repentance. This, observes the poet, is frequent with men who earn their riches by wicked means. Presumably their covetousness blinds them to everything but profit and gain:

Teilz est qui avoir at, qu'il l'at par tricherie;
 De robeir l'at conquis, de tort, de larenie.
 A derrains, cant il voit ke plus n'est de sa vie,
 N'at volonteit del rendre, car ne se repent mie.
 (Stanza 217)

Reluctance to make restitution is a feature of the usurer also singled out by Robert le Clerc. He compares the usurer unfavourably to the heretic. If one were to assemble heretics and usurers together and preach to them the doctrine of the Church, the heretics would be the first to be moved to tears and genuine repentance. The usurers, however, would not be deterred from their chosen path and would not consider abandoning their wealth.

Pekiés d'usure est tant vilains:
 Qui bougres, juis et commains
 Meteroit en une maison
 Et d'usuriers le moitie mains;
 S'i preecast les poins romains
 A cascun selonc se raison:
 Li bougre en pleurs, en orison,
 En devote contriction
 Joinderoient vers Diu lor mains:
 Li lere useriers mention
 Ne feroit de rendation
 Dont il ne fust trekierre atains.
 (Vers de la Mort: Stanza CXLV)

Again we read in the work C'est li Mariage des Filles au Diable, that usurers do not, even at death, restore their profits. The poet accuses the bourgeois of being an unproductive member of society⁽⁷²⁾ who traps unsuspecting people in his web of trickery and robs them of their possessions. These ill-gotten gains are not restored:

Bourjois qui pas ne laborez,
 La gent par usure acorez
 Aussi com la mouche l'araigne.
 A tout autrui fardel morés,
 Ne a la mort ne restorés
 L'aquest de la mauvaise gaigne.
 (Jubinal, N.R.I, p. 286)

In the Roman de la Rose we hear that usurers do give up their dishonest gain upon their deathbeds, and are thereupon assured of salvation by covetous friars who benefit from such restitution. (ll. 11225-29). (See my Chapter 3, A, 2, c, 2, h.)

The restitution of usurious profits is the whole subject of the short satirical poem, Le Credo a l'usurier by Fouques⁽⁷³⁾. The poet first expresses the necessity for making restitution:

Maistre Fouques raconte et dit
 Que nus ne puet avoir mercit
 Qui useriers est, s'il ne rent:
 Que Deables en son torment
 Ne l'enmaint, s'ili est trovez,
 Et qu'il ne soit mors et dampnez.
 (ll. 1-6)

The poet next dramatises a deathbed scene. The dying usurer summons a priest and begins his confession: He has acquired much illegal profit and

has been excommunicate for two full years:

"Sire, j'ai bien eũ de monte
Plus d'une mine de deniers
Dont Déables est parçoniers;
Bien sai qu'il les mes a donez,
Par lui les ai toz allnez,
Et si sui escomeniez,
Ne je ne fui communiez
Bien a passé deus ans entiers;"
(ll. 62-69)

The usurer admits that he has become the servant of the Devil and by practising usury has denied God:

"J'ai encor fet pechié greignor,
J'ai renoié Nostre Seignor
Des puis que deving useriers
Por avoir plenté de deniers.
Si deving hom^ea l'anemi,"
(ll. 75-79)

The usurer's hypocrisy becomes apparent when he begins to recite his own version of the Credo. By mixing the orthodox Latin formulae with the usurer's true sentiments, the poet makes his satiric attack on this social pervert:

"Credo, fet il, de mes deniers,
In Deum, qu'en porrai-je fere?"
(ll. 100-101)

He is obviously unwilling to relinquish his riches and asks that they should be brought before him:

"Je ne li lerai pas ainsi
Mes deniers en sa poesté,
Mès o moi, Celi et Terre,
Soient tuit mis, et in Jhesum,
Fetes les apoter, C'ristum
Filiu ejus, devant moi,
Ja n'aurai bien se ne les voi.
(ll. 112-18)

The priest tells him that he cannot take his riches with him. Only his good deeds will defend him before God. A sinner has to make amends before he can be saved (ll. 177-83). The usurer, however, is not concerned with making amends. He feels only distress at the thought of leaving behind his riches:

"Mes grant duel cil de mon avoir
 Que je lerrai, par tans je cuit
 Jâ ne verrai la mie nuit
 Que je ne sueffre grant torment."
 (ll. 230-233)

Pessimism would seem the keynote when the didactic poets write about usurers. The writers attack their trade, their greed, and urge them to reform by making restitution, but they appear to despair of the usurer mending his ways or even of repenting on his deathbed. Such a sinner is impervious to all exhortation to save his soul. At one point Robert le Clerc abandons his violent criticism, and tries to deter sinners by painting a pathetic picture of the truly repentant usurer, who has abandoned his evil way of life to enter the service of God. He quotes the usurer's very words, as follows:

Li usriers dist: "Je sai bien,
 Ce k'ai reubé n'est mie mien.
 Pecieres sui et desloiaus,
 Quant encontre raison retieng
 Ce c'autrui est, u je n'ai rien.
 Estre cuidois officiaus,
 Mais ne sui preudom né loiaus.
 Usure est hisdeus apoiaus;
 Werpir le voel, sans mal engien,
 Et estre amis especiaus
 Le crois, qui est signes roiaus;
 Par pais faisant, a li me tieng.
 (Vers de la Mort: Stanza CLXIII)

In like fashion, the Manuel des Pechés offers the exemplary tale of Pers the Usurer who, after a divine vision, abandons his trade. He gives all his riches to the poor and is sold as a slave. By his suffering he earns the grace of God (ll. 4823 sqq.). Such truly repentant usurers are, however, rare in the didactic works. The poets are more inclined to see the usurer as unregenerate, set in his evil ways and certain of damnation.

e) Allegorical treatment of the topic of usury.

The Old French didactic poets often have recourse to allegory in their works, and the usurer is a frequent figure in allegorical scenes.

Guillaume le Clerc (Besant de Dieu) speaks of a meal at which gather

the vices personified. Usury is one of the guests:

Nuit e jor quanqu'el puet rabler.
 Usure preste por gabler.
 (ll. 1955-56)

At a feast in Hell, described by Raoul de Houdenc in Le Songe d'Enfer⁽⁷⁴⁾, the usurer is not a guest, but part of the menu. His skin has been used for the table-cloths! An indication indeed of the hatred felt for the usurer.

Napes, qui sont faites de piaus
 De ces usuriers desloiaus,
 A estendus sus les dois.
 (ll. 431-33)

Après champions ont eü
 Useriers cras a desmesure.
 (ll. 454-55)

Such fare, comments Raoul, was not considered a delicacy in Hell, where usurers, being in plentiful supply, formed the staple diet of the guests:

Itant vous di bien sanz faintié,
 Qu'il nel tienent mie à daintié
 Tel mès, selonc ce que je vi,
 Quar il sont d'usuriers servi,
 Toz tens et esté et yver;
 C'est li generaus mès d'Enfer.
 (ll. 465-70)

Similarly, a usurer is part of the meal in Le Salut d'Enfer⁽⁷⁵⁾:

Belzébus fist appareillier
 I usurier cuit en l pot;
 (Jubinal, Jongleurs et Trouvères, page 43)

In the Tornoient de l'Antecrist by Huon de Méry, the Antichrist recruits usurers for his army:

Et pour plus avoir chevaliers
 Meint usurier et meint vilain
 Ot fet chevalier de sa mein.
 (ll. 2042-44)

Finally I should like to draw attention to an unusual use of the terminology of usury in the Besant de Dieu by Guillaume le Clerc. His work centres round the parable of the talents⁽⁷⁶⁾. He begins his work with a reference to this parable, and then speaks of the use he wishes to make of the talents that God has entrusted to him. For this, he reproduces the

metaphorical language of the biblical text, transposing usury terms to fit the situation:

Pur ceo que jeo ne voil muscier
 Le besant deu ne acorcier,
 Mes metre a creis e a usure,
 Dirrai tant com leisir me dure.
 (ll. 1-4)

This use of the terminology of usury lends an incongruous and surely unintentional aura of respectability to a trade which Guillaume le Clerc and all other poets usually condemn without reservation.

We have seen that the Old French didactic poets share a universal hatred of the usurer. This hatred stems from their view of him as social pervert, as an unproductive member of society. More especially they see him as an errant moral type, as a criminal.

C. The "Jongleur".

Another off-shoot of the third estate was the "jongleur", the public entertainer, who earned his living by the recital of literary works which he sometimes wrote.

In the didactic works there is clear evidence of two opposing attitudes towards the "jongleurs" and their livelihood. Such attitudes are dictated by the personal position of the didactic poet. If he is himself a professional entertainer, he will speak out on behalf of himself and his fellow "jongleurs". He will in some way urge patrons to be generous and to assure the economic well-being of those who strive to divert him. If, however, the didactic poet is not a professional entertainer, but a member of the Church who has chosen verse merely as a vehicle by which to communicate his moralising to the public, then he will not be openly favourable to the "jongleur". In this second instance, I find that the didactic poets completely ignore the "jongleur" as a social type, while some bitterly attack him as a social parasite, unworthy of the rich gifts and payment he receives from wealthy patrons.

1. Social Background of the "Jongleur".

During the thirteenth century the number of "jongleurs" increased considerably, but soon they outnumbered their patrons. Eventually the "jongleur" found it hard to make a living. As a direct result there was much bitter complaint⁽⁷⁷⁾. The "jongleurs" accused their patrons of avarice and lamented the demise of liberality in court circles.

Those who supported the "jongleur" were mainly the "seigneurs" and the bourgeois. The nobility were the traditional patrons, but as their wealth declined (see my Chapter Three, B), the bourgeois became more interested in acquiring the luxuries associated with the leisure class, and so they, in turn, paid entertainers. The "jongleur" was a sort of status symbol for the rich man. Whenever a host wished to impress his guests, he could display his wealth by showing the "jongleurs" with costly gifts. This habit of court society was eulogised in courtly romance (see my Chapter Five, sections B, 3 and 4).

"Jongleurs" were rewarded for their services by gifts of clothing and other objects, and rarely paid with money. Money only became the accepted form of payment from about the end of the thirteenth century⁽⁷⁸⁾.

2. The Favourable Attitude of Some Poets to the "Jongleurs".

Of those didactic poets who did not attack "jongleurs", Guiot de Provins appears as the spokesman of paid entertainers. This is understandable since he himself had been a "jongleur" and had experienced at first hand the difficulties of finding a generous patron in the troubled times which upset the nobleman's budget. Like many poets of this period, didactic and courtly, Guiot accuses the nobles of meanness. (See my Chapter Three, section B). Similar complaints come from Robert de Blois, in L'Enseignement des Princes, who is indignant that the nobles close their doors to "jongleurs".

In the short work De la Maille⁽⁷⁹⁾, the anonymous author defends the cause of the "jongleur" who cannot expect large sums of money from his

audience, but if he saves up all the "mailles" (half a "denier") received, he is able to eat:

Si en ot l'en chançons et rotes,
De jougleors assez sovent,
Por la maille seulement;
L'en ne la doit en despit metre,
Quar on a mult grant soufrete.
(Jubinal, Jongleurs et Trouvères, page 106)

Rutebeuf was not a court entertainer, but depended on his compositions for his living. He, too, complains of the avarice of patrons, as a result of which he is extremely poor:

Entre chier tens et ma mainie,
Qui n'est malade ne fainie,
Ne m'ont laissié deniers ne gages.
Gent truis d'escondire arainie
Et de doneir mal enseignie:
Dou sien garder est chacuns sage.
(Povreté Rutebeuf: ll. 13-18, Vol. I, page 571)

He had earlier treated this theme in De L'Estat du Monde, a didactic poem of the estates of the world kind: The minstrels are the victims of mean noblemen:

Menesterez sont esperdu,
Chascun sa son Donet perdu.
(ll. 157-58, page 388)

Although Rutebeuf is pleading his own cause, he is not proud of his means of earning a living. For him, to accept payment is a necessity, but he appears rather ashamed to be forced to do so:

J'ai toz jors engressié ma pance
D'autrui chatel, d'autrui substance:
(La Mort Rutebeuf: ll. 19-20, Vol. I, page 576)

One is aware that the poet is consciously the social parasite, scorned by the moralists, and that he can find no defence for his way of life.

A similar attitude of shame is to be found in Guillaume le Clerc's Besant de Dieu. At the beginning of his work the poet confesses that he has earned his past living by his foolish writing and asks God's pardon:

Guillaume, uns clers qui fu Normanz,
Qui versefia en Romanz
Fablels e contes soleit dire
En fole e en vaine matire,
Peccha sovent: deus il pardont!
(ll. 79-83)

He admits that he could not support his wife and children unless he was given payment for his verse:

E pensa qu'il aveit enfanz
 E sa moiller a gouverner
 E ne lor aveit que doner,
 S'om ne li donout por ses diz.
 (ll. 96-99)

He, therefore, justifies the taking of payment for his verse since he has a good excuse. Yet one senses that he is apologising for his way of life and is certainly not proud of it.

We are not surprised to find that "jongleurs" themselves regard their profession favourably, as in the case of Guiot de Provins and Robert de Blois. Others, like Guillaume le Clerc and Rutebeuf, are torn between the practical necessity of being paid for their work and the sense that they were not performing a worthwhile and honourable social function. How do the other estates view them?

The "jongleurs" find a champion in Hugues de Berzé, a nobleman. In his Bible, he regrets the passing of the fine courts and all the knightly activities, including the entertainment that went on (ll. 93-97). Hugues de Berzé has obviously known court life. His worldly attitude of nostalgia for the finery of such a life indicates that he is not prejudiced against "jongleurs" and the innocent pleasures they provided. However, Hugues de Berzé attributes such court life to a time that is forever past. Court life nowadays is corrupt as is every other sector of society, and so his attitude hardens into one which complies more to the "contemptus mundi" concept. He is not, therefore, openly favourable to "jongleurs" although he has nothing to say against them.

3. The Attitude of the Moralists to the "Jongleur".

The attitude of the didactic poet to the "jongleur" coincides with the attitude of the Church. This attitude had always been one of unmitigated disapproval.

St. Augustine warned men of the corruptive influence of professional entertainers. This was taken up later by Alcuin⁽⁸⁰⁾ as follows: "Nescit homo, qui histriones, et mimos, et saltatores introducit ad domum suam, quam magna eos immundorum sequitur turba spiritum" (Ep. 175, p. 290). Alcuin advises rich men to invite the deserving poor to their table rather than the entertainers: "melius est pauperes edere de mensa tua, quam istriones vel luxuriosos quos libet." (Ep. 124, p. 133, cp. no. 7)⁽⁸¹⁾.

In the twelfth century the prejudice against entertainers had not weakened. Honoré d'Autun denied them any hope of salvation⁽⁸²⁾: D. "Habent spem joculatores?" - M. "Nullam: tota namque intentione sunt ministri satanae, de his dicitur: Deum non cognoverunt: ideo Deus sprexit eos, et Dominus subsannabit eos qui desisores deridentur." (Elucidarium 11, 18, P.L. CLXXII, c. 1148). According to John of Salisbury (Policraticus 1, 8), those who give to "jongleurs" make themselves the accomplices of these deplorable people. Jongleurs have no function in society, said Petrus Cantor: "nullum genus hominum est, in quo non inveniatur alquis utiles usus praeter hoc genus hominum, quod est monstrum, nulla virtute ademptum a vitiis. (Verbum abbreviatum, Chap. 49: Contra dantes histrionibus, p. 148).

Some Old French didactic poets echo this teaching of the Church: In the Poème Moral there is a section on the presentation of gifts and money to "jongleurs". On this particular subject the poet does not display his usual tolerance upon which we have had occasion to comment regarding other issues. On this one topic, he is unrelenting in his condemnation, and attacks not only "jongleurs" but all who encourage them in their activities. He considers that giving to "jongleurs", irrespective of their poverty, is false charity, even sinful.

In his section: "con grant Pechier est de doneir as Jugleor"^u_^, the poet maintains that the pursuits of "jongleurs" are immoral:

Kant k'il funt, cant k'il dient, tot turne a lecherie.
(Stanza 518, line 2069)

They are cursed by God, and endanger the spiritual lives of others by their evil influence (ll. 2072-76). The poet continues his denunciation of the "jongleurs" in very vigorous language, quite uncharacteristic of his usually measured and reasonable tone: They are like the filthy sow who taints all with whom she comes in contact:

"Il resemblent la truie, ki de boe est cargie;
S'ele vient entre gent, de son greit u cacie,
Tuit ont del tai lor part, a cui ele est froïe
(Stanza 520, ll. 2078-80)

Those who patronize "jongleurs" are guilty of encouraging them in their immoral conduct:

Mais cil ki les en lowent, cil funt la derverie,
Car cum plus lor done hom, plus funt de deablie.
(Stanza 520, ll. 2083-84)

They are stupid to give to these people:

ki a teile gent donent, n'ont ne sens ne savoir.
(Stanza 523, line 2089)

The poet considers that giving to "jongleurs" is motivated by worldly vanity, surely an accurate assessment of the practice as presented in courtly romance. (See my Chapter Five, section B, 3 and 4). He contrasts this with the charitable giving of alms (Stanza 524). Like Alcuin and subsequent Church teachers, the author of the Poème Moral reproaches those rich men who turn away the deserving poor at their door, yet who admit "jongleurs". One may contrast those poets who complain that "jongleurs" are no longer admitted to the table of the rich. The poet here presents the scene of the rich man's door, where the porter dismisses the poor man whose hungry cries are drowning the songs of the rich man's entertainers:

"Va," ce dist li portiers, "ribauz, mal aes tu!
" Mes sires vult oïr canteir. Ke cries tu?"
(Stanza 510, ll. 2037-38)

The "jongleur" also figures in the Poème Moral as an exemplary figure. In the section headed: "De queil ordre que l'Homs soit, bien se puet salveir" the poet relates how a "jongleur" who has led a sinful life, during which

he has robbed a church, redeemed himself by one good turn. He is later converted by the preacher Pasnutius. He makes amends for his corrupt life by spending three years in a hermit's cell. He is subsequently saved. Evidently this moralist does not agree with Honoré d'Autun who rejected the idea of all salvation for the "jongleur". Once more this author shows tolerance.

It is significant that in another exemplary tale in the Poème Moral, a good-rich man is described as rejecting the vain, worldly trappings of his estate: gaming, hawking, music and the entertainment provided by "jongleurs" (Stanza 595).

In his contempt for "jongleurs" and his disapproval of their patrons, the author of the Poème Moral has an ally in the Reclus de Moilliens. In Miserere, contemporary to the Poème Moral, the poet compares the "jongleur" to a pig, (cf. Poème Moral, stanza 520), which is not worthy to eat the food of humans:

Mais au fol cui je voi joglant
Et ki va de bourdes jenglant,
A chelui est li pains destroys:
Ordement vit en fabloiant.
Pors est; manjut faïne ou glant.
De pain gouster n'est pas ses drois.
(Miserere: Stanza CLVIII, ll. 7-12)

In attacking the "jongleur" these moralists are following current Church thought. The specific grounds upon which they condemn the "jongleur" are his attachment to the worldly, his loose living, but most especially his position as social parasite. Both poets judge the "jongleur" according to the criterion of St. Paul⁽⁸³⁾, that only those who perform honest, useful work deserve to be rewarded:

Bien gaaniet, ki si gaaniet dont altrui vult aidir.
(Poème Moral: line 2060)
Stanza 515

and

Sains Pous pain oisous dessaboure,
Ki dist: "Ne goust ki ne laboure."
Car ne puet ki oisouse maine
Gouster de pain d'autrui sans boure.
(Miserere: CLIV ll. 1-4)

In the eyes of the moralist the "jongleur" did not perform a useful function in society. He had no place in the system of social interdependence. An exception had been made in the case of the merchant because his trade involved work, and was justifiable in that it was useful, provided that he was not tempted to put profit above all else. No case can be made for the "jongleur". He lives for the frivolous and panders to the taste for worldly pleasure of other men. He, therefore, does not deserve his wealth, however modest. He is the antithesis of the man dignified by his altruistic labours so cherished by the Middle Ages. The "jongleur's" only defence comes from those men who had a personal and vested interest in the fate of this profession, those who were themselves "jongleurs". These defend the necessity to earn for their families as does Rutebeuf and Guillaume le Clerc.

CONCLUSION TO THE FIRST PART

This critical survey of disparate works, linked only by didactic intent has highlighted a wide range of attitudes towards wealth. Despite differing views and apparent inconsistencies, one may distinguish general trends and contrast divergent opinions.

In the period between 1150 and 1300, interest in money and riches manifested itself in contemporary literature, particularly in works purporting to mirror the life of the times. In addition to their desire to edify, the heteroclitic "didactic" poems share an overriding interest in wealth to the point where this becomes the dominant theme. All aspects of wealth are treated therein, its dangers and benefits, its correct and incorrect use, social malpractices associated with it, man's attitude to his own wealth, and to that of others.

With regard to doctrine and thought throughout the Christian era, the Old French poets are often content to repeat traditional Church teaching on wealth, whether based on Biblical material or on later doctrinal works. There are also echoes of recent canon law, in Etienne de Fougères's opinions on Just Price or Guillaume le Clerc's admonitions to bishops who demand ruinous hospitality.

With regard to the inspiration of the major poets, we noticed connections between Latin "Contemptus mundi" writings and later vernacular verse sermons. Significantly didactic poets modify extreme attitudes and pitch their message to the level of their lay public. Very few exactly imitate the severity of a Peter Damian, though Helinand and Thibaud de Marly come near to his rigorous

views. Most poets admit a tolerant attitude and pursue the practical end of advising men how to gain salvation in secular society while remaining in possession of material goods. The Poème Moral goes further than others in his psychological analysis and treats Church doctrine from a lay viewpoint. In the longer didactic works, the sermon has the severest attitudes to wealth, expressing grave reservations about possessing it. Even here, the poets cannot be called "anti-wealth" in their stance. They concentrate their heaviest attack on the illicit love of money which approaches idolatry.

All the poets concur in the importance of the proper use of wealth. They place almsgiving first of all the available uses of riches because to them this alone justifies the possession of wealth. The only dissenting voice is that of Guiot de Provins whose courtly attitudes outweigh his monastic ones. In the understanding of practical charity, the Poème Moral is joined by the Reclus de Moilliens who stipulates that one should be "poor in spirit". We have a searching analysis in many poets of the rich man's psychological suffering upon earth. A few writers bewail the acclaim of a corrupt society for the evil rich man. The damnation of the miser traditionally illustrated by the story of Dives and Lazarus is countered by exempla which demonstrate his possible salvation. The Poème Moral particularly stresses this basic optimism.

Optimism triumphs again with the moralists in the "Etats du Monde" section of the poems studied in my Chapters Three and Four. In the standard review of society, the poets defer sermonising to direct observations whether in satire or complaint. All agree that society's use of wealth lies at the root of secular corruption and failings. With regard to the preaching of monastic values, Thibaud de Marly and Helinand speak out in favour of a life in the cloisters, as do the Reclus de Moilliens and Hugues de Berzé. These last two recognise secular values and make allowances for the layman. Here the Poème Moral is the most realistic in advising Christians to set

a good example of the world.

In their survey of the knight and peasant, the poets claim that all who have an ambition in a feudal society betray their calling and function. Moreover shortcomings flow from attitudes towards wealth. The merchant does not inspire great censure, being judged, like all social types, according to St. Paul's tenet that only those who labour should be rewarded. However few poets include the merchant in their social review. This neglect arises from confusion between the trader and the usurer. Most poets attribute usurious practices to merchants in general who thereby become objects of the bitterest condemnation. Usury itself is unequivocally rejected. Etienne de Fougères advocates compromise in the practice of deferred payments condemned by others as outright usury. On the whole moralising writers are concerned with the confessional and with moral attitudes based on Church teaching. They lack critical observation of social activities. Thus those who do express personal judgements, in defiance of accepted doctrine, stand out. The "jongleur" did not satisfy the Pauline condition for a useful member of society, and became a social parasite. Most didactic poets who were not professional entertainers keep silent on the subject of "jongleurs". In the general conclusion to this thesis, after study of courtly romance, we will return to an assessment of the "jongleurs" in Old French literature.

In the "Etats du Monde" writing, every social class is systematically accused of avarice, but far and away the chief defaulters are ecclesiastics themselves. There is only one plausible reason for attacks on this abuse of wealth, a sincere desire to chastise those in danger of putting the material before the spiritual, Mammon before God. If the Church had evil elements, guilty of this, then let the Church be chastised and more severely than any other part of society. Our poets, faced with the dilemma of reconciling the spiritual and the material emerge as pragmatists and counsel a compromise. They do not seek to eliminate wealth but to assign it to a

properly subordinate place. They generally dismiss wealth as a means to vain pleasure and worldly luxuries. In this they do not foreshadow the hedonistic use of wealth in the courtly romances, a topic to be examined in the second part of my thesis. Most didactic poets seek moderation in all things, trying to redress the balance between the spiritual and the material, in a world driving mankind towards an all-consuming passion for wealth to the neglect of spiritual well-being.

NOTES TO CHAPTERS ONE - FOUR

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION AND PRELIMINARY CHAPTER

1. Medieval Studies, vol. XXIII, Toronto, 1961, pp. 335-351.
2. Vol. I, Moyen-Age - XVIe siècle, Genève, 1966, Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance.
3. Paris, 1883 (second edition).
4. Paris, 1908.
5. New York, 1933.
6. New York, Columbia University Press, 1917.
7. Cambridge University Press, 1973.
8. "Des 'Trois Fonctions' aux 'Trois Etats'?", Annales, Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations, 1963, pp. 933-938; also "Les Moines Blancs dans les 'Etats du Monde' (XIIIe - XVIe siècles)", Cîteaux, XV, 1964, pp. 5-24; and "Les Convers chez quelques moralistes des XIIIe et XIVe siècles", Cîteaux, XX, 1969, pp. 241-259.
9. Tome II (pp. 469-487) of Etudes sur l'Histoire de la Pauvreté jusqu'au XVIe siècle sous la direction de Michel Mollat, 2 vols., 1974.
10. ed. D.J.A. Ross, Cambridge, 1956.
11. See G. Doutrepoint, La Littérature et la Société, Brussels, 1942, page 336: "...la critique des travers humains dispense de penser et d'observer. Peut-être faudrait-il voir là l'une des raisons du succès du genre didactique au Moyen-Age, genre facile après tout. Mais la réside également l'une des raisons de sa faiblesse littéraire à cette époque. L'esprit satirique et moralisateur, qui paraît tendre, comme par définition, vers les tableaux réalistes de la vie, est, de la sorte, assez fréquemment opposé au réalisme d'observation et de composition. Quoi qu'il en soit, les oeuvres de moralistes contiennent un énorme déchet de convenu qu'on doit laisser tomber quand on juge leur époque: le déchet comprend tous les emprunts au passé, qui ne sont que des redites, des traductions, des reproches mille fois adressés à cette mauvaise humanité, des exemples consacrés, de vieilles historiettes adaptées à des milieux nouveaux."
12. See A. Fourrier, Le Courant Réaliste dans le Roman Courtois en France au Moyen-Age, Tome I, Les Débuts - XIIIe siècle, Paris, 1960, page 487: "Dans la littérature narrative d'inspiration courtoise on voit naître, pendant la seconde moitié du XIIIe siècle, un courant dont le principe actif est le sens de la réalité." See also E. Auerbach, Mimesis, The Representation of Reality in Western Literature, Princeton, New Jersey, 1953, who agrees that these works often aim at realism (page 131), but concludes that this is not usually wholly achieved (page 136).
13. For the growth of the towns, see H. Pirenne, Histoire Economique et Sociale du Moyen-Age, Paris, 1963, pp. 34-35.
14. See G. Fourrier, Histoire Economique de l'Occident Médiéval, Paris, 1969, page 235
15. - Pirenne, Histoire Economique, pp. 44-47, 151.

Notes to introduction and preliminary chapter contd.

16. See J.V. Alter, Les Origines de la Satire anti-bourgeoise en France, Genève, 1966, page 60: "Assuré de complicité parmi les couches les plus actives de la population, Philippe-Auguste créa les charges de bailli et de sénéchal, fonctionnaires rémunérés en argent, amovibles, recrutés selon le bon volenté du souverain, superposés aux vestiges des conceptions administratives de la féodalité. Le conseil suprême se scinda en cour de comptes, spécialisée ès matières financières et cour du Parlement, appelée à rendre justice. Ici comme là, les légistes bourgeois furent d'un secours considérable: ils reçurent le Palais en jouissance indivisible et on leur permit de pénétrer dans l'administration."
17. See Fourquin, Histoire Economique..., page 254.
18. See M. Bloch, Esquisse d'une Histoire Monétaire de l'Europe, Paris, 1954, pp. 22 and 35-36.
19. Fourquin, Histoire Economique, page 135.
20. Pirenne, Histoire Economique, pp. 92-94; and for the history of minting and devaluation, see Chapter 5 of La Doctrine de l'Eglise et les Réalités Economiques au XIIIe siècle, l'Intérêt, les Prix et la Monnaie, by J. Ibanès, Paris, 1967.
21. Pirenne, Histoire Economique, page 93.
22. J.V. Alter, Les Origines de la Satire, page 116: "Avant le XIIe siècle, on ne connaissait que la passion pour l'or en tant que métal, matière première d'objets de luxe, témoignage mais non source de richesse; avec l'implantation de l'économie bourgeoise, son rôle devient déterminant dans la vie sociale. Sous forme de capital, il se reproduit lui-même et il assure à son possesseur la disposition des biens et la considération."
23. Pirenne, Histoire Economique, pp. 133-134.
24. Pirenne, Histoire Economique, pp. 48-49.
25. See J.W. Thompson, Economic and Social History of the Middle Ages, New York, 1928, page 495: "The nobles preserved their social prestige but had lost political power to the crown and economic power to the bourgeoisie. The new wealth created by commerce and industry not only made the urban population rich, it made the land-owning class poorer, for land lost its old-time capitalistic character as the only important form of wealth."
26. Fourquin, Histoire Economique, page 222.
27. Pirenne, Histoire Economique, pp. 40-41.
28. See G.R. Owst, Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England, Oxford, 1906, Chapter VI, pp. 291-308.
29. 1225-1274.
30. See G. Q'Brien, An Essay on Medieval Economic Teaching, London, 1920. Chapter One, page 16: "Aristotle's teaching on money was accepted by all the writers of the thirteenth century."
31. For a detailed study of the teaching of Thomas Aquinas see E. Gilson, Le Thomisme: Introduction au Système de Saint Thomas d'Aquin. second edition, Paris, 1922.

Notes to Introduction and preliminary chapter contd.

32. See G. O'Brien, An Essay on Medieval Economic Teaching, p. 18.
33. See Ibanès, La Doctrine de l'Eglise, page 33: "A vrai dire, les canonistes et les théologiens ont moins cherché, quant au principe, à harmoniser leurs thèses avec les réalités économiques qu'à influencer ces dernières en orientant le comportement des agents de l'économie, et cela, au besoin en réaction contre les pratiques accordées, elles, au développement économique."
34. Pirenne, Histoire Economique, page 23, who, in support of this statement, points to the evidence to be found in the last wills of medieval merchants and bankers whereby many sought to make restitution to those they had robbed and cheated.
35. The position of the Church is resumed thus in l'Histoire de l'Eglise, Fliche et Martin, Vol. 12, Préliminaires, page 32: "A une société agricole, dirigée par des seigneurs ruraux, des évêques-comtes et des rois patriarches, se substitue, pendant l'âge classique, une société où prédominent le commerce, le marchand urbain, le prince fort, entouré d'experts. L'Eglise, qui a préparé le passage, doit conformer ses structures aux modes triomphantes, oscillant de la résistance à l'adhésion voire à la suggestion - volontaire ou imprévisible - d'un progrès continu".
36. J. Gilchrist, The Church and Economic Activity in the Middle Ages, New York, 1969, Introduction, pp. 1-10.
37. Ibid., page 6.
38. R.H. Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, London, 1926, page 62: "... the problem of moralising economic life was faced and not abandoned. The experiment may have been impracticable, and almost from the first it was discredited by the notorious corruption of ecclesiastical authorities, who preached renunciation and gave a lesson in greed."

Notes to Chapter One.

1. Satires I and III, ed. J.D. Duff, Fourteen Satires of Juvenal, Cambridge University Press, 1966.
2. Fourquin, Histoire Economique, page 258: "... ce n'est pas un hasard si la première capitale de l'argent fut aussi le berceau de la littérature satirique de langue française."
3. See J. V. Alter, Les Origines de la Satire..., Introduction, page 8: "A mesure qu'apparaissent marchands, manieurs d'argent, maîtres de métier, légistes, financiers et fonctionnaires, que les roturiers constituent la noblesse de robe, que la mentalité de petit commerçant se raffine en philosophie libérale, que la morale des affaires se dissipe en fastes du libertinage, la satire anti-bourgeoise se complique, s'enrichit, se développe...."
4. Chansons et Dits Artésiens du XIIIe siècle, published by A. Jeanroy and H. Guy, Bordeaux, 1898 (Bibliothèque des Universités du Midi).
5. Poem number XXIV of the collection of Jeanroy and Guy is a particularly good example of this. It is a satire based on an important tax scandal. The poet exposes the dishonest magistrates who had cheated.
6. I would refer the reader to the Dictionnaire de la Bible, ed. F. Vigouroux, Paris, 1926, Vol. I, 2, pp. 1285-88 and to the Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique of A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, E. Amann, Paris, 1930, Vol. I, 2, pp. 2623-2627, under "Avarice".
7. Psalms CXIX:36; Exodus XVIII:21; Proverbs I:19; XII:27; XXVIII:16; Isaiah LVI:11; Jeremiah VI:13; VIII:10; Ezekiel XXXIII:32.
8. Proverbs XI:28; Job XXI:24-25; Proverbs XI:28; XXIX:4; Ecclesiastes V:9-10; Isaiah II:7.
9. Ezekiel XXII:12-13; I Samuel VIII:3; Isaiah XXXIII:15; IV:2.
10. Matthew VI:24; Luke XVI:10-14; I Timothy IV:10.
11. Luke VI:21; Mark X:24-25; Epistle of James I:9; V:1-6; I Peter V:1-3.
12. Mark VII:22; Luke XIV:13; Epistle to the Romans I:29; I Corinthians VI:10; V:10-11; Ephesians VI:19; V:3-5; Colossians III:5; Thessalonians II:5; I Timothy III:3; II Timothy III:2; Hebrews XIII:5; II Peter II: 3, 14.
13. For the influence of the Bible and the Church Fathers on medieval learning see B. Smalley, The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages, Oxford, 1951.
14. Sermon LXXXVI, P.L.t. XXXVIII, col. 523-530.
15. Matthew XIX:21.
16. See The Social Message of the Early Church Fathers by I. Giordani, translated by A.I. Zizzamia, Paterson, N.J., 1944, page 261.
17. Ibid., page 256.
18. Contra Celsum, I, 24, quoted by Giordani, op.cit., page 256, note 6.
19. The Social Message, I. Giordani, page 256.

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20. See J.W. Baldwin, Medieval Theories of Just Price, Philadelphia, 1959, page 15.
21. The City of God, trans. J. Healey, ed. R.V.G. Tasker, London, 1950, Vol. I, Introduction, page xxxiii.
22. Gratian, a monk from Bologna, whose Decretum (1140) was the first systematic collection of canon law.
23. 150 to 211-216 A.D.
24. ed. K. K8ster, Freiburg, 1893.
25. Quoted by Giordain, The Social Message, page 271.
26. Ennaratio in Psalmos, CXLIII, 18; Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina, XL, 2085-86.
27. Giordani, The Social Message..., page 254.
28. Ibid., page 260: "Despite the fact that they are not always clear, these writers condemn the use made of wealth and not wealth itself, at least not explicitly. In fact, what they hammer at most is greed."
29. See C.H. Haskins, The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century, New York, 1927, page 98.
30. Ibid., page 117.
31. Cicero, De Officiis, translated J. Higginbotham, pub. Faber & Faber, London, 1967. (Latin text used: Holden, C.U.P., 1869), Book I, Chapter 8, 25: "Not that the innocent increase of one's estates is to be deplored, but it is only innocent as long as it is free from injustice."
32. Ibid., Chap. 20, 68: "...above all one must beware of avarice, for there is no more certain sign of a narrow and petty mind than the love of riches, and nothing more indicative of a fine and honourable spirit than contempt for money not possessed or generosity with money possessed."
33. Book I, chapter 42, 150.
34. The Satires of Horace, edited A. Palmer, London, 1964 (Macmillan & Co. Ltd.): The Epistles of Horace, edited A.S. Wilkins, London, 1965 (Macmillan & Co. Ltd.).
35. ed. J.D. Duff, C.U.P., 1966. Juvenal wrote between 100 and 130 A.D.
36. Bible, ed. J. Orr. We shall meet many instances of Guiot's reproaches to the nobles in Part I of this thesis.
37. Boethius, philosopher and statesman, wrote his De Consolatione in 524. Ed. A. Bocognano, Paris, 1937.
38. See the appraisal in Histoire de l'Eglise, Fliche et Martin, Vol. 4, p. 56: "C'est toute la noble sagesse antique dont Boèce recueille les leçons pour en faire la substance de ce 'protreptique' de cette exhortation: à s'orienter vers Dieu, terme et but de toute créature."

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39. Its influence in the Middle Ages is also demonstrated by the fact that Jean de Meung translated it into the vernacular: see "Boethius' 'De Consolatione'" by Jean de Meung" by V.L. Dedoek-Héry, Medieval Studies, 1952, pp. 165-275.
40. ed. J.C. Payen, Paris, 1970, Editions Klincksieck. The editor dates the work from the first third of the thirteenth century. He describes it thus: "un traité de morale pratique destiné à la noblesse, comme le prouvent encore la place accordée à certaines valeurs (largesse, cointise), qui sont celles de l'aristocratie médiévale, non celles que cultivent les clercs" (pp. 33-34). It was based largely on Moralium Dogma in its translated form: Moralités des Philosophes, ed. Homberg, Upsal, 1929.
41. D.R. Howard, On the Misery of the Human Condition: Lothario dei Segni, Pope Innocent III, New York, 1969, Introduction, page xxv.
42. Christianisme et Valeurs Humaines. A. La Doctrine du Mépris du Monde. IV,2. 1963- , page 8.
43. Apologeticum de Contemptu Mundi, P.L.145: 251-292.
44. Carmen de Mundi Contemptu, P.L. 158: 687-706.
45. De Vanitate Mundi, P.L. 176: 703-740.
46. Confessio Theologica, ed. J. Leclercq and J.P. Bonnes.
47. De Contemptu Mundi, ed. A.C. Hoskier, 1929.
48. D.R. Howard, The Three Temptations, Medieval Man in Search of the World, Princeton, N.J., 1966.
49. D.R. Howard, The Misery of the Human Condition, Introduction, page xvi.
50. Ibid., page xvii.
51. Peter Damian, born 1007 at Ravenna. A monk, he became cardinal bishop of Ostia in 1057, a legate in 1059. (For further details see P. McNulty, St. Peter Damian, London, 1959).
52. Howard, The Three Temptations, page 39.
53. "Spirituels et théologiens devant l'homme et le monde", Revue Thomiste, 1964 (pp. 517-548), page 525.
54. Nolite diligere mundum, neque ea quae in mundo sunt. Si quis diligit mundum, non est charitas Patris in eo, quoniam omne quod est in mundo, concupiscentia carnis est, et concupiscentia oculorum, et superbia vitae quae non est ex Patre, sed ex mundo est. Et mundus transit, et concupiscentia ejus; qui autem facit voluntatem Dei, manet in aeternum. (Vulgate).
55. Si mundus vos odit, scitote quia me priorem vobis odio habuit. Si de mundo fuissetis, mundus quod suum erat diligeret; quia vero de mundo non estis, sed ego elegi vos de mundo, propterea odit vos mundus. (Vulgate)

56. Adulteri, nescitis quia amicitia hujus mundi inimica est Dei? Quicumque ergo voluerit amicus esse saeculi hujus, inimicus Dei constituitur. (Vulgate).
57. Jerome, Biblia Sacra iuxta latinam vulgatam versionem ad codicum fidem...XI (Rome 1957); reference found in D.R.Howard's The Three Temptations, page 68 and note 62, page 68.
58. St. Augustine, Confessions, ed. P.de Labriolle, 2 vols, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1925-26; tome I, livres I-VIII, tome II, livres IX-XIII. Collections des Universités de France.
59. Bibliothèque Augustienne, Oeuvres de St. Augustin, 35, La Cité de Dieu, ed. B.Dombart and A. Kalb, trad. G. Combès, 1959.
60. Corpus Christianorum Series Latina XXXIX, 1352.
61. Ennarratio in Psalmos, CXLIII, 18; Corpus Christianorum Series Latina XL, 2085-86.
62. D.E.Howard, On the Misery... Introduction, pp. XXV-XXVI.
63. S.Wenzel, "The Three Enemies of Man", Medieval Studies, 1967, pp.47-66; see page 48.
64. Ibid., page 50.
65. See, for example, Jean de Fécamp, Confessio Theologica, III,6, page 147, ed. J.Leclercq and J.P.Bonnes. (work dated 1018).
66. Howard, The Three Temptations, page 62; St. Bernard, Meditationes Piissimae de Cognitione Humanae Conditionis, P.L. 184:503.
67. See my pp.70-71 and note 133.
68. See Howard, The Three Temptations, pp.66-67.
69. Christianisme et Valeurs Humaines, IV(1), page 49.
70. Peter Damian, Op.L,7,739A; Op. XVI,3,369CD, P.L.144. References given by R.Bultot, op.cit.; also references in notes 71,73.
71. P.L. 145:251-292.
72. Bultot, Christianisme.. IV(1), page 140.
73. cf. also Op.XXXI,2,532-533; Op.IX,8,222; Op.IX,1,210-11; Op.LVI,6,815B; Ep. VI,32, 425C-426D. P.L.144.
74. Bultot, Christianisme.., IV (1), page 114.
75. Known as Bernard of Morval, Bernardus Morvalensis, Bernard of Cluny, and sometimes, erroneously, as Bernard of Morlaix.
76. ed. A.C.Hoskier, Bernard of Morval, De Contemptu Mundi: A Bitter Satirical Poem of 3000 lines upon the Morals of the Thirteenth Century, London 1929.

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77. Geoffrey Shepherd, "All the wealth of Croesus.... A topic in the Ancien Régime" in Modern Language Review, 1956, pp. 161-167. See page 164.
78. See the study of G. Engelhardt, "The De Contemptu Mundi of Bernardus Morvalensis", Medieval Studies, 1960, pp. 108-135, page 110.
79. See R. Bultot, "La Doctrine du Mépris du Monde chez Bernard le Clunisien" in Le Moyen Age, 1964, pp. 179-204.
80. Ibid., page 187.
81. Ibid., pp. 198-199.
82. ed. Hoskier, ll. 661-664. See my chapter Two, note 38.
83. That such evil should be attributed to money, rather than love of money is unusual. cf. Dan Denier (ed. A. Jubinal, Jongleurs et Trouvères), pp. 95-96; also my chapter Two, section A, 2.
84. ed. M. Maccarrone, Lotharii Cardinalis (Innocentii III) De Miseria humanae conditionis, Thesaurus Mundi, Lugano, 1955. English translation by D.R. Howard, see note 41.
85. R. Bultot, "Mépris du Monde, misère et dignité de l'homme dans la pensée d'Innocent III" in Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale, 1961, pp. 441-456. See page 441.
86. Howard, On the Misery..., Introduction, page xxi.
87. I Job 7:1: "Militia est vita hominis super terram:"
88. ed. W. Suchier, Zwei Altfranzösische Reimpredigten, Halle, 1949, pp. 68-93. Bibliotheca Normannica Bd. I, mit Benutzung der Ausgabe Hermann Suchiers Neu herausgegeben von Walther Suchier.
89. Grundriss Der Romanischen Literaturen des Mittelalters, Band VI/2. Vol. VI, La Littérature Didactique, Allegorique et Satirique, Directeur H.R. Jauss, Tome 2 (Partie Documentaire), Heidelberg, 1970, Number 2212.
90. Vulgate: "Vanitas vanitatum, dixit Ecclesiastes; vanitas vanitatum, et omnia vanitas."
91. ed. J. Kremer, Marburg, 1887.
92. This date is given by Kremer. Jauss puts it between 1168 and 1178.
93. ed. H.K. Stone, Paris, 1932.
94. ed. Fr. Wulff and Em. Walberg, Paris, 1905.
95. Introduction, page xxxii.
96. ed. A-G. van Hamel, Paris, 1885.
97. Jauss questions these dates and prefers Carité: 1224 and Miserere: 1230.
98. "Ce qui diminue pour nous l'intérêt de son ouvrage, c'est qu'il moralise plus qu'il ne critique, et que, dans ces diatribes contre les mœurs de son temps, il reste trop dans les généralités" page clxxvii.

Notes to Chapter One contd.

99. ed. F.J. Tanqueray, Paris, 1922. Dated by the editor from 1150, by Jauss from c.1200. (see number 7216).
100. Poème Moral, Traité de Vie Chrétienne écrit dans la région Wallonne vers l'an 1200, ed. A. Bayot, Brussels, 1929.
101. cf. St. Augustine's view that one can lead a blameless life in the secular world, my page 30.
102. ed. A. Gabrielson, Uppsala, 1909.
103. ed. J. Orr, Manchester, 1915.
104. Ibid., Introduction, page xxi.
105. Ibid., Introduction, pages xiii-xv.
106. La "Bible" au Seigneur de Berzé, ed. F. Lecoy, Paris, 1938.
107. ed. E. Martin, Halle, 1869.
108. See P. Ruelle, Le Besant de Dieu de Guillaume le Clerc de Normandie, Edition de l'Université de Bruxelles, 1973, pp. 47-49 for a detailed comparison between the De Miseria and Le Besant de Dieu.
109. ed. F.J. Tanqueray, Paris, 1922.
110. pub. P. Meyer, Romania, 1887, pp. 1-24.
111. op.cit., number 4168.
112. P. Meyer, Romania, 1887, pp. 4-5.
113. ed. C.A. Windahl, Lund, 1887.
114. See R. Mohl, The Three Estates in Medieval and Renaissance Literature, New York, 1933, who, in describing the "distinguishing traits" of these works goes no further than the social aspects (Preface); and M.M. Wood, The Spirit of Protest in Old French Literature, New York, 1917, who mentions these works chiefly in connection with "protest against the social order" (Chap. I, pp. 11-73).
115. Philip Norman, "Atticus", The Sunday Times, 11-4-76, page 32.
116. P.L. 41, col. 424.
117. P.L. 100-101, col. 634.
118. ed. M. Maccarrone.
119. ed. E.J. Arnould, Paris, 1940.
120. ed. J. Ulrich, Berlin, 1895
121. ed. F. Lecoy, C.F.M.A. Paris, 1965-70 (3 vols.). Vol. 2 (1966).
122. The Seven Deadly Sins, Michigan, 1952.

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123. The Epistles of Horace, ed. A.S. Wilkins, London, 1965, page 4.
 Fervet avaritia miseroque cupidine pectus:
 sunt verba et voces quibus hunc lenire dolorem
 possis et magnam morbi deponere partem.
 Laudis amore tumes: sunt certa piacula quae te
 ter pure lecto poterunt recreare libello.
 Invidus, iracundus, iners, vinosus, amator,
 nemo adeo ferus est ut non mitescere possit,
 Si modo culturae patientem commodet aurem.
 (ll. 33-40)
124. neque molles, neque masculorum concubitores, neque fures, neque avari,
 neque ebriosi, neque maledici, neque rapaces, regnum Dei possidebunt.
125. Nam qui volunt divites fieri incidunt in tentationem, et in laqueum
 diaboli, et desideria multa inutilia et nociva, quae mergunt homines
 in interitum et perditionem. Radix enim omnium malorum est cupiditas;
 quam quidam appetentes erraverunt a fide, et inseruerunt se doloribus
 multis.
126. See F.C. Vigouroux's Dictionnaire de la Bible under "avarice"; reference
 given above, my note 6.
127. P.L. 38, col. 1530.
128. P.L. 49, 55 ff. See also P.L. 49, col. 291, Liber Septimus, "De Spiritu
 Philargyriae."
129. Moralia in Job, P.L. 76, col. 620 sqq.
130. For example, I Corinthians VI:9-10 (see my note 124) and I Timothy 6:9
 (my note 125).
131. Summa Theologica, ll^a ll^{ae}, q. CXVII, a. 1. (ed. J.P. Migne, 4 tomes,
 Mediolani, 1878).
132. P.L. 144, col. 529 ff.
133. S. Wenzel, "The Three Enemies of Man", Medieval Studies, 1967, page 62.
134. It is interesting to note that there has been a considerable shift of
 meaning in this text. The Hebrew word of the original text, "besa"
 meant literally illicit gain or rapine. (Dictionnaire de la Bible,
 Vol. I, 2, page 1285). In Greek this was translated as "philargyria"
 "quo verbo significatur amor pecuniae". (St. Augustine, Ennarratio in
Psalmum CXVIII, Sermon XI, no. 6, P.L. 38.col. 1530. In the Vulgate,
 "cupiditas" became the root of all evil. (I Timothy 6:10, see my note
 125 above).
135. P.L. 76, col. 621.
136. See also ll^a ll^{ae} q, CXVIII, a.7.
137. See J. Batany, Approches du "Roman de la Rose", Bordas, Paris, 1973.
 Chapter 2, pp. 29-39, for a summary of the history of allegory.
138. ed. M. Lavarenne, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1963.

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139. ed. G. Wimmer, Marburg, 1888. Date: 1234/35.
140. ed. P. Lebesque, Paris, 1908. Date: between 1221 and 1230.
141. ed. E. Faral and J. Bastin, Oeuvres Complètes de Rutebeuf, Paris, 1959, 2 vols, Des Jacobins, Vol. I, pp. 314-317.
142. See R. Bultot, "La Doctrine du Mépris du Monde chez Bernard le Clunisien Le Moyen Age, 1964, page 374.
143. ed. Hoskier.
144. See above note 37.
145. Poetry V. See version by Jean de Meung, "Boethius' 'De Consolatione' by Jean de Meung", V.L. Dedeck-Héry, Medieval Studies, 1952, pp. 165-275
 "Trop furent beneuré li homme du premier aage. Il se tindrent apaies des viandez que li loyal champ leur apportoient." There follows an account of man living simply by natural products. The poet continues:
 "Je voudroie que nos temps retournassent orendroit es meurs anciens. Mais l'angoisseuse couvoitise de avoir art en nous plus crueusement que li feu de la montaigne Ethna qui touz jours art. Ha las! qui fu cil qui premier trest et deffoi les massez d'or couvert souz la terre et les pierres precieusez qui se vouloient repondre? Cist traist et deffoi aus hommes perilz precieus."
146. pub. C. Storey, Genève, 1968. Date: 1040, according to G. Paris in his 1872 edition of La Vie de St. Alexis.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. See W.D. Elcock, The Romance Languages (Faber and Faber, London, 1960), page 251: "riche (< Riki, cf. German reich) which in Old French meant 'powerful' and came only by semantic extension to be 'rich'."
2. See F. Lecoy's edition of the Bible of Hugues de Berzé, note 495, page 61, where the editor comments that the reason given by the poet for the defeat of the crusaders was often to be found in chronicles.
3. ed. B.S. Merrilees, Oxford, 1970. Date: 1189-1216.
4. published by A. Jubinal, Nouveau Recueil de Contes, Dits, Fabliaux et autres pièces inédites des XIIIe, XIVe et XVe siècles, 2 vols, Paris, 1839-1842, Vol. 2, pp. 264-272.
5. published by A. Jubinal, Jongleurs et Trouvères ou Choix de Saluts, Epîtres, Réveries et autres pièces légères des XIIIe et XIVe siècles, Paris, 1835, pp. 95-96. Date: XIIIth century.
6. Sermo CXXV, 11; P.L. XXXVIII, 698; also Enarratio in Psalmos, XXXIX, 7; Corpus Christianorum Series Latina XXXVIII, 430.
7. References to be found in J. Orr's edition of the Bible of Guiot de Provins, note to lines 520-522. Tobler, Li Proverbe au vilain, XX:
 Plus a li deables, plus convoite
 also Leroux de Lincy, Proverbes Français, 1, 9:
 Plus a le diables, plus veut avoir.
8. Prose 3, 18:
 "Mais, dirais-tu, les riches ont de quoi satisfaire leur faim, éloigner la soif et le froid. Mais si de cette manière les richesses peuvent calmer le besoin, elles ne peuvent le chasser absolument, car si le besoin est à tout instant béant de convoitise et s'il réclame encore quand il est comblé de ressources, il restera toujours nécessairement un vide à remplir. Je ne rappelle pas que les besoins de la nature sont très faibles, ceux de la cupidité infinis. Si donc les richesses ne peuvent éloigner le besoin et au contraire le créent, quelle raison avez-vous pour croire qu'elles donnent la suffisance?" Boèce, La Consolation de la Philosophie, traduction, introduction et notes, Aristide Bocognano, Paris, 1937, page 99.
9. See also lines 2159 sqq.
10. Horace, Satires, ed. A. Palmer, London, 1964. (Macmillan and Co. Ltd.)
11. Liber de Virtutibus et Vitiis, Caput XXX, De Avaritia. P.L. 100-101, col. 613-638.
12. 11. 868-872.
 "Mammona conditur, et sitis additur, ô sitis undans!
 Fit sine nomine nominis omine Tantalus ille.
 Sunt sua gaudia, lucra, pecunia, praedia, villae.
 Horrea construit, omnibus affluit unus opimus,
 Ad bona serior, ad mala promptior, ad fora primus.
13. ed. A. Gabrielson, Uppsala, 1909, who describes it as an Anglo-Norman work of the last part of the twelfth century.

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14. De opere et eleemosynis, XIII. See Giordani, The Social Message..., page 265, note 30.
15. Enarratio in Psalmos, XCV, 14, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, XXXIX, 1352.
16. Epistle VI, 32, 424 A C.
17. See also Stanza 497 of this work and Roman de Carité: Stanza III, line 7.
18. In his De Contemptu Mundi, Bernard of Morval echoes this line: Book II, line 349:
Captus, egens abit, et vacuus canit ante latronem;
19. Ad Donatum 12, see Giordani, op.cit., page 265, note 30.
20. De Civitate Dei, VI, 3, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, XLVIII, 100; translation: Hafner edition of Dods translation: The City of God, HI, 138.
21. See Roger de Caen's Carmen de Mundi Contemptu: P.L. 158, 692c - 693c.
22. ed. Hoskier, Book II, ll. 884-895.
23. De Miseria... Book I, XV. ed. M. Maccarrone; translated by D.R. Howard, On the Misery of the Human Condition, Lothario dei Segni (Pope Innocent III)
24. See also Vers de la Mort of Robert le Clerc, Stanza 188.
25. This is probably based on Ecclesiastes 2:11.
26. cf. the same idea, relating to court cases, in the early Church father, Cyprian. See above pp. 98-99.
27. This bears a great resemblance to an early "Contemptus Mundi" work by Hermann Contract (1013-1054) who also listed natural causes of the loss of wealth in his De Contemptu Mundi, dated between 1044-46, lines 1015-1094. "Poème exhortatoire sur le mépris du monde", ed. E. Dümmler in Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum, XIII (1867), pp. 385-434.
28. Likely sources are Juvenal Satires, XIV, ll. 126-137; Bible: Ecclus. 14:3 and 14:5; see also Innocent III, De Miseria..., Book II, XVI: "Largus in alieno, sed parcus in proprio. Gulam evacuat, ut archam impleat, corpus extenuat, ut lucrum extendat."
29. J. Morawski, Proverbes Français antérieurs au XVe siècle, Paris, 1925, C.F.M.A. 47.
30. For example, Renaud d'Andon's Le Contenz dou Monde (ed. T. Atkinson Jenkins) which deals only with lawyers: notably, stanza 22. It is a theme we shall meet again in Chapter Three which treats of the rich as social types.
31. See also Le Roman de la Rose, ed. F. Lecoy, ll. 4680-4803; ll. 4975 sqq.; ll. 6251-72.
32. Psalms 39:6; Psalms 49:10-17; Job 27:16-17; Luke 12:20.
33. For example, Hugue de Berzé's Bible, ll. 810-822.

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34. cf. Bernard of Morval, De Contemptu Mundi, Book II, ll. 669-72, for the same idea.
35. ed. E. Faral and J. Bastin, 2 vols., Paris, 1959, Vol. I, pp. 497-509.
36. St. Augustine, Sermo CCCLV, 5, P.L. 39 c. 1572: "Quicumque vult exhaeredato filio haeredem facere Ecclesiam, quaerat alterum qui suscipiat, non Augustinum: imo Deo propitio neminem inueniat." (ref. given by A. Bayot, Poème Moral, page 168, note to 570).
37. See also Helinand, Vers de la Mort, stanza 21; and Robert le Clerc, Vers de la Mort, stanza 2.
38. cf. Bernard of Morval, De Contemptu Mundi, lines 683-85:
Nunc ubi pallia? Nunc ubi prandia? Nunc ubi coena?
Pallia, prandia sunt fugientia, stat sibi poena.
Purpura transiit, escaque finiiit, ultio retat;
See also lines 933-951.
39. Doubtless King Louis VIII, who died in 1226, and who had made many territorial gains during his reign.
40. This bears a close resemblance to Juvenal's satire X, ll. 188-245 (ed. J.D. Duff).
41. See the Pauline text, I Timothy 6:7-8 (my chapter One, note 154).
42. cf. Robert le Clerc, Vers de la Mort, stanza 83, who says that avarice is a vice chiefly of the elderly.
43. See also stanza CLIV (Carité).
44. eg. Le Contenz du Monde, Renaud d'Andon, line 32:
Li aver comperront ce qu'il ont ci happé;
and Vers de la Mort of Robert le Clerc, stanzas 56 and 274.
45. This is a reference to the parable of the talents, Luke 19:12-26.
46. Matthew 19:21.
47. c. 150 to 211-216.
48. See I. Giordani, The Social Message of the Early Church Fathers, page 267 where he notes that the parable of the rich young man had been taken literally, that is preaching a total renunciation of wealth, but that Clement saw that this would lead to "economic anarchy" (Paedagogus III). With particular reference to the text of St. Matthew (19:21) Clement urges detachment from wealth but sees no merit in absolute poverty. (Quis dives salvetur? XI).
49. Gregory: Moralia in Job, VIII, XXVI, 45: P.L. 75, c. 829: "sunt nonnulli justorum qui sic coelestia appetunt ut tamen a terrenorum spe minime frangantur. Largita divinitus patrimonia ad necessitatis subsidium possident, honores sibi temporaliter impensos tenent, aliena non ambiunt, suis licite utuntur." (Reference given by A. Bayot, Poème Moral, note to stanza 480, page 148)
50. Gregory: Homiliae in Evangelos, ll, XL, 2. P.L. 76 c. 1304. (See Bayot's edition of Poème Moral, note to stanza 490, page 150).

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51. For Abelard and the Doctrine of Intention see Abelard and St. Bernard (A Study in twelfth century "modernism") by A Victor Murray, Manchester University Press, 1967, pp. 118-119: "Intention is the root of justice, of sin and of virtue, it is the factor which gives a moral quality to outward acts which by themselves they lack." This thinking is based on Abelard's Scito te ipsum seu Ethica, ed. Cousin, Opera Abelardi, (Paris, vol. I, 1849, vol. II, 1859), vol. II, pp. 596-8.
52. For specific instances of direct imitation of the teaching of Gregory, see A. Bayot's edition of the Poème Moral (Brussels, 1929).
53. published by A. Jubinal, Nouveau Recueil, vol. 2, 1842, pp. 150-161.
54. R. Bossuat, Manuel Bibliographique de la Littérature Française du Moyen Age (Melun, 1951), page 251.
55. That there are good rich men was early accepted to judge merely by the title of a major work by Clement of Alexandria: Quis dives salvetur?
56. See biblical texts such as: Matthew 25:34-40; Mark 12:30-31; Luke 6: 31, 38; Romans 12:5.
57. See J. Gilchrist, Church and Economic Activity in the Middle Ages, pp.77-78. For an early interpretation of the "right to own" and the "right use of wealth", see St. Augustine, Sermo L. 11, 4; P.L. XXXVIII, 327: "Gold belongs to him who uses it rightly, and so it is more truly God's. Gold and silver, therefore, belong to the man who knows how to use gold and silver. For even among men, a man is properly said to possess something only when he uses it rightly. For what is not employed justly is not held rightly. And if a man calls his own that which he does not possess rightly, his voice will not be that of a just possessor but the wickedness of a shameless usurper." Translated by H.A. Deane, The Political and Social Ideas of St. Augustine, page 292, note 122.
58. cf. Carité by the Reclus de Moiliens, stanza CLXVIII, my page 129.
59. Gilchrist, Church and Economic Activity, page 78.
60. Ibid., page 78. Gilchrist refers back to B. Tierney's Medieval Poor Law: a Sketch of Canonical Theory and its Application in England (Berkeley, California, 1959), page 39.
61. Numerous biblical texts affirm this, notably Matthew 25:40. See also my section on the Poor Man (B, 2).
62. Vacant, Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, tome 2, under "Charité", page 2256.
63. Ibid., tome 2, page 2257.
64. Summa Theologica, 11^a 11^{ae} q, XXXII a. 2.
65. Vacant, Dictionnaire de Théologie, Vol. I, A 2, under 'Aumône, pp.2561-2.
66. See R. Bultot, Christianisme et Valeurs Humaines, Tome IV(1), page 98, note 240: "Le riche, dépositaire de biens qui ne lui appartiennent pas, a le devoir de les distribuer aux pauvres; le pauvre, lui, a pour raison d'être d'aider le riche à faire son salut ... la richesse n'est pas un moyen d'épanouissement humain, mais presque uniquement un moyen de salut pour le riche."

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67. See also Cp. XXXI, 2, 532-533, and Cp. IX, 8, 222, and my Chapter One, pp. 41-42.
68. De Contemptu Mundi, Book I, ll. 11-12; II, 715-719.
69. See R. Bultot, "La Doctrine du mépris du monde chez Bernard le Clunisien," Le Moyen Age, 1964, pp. 179-204 and pp. 355-376. "... il mécanise l'aumosne et en fausse l'esprit: le riche procure au pauvre les biens terrestres, le pauvre procure au riche les biens celestes, les bonnes oeuvres apportent le salut." (page 362)
70. The ethics of justice in association with almsgiving originate largely in the teaching of St. Augustine. See above note 57.
71. J. Hastings, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, "Charity", Vol. 3, page 384, article by C.T. Dimont. "The habit of looking at alms solely as a passport to salvation grew so steadily that although Thomas Aquinas still treats of 'eleemosyna' under 'charitas' by later doctors it is transferred to 'poenitentia' where it stands as one of the three elements of 'satisfactio'."
72. cf. Carité, stanza XCIX, ll. 9-10:
Carités est fors armeure,
Car dars nel fausse ne ne fent.
73. St. Augustine's teaching made this point clearly: "We ought, therefore, to do alms that we may be heard when we pray that our past sins may be forgiven, not that while we continue in them we may think to provide ourselves with a licence for wickedness by alms-deeds." De Civitate Dei, XXI, 27; Corpus Christianorum Series Latina XLVIII, 801; Hafner II 465-66 quoted by H.A. Deane, The Political and Social Ideas of St. Augustine, Columbia University Press, 1963, page 111.
74. Sulpicius Severus, Vita B. Martini, P.L. 20, c. 162.
75. A similar exemplum ends thus: stanza 535 of Poème Moral.
76. This is confirmed in Stanza 605, where reference is made to the rich man's role as judge at a court of law, and as mediator in armed disputes.
77. Gregory, Homiliae in Evangelos, IV, 3, P.L. 76, c. 1094.
78. This was not so in the first extant poem on the Three Estates of Society, Praeloquia by Rathier de Verone (P.L. 136, LI, XIX, 33-34, c. 186-188) date 936, who includes the beggar as a social type. See J. Batany, "Les Pauvres et la Pauvreté dans les revues des 'estats du monde'," in Tome II (pp. 469-487) of Etudes sur l'Histoire de la Pauvreté jusqu'au XVIe siècle, sous la direction de Michel Mollat, 2 vols, 1974.
79. Ibid., page 470. Beggars contravene the biblical approval of honest labour as a condition for one's substance. See II Thessalonians 3:7-12.
80. This is the case in Miserere by the Reclus de Moiliens (Stanzas XLI-XLVII) and also the Besant de Dieu of Guillaume le Clerc (ll. 1057-1083).
81. Gregory, Moralia in Job, XII, ll. 2 (PL.75, c.986 sqq.)

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82. Guiot's opinion on monks and monastic poverty will be studied in great detail in Chapter Three.
83. Livre des Manières, ll. 937-40.
84. I Timothy, 6:7-8.
85. cf. St. Augustine: "But those who have none of this wealth, but only desire it, are counted also among rich men who will be rejected; for God takes account not of power, but of will." Enarratio in Psalmos LXXXIII, 3; Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, XXXIX, 1147; translated Philip Schaff, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers (1st series), VIII, 400; quoted in H.A. Deane, The Political and Social Ideas of St. Augustine, Columbia University Press, 1963, page 294, note 1.
86. ed. E. Faral et J. Bastin, vol. I, pp. 570-72.
87. ll. 4680-4764; ll. 4769-4803; ll. 4837-4923, ed. Félix Lecoy, Paris, 1970
3 vols. (CFMA) Tome 1 (1965)

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1. "Des 'Trois Fonctions' aux 'Trois Etats'?", Annales, Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations, 1963, pp. 933-938.
2. See M. M. Dubois: Aelfric, sermonnaire, docteur et grammairien, pp. 210-213.
3. See G.A. Huckel, Les Poèmes Satiriques d'Adalbéron, Bibliothèque de la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université de Paris, t. XIII, 1901, pp. 155-156: "La cité de Dieu que l'on croit une est donc divisée en trois: certains prient, d'autres combattent, et d'autres enfin travaillent. Ces trois ordres qui co-existent ne souffriraient pas d'être séparés; les services rendus par l'un, permettent les travaux des deux autres, chacun à son tour se charge de soulager l'ensemble. Tant que cette loi a pu triompher, le monde a joui de la paix."
4. The mention was made in a speech and later recorded in Gesta Episcopum Cameracensium, see article by R. Batany, my note 1 above.
5. J. Chelini, Histoire Religieuse de l'Occident Medieval, page 272: "Cet effort même pour intégrer les nouveaux groupes de la bourgeoisie et de l'artisanat urbain dans les structures ecclésiastiques, souligne combien, à la fin du XIIIe siècle, le souci de l'unité de la société chrétienne restait vif dans les cadres du monde occidental."
6. See Ruth Mohl, The Three Estates in Medieval and Renaissance Literature, New York, 1933, page 8.
7. See E. du Méril: Poésies Populaires Latines du Moyen Age, Paris, 1847, pp. 128-136. Date: second half of 12th century. A much earlier work, Praeloquia of Rather of Verona (date c. 931) may be said to be an "Estates of the world" poem, but the listing of social categories does not correspond to the stereotyped divisions of twelfth and thirteenth century works. His list is as follows (see J. Mann, Chaucer and Medieval Estates Satire, p.203): 1. Christians: knights: craftsmen: doctors: merchants: advocates: judges: witnesses: public ministers: nobles: hired employees and vassals: counselors: lords: serfs: teachers: pupils: the rich: people of moderate income: beggars. 2. men: women: husbands: wives: celibates: mothers and fathers: sons and daughters: widows: virgins: children: boys: adolescents: old men. 3. king.
8. ed. F.J. Tanqueray, Paris, 1922. Date: 1150 according to its editor; 1200 according to Herr Jauss (Grundriss Der Romanischen Literaturen des Mittelalters, Band VI/2, vol. VI: La Littérature Didactique, Allegorique et Satirique, tome 2, Heidelberg, 1970, section 7216.
9. See for example: J. Peter, Satire and Complaint in Early English Literature, Oxford, 1956, page 80: "Of the professions attacked by far and away the most important are the clergy, who are pilloried in almost every complaint of the period." and E. Faral, Les Jongleurs en France au Moyen Age, page 38: "L'avarice du siècle et du clergé fait le deuil des vagants."
10. See J. Crosland, Medieval French Literature, page 145: "the stingy priest ... the cunning priest who had grown fat on his stipends and the rich villain were ... the chief objects of ridicule and abuse in the 'fabliaux'."
11. Contra Symmachum, ed. M. Lavarenne. Prudence, Paris, C.U.F., 1943-1951, 4 vols. Vol. 3, 1948.

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12. For references to Peter Damian see Chapter One, section A, 4, g, i. The works of Bishop Hildebert of Lavardin include a long poem on avarice in which he attacks this vice in the clergy: De Nummo, seu satyra adversus avaritiam, P.L. CLXXI, col. 1402, and in F.W. Otto's Commentarii critici in codices bibliothecae Gissensis, Giessen, 1842. (References given by F.J.E. Raby, A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages, Vol. I, page 321, note 1. See also J.W. Thompson, Economic and Social History..., page 685: "Among those who most severely criticised the Church for its corruptions, and who were most unsparing in their denunciations of the characters of the clergy were some of the most saintly, as well as some of the most thoughtful sons of the Church - men like St. Bernard, Peter Damian, Peter Cantor, Hildebert of Lemans, Peter of Blois, and Robert Grosseteste.")
13. Hymne sur la Vanité et la Misère du Monde, ed. Poésies Populaires Latines du Moyen Age, M. Edelstand du Ménil, pp. 102-107.
14. See F.J.E. Raby, A History of Secular Latin Poetry..., vol. II, Oxford, 1934, pp. 27-28.
15. Ibid., pp. 28-29.
16. Date 1150. See my Chapter One, section A, 4, g, ii.
17. K. Strecker's work on this poet listed by Raby, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 379. See also list of works in J. Mann, Chaucer and Medieval Estates Satire, page 297; and page 234, note 14, for a list of Medieval Latin anti-clerical satire.
18. ed. J.H. Mozley and R.R. Raymo, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1960.
19. See G. Owst, Literature and Pulpit, pp. 241, 244, 245, 248, 258, 276-7; and L. Bourgain, La Chaire Francaise, pp. 220, 277, 278, 280-1, 336.
20. See J. Peter, Satire and Complaint, page 81: "To accept without question the evidence of the poets would be to conclude that the Church in the Middle Ages was little better than a moral sty, shielded by its own hypocrisy."
21. See Thompson, Vol. II, page 660: "The Church, in common with secular government, rested upon land as its base. The stipends of the clergy were derived from landed endowments, as prebends and the like."
22. Ibid., page 692.
23. Ibid., page 693.
24. Ibid., page 693.
25. Ibid., page 648.
26. See Fliche et Martin, Histoire de l'Eglise, Vol. 12, Première Partie, Livres II a VI par Gabriel Le Bras, pp. 251-252 on Church expenditure.
27. This point is made by E. Perroy, Histoire Générale des Civilisations, Tome III, Le Moyen Age, page 276: "...un autre problème plus vaste et plus élevé commence à se poser, celui de l'attitude des gens d'église vis-à-vis des richesses de ce monde. Problème tout neuf celui-ci et

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27. (contd.) qui est directement suscité par le changement des conditions économiques, par le renouveau des échanges, l'accélération de la circulation monétaire, l'enrichissement de l'occident."
28. ed. A. Jubinal, Nouveau Recueil...., Vol. I, 1839, pp. 283-292. Date: 13th or 14th century.
29. Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 360-371. Date: probably 14th century.
30. Ibid., Vol. II, 1842, pp. 316-325. Date: probably 13th century.
31. ed. A. Jubinal, Jongleurs et Trouvères, 1835, pp. 94-100. Date: 13th century.
32. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, ed. James Hastings, vol. XI, 19; 4^o, page 525, article on simony by A.J. Maclean.
33. See Acts VIII; 18-20.
34. See Vacant; Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, tome 14, 2, article on simony by A. Bride (pp. 2141-2160), page 2145; see also Handbook of Church History, Vol. 3, The Church in the Age of Feudalism, by F. Kempf, page 370: "The first Roman Reform Synod of 1074 renewed the old rules, decreeing exclusion from the ministry for simony, suspension for Nicolaitism. The synod of the following year drew the reins tighter: for simonists it now decreed permanent deposition." For the difficulty of these reform measures, see Daniel-Rops, La Cathédrale et la Croisade, pp. 161-162.
35. Thompson, page 687: "It is literally true that in the Middle Ages everything had its price - offices of Church and State, 'presents' to judges, advantageous marriages and marriage settlements, wardship, etc. ... Fees were attached to all such administration. With the prevalent thinking so concrete, it was unavoidable that the penitential system should reflect such psychology."
36. page 688.
37. See note 32.
38. See also Lateran IV (1215) canon 63.
39. See also Vers of Thibaud de Marly, line 391; L'Etat du Monde by Rutebeuf, ll. 163-64, ed. Faral et Bastin, vol. 1, pp. 383-88; Li Tornoieiment Antecrit, ed. G. Wimmer (Date: c. 1234), line 888.
40. by William Waddington, Date 1250-1270, ed. F.J. Furnivall, 1901-03, Early English Text Society.
41. cf. Roman des Romans, ed. F.J. Tanqueray, line 495. "vent Iglise" which is directly linked to the betrayal of Judas, and the selling of God in that sense.
42. See also pages 197 and 198.
43. ed. J.H. Fox, Paris, 1950. Date: middle of the thirteenth century.
44. ed. A. Jeanroy and A. Langfors, Chansons Satiriques, Piece VII, page 13.

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45. ed. A. Jeanroy and A. Langfors, Chansons Satiriques, Piece IX, page 17, stanza III.
46. by Moniot, ed. A. Jeanroy and A. Langfors, Chansons Satiriques, Piece VI, pp. 10-11.
47. See J.A. Yunck, "Economic Conservatism, Papal Finance and the Medieval Satires on Rome", pp. 335-351, Medieval Studies, Vol. XXIII, Toronto, 1961.
48. ed. A.C. Hoskier, London, 1929, Book III, ll. 599 sqq.
49. Nigel Wireker's Speculum Stultorum, ll. 2525-32, ed. J.H. Mozley and R.R. Raymo, University of California Press, 1960.
50. Dist. II, XVI, page 82, ed. M.R. James.
51. Much of the historical functions of various clerical ranks I have taken from Fliche et Martin, Histoire de l'Eglise. In this section I have used Volume 12, written by G. Lebras.
52. Lebras, page 351: "Les besoins d'argent de la Papauté, relativement modestes pendant le premier millénaire, se sont subitement accrus à l'age classique. De grandes dépenses furent engagées pour les Croisades de Terre Sainte, en Occident, les conflits de toutes sortes exigeaient des fonds publics ou secrets, l'entretien du gouvernement central devenait écrasant."
53. W.E. Lunt, Papal Revenues in the Middle Ages, Columbia University Press, 1934, Vol. I, Introduction.
54. Lunt, Vol. I, page 31: "By the middle of the eleventh century the papacy collected effective rents from only a few fragments of the states of the Church. Of the remainder, some had passed entirely out of its possession by gift, usurpation or seizure, the greater part was in the hands of feudal vassals who had the use and enjoyment of the land, paying to the papacy in recognition of its proprietorship only nominal rents."
55. Lunt, I, pp. 71-72.
56. Ibid., pp. 75-76.
57. cf. also Rutebeuf's pejorative use of the word "romains" to mean evil: "Francois sont devenu Romain" (La Voie de Paradis, line 716, Vol.I, p.365).
58. Daniel-Rops, La Cathédrale et la Croisade, page 309.
59. This tax, known as "services" was not formally instituted until the second half of the thirteenth century (when Rutebeuf was writing) but it existed in the form of enforced "gratuities" long before this. cf. Yunck, pp. 341 and 345-347.
60. Lebras, Fliche et Martin, Vol. 12(2), page 355: "La nécessité d'un personnel stable de juristes conduisait la papauté à créer, vers le milieu du XIIIe siècle, des auditeurs en titre."
61. See Yunck, page 342.
62. Such complaints occurred also in the Medieval Latin works, eg. Speculum Stultorum, ll. 2533-42.

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63. cf. also Section B, 3, A for nobleman as judge of a lay court of law.
64. The same charge is made by John of Salisbury to Pope Hadrian IV, in a conversation recorded in his Policraticus, Liber VI, cap. XXIV, ed. C.C.I. Webb, Oxford, 1909, Tome II, pp. 67-68.
65. Ibid., pp. 68-71.
66. Ibid., pp. 71-73.
67. Ibid., page 73.
68. Innocent III, pope from 1198-1216.
69. ed. Michele Maccarrone, Lotharii Cardinalis (Innocentii III) De Miseria humane conditionis, Lugano, Thesaurus Mundi, 1955; translated into English by D.R. Howard, On the Misery of the Human Condition, 1969.
70. See Book II, caput XIII: "De Contempnenda possessione divitiarum", ed. Maccarrone, page 49.
71. For a biography of Innocent III, see Daniel-Rops, op.cit., pp. 178-182.
72. See Daniel-Rops, pp. 179-180.
73. Canons bear such revealing titles as: On Restricting drunkenness among clerics (canon 15); Churches are not to be used as warehouses (canon 19); no-one may have two benefices with cure of souls (canon 29); On simony (canons 63, 64, 65, 66). Listed in J. Gilchrist's The Church and Economic Activity in the Middle Ages, pp. 149-150.
74. Daniel-Rops, page 179 and page 251.
75. 1159-81. It was during the papacy of Innocent II that the right to dispose of benefices was accorded to the Pope so that he might reward personal services. This practice became more popular with succeeding Popes and was very unpopular: it was charged that unsuitable people were given high ecclesiastical office. Such a complaint was made by Robert Grossetete in 1245 at the Council of Lyons. See Daniel-Rops, page 295.
76. Guillaume le Clerc's Besant de Dieu is based largely on the De Miseria of Innocent III. See note 108, Chapter One.
77. 1216-1227. In 1225 Honorius III decreed that one prebend in every church and cathedral should be reserved for disposal by the Holy See. Daniel-Rops, page 295.
78. Published by P. Meyer, Romania IV, 1875, pp. 370-97; also by I. Aspin, Anglo-Norman Political Songs, Oxford, 1953. 148 lines; date: first half of the thirteenth century, according to P. Meyer (page 388).
79. Rutebeuf's literary activity dates from 1249 to around 1277. See Faral et Bastin, Vol. I, Introduction, page 35 and page 37.
80. Pope Alexander IV, 1254-1261, a former Dominican.
81. Lebras, Histoire de l'Eglise, Vol. 12(2), page 342: "...il (le pape) tient compte des mérites sans doute, mais aussi de ses sentiments et de ses intérêts, des recommandations princières."

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82. Lebras, pp. 342-3.
83. Lebras, page 343: They dealt with "controverses bénéficiales, conflits entre évêques et chapitres; disputes civiles, sur les successions et testaments; accusations d'hérésie ou de sortilège."
84. Lebras, page 344.
85. ed. A. Jubinal, Nouveau Recueil..., Vol. 2, 1842, pp. 264-272
86. Lebras, page 343: "Pour la réforme de l'Eglise, pour les relations politiques, pour la lutte contre l'hérésie, le Saint Siège dépêchait dans la Chrétienté des légats qui, depuis Gregoire VII, furent surtout des cardinaux. Vers la fin du XIIe siècle, on appela 'legati de latere' ces délégués, on pourrait traduire: les détachés de la puissance pontificale, qui jouissaient, ... d'un droit quasi-pontifical."
87. For the various distributions of legates, see F. Kempf, Handbook of Church History, Vol. 3, page 433.
88. See Daniel-Rops, page 289 on the appointment of permanent legates, and the protest against their tyrannical conduct.
89. cf. Besant de Dieu: ll. 1958-61, on Rome:
 Ceste cite dont jeo vus cont,
 A ses legaz par tuz le mont.
 Orgoil vait par tute la terre.
 Tut velt avoir e tut conquerre.
90. Vol. 3, pp. 267-68.
91. L. Bourgain, La Chaire Francaise au XIIe siècle, 1879, page 26.
92. Lebras, page 370: "Quand il voyage des dizaines de cavaliers l'escortent, un protocole minutieux le glorifie et il emporte un autel dans ses bagages. Des privilèges le mettent à l'abri des excommunications générales et des rigueurs de l'interdict."
93. Lebras, page 370: "Par la richesse, l'évêque acquiert une puissance tout temporelle. Il lui suffit d'avoir des biens pour être impliqué dans le siècle. Quand ces biens sont des seigneuries, il devient, à ce titre, pur séculier. ... Tous les honneurs et privilèges du seigneur lui appartiennent." See also M. Bloch, La Société Féodale, Vol. 2, page 100: "Par la fortune, le pouvoir, la vocation du commandement ces grands seigneurs d'Eglise étaient au niveau des plus hauts barons d'épée."
94. See Daniel-Rops, pp. 310-311 for the revenues of a bishop.
95. Lebras, page 369.
96. Lebras, page 369: "...la charge d'héberger au cours de ses visites. L'évêque et sa nombreuse suite pesait si lourdement sur le budget des curés que la coutume se généralisa de fixer une indemnité forfaitaire, la procuration qui, après bien des vicissitudes, se règle en monnaie."
97. Lebras, page 373: "En fait, l'épiscopat de l'âge classique se recrute surtout dans la noblesse. L'Eglise et les Etats pensaient y trouver leur avantage. Cette collusion s'explique par la structure sociale qu'elle tendait à renforcer."

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98. See The Crisis of Church and State 1050-1300, B. Tierney, 1964, passim; also Daniel-Rops, pp. 225-234.
99. Canon 8. COD (Conciliorum Occumenicorum Decreta, centro di documentazione istituto per le scienze religiose: St. Louis, Mo., 1962) 167.
100. J. Chelini, Histoire Religieuse de l'Occident Médiéval, 1968, page 287, who records an improvement in episcopal elections: "Les évêques continuaient pour la plupart à sortir de la noblesse et, par leurs revenus et leur position sociale, menaient un train de grand seigneur.... Malgré ce genre de vie seigneurial, l'élévation du niveau moral était incontestable. On ne trouve plus aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles de hauts prélats scandaleux...."
101. Again the poet must be referring to lay investiture. There is mention of benefices being treated as hereditary by absentee clergy in La Société Française au Temps de Philippe-Auguste by Achille Luchaire, 1909, pp.44-45.
102. See Yunck, "Economic Conservatism...." (Medieval Studies, 1961), page 346 where it is claimed that the expense of the consecration of a bishop cost the latter nearly a year's income. This often necessitated borrowing on the part of the new prelate.
103. Lateran III, 1179, canon 4, deals with bishops and their life-style, notably the hospitality to be afforded them when on visitation. They should restrict their retinue to twenty or thirty horse. "They are not to take with them hunting dogs and birds, ... they are not to look for elaborate meals, ... We also forbid bishops to burden their subjects with taxes and excessive dues." (translation in J. Gilchrist, Church and Economic Activity, pp. 166-167).
104. cf. also Speculum Stultorum, ll. 2673-86:
 Qui, quamvis veniant ovium sub veste, rapaces
 Sanguinis hos avidos noveris esse lupos.
 (ll. 2673-4)
 The association of the priest and the shepherd who protects his sheep from the wolf comes from the Bible: John 10:1-16.
105. Lebras, page 376: "Dès le IXe siècle, la tentation de la richesse rompait l'unité de ces presbyteria légalement unifiés: les chanoines se constituèrent un patrimoine, la manse capitulaire, le divisèrent en prébendes, et par un double mouvement, la communauté de vie se brisa, tandis que la communauté d'intérêts favorisait la naissance d'une corporation autonome."
106. Ibid., page 378: "La base de la puissance du Chapitre, c'est la fortune patrimoniale, qui, au XIIIe siècle, atteignit, en la plupart des diocèses, son apogée."
107. Ibid., page 380: "Quel corps fut plus jaloux de son prestige? Titres, costumes, insignes affichent sa dignité. Il supporte mal le moindre oubli de sa présence."
108. See Kempf, Handbook...., page 453: "...from the beginning of the eleventh century there gradually emerged a critical attitude vis-a-vis the wealthy chapters that had been incorporated into the economic and political system of feudalism."

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109. For the duties of the provost, see Lebras, page 380.
110. See Lebras, page 391.
111. Canon reference: X, 1, 23, 9 (ad haec), given by Lebras, page 392, note 9.
112. Lebras, page 393.
113. Lebras, page 431 for the duties of the dean.
114. Lebras, page 431 for the source of income of the dean.
115. Ibid., page 431: "Parfois, leur richesse s'accrut par des extorsions. Le soin que prennent les évêques de fixer les tarifs, d'exiger une exacte tenue des comptes, d'exercer un contrôle attentif laisse supposer des abus fréquents dont plusieurs sont dénoncés dans les statuts."
116. Ibid., page 431.
117. It was one of the theories on property propounded by the mendicants or Franciscans. When pious donations and legacies embarrassed their refusal to own property, they solved the problem by declaring that all wealth that they received and used was in reality the property of the Pope, as God's representative. See Franciscan Poverty, M.D. Lambert, London, 1961, page 95.
118. Duties of the parish priest are listed by Lebras, pp. 406-07.
119. Lebras, page 407. See also my next section, on the mendicants, where we see the friars usurping this function of parish priests.
120. Lebras, page 409, for revenues of parish priest.
121. Ibid., page 409.
122. Daniel-Rops, La Cathédrale et la Croisade, page 298: "Le clergé rural était fort pauvre. En principe chaque paroisse avait des bénéfices qui devaient faire vivre son clergé, mais outre qu'ils étaient souvent détournés par un seigneur ou un prélat, il advenait qu'il fussent bien minimes. L'étude des taxes royales montre qu'il existaient beaucoup de paroisses non imposées parce que leur revenu annuel était inférieur à dix et même à sept livres, à peu près un tiers de sou par jour, alors qu'un ouvrier gagnait au minimum un demi-sou."
123. Daniel-Rops, page 298. His sources are given page 788.
124. cf. the duty of a priest as defined in the Bible: 2 Timothy 4:2.
125. See note 104 above.
126. briche: "on jouait, surtout entre jeunes filles, assis, avec un bâton; il paraît qu'on faisait sauter sa 'briche' pour l'essayer avant de la choisir." - Van Hamel's edition of the Roman de Carité, Vol. 2, page 314, note to stanza XC, 6.
127. Quoted in translation by G.G. Coulton, Life in the Middle Ages, Vol. I, pp. 95-103.

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128. Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 84-85.
129. Ibid., Vol. II, page 199.
130. "Economic Conservatism,....", Medieval Studies, 1961, page 334.
131. Ibid., page 341.
132. J. Peter, Satire and Complaint in Early English Literature, page 10: Satire tends to be scornful, often reflecting only a token desire for reform, whereas complaint is corrective and clearly does not despair of its power to correct."
133. See also the motives of other poets:
 Le Reclus de Moilliens (Miserere) says it is his duty, and begs God's forgiveness for having delayed his work so long (Stanza I).
 Guiot de Provins: "Et sens feloignie et sens ire
 vodrai molt lou siecle reprendre,
 et assallir, et raison rendre,
 (Bible: ll. 12-14)
 Hugues de Berzé claims he is speaking from personal experience, and his attitude also seems to be one of a necessary duty to be accomplished. The tone of his work suggests that he criticizes more in sorrow than anger. See Bible: ll. 385-415.
 For Guillaume le Clerc, too, it is a duty to speak out. God has given him the means. He must use his gifts for public edification: Besant de Dieu: ll. 2780-2809.
134. Li bon reclus, li bon chanoine,
 Li bon hermite, li bon moine,
 Qui sont tut dis obedient.
 (Besant de Dieu: ll. 589-91)
135. Yvonne Azais, Histoire de l'Eglise, Fliche et Martin, Vol. 10, pp.406-407.
136. See L. Bourgain, Le Chaire Française au XIIe siècle, Paris, 1879, Chapter IV, page 66: "La foi saisit le douzième siècle avec un surcroît de puissance et le porte tout entier vers la vie monastique. Que de foyers étincelants d'amour s'allument de toutes parts."
137. The majority of historians lay blame with the secular Church: M.D. Chenu, La Théologie au Douzième Siècle, Paris, 1957, 2e Partie, page 228: "contre la décadence des clercs le grand remède est la 'vita communis'."; H.B. Workman, The Evolution of the Monastic Ideal, London, 1918, page 10: "The hermit fled not so much from the world as from the world in the Church, from court bishops who fought for rich sees...."; Georges de Lagarde, La Naissance de l'Esprit Laïque au declin du Moyen Age, 1934, Chap. V, page 102: "Il est certain que la volonté de protester contre l'insolente richesse d'un trop grand nombre de prélats ou de clercs n'est pas étrangère au mouvement (monastique)."
138. G. de Lagarde, La Naissance...., page 103, refers to it thus: "la magnifique réaction du Christianisme, en face du capitalisme naissant."
139. See M. M. Sheehan, The Will in Medieval England, Toronto, 1963, pp.258-62.

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140. See J.W. Thompson, Economic and Social History of the Middle Ages, New York, 1928, Vol. II, page 608: "...the founding of a monastery in the Middle Ages was a lucrative form of investment. For the founder was the overlord. Abbeys created by laymen were the hereditary property of the founder's descendants, their revenues formed part of his estate, they were bequeathed, devised, partitioned among his heirs."
141. Alexander Bruel, Recueil des Chartres de l'Abbaye de Cluny, I (Paris, 1876), Doc. 112. It is translated and quoted by R.H. Bainton, The Medieval Church, New Jersey, 1962, pp. 115-116.
142. This case is quoted by H.B. Workman, Evolution of the Monastic Ideal, p.223.
143. See J.W. Thompson, Economic and Social History...., Vol. II, page 623: "The monasteries were not only relatively, but absolutely, richer than the bishoprics."
144. For a complete account of the expenses and charitable works of the monasteries, see H. Daniel-Rops, L'Eglise de la Cathédrale et de la Croisade, Histoire de l'Eglise, 3, 1952, pp. 320-326. This is a useful summary of the huge and authoritative work of French church historians.
145. Ibid., p. 318.
146. J.W. Thompson, Economic and Social History, Vol. 2, page 638.
147. Ibid., pp. 638-639.
148. La Cathedrale et la Croisade, page 344.
149. Ibid., page 345.
150. See David Knowles, Christian Monasticism, London, 1969, page 109.
151. See M.D. Chenu, La Théologie...., Chapter X, page 229: "des structures juridiques et administratives, des justices autonomes avec leurs tribunaux et leurs sanctions, des services d'impôts avec leurs fonctionnaires s'étaient constitués, sous cette tutelle monastique."
152. See Thompson, page 627.
153. M.D. Chenu makes this point when speaking of the wealth of the monasteries: "Comment ne pas éprouver à l'éveil du sens évangélique et par comparaison avec la première communauté apostolique, le choc d'une grave discordance?" La Théologie...., page 229.
154. cf. Walter Map, De Nugis Curialium, between 1181-1193, ed. M.R. James, Oxford, 1914; Nigellus Wireker, Speculum Stultorum, 1180, ed. J.H. Mozley and R.R. Raymo, Univ. of California Press, 1960.
155. ed. A Langfors, Paris, 1913, C.F.M.A. 13. Date: thirteenth century.
156. cf. Nigel Wireker, Speculum Stultorum (1180) especially in connection with individual orders: also L'Ordre de Bel Ayse (c. 1300), an Anglo-Norman work, again with reference to particular orders. A full list of medieval Latin and English works which feature worldly monks is given in J. Mann's Chaucer and Medieval Estates Satire, pp. 17-37 and notes on pp. 218-225. See also G.G. Coulton, Ten Medieval Studies, page 22 for reference to attacks made on monks by contemporary churchmen, such as Roger Bacon,

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156. (contd.) Saint Bonaventura, Jacques de Vitry, who all came to the same conclusions as the Old French poets. See also page 25 and page 75.
157. This aspect is also a popular theme in the above mentioned works and is associated particularly with Cluniacs in medieval Latin literature. Speculum Stultorum: ll. 2087-8; L'Ordre de Bel Ayse: ll. 96-115. Monastic gluttony gave rise to proverbs: see H. Walther, Proverbia Sententiaeque Latinitatis Medii Aevi, 5 vols. and index, Göttingen, 1963-67, 19, 506-507. D. Knowles gives historical evidence of this trend in the English abbeys: The Religious Orders in England, Vol. I, Cambridge, 1948, pp. 100, 105, 107.
158. The proper names Folain and Durant are used by the poet to represent men of tough character. See note on page 304 in Vol. 2 of Van Hamel's edition.
159. See Fliche et Martin, Histoire de l'Eglise, vol. 7, pp. 317-318, for the details of the worldly existence led in the cloisters.
160. See the Charter on my page 243.
161. See the works mentioned in Note 157 above.
162. Chansons Satiriques et Bacchiques, Piece IX, ll. 11-16, stanza 11, page 16.
163. See Note 157 above.
164. Apologia ad Guillelmum Sancti-Theodori Abbatem, P.L. 182, pp. 895-919, translated by R.H. Bainton, The Medieval Church, pp. 131-132.
165. See D. Knowles, Christian Monasticism, page 108: "In many of the large abbeys the abbots had become vassals, tenants-in-chief of the king, with the obligations of feudal service and attendance at the royal Council. They had set up establishments of their own which gave them a place apart from their community, and they spent a great part of the year either at court or in travelling from manor to manor. Even as early as 1170 and in the person of such a worthy man as Samson of St. Edmondsbury, we can see the spiritual father lost behind the great magnate and skillful administrator."
166. Daniel-Rops, La Cathédrale et la Croisade, page 175.
167. See Fliche et Martin, Vol. 8, page 453: "Aubri et ses compagnons ont pris l'engagement de n'avoir en bénéfice ni église, ni chapelle, ni cimetière, ni four, ni moulin, ni domaine seigneurial, ni dîmes."
168. See D. Knowles, Christian Monasticism, page 77, for an account of the role of the lay brethren.
169. cf. Walter Map, De Nugis Curialium: Distinctio I, XXV; Speculum Stultorum: ll. 2115-20.
170. In defence of the point made by Hugues de Berzé, there is the apology for the Cistercians made by Bishop Giraldus Cambrensis. He explains why they were so eager to acquire land: "A good intention, I suppose, is the occasion of this greed of theirs which is denounced throughout the world; it arises from the hospitality which the members of this order, although in themselves the most abstemious of all others, indefatigably exercise,

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170. (contd.) in their unbounded charity to the poor and to strangers. And because they have no revenues, like others, but live entirely by labor and the produce of the hands, they greedily seek for lands with so much effort, in order that they may provide sufficient for these purposes, and so they strive to get farms and broad pastures with unabated perseverance.' (Quoted in translation by J.W. Thompson, Economic and Social History..., Vol. 2, page 638).
171. D. Knowles, Christian Monasticism, page 89.
172. See Daniel-Rops, page 175, for reference to the document of 1202 addressed by Innocent III to the abbots of Clairvaux, Morimond, Pontigny and La Ferté
173. See Fliche et Martin, Vol. 9, page 300 for an account of how the Cistercians initiated a "capitalist" economy: "on doit admettre que, dès le troisième quart du XIIe siècle, l'ordre de Cîteaux avait rendu un immense service à la société occidentale: il avait été l'un des ferments les plus actifs de la transformation de l'économie médiévale, et il avait puissamment contribué au développement de la production, du commerce d'exportation et de la richesse mobilière."
174. They receive only praise in Speculum Stultorum: ll. 2227-2256; see also G.G. Coulton, Ten Medieval Studies, page 22. The motto of the Carthusians is: "Never reformed, because never deformed".
175. Rutebeuf is the exception. Writing some fifty years after Guiot, he makes a veiled criticism of the Carthusians. He ironically approves the resettling of some Carthusians in the heart of Paris, rather than in their customary wilderness. His tone leads us to believe that he accuses them of forsaking their asceticism and of yielding to the temptations of city comforts:
- Cil de Chartrouse sont moult sage,
 Quar il ont lessié le boschage
 Por aprochier la bone vile.
 Ici ne voi je point d'outrage:
 Ce n'estoit pas lor heritage
 D'estre toz jors en itel pile!
 (Les Ordres de Paris: ll. 145-150, Faral et Bastin,
 Vol. I, page 328)
- One notes that Rutebeuf can make no specific charge against them.
176. See H.B. Workman, The Evolution..., page 242.
177. For an account of the struggle for power in this order see note to line 1465 of the Bible of Guiot de Provins in J. Crr's edition; see also Fliche et Martin, Vol. 9(2), page 303 for the details of the events.
178. Similarly, there is an allusion to the clashes in Hues li Rois' Descrission, ll. 169-74; the Speculum Stultorum, written before the major clash does not comment on the power of the converts in the section on the Grandimontanes, ll. 2183-2226.
179. Details of the order given by Deanesly, A History of the Medieval Church, page 128, and by Fliche et Martin, Histoire de l'Eglise, Vol. 9, pp. 127-131.
180. In Fliche et Martin, Histoire de l'Eglise, Vol. 9(2), page 295, we find that, according to chroniclers, at the end of the twelfth century the order boasted 1000 abbeys and priories. Daniel-Rops (page 172) testifies that in 1350 this number had increased to 1,500.

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181. by Nigel Wireker, ll. 2287-2314.
182. This is also the dominant trait according to Speculum Stultorum: ll.2257-86; likewise L'Ordre de Bel Ayse: ll. 79-95.
183. Daniel-Rops, La Cathédrale et la Croisade, page 145.
184. Ibid., page 546 and page 717.
185. ^{See note 78} ed. I.S.J. Aspin, Anglo-Norman Political Songs, Oxford, 1953. Date: first half of thirteenth century; possibly Anglo-Norman; 148 lines; incomplete.
186. cf. also Walter Map, De Nugis Curialium, Distinctio I, XIX, ed. James, page 29, where the Templars' great wealth is contrasted with their modest beginning. However Walter defends the Templars by saying that, to his knowledge, they live correctly in France. He claims ignorance of their conduct in Jerusalem: XXII, James, page 34.
187. Fliche et Martin, Vol. 9(2), pp. 311-313.
188. For the evolution of the order, see Orr's edition of Guiot de Provins' Bible, page 138, note to line 1808.
189. For the history of this order see Orr, Bible of Guiot de Provins, pp. 142-3, note to line 1936.
190. Ibid., page 143.
191. This is an allusion to the habit of marking the pigs of this order with a cross, putting a bell around their necks, and allowing them to roam at will and enjoy free grazing. See also Daniel-Rops, page 321.
192. Usually known in the Old French works as Cordeliers, from the cord with which they tied their tunic at the waist.
193. For the importance of poverty to St. Francis, see Daniel-Rops, page 187: "...pour lui, le renoncement total, le dénuement absolu serait la fin suprême, à la fois moyen et but de toute sainteté...."
194. Usually called Jacobins in the Old French works, after their first convent which was founded in the rue St. Jacques.
195. Daniel-Rops, La Cathédrale...., page 205.
196. See D. Knowles, Christian Monasticism, page 116.
197. The matter was thrashed out in a papal Bull in 1230: Quo Elongati, where a distinction is drawn between possessing wealth, judged acceptable, and considering oneself the owner of this wealth, found unacceptable. Therefore, after the time of St. Francis, poverty in the order was often merely theoretical. For subsequent debates on this subject, see M.D. Lambert, Franciscan Poverty, London, 1961, pp. 51, 91, 99. Criticism also came from within the order. In his Epistle of 1257, St. Bonaventura attempts to analyse the reasons for the corruption of the Franciscan order. He lists contributory factors: involvement with commerce and greed for money; importunate begging which alienates the sympathies of lay people; the construction of sumptuous buildings. (Latin text quoted by G.G. Coulton, Ten Medieval Studies, pp. 187-88).

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198. See J.W. Thompson, Economic and Social History, Vol. II, page 646: "the scorn of property and proprietary attachment soon became a hypocritical attitude, and the friars became whining sycophants and artful beggars, employing questionable methods for the extortion of funds, and rapidly delivered themselves over to avarice. As legacy-hunters and hawkers of indulgences they became notorious."
199. See Daniel-Rops, page 188.
200. J.W. Thompson, Economic and Social History, Vol. II, page 645: Merchant, trader, artisan, peasant loved them as heartily as the monks and the secular church and the feudal aristocracy hated them for their sympathy with the masses, their open advocacy of the communal movement, even of revolution, their condemnation of irresponsible wealth, their contempt of the feudality and high worldly clergy."
201. See notes 63 and 67.
202. D. Knowles, Christian Monasticism, page 117, writing on friars of the middle of the fourteenth century: "their implication in purely social and secular interests, and their avidity for alms and benefactions of all kinds, to say nothing of the lowering of moral standards and their tiresome ubiquity, helped to make them objects of criticism and satire."
203. published, Constance, 1632: *opera omnia quae reperiri*. See Maurice Perrod, Maitre Guillaume de St. Amour, l'université de Paris et les Ordres Mendians au 13e siècle (Paris 1895), for details of the controversy.
204. Rutebeuf wrote thirteen poems against the mendicant orders, and six on the Guillaume de St. Amour affair: Les Ordres de Paris (1263); La Chanson des Ordres (1263); Des Jacobins (1263-65); Li Diz des Cordeliers (1249); Des Beguines (1264); Li Diz des Regles (1259); Renart le Bestourné; Du Pharisien (1259); De l'Estat du Monde (c. 1265); Les Plaies du Monde (after 1271); De la Vie du Monde (1285); La Bataille des Vices contre les Vertus (1263); La Lections d'Ypocrisie et d'Umilitei (1261); Li Diz de l'Universitei de Paris (1266-1275); La Descorde de l'Universitei et des Jacobins (1254); Li Diz du Maitre Guillaume de St. Amour (1254); La Complainte Maitre Guillaume de St. Amour (1259); De Sainte Eglise (1259); Des Regles (1259). Dating according to E. Faral and J. Bastin.
205. I have found two works which have only good to say of the mendicant order: The short work Trop par est cist mondes cruaus (ed. Jeanroy et Langfors, Chansons Satiriques..., pp. 16-17), attacks the corruption of the secular clergy (ll. 17-24) and also of the monastic orders. Then it offers unequivocal praise of the two mendicant orders (ll. 33-36). The other example is to be found, surprisingly, in Rutebeuf's Des Cordeliers written in 1249 (Faral et Bastin, Vol. I, pp. 231-37). An early work, it predates the period of greatest decadence of the order, and, more particularly, it predates the Guillaume de St. Amour affair which alienated Rutebeuf's sympathies for the mendicants.
206. cf. Roman de la Rose, where Faus Semblant refers to his huge houses in a very similar way:
- es bours, es chateaus, es citez
faz mes sales et mes palés,
ou l'en peut corre a plein alés;
(ll. 11676-78. Vol. 2, ed. Lecoy)

Notes to Chapter Three contd.

207. A church historian, D. Knowles, records that between 1270 and 1320 there was "construction of spacious convents and churches with no corresponding increase in the number of friars." The Religious Orders in England, Vol. I, page 187.
208. See M.D. Lambert, Franciscan Poverty, page 165, where it is suggested that the claim is founded. Moreover the Chapter General of Paris did not wholly condemn the practice: "Friars might influence testators to whom they were related, and in doing so, and in all gathering of alms, they were to remember the needs of the Paris convent."
209. ed. A. Jubinal, Nouveau Recueil..., Vol. 2, pp. 132-149. Date: probably early fourteenth century.
210. See D. Knowles, The Religious Orders, Vol. I, page 167, for reference to the friars as "confessors to the great" in England. "In this office the Preachers all but held a monopoly; from the reign of Henry III to the fall of Richard II they were the sole royal confessors."
211. See J. Mann, Chaucer and Medieval Estates Satire, page 225, note 66 for a list of Latin works complaining of trickery of the friars.
212. See G. Duby, La Société aux XIe et XIIe siècles dans la région maconnaise, Paris, 1953, page 585: "...à partir de 1190, il (le titre de sire) est porté régulièrement par tous ceux qui ont reçu la chevalerie."
213. e.g. Guillaume le Clerc, Besant de Dieu, line 847.
214. e.g. Etienne de Fougères, Le Livre des Manières, line 537; Hugues de Berzé, Bible, line 217; Sermon en Vers, St. XXXVII line 1.
215. See Daniel-Rops, page 237, for the temporal power of the Pope.
216. For a list of the order of the Estates in medieval Latin works, see J. Mann, Chaucer and Medieval Estates Satire, pp. 203-204.
217. See E. Perroy, La Féodalité en France du Xe au XIIe siècles, page 127: "Droits et devoirs réciproques du seigneur et du vassal reposent sur un partage très inégal de la propriété. En conséquence, cette répartition inégale donne plus de liberté au vassal qu'au seigneur."
218. Ibid., pp. 422-23: "Les simples 'milites' ne detiennent jamais les grands droits réguliers et ne jouissent pas des exactions qui leur sont liées; ils ne profitent ni des péages, ni des marchés, ni des moissonages, ni des belles amendes de la haute justice. Quelques-uns, il est vrai, perçoivent quelques coutumes, mais petites et d'origine privée, redevances versées par les habitants du hameau pour l'usage du bois ou des pâtures... Le chevaliers n'ont guère d'hommes propres, hormis leurs domestiques... Toutes ces rentes, coutumes, ne sont jamais qu'un complément, qu'une annexe du patrimoine."
219. Ecclesiastes II: 4-11.
220. Probably Louis VIII, le Lion, died 1226, the year of the Besant de Dieu's composition, according to Ernst Martin. During his reign, Louis VIII acquired many lands.

221. He reigned from 1270-1285. He would possibly seem a poor king to a Churchman when compared with his father, Saint Louis.
222. The knight's role as defender of churches, widows and orphans was first defined by Odo of Cluny (878-942). Vita sancti Geraldi, P.L. 132, col. 646c. Reference given by J. Mann, Chaucer..., page 261, note 33. See also Giraud de Barri, De principis instructione liber, ed. G.F. Warner, London, 1891, t. VIII, for a clergyman's view of the perfect prince at the beginning of the thirteenth century (1217): the prince should possess a combination of moral and courtly virtues.
223. See St. Bernard's address to the Templars, De Laude Novae Militiae, P.L. 182, col. 921-940.
224. ed. C.C.I. Webb, Oxford, 1909, Book VI, Vol. 2, pp. 1-40.
225. De Planctu Naturae, P.L. 210, col. 186.
226. cf. Juvenal, Book I, Satire I, ed. J.D. Duff, page 4.
quis fercula septem
 secreto cenavit avus? nunc sportula primo
 limine parva sedet turbae rapienda togatae.
 (ll. 94-96)
227. ed. Jubinal, Nouveau Recueil, Vol. II, 1842, pp. 150-161.
228. See Part II of this thesis, where similar complaints are made by the courtly poets (Chapter Five, A, 2, b).
229. by Gontier de Soignies, ed. Jeanroy et Langfors, Chansons Satiriques..., piece II, pp. 3-4.
230. See G. Duby, La Société..., page 529. "La noblesse est divisée: quelque grands seigneurs, par l'exploitation fructueuse des villes et des routes et par le crédit, conservent leur supériorité, mais la plupart des noble châtelains ruinés et chevaliers de village, se mêlent dans une classe moyenne avec les grands bourgeois et quelques paysans enrichis; la misère isole plus nettement au dernier échelon de la société un groupe d'exploités à la merci des riches."
231. See H. Pirenne, Histoire Economique, page 67, for an account of the increase in necessary expenditure of a twelfth century knight. Pirenne also describes how the knight's income did not show a corresponding increase for a number of reasons: "Ils étaient victimes d'un système économique périmé qui les empêchait de percevoir de leur capital foncier une rente proportionnelle à sa valeur. La tradition leur interdisait la possibilité et jusqu'à l'idée même d'augmenter les prestations de leurs tenanciers ou les corvées de leurs serfs, consacrées par un usage séculaire et devenues des droits auxquels on n'eût pu porter atteinte sans provoquer les plus dangereuses répercussions économiques et sociales."
232. See E. Perroy, Le Moyen Age (Tome III of Histoire Générale des Civilisations) page 365: "...à la fin du XIII^e siècle, le loyer de la plupart des tenures était devenu dérisoire." For the establishment of rents, see G. Fourquin, Histoire Economique de l'Occident Médiéval, 1969, page 222.
233. See S. Painter, French Chivalry, pp. 15-16.

Notes to Chapter Three contd.

234. Duby, La Société..., page 511. For the influence upon society of the praise of liberality in courtly literature see Part II of this thesis, page 531.
235. See Perroy, Le Moyen Age, page 367.
236. Duby, La Société..., page 428: "Le chevalier, la plupart du temps, se bat, non pour protéger les paysans et les gens d'église, mais pour venger son patron, ses parents, ses amis ou lui-même."
237. See Perroy, La Féodalité..., page 135.
238. See Daniel-Rops, La Cathédrale et la Croisade, page 350.
239. See S. Painter, French Chivalry, page 18: "By the end of the twelfth century, private war between petty nobles was sternly discouraged in most parts of France and was apparently quite rare. The century between 1150 and 1250 was marked by wars between the great vassals of the crown and between the Plantagenet and Capetian monarchies. St. Louis and his immediate successors were strong enough to curb the turbulence of the feudal princes and to prohibit private war entirely. As a result by the end of the thirteenth century the right to wage war had become in theory and, to a reasonable extent in practice, a royal monopoly."
240. See note 25.
241. Fourquin, Histoire Economique..., page 216.
242. See Marc Bloch, Rois et Serfs, 1920, pp. 21-39, for the different taxes levied on the third estate.
243. Marc Bloch, Rois..., page 27: "Le seigneur la (taille) levait quand il avait besoin d'un secours en argent, il levait la somme même dont il avait besoin. Ainsi la taille à l'origine fut toujours 'à sa volonté'."
244. E. Perroy, La Féodalité, page 167.
245. G. Duby, La Société, page 432: "la sensibilité morale s'est affinée; on n'achète plus son salut; on le gagne par ses oeuvres et par ses intentions."
246. See my Chapter Two, A, 8, c.
247. La Féodalité..., page 135.
248. cf. the attitude taken in courtly works according to M. Bloch, La Société Féodale, Vol. 2, page 111. This applies, too, to most of the Etats du Monde poems: "Au dessous du noble et du clerc, la littérature d'inspiration chevaleresque affectait de n'apercevoir qu'un peuple uniforme de 'rustres' ou de 'vilains'. En réalité, cette foule immense était traversée par un grand nombre de lignes de clivage social, profondément marquées."
249. See Jean Chellini, Histoire religieuse de l'occident médiéval, page 271.
250. See Duby, La Société..., page 367.
251. Ibid., pp. 373-4, 379.

Notes to Chapter Three contd.

252. Ibid., page 514: "...la conversion en argent des redevances en nature avantage les cultivateurs. Elle leur laisse l'entière disposition de leur récolte au moment où l'extension de la population urbaine, un trafic routier plus intense, la fondation des marchés et de foires permettent d'écouler plus facilement les excédents de récoltes et les produits de l'élevage, et à meilleurs prix, puisque ces denrées enchérissent."
253. Ibid., page 514.
254. See M. Bloch, Seigneurie Française et Manoir Anglais, pp. 91-92 for the history of the dîme and how it passed to the monasteries.
255. See also A. Ledieu, Les Vilains dans les Oeuvres des Trouvères, Paris, 1864, pp. 99-105 for the vices attributed to the peasants in other literary genres, notably the "fabliaux". They were avidité, mauvaise foi, gourmandise, ingratitude.
256. See also this attitude attributed to the villeins in the courtly works, my pp. 482-483.
257. ed. A. Jubinal, Jongleurs et Trouvères, 1835, pp. 107-109.
258. See my pages 481-485.
259. For the means of obtaining freedom available to a serf, see M. Bloch, Rois et Serfs, pp. 47-70. The sale of "affranchissements" was a source of profit for the nobility.
260. See also Hugues de Berzé, Bible: ll. 229-30:
 En plusours manieres sont faus
 E tricheour li plusour d'aus.
261. See also Thibaud de Marly, Vers, line 585. To Hell will go:
 Si ert li gaaignierres qui prent autrui couture.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. Artisans are treated mainly in shorter works such as le Dit des Métiers (pub. P. Tarbé, Poètes de Champagne antérieurs au siècle de François Ier) and Le Dit des Feures (A. Jubinal, Jongleurs et Trouvères, pp. 128-138).
2. See H. Pirenne, Histoire Economique et Sociale..., Introduction, page 4.
3. Pirenne, page 38.
4. For the history of the communes, see G. Duby, La Société, pp. 599-611.
5. See Perroy, Le Moyen Age, page 264.
6. Ibid., page 264.
7. M. Bloch, La Société Féodale, Vol. II, page 113. "Essentiellement il (le bourgeois) vit d'échanges."
8. See Lebras, Fliche et Martin, Histoire de l'Eglise, Vol. 12, Préliminaires, page 29: "Les opérations financières de la Papauté impliquaient une économie internationale."
9. Ibid., page 171: "Le rapport des forces au XIIe siècle se modifie, avec la structure même du laïcat. A une foule ignorante et docile, sous la domination de seigneurs prépotents, se substituent des artisans groupés, des bourgeois riches et lettrés, des élites pieuses et exigeants, des meneurs inspirés."
10. Ibid., page 32: "A une société agricole, dirigée par des seigneurs ruraux, des évêques-comtes et des rois patriarches, se substitue, pendant l'âge classique, une société où prédominent le commerce, le marchand urbain, le prince fort, entouré d'experts. L'Eglise qui a préparé le passage, doit conformer ses structures aux modes triomphantes, oscillant de la résistance à l'adhésion, voué à la suggestion - volontaire ou imprévisible - d'un progrès continue."
11. Many of these teachings we have encountered in my Chapters One and Two. See also J. Gilchrist, The Church and Economic Activity in the Middle Ages, pp. 50-51.
12. Gilchrist, page 51.
13. J.W. Baldwin, The Medieval Theories of Just Price, Philadelphia, 1959, page 14.
14. Gilchrist, page 50: "The Church was not directly interested in or concerned with economic theories. Therefore the basis of our reconstruction of motives and theories consists mainly of the ad hoc pronouncements of popes, councils, canonists and theologians."
15. Ibid., pp. 53-54.
16. Ibid., page 56.
17. Ibid., page 56: "The idea that a merchant's intention - whether or not he intended to use the profits for an honest living - should be the principal determinant of the rightness of his calling is a far cry from the notions that had held sway for the period down to and including Gratian."

Notes to Chapter Four contd.

18. Ibid., page 59.
19. Ibid., page 60.
20. Baldwin, page 29.
21. J.F.L. Bray, "Financial Justice", Aquinas Paper, no. 22, page 22.
22. Baldwin, pp. 65-66. See particularly St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, ll, ll, q. 77, a. 4.
23. See my Preliminary Chapter, note 31.
24. Baldwin, page 72.
25. Gilchrist, page 60.
26. Baldwin, page 77.
27. Thompson, Economic and Social History, Vol. II, page 698, refers to the Church teaching on Just price and Usury: "The economic practice of the people refused to follow the teachings. The decrees of the Church were either ignored or, what was more common, surreptitiously evaded. The business ingenuity of the times invented 'indirect exceptions' of many sorts!"
28. It has been claimed that the writings of the Old French moralists was one means by which the Church publicized its teaching. J. Ibanès specifically quotes the example of Etienne de Fougères: La Doctrine de l'Eglise et les Réalités Economiques au XIIIe siècle, L'intérêt, les prix et la monnaie, Paris, 1967, Chapter VI, page 87.
29. notably: Le Commerçant dans la Littérature Française du Moyen Age, G. Schilperoort, 1933; La Bourgeoisie Naissante: Société et littérature bourgeoises d'Arras aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles, M. Ungureanu, Arras, 1955; Les Origines de la Satire anti-bourgeoise en France, Moyen-age - XVIe siècle, J.V. Alter, Geneva, 1966.
30. les drames liturgiques, pp. 39-42; les chansons de geste, pp. 42-81; les romans d'aventure, pp. 81-88; les fabliaux, pp. 88-93; la poésie lyrique, pp. 93-98; les moralistes, pp. 98-117.
31. J. Crosland, Medieval French Literature, page 146.
32. page 88.
33. J. Bédier, Les Fabliaux, Introduction, page 1.
34. See M. Ungureanu, La Bourgeoisie Naissante, p. 185.
35. ed. A. Jeanroy et H. Guy, Chansons et dits Artésiens du XIIIe siècle, Bordeaux, 1898, notably pièces II, III, XIII, XIV, XXII and XXIV.
36. cf. Ungureanu, pp. 41-42: "Leurs critiques, leurs traits de satire révèlent une bonne connaissance du mécanisme administratif; des finances municipales, des affaires économiques, une information très détaillée, mais aucune idée d'envergure, aucun plan de réforme sociale, aucune doctrine."
37. ed. Montaiglon et Raynaud, Recueil General des Fabliaux des XIIIe et XIVe siècles, Paris, 1877, vol. 2, pp. 123-129.
38. For a list of these works, see J. Mann, Chaucer and Medieval Estates Satire, pp. 203-204.

Notes on Chapter Four contd.

39. See Alter, page 47.
40. See note 28.
41. II Thessalonians, 3: 7-8. "Ipsi enim scitis quemadmodum oporteat imitari nos, quoniam non inquieti fuimus inter vos; neque gratis panem manducavimus ab aliquo, sed in labore, et in fatigatione, nocte et die operantes, ne quem vestrum gravaremus."
42. In their discussion of trade the moral theologians used the theme of the seven deadly sins frequently, especially, of course, of avarice or covetousness. See Baldwin, page 59.
43. "Vendre Dieu." This phrase is more usually associated with the corruption of justice. See my Chapter Three, pages 183-4, 197, 214.
44. ed. A. Jubinal, Nouveau Recueil, Vol. I, pp. 195-198.
45. See H. Guy, Chansons et Dits Artésiens for satirical verse against Arras usurers. The editor says of Arras: "La capitale de l'Artois, renommée pour ses industries florissantes, nourrissait une population de commerçants avides. D'autre part, une légion d'hommes d'affaires déguisait sous l'euphémisme de change les opérations usuraires dont s'enrichait la cité". (Introduction)
46. Trois Contes Français du XIIIe siècle, GÖran Bornas, Lund, 1968, page 175.
47. quoted in La Vie en France au Moyen Age, Vol. 4, La Vie Spirituelle, Paris, 1928, pp. 158-159.
48. Exodus 22: 25; Deuteronomy 23: 19-20; Luke 6: 34-35: "Et si mutuum dederitis his a quibus speratis recipere, quae gratia est vobis? Nam et peccatores peccatoribus foenerantur, ut recipiant aequalia. Verumtamen diligite inimicos vestros; benefacite, et mutuum date, nihil inde sperantes, et erit merces vestra multa, et eritis filii Altissimi, quia ipse benignus est super ingratos et malos."
49. See J. Ibanès, La Doctrine de l'Eglise..., pp. 14-15.
50. See G. Fourquin, Histoire Economique de l'Occident médiéval, pp. 16-17.
51. See J. Gilchrist, The Church and Economic Activity, page 63.
52. The texts of this and canon 25 of the third Lateran Council of 1179 are quoted, in translation, by J. Gilchrist, op.cit., page 165, page 173.
53. Gilchrist, page 64.
54. J.T. Noonan, The Scholastic Analysis of Usury, page 20.
55. See Gilchrist, pp. 64-65.
56. Ibid., page 65.
57. page 65.

Notes to Chapter Four contd.

58. See note 52 for reference to this canon concerning "usurarii manifesti".
59. See J. Ibanès, pp. 91-95 who explains that (a) the Church borrowed on credit, (b) certain sectors of the Church loaned with interest, (c) kings and princes borrowed from usurers.
60. cf. the list of exceptions drawn up by Cardinal Hostiensis in Summa de Usuris, no. 8, fo. 374. Latin text, T.P. McLaughlin in Medieval Studies, I (1939), p.125. Translation in Gilchrist, page 67.
61. See Noonan, page 48.
62. Ibid., pp. 53-54.
63. See Biblical texts in note 48.
64. See Schilperoort, pages 49-50 and Alter, page 43.
65. For details of this practice see Noonan, page 91. There was much discussion between canonists as to whether credit sales were 'usurious.
66. Especially Robert le Clerc who came from Arras. cf. M. Ungureanu, La Bourgeoisie..., page 92: "Pour lui la propriété, celle des usuriers (et les plus grands patriciens d'Arras l'étaient), c'est simplement le vol, et son sermon ressemble souvent assez bien à un manifeste révolutionnaire."
67. cf. Le Roman de la Rose, ll. 169-175:
Aprés fu pointe Covoitise.
C'est cele qui la gent atise
deprendre et de noiant doner
et les granz avoirs adner;
C'est cele qui fet a usure
prester mainz, por la grant ardure
d'avoir conquire et d'assembler; (ed. Lecoy, Vol. I)
68. See Noonan, page 17, when he claims that Anselm of Lucca (collection of canons 1066) was "the first medieval author to treat usury as specifically a sin against the seventh commandment, and the first to demand restitution of usuries as stolen goods."
69. See also Poème Moral, ll. 65-66; also Stanza 938; Manuel des Pechés, ll. 2882-86; Renaut d'Andon, Le Contenz du Monde, ll. 40-41.
70. This is an allusion to the Biblical text of the ten commandments with particular reference to idolatry (Exodus, 20: 5).
71. Psalms, 5:7.
72. cf. the short poem, le Dit des Feures (Jubinal, Jongleurs et Trouvères, pp. 128-138), where the bourgeois compared to the artisan. The smithy, the artisan, works hard for his living and performs a valuable service to society:
Bien savez que de termoier
Ne vivent pas feure, c'est voirs.
N'est pas d'usure lor avoirs;
Ja n'en auront vaillant i ail:
De lor labor, de lor travail
Vivent li feure léaument,
Si donent plus largement
Et despendent ce que il ont.
Que usorier, qui riens ne font, (page 129)

Notes to Chapter Four contd.

73. ed. Barbazon et Méon, Fabliaux et Contes des Poetes Français, 4 vols. volume 4, pp. 106-114.
74. ed. A. Scheler, Trouvères Belges (Nouvelle Série), Louvain, 1879, pp. 176-200. Date: end of the twelfth century.
75. ed. A. Jubinal, Jongleurs et Trouvères, pp. 43-45.
76. Matthew 25: 14-30.
77. E. Faral, Les Jongleurs en France au Moyen Age, pp. 149-150.
78. Ibid., page 121.
79. A. Jubinal, Jongleurs et Trouvères, pp. 101-106.
80. See Faral, Appendix III, 1, b, page 272.
81. Ibid., page 272.
82. Ibid., page 277.
83. St. Paul's second epistle to the Thessalonians, 3: 7-12. See my note 41 above.

PART II

The Courtly Works



CHAPTER FIVE

Avarice and Liberality in Courtly
Romance

- A. Avarice and Covetousness defined.
1. Differing Attitudes to Avarice in the Didactic and Courtly Works.
 - a) Difference of motive, similarity of presentation.
 - b) "Contemptus mundi" and the Courtly Romances.
 2. The Courtly Poets and Avarice.
 - a) Their comparison between past and present.
 - b) Their invective against miserly nobles.
 - c) Their treatment of avarice in courtly-didactic works.
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 3. Courtly Characters and Avarice.
 - a) Their attitudes to avarice.
 - b) Practice of avarice and covetousness within courtly society.
 - c) Avarice and Women.
 4. Non-Courtly Characters and Avarice.
 - a) The Clergy.
 - b) Merchants.
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- B. Liberality.
1. Liberality, a Virtue necessary to the True Courtly Knight.
 - a) Advice to young knights.
 - b) Liberality, the fount of all good.
 2. Description of Liberal Courtly Heroes.
 - a) Alexandre.
 - b) Arthur.
 - c) Other liberal courtly heroes.
 - d) Liberal courtly ladies.
 - e) Beneficiaries of courtly liberality,

3. Motives for Liberality.

- a) Political Largesse.
- b) Personal Glory.
- c) Seven kinds of largesse in Florimont.
- d) Disregard for beneficiary.

4. Noble Expenditure.

- a) Reasons for noble expenditure.
- b) Historical examples of noble expenditure.
- c) Noble expenditure in the Courtly Romances.
- d) Prodigality.

CHAPTER FIVE

Avarice and Liberality in Courtly RomanceA. Avarice and Covetousness Defined.

In the first part of this study, we examined the attitudes towards avarice found in Old French didactic verse writing; we saw avarice unanimously and unrelentingly condemned as a moral and social vice, and as a deadly sin in direct opposition to the Christian virtue of charity. The abhorrence of avarice was an aspect of the larger concept of "contemptus mundi", that is the advocated scorn of material things in favour of devotion to the spiritual, based on Christian teaching. In the didactic works, therefore, the vice was attacked because it implied attachment to the worldly, to the temporal.

The same denunciation is equally severe in the contemporary courtly romances, although it does not play such an important role.

1. Differing Attitudes to Avarice in the Didactic and Courtly Works.

The treatment of the topic in the romances is generally somewhat different from that it receives in the didactic works; more different still are the reasons for its condemnation.

a) Difference of motive, similarity of presentation.

Firstly there is the bitter attack on avarice, the keeping of wealth, and covetousness, the seeking of wealth, given as a personal comment by the author of the romances. This stands outside the framework of the narrative, the tirade or lament being made at the beginning or end of the work, or, if within the narrative, as a digression. Such hostile comments, although often resembling in tone the moralising outbursts of the didactic poets, are obviously not disinterested. They are hints, often indiscreet

ones, on the part of the poet or "jongleur" who is encouraging his noble patron to be generous in rewarding the poet for his labours.

The motive for such outbursts is, in this case, different from that of the didactic authors, but the presentation is similar to that found in the didactic works. The resemblance occurs when the "jongleur" makes his point by using the commonplaces we have so often met in the didactic poems. A typical procedure is to lament the passing of the "good old days" when the feudal lords held rich courts and took obvious pleasure in distributing their wealth, not forgetting the "jongleurs", of course. Patrons were unstintingly generous in the past, but now, cries the poet, they have become mean. Thus the poet, adapting for his own purpose the "contemptus mundi" theme, ardently discourages the retention of wealth, not, it appears to me, from spiritual inspiration, but according to very material, self-interested motives.

The second main reason for the condemnation of avarice in the romances also contrasts greatly with the motives of the didactic writers. In the majority of the romances, the Christian ethos is supplanted, or at least overshadowed, by the courtly ethos. Consequently, whereas, in the didactic works, avarice is presented as the evil counterpart of charity, the greatest Christian virtue, in the romances, it is the negation of liberality, the greatest of courtly virtues. When avarice is deplored, religious considerations rarely play a part. Avarice, to the courtly poet and hence to the courtly characters, is simply an anathema to the courtly code.

b) "Contemptus mundi" and the courtly romances.

One must exclude from the general observations, made above, those works which are inspired primarily or partially by Christian principles, where the condemnation of avarice is complemented by the preaching of charity and scorn for the material. These works are notably Eracle⁽¹⁾, Guillaume d'Angleterre⁽²⁾, Richard le Beau⁽³⁾ and Gui de Warewic⁽⁴⁾.

In them, we encounter a curious fusing of two apparently incompatible codes of behaviour. It is true Eracle and Guillaume both divest themselves of their worldly wealth, the former voluntarily, the latter prompted by a divine vision. One notes, however, certain inconsistencies in these works, which detract from their superficially religious nature. Eracle in part also glorifies "fin amors" or adulterous love. Guillaume d'Angleterre finds his hero finally restored to his throne and his great wealth. As for Richard and Gui, they are both courtly knights. Richard hates avarice as an anti-Christian vice and as a social evil, thus combining the religious and courtly aspects. He, too, ends up rich. Gui de Warewic falls into two distinct parts. Gui makes for himself a successful career as a courtly knight. At the climax of his personal glory, he changes direction, and decides to devote the rest of his life to the service of God. He renounces his fortune, becomes a pilgrim, a crusader, and finally a hermit, and dies in abject poverty and in saintliness.

Thus, when avarice is attacked in works such as these, it may be for religious, or more interested motives, according to whether the self-seeking poet is speaking for himself or whether it is his ambivalent hero who betrays traits of both Christian and courtly attitudes. These particular and apparently religious works, therefore, in part at least, bear a close resemblance to the didactic works proper in the motivation and presentation of the denunciation of avarice.

2. The Courtly Poets and Avarice.

a) Their comparison between past and present.

Let us first consider some examples of the personal comment of the poet.

In the prologue to Eracle, the poet, Gautier d'Arras, speaks openly about the meanness of lords who are so opposed to giving away money and gifts, it causes them real grief.

Li autre pleurent quant il donent.
(line 27)

The poet then accuses them of having the wrong priorities. They no longer appreciate innocent entertainment: songs, poems and fables, but are preoccupied with their high positions of power and with accumulating riches. Gautier, speaking here as a poet with a living to make, rather than as a religious propagandist, calls them misers:

Il tienent ordre et ont tel riule
Que il ne prisent une tñle
Chançon ne son ne rotruenge,
Car couvoitise les challenge.
Il n'a el monde chanteür
Mestre estivier ne conteür
Qui un seul mot lour ost tentir;
Car ne se sevent assentir
A o'ir fable ne chançon
Car aver sont li eschançon
Et cil qui donent a l'aver,
Et il meime sont aver.
(ll. 33-44)

Having thus condemned the majority of the feudal lords, the poet goes on to make a subtle contrast. He praises Thibaut de Blois for his exceptional liberality. Doubtless this was the noble whom Gautier had chosen as a likely patron and from whom he anticipated a rich reward. Such a technique is not uncommon: to single out one's chosen benefactor and to sing his praises while belittling all others. Gautier certainly paints a shining picture of Thibaut's generosity and willingness to dispose of his riches:

"Lors fait aporter ses brelens
Et les eschequiers pour nombrer
L'avoir dont se vueut descombrer.
Cil ne li vont pas anoiant
Ou il le suen vait estoiant;
Ne mais li avoires li anuie,
Qu'il onques autrement n'estuie;
Qu'il done touz jourz sanz prametre."
(ll. 76-83)

Thibaut's attitude towards giving, says the author, is one of joy. Compare the attitude of those who cry when giving (line 27). It is not that Thibaut dislikes his riches and wants to be rid of them, but he just takes genuine pleasure in giving, and does so readily and spontaneously, not

contenting himself with empty promises. The emphasis that Gautier lays on the attitude of the giver is worth noting here. He appears to believe that the truly courtly person should be generous in spirit as well as in actions. He should want to give. Although we shall see later (my pages 506-522) that other poets had a different conception of liberality in that they made it merely a means to an end, the more materialistic attitude of these poets does not prevent the appearance of joy which is so characteristic of the courtly giver.

One wonders what Thibaut's reaction was to Gautier's blatant flattery. Did he succumb to it, allowing Gautier to achieve his aim? He must surely have found it difficult to be anything less than generous after such an eulogy, which was probably made publicly in front of his court. I imagine that Gautier benefited greatly for the pains he took with Eracle.

In his prologue to Florimont⁽⁵⁾, the poet, Aimon de Varennes, makes a similar attack on miserly nobles. He compares the past with the present, observing that avarice has debased the present:

Lors estoit d'onour coronnée:
 Por coveitise est or tornée;
 Adone n'avoit ele nulz vice:
 Mais or se muert por avarice.
 (ll. 57-60)

He continues by remarking that all categories in society were obsessed with the acquisition of wealth, thereby neglecting the nobler aspects of life, such as love:

Or ne veult pas amor noblece,
 Mais celuy veult qui ait richece,
 Ou soit gentis ou soit vilains.
 (ll. 61-63)

He warns men that the accumulation of wealth is a vain pursuit - a "contemptus mundi" topic, taking the Bible as its source⁽⁶⁾. It can never bring anything but sorrow if it is hoarded. It is inevitable that such wealth will not last; it will be lost either on land or at sea, as a result of wars or misfortune. As with its possession, its loss also

will bring sorrow. Concluding his arguments against the storing of riches, which are by now familiar to us from our study of the didactic works, the poet reflects that in any case all wealth must be surrendered at death. Here we have yet another commonplace from the didactic works: "You can't take it with you."⁽⁷⁾

Mai il iert mout tost desells,
 Car il ne seit ne n'aparsoit
 Comment il avoir le desoit.
 Quant le conquiert, s'ait joie vainne,
 Et quant le pert, dolor certaine:
 Ne puet pas gardeir longuement
 Qu'il ne(1) perde, qu'il ne(1) despent.
 Avoirs est perdus mainte part;
 Avertz hontz n'iert ja senz regart,
 Qu'i pert en terre et pert en meir,
 Por recueillir et por embleir,
 Per malz signor pert et per guerre;
 Quant muert, pert l'avoir et la terre.
 (ll. 68-80)

The author of Durmart le Galois⁽⁸⁾, a thirteenth century romance, makes his comments on the corruption of the times in the course of the narrative. Durmart's father speaks in praise of liberality and urges his son to aspire to that courtly virtue. The poet takes this opportunity to digress: he compares the past with the present, praising the time when rich gifts were readily given:

Li siecles n'estoit mie sors;
 Quar on donoit les riches dons .
 Jolis estoit trestos li mons;
 (ll. 1482-84)

This generosity gave the secular its good reputation, but this image has become tarnished by the conduct of the socially superior:

Or est li siecles d'autre a faire,
 Quar li riche home sont malvais;
 (ll. 1486-87)

At the end of his work, the poet takes up this theme again. He urges the powerful to remember the generosity of their ancestors which brought them such renown, and he tells them to strive to follow their example and thus restore honour and glory to courtly society.

Or entendés a ma raison,
 Roi et duc et conte et baron,
 Vos qui les granz terres tenés
 Et qui povre vie menés:
 Menbre vos des bons ancïens
 Qui jadis fissent les grans biens
 Dont il les grans honors conquissent.
 Faites ausi comme cil fissent
 Dont li grant bien sunt raconté,
 Sovigne vos de lor bonté,
 [Que lor largece et cortoisie]
 Soit renoveleet et florie,
 Et que par vos soit rensaucie
 Onors qui trop est abaissie;
 (ll. 15,957-70)

The poet evidently has a very high opinion of liberality and the wonders it can do. For him, the reputation of society rests solely on the attitude of the feudal lords to wealth. If they are covetous and mean, as he claims they are at present, then secular life is worthless, but if they become generous, then they may confer glory upon society while enhancing their own prestige. This is one of the dominant attitudes towards wealth and its use that we shall find in the courtly romances.

At the end of the short work, Le Donnei des Amants⁽⁹⁾, the poet makes a similar comparison between the past and the present. He is not concerned with glory so much as friendship. In the past true friendships flourished because men were frank and faithful. Nowadays, however, men are solely concerned with themselves and their wealth, and care not for others. As a result, real friendships are rare. Altruism has been replaced by selfishness and covetousness.

Jadis, en cel(e) antiquité,
 Tant regna fei e leauté,
 E li secles esteit orins,
 De bon metal, riches e fins;
 Uncore el bon ceclle jadis
 Se pleinstrent genz de fains amis,
 E ke relement fu trové
 Amis de bon(e) le(a)uté.
 Mes or put l'em tut adesertes
 Pleindre les fautes e les pertes
 D'amis verais e enterins,
 Tant d'estranges cum descosins.
 Li riche hom nomeement
 Ne conussent ami n(i)ent:
 Pas nel sevent quel unt plus cher,
 Eus meïmes ou lur dener.
 (ll. 1187-1202)

One of the earliest of the Old French romances, the cyclical Alexandre⁽¹⁰⁾, also bewails the evils of the times, not those of contemporary society, but those of Greece before the birth of Alexandre. Avarice held everyone in its grip. The poet, instead of praising a vague, unsituated era free from vice, claims that such an era coincided with the life of Alexandre. By his example and by his active opposition to the practice of avarice, he represented the salvation of Greek society. Men who hoarded their treasures were deprived of them by force, and their riches were distributed among Alexandre's knights.

Grant joie vint en Grece le jour que il fu nez.
 Ja estoit touz li siecles ainsi anientez
 Et donners refroidiez et crelle avertiez,
 Avarices estoit en si haut bruit montez,
 Qui avoit le tresor, je mes ne fust mostrez,
 Ainz ert sempres en terre et repoz et boutez;
 Encore en a en terre cinc cens somiers troussez
 Que ja mes ne sera ne vellz ne trouvez.
 Mes puis fu par le roi mains tresors effondrez
 Et aus frans chevaliers departis et donnez
 (Branch I, ll. 205-14. ed. E.C. Armstrong, Vol. II)

b) Invective against nobles.

In the extracts so far quoted, one notices that the author either accuses in general contemporary men of high rank and, in particular, he singles out the nobles. This is not surprising since the nobles were the traditional literary patrons, upon whom the "jongleurs" depended for their livelihood. It is, therefore, inevitable that "jongleurs" should strike out bitterly if the nobles showed less generosity than previously. We have already met a similar reaction in the didactic works, namely in the Bible of Guiot de Provins (my chapter Three, B, 3), who, himself, had been a professional "jongleur". Guiot de Provins and the poets of the courtly romances betray identical attitudes: ones of self-interest. They are simply pleading their own case and attempting to secure their immediate future and well-being. Thus their condemnation of avarice was only superficially like that of the didactic writers proper, who denounced

avarice on religious and moral grounds.

We may regard the accusations of the "jongleurs" concerning avarice in the nobles from two aspects. Either they are desperately haranguing the nobles because they really were becoming more tight-fisted, or they were merely warning them against the practice of avarice and its dire consequences in order to encourage them to be generous to their court poets. By accusing them, with or without justification, of covetousness and avarice, they perhaps hoped for a strong reaction in the opposite direction.

There does, however, seem to be a basis of historical reality in the claims that the feudal lords were not as liberal as their predecessors. I would refer the reader back to the section on avarice and the nobles in the didactic works (Chapter Three; 3, B, 3), where I have shown why the nobles were indeed impoverished for a variety of reasons, and how more and more "jongleurs" were flooding a shrinking market.

Assuming that the "jongleurs" were, in some measure, accurately recording a decline in literary patronage, another reason for this presents itself: namely that the Church actively discouraged the giving of gifts and money to "jongleurs", since it considered them to be social parasites. (11) Perhaps Church opinion was influencing the nobles who were, of course, closely involved with the Church in this age of crusades; nobles were also endowing and founding monasteries, and at times spending their last days in the cloisters. Courtly romance tends to create the illusion that the nobles were not deeply concerned with religious ideals and lived according to their particular code of courtly traditions, which was, of course, far from true. It is, therefore, a justifiable supposition that Church censure did find an echo in princely life.

The praise of liberality and the condemnation of avarice may have been personal propaganda on the part of the poet, but it was also an

essential part of the fabric of courtly life as portrayed in the romances. Liberality was a feature of the heroes of the earliest romances, Thèbes⁽¹²⁾, Troie⁽¹³⁾, and as a literary theme it gained in popularity so that the love of giving and hence the abhorrence of avarice, whether stated or understood, became one of the most important and characteristic attributes of the perfect courtly hero.

From the examples I have cited in the preceding pages, we note that not once is avarice contrasted with charity, but always with liberality. The "contemptus mundi" commonplaces are used not in order to detach men from the material side of life and turn their attention to the spiritual, but rather to incite them to revise their use of the material, so that other categories of secular life may benefit, and so that the giver himself may increase his secular glory. The direct, personal comment of the poet and the example of his courtly heroes urge the contemporary nobles to give generously.

c) Treatment of Avarice in courtly-didactic.

The courtly poet's antithesis of liberality and avarice, so different from the moralist's antithesis of charity and avarice, is also a feature of a category of works which one may call courtly-didactic poems. Intended as handbooks of moral and social conduct for courtly society; these works include elements of religion and of courtly tradition. Christian precepts figure largely, but absent is the harsh asceticism of the more extreme didactic writers. They effect a compromise, making concessions to the temporal and regarding the material as not necessarily evil. While condemning unchristian attitudes and activities, they give greater latitude to the secular, by recognising without criticism the criteria of courtly society, as depicted in courtly romance, and as it was, to a lesser degree, in reality⁽¹⁴⁾.

In this study, I am more concerned with the attitudes to be found in

courtly romance, but it is interesting to examine briefly some of the attitudes towards avarice found in one or two of the courtly-didactic works which are representative of the genre. There is, for example, Le Livre de Philosophie et de Moralité by Alard de Cambrai⁽¹⁵⁾, which dates from the first half of the thirteenth century and so is contemporary with many of the courtly romances and didactic poems. Consisting of a series of precepts taken from the writings of classical authors, usually misattributed, it is a vernacular adaptation of Moralium Dogma⁽¹⁶⁾, and was widely read.

The poet's treatment of the topic of avarice resembles that of a didactic writer. In his section LI: "Li Poeste dit que de trop covoitier ne vient se maus non", he describes the fear and suffering of the covetous man, and apparently attaches more importance to this personal suffering than to the eternal damnation by which covetousness is punished: He ends his section with an allusion to this constant anxiety and dissatisfaction of the greedy person:

Il n'est pas hom qui tout covoit
 Qui ja ait chose qui li plaise,
 Ne ja vive .l. seul jor a ayse.
 Dont a cil fol chose emprise
 Qui maint en trop grant covoitise.
 (ll. 2172-76)

Another commonplace of the didactic works is evoked in section LVI: the covetous man who is the servant of his wealth⁽¹⁷⁾. Such a man deserves social censure, says Alard. There is, however, no question of renouncing wealth, but simply of making oneself its master and not its slave:

Je weil mon avoir souz moi metre
 Mais ne me weil pas entremetre
 De moi metre souz mon avoir,
 (ll. 2333-35)

The assertion that men, who cheat and lie in order to acquire worldly goods, are hated by God (XCII), is more in line with the attitude of a didactic writer. There are also the social consequences: such a person

loses the name of "preudomme" (line 4086). This loss of social respect is irremediable.

Qui de preudomme pert le non,
 N'i puet avoir se honte non,
 Car je vos faz por voir entendre
 Que nus avoires ne le puet rendre
 A home puis qu'il l'ait perdu.
 (ll. 4087-91)

The critical portrait of the insatiably covetous man (CVII) is evidently not intended as anti-wealth propaganda. It serves rather to show that true wealth resides not in material possessions, but only in one's attitude towards them. Dissatisfaction and greed for more is as bad as poverty. True wealth is to be found in the man who is content with what he has.

Qui tant a et plus ne covoite,
 Riches est de richesse droite.
 (ll. 4927-28)

There is no prestige attached to covetousness, but acceptance of one's lot makes a man rich beyond his real possessions, and richer than the greedy man, even if the latter is wealthier.

(Cicero) Il dist que cil qui a richoise
 Tele qu'il plus ne demande,
 Qu'il a seignori# plus grande
 Que cil qui a .C. mile tans,
 Por tant qu'encor soit covoitans.
 (ll. 4960-64)

The poet is not advocating poverty, but analysing or contrasting the psychology of wealth in the good rich man and the evil one.

In section CXI: "Aristotes dit que bien faiz respasse le cuer dou malade riche home", the poet prescribes the practice of good deeds to cure the powerful lord who is obsessed by his wealth. The good deeds are not charitable ones, for this poet considers liberality the converse of avarice:

Avarice font chevauchier
 Et errer en lor compaignie
 Blame et angoisse et vilonie,
 Mais largece en est hors boutee.
 (ll. 5132-35)

Thus the good deeds do not include the giving of alms, as one might have expected from a didactic writer. Instead this "courtly didactic" poet urges the nobleman to spend lavishly and generously as well as displaying martial virtues:

Voit as armes et as tornoys
A grant honor, a grant compaigne,
Soit viguerex en la chanpaigne
et de bien faire couvoiteus,
et si tingne les granz osteus,
et face les rices despens.
(ll. 5150-55)

He should give gifts to squires, rescue women in distress, in short emulate the perfect courtly hero of the romances.

Iceste medecine enseigne
Aristotes as riches hommes
Qui des avoirs ont les granz sommes,
(ll. 5190-92)

We see, therefore, that, in this work, the religious aspects are played down. Avarice is presented primarily as a social crime and the cause of personal misery and shame. It opposes the courtly ideal of liberality, rather than the Christian one of charity.

L'Enseignement des Princes⁽¹⁸⁾ dates from the middle of the thirteenth century, is the work of the "trouvère" Robert de Blois, and is a handbook of courtly etiquette. For this poet, covetousness and avarice are deadly sins. The miser cannot compensate for his vice by his prowess for he is hated by God:

Sors tot het Dex le riche aver
Car de ceste ordure laver
Ne se puet par nule proesce.
(ll. 913-15)

Whereas the didactic poets treated the miser as a moral type, here he is a social type. Robert de Blois is concerned only with misers belonging to one social category, the feudal lords. He says of the noble miser that he will make an unsatisfactory military leader. He will underpay his soldiers, thus losing their loyalty and eventually his wars

and his land:

"Ensi est la terre perdue
Par aver prince, et confondue.
(ll. 971-72)

The poet proves his point with the "exemplum" of Alexander and Porus. The latter hoarded his treasure while Alexander gave much of his away to his loyal soldiers. Consequently, when the troops of the two leaders met in military conflict, Alexander's well-paid men fought better than their neglected opponents and so won not only the battle but Porus' immense hoarded treasure (ll. 1001 sq.).

Evidently in this courtly-didactic poem the converse of avarice is liberality. So grave are the social consequences of avarice, says the poet, that a brave but miserly knight will never win the praise and love of his men, while a knight known to be generous will be forgiven mistakes of another nature.

Et s'il fait aucune fole euvre,
Li bons doner le çoile et cuevre,
Qu'il n'an est mie tant blasmez
Con saroit uns autres d'essez.
(ll. 1117-20)

The idea that avarice is associated with other vices, and that liberality can hide faults and give the illusion of prowess is one we shall meet again in the courtly romances.

We note, therefore, that in these courtly didactic works, moral precepts are modified and adapted to suit courtly ideals. So it is in the romances where, in varying degrees, the didactic commonplaces are applied to a courtly rather than Christian code of attitudes and behaviour.

d) Modification of didactic commonplace.

Yder is one romance which follows closely the didactic treatment of the topic of avarice. The subject is considered at length in this work. The hero, Yder, has been thinking wistfully of his past wealth, which prompts the poet to develop the theme in a didactic manner, not neglecting the religious aspect of the matter.

Covetous people, he says, lose the love of God:

Co sunt li saive de nos tenz,
 Qui sor avoir sont coveitos
 Tant qu'il perdent Deu a estros;
 (ll. 1678-80)

Another commonplace: The covetous man is never satisfied. However much he possesses, he will always desire more:

Combien qu'il ert, ja faudra il,
 (line 1686)

He continues in a vein familiar to us: great wealth is a source of suffering to the man obsessed with it. It causes him ceaseless anxiety, and in spite of all his care, he will inevitably lose it, if not during his life-time, then certainly at death. As with its possession, the loss of wealth is painful. The only fleeting moments of joy for a miser come from the contemplation and assessing of his wealth (ll. 1693-1705). The miser is the slave of his wealth:

Cil qui l(e) garde n'en est pas sire,
 (line 1715)

The poet does not oppose avarice to charity or liberality, but one assumes that, in spite of the "contemptus mundi" commonplaces, his ideal is incarnated by his hero, Yder, the epitome of courtly liberality.

We have seen (pages 449-450) that Aimon de Varenne in his prologue to Florimont, evoked the same didactic commonplaces, in order to advocate liberality, by which he understands not merely giving. One must also earn wealth in order to give it away generously. Giving without replenishing the source of wealth is foolish, says the poet. (ll. 81-92). Equally reprehensible is the acquisition of wealth without the subsequent giving of it. He concludes that the ideal conduct for the nobleman is to balance his earnings and his liberal expenditure:

Boins princes doit toz jors desprendre
 Et conquerer, doner et prandre;
 (ll. 93-94)

The poet of Jehan et Blonde⁽²⁰⁾, Philippe de Beaumanoir, uses

"contemptus mundi" commonplaces to make the same point: One should strive to acquire wealth, in order that one may use it well. If one is not prepared to give it away, then one has no right to it:

Et s'on aquiert aucune cose,
 On doit avoir en son cuer close
 La volenté de bien despendre.
 Car cascuns, por voir, doit entendre
 Que riens del mont n'est hiretages.
 Bien le puet aquerre li sages,
 Et après bien metre le doit
 Autrement ne mece le doit
 A cose ki soit a che monde.
 (ll. 6227-35)

The hero of the romance, Jehan, did just this. And at his death, the only wealth which brought him honour was that which he had given away:

Jehans conquist par son savoir
 S'amie et grant plenté d'avoir,
 Mais en tere riens n'em porterent
 Fors chou que pour Dieu en donnerent.
 (ll. 6239-42)

Durmart concludes with thoughts on the instability of worldly wealth, the inevitability of death, the greater treasure to be had after death (ll. 15471-94). The poet urges his listeners to mend their ways, to shake off pride, avarice and dishonesty, to embrace largesse and courtesy. This is not in order that they may be worthy of eternal life, but so that they may enhance their personal social prestige:

Haés orguel et felonie
 Et avarisce et vilenie;
 Largece et cortoisie amés,
 Si iert vostre pris coronés.
 (ll. 15913-16)

The hero, Durmart, was an exemplary ruler, combining liberality and charity:

Largece et cortoisie ama
 Tant cum il vesqui et dura,
 Mout ama Deu et sainte glise,
 (ll. 15919-21)

When the poet, Jakemes, digresses from the narrative of le Chastelain de Couci⁽²¹⁾, to consider avarice, he does so from a worldly point of view

including, nevertheless, elements of didactic commonplace: Death can strike at any moment, so one should lead a life free from vice, particularly the vice of avarice. One should aim at a life of "courtoisie", so that one's glorious reputation may live after one's death. The poet is evidently not concerned with the fate of the soul after death, but simply with that of a man's secular reputation:

Pour quoi je di que li aver,
 Qui curent d'avoir amasser,
 En cest mont en ont le piour:
 Il pueent veoir cescun jour
 Que la mors souvent les assaut
 Quant en avoir sont le plus haut.
 Pour cou se doit cescuns pener
 De soi de tous visces garder.
 Et d'adiés maintenir sa vie
 En honnesté, en courtoisie,
 Si que de li, quant il est mors,
 Soit biaux a oïr li recors.
 (ll. 1782-93)

Thus we see that didactic comment on avarice made by the courtly poet resembles in presentation and treatment that of the moralists we studied in the first part of this thesis. In spite of the literary similarities, we note however that the underlying attitudes differ considerably. Usually avarice loses its status as deadly sin, and becomes more of an anti-social, uncourtly failing. The use of religious precepts to advocate a courtly way of life is sometimes strangely out of place, especially when considered in the light of the content of the narrative, which may glorify an anti-Christian ideal, an adulterous love. Perhaps the religious tone of the poet's personal comment is an attempt to reconcile his courtly narrative with the criteria of a clericalist society. His listeners were, after all, not only courtly, but Christians. The poet, in general, seems reluctant to abandon completely Christian principles and attitudes in favour of courtly ones. His personal comment would therefore be a gesture in order to redress the balance between Christian and courtly ideas, since the latter usually dominate in the narrative. Or he is merely reproducing current literary commonplaces.

3. Courtly Characters and Avarice.

a) Their Attitudes to Avarice.

I turn now to opinions on avarice held not directly by the poet, but put into the mouth of one of the romance characters.

In the romance, Richard le Beau, an incident provokes the hero to speak out against avarice. An inn-keeper has kept the body of a slain knight who owed him money. Richard gives the inn-keeper all his own money so that the knight may be properly buried. He reproves the inn-keeper thus:

"Con fu grant lait et grant damage,
 Quant chevaliers si bons, si preus,
 Et qui estoit si vighereus,
 Si tres vaillans, quant pour ordure
 D'avoir pierdi se sepulture!
 He avarisse desloyalz!
 T'ies de malisse li tuyalz,
 T'ies li sourgons de trestout visce,
 T'ies la fontainne de malisce.
 Or maudi ie or et argent -
 Argens a non qui art les gens;
 Trop fust li sieclez de bons mors,
 Se il ne fust argens ne ors;
 Car d'avoir vient toute malisce,
 Qui cuer d'omme afole et debrise."
 (ll. 4386-4400)

We hear Richard echoing the words of the didactic writers: that avarice is the root of all evil. Moreover he claims that money corrupts. The corruptive influence of wealth unassociated with avarice is not often considered in the courtly works, nor indeed in the didactic works (see Chapter Two, A, 2). Richard le Beau, however, differs from the majority of the romances, in that it is one of the few to possess a strong, pervading Christian spirit, which becomes fused with courtly ideals. Richard is above all a Christian knight, and, therefore, does not prize riches highly. He goes on to wish that all material things on earth could be shared equally between men:

"Mais toute riens commune fust,
 Si que par lui nus riens n'eust?"
 (ll. 4401-02)

Here, Richard is advocating charity, not courtly liberality. The notion of liberality presupposes the possession of great wealth in order to be consistently generous. Richard thinks the world would be a better place without silver and gold, a quite uncourtly opinion, and one which Richard does not always hold, if one may judge by his actions. His generosity is a mixture of charity and liberality, his beneficiaries often being the poor knights who are the traditional receivers of courtly largesse. Richard does not disdain the acquisition of wealth, and often participates in tournaments in order to earn the wherewithal to give. Moreover he does not, himself, readily accept poverty. (See Chapter Seven, section B, 3, c).

The scene referred to above concludes with a demonstration of charity where Richard gives the inn-keeper all the money and valuable possessions he has with him, in return for a Christian burial for the knight (ll. 4403-4410). One assumes that this must be an exemplary act of charity since it is motivated by the desire for a Christian burial. However, Richard's presentation of £3000 and all his equipment to a person whom he has accused of avarice, seems an exaggerated gesture which approaches foolish prodigality.

Another Christian-inspired work is Guillaume d'Angleterre, often attributed to Chrétien de Troyes. It is not surprising to find in this work tirades against covetousness similar to those seen in Richard le Beau.

King Guillaume is in a sorry state. He is poverty-stricken, having sought voluntary exile, inspired by a divine vision; his wife and two children have been stolen from him. His wife has been abducted by some merchants who offer him money as compensation. Guillaume refuses, but the money is thrown at his feet. Later he is tempted to pick it up, but the purse is snatched away by a bird. Guillaume interprets this loss as a sign of God's disapproval and a rebuke for his covetousness:

"Ha! covoitise desloiaus,
 Tu es rachine de tos maus,
 Tu es la dois et la fontaine.
 Moult est covoitise vilaine,
 Car cui ele prent et assaut
 Et il plus a, et plus li faut.
 En tel torment est covoitous
 K'en abondance est souffraiteus,
 Tout ausi comme Tantalus,
 Qui en infer soeffre mal us;
 Moult i use mal et endure."
 (ll. 895-905)

Here again we have an assembling of didactic commonplaces: covetousness is the source of evil, the more a covetous man has, the more he wants; a covetous man suffers great torment. The poet compares him to Tantalus who was condemned by Zeus to eternal hunger and thirst. This image is reminiscent of images used by didactic poets who often described a covetous man as being like one sick with fever who is continuously thirsty (Chapter Two, A, 3).

"En tel torment, en tel justice
 Sont li plusor par covoitise
 Qui ont a muis et a sestiers
 Plus que ne lor seroit mestiers.
 Trop a, qui rien n'onour ne sert.
 Ja tant n'ara ~~que noiens sert~~."
 (ll. 915-21)

The poet again refers to the self-inflicted hardship endured by grasping people. He also makes the observation that a covetous man does not really possess his wealth, but that it possesses him, reducing him to a state of slavery.

The poet then experiences a rather strange change of heart. So far Guillaume's attitude has been that of a Christian, rather than that of a courtly, hero. The influence of didactic works on the poet is evident. However, he suddenly reverts to the courtly code. Whereas one might expect Guillaume to sing the praises of charity, he instead expresses a typically courtly attitude:

"Mais cil qui le despent et done:
 Cil l'a et si le doit avoir,
 Amis et honour et avoir."
 (ll. 922-24)

This is the ideal of the courtly hero: to spend and to give. Why? In order to win friends, personal glory and more wealth. There is no hint of Christian charity in these lines. In general, however, the poet seems to have fused the two codes of ethics, Christian and courtly, incorporating, in his work, elements of each. Earlier Guillaume had been depicted as charitable. He and the queen had given away all their wealth from purely altruistic motives, albeit prompted by the apparition of an angel:

Por Dieu le done tot et livre.
(line 186)

In Thèbes, we see Jocaste warning Etioclès against covetousness and urging him to share his wealth with his brother:

"Quant tu ne la puez seul tenir,
miex t'en vient o autre partir,
que tout couvoitier et vouloir
et tout perdre sanz rien avoir.
Par mi tout ce tu li juras;
se tu onques de toi cure as
ne te parjurer pas por terre
ne por couvoitier d'avoir querre .
(ll. 383-38)

Etioclès was bound by his oath to hand over the kingdom to his brother, but he is reluctant to do so. When warning him against covetousness, Jocaste is not over-concerned with the injustice of his action, but with the disastrous social consequences, were Etioclès to persist in his refusal to cede the kingdom to Polynice. He risks losing all in a war which his brother would no doubt declare in order to recover his just inheritance. It is, therefore, the lesser of two evils to share the rule, rather than be left with nothing. This attitude owes nothing to Christian or moral principles, nor indeed to courtly principles. It is a pragmatic solution to a difficult situation created by Etioclès's covetousness.

Durmart's father also regards avarice, from a practical point of view, as a social evil. For him, it is an obstacle to chivalric glory.

Recently knighted, Durmart is about to leave home on a mission. His father advises him to cherish loyalty and largesse (line 1436), to hate avarice. Avarice precludes prestige. A miser attracts censure for those actions which, in a generous person, will be praised. Avarice loses a knight his reputation for prowess:

"Avarisce haés de mort;
 Ne soiés pas a son acort.
 Se vos estes faus et avers,
 Ja vostre pris ne sera clers,
 Ains sera estains et noiés;
 Car uns avers mal entechiés
 Est de mainte chose blasmés
 Dont uns cortois seroit lôés.
 Mains hom par sa malvaise teche
 Pert bien grant cri de sa proëce."
Durmart: (ll. 1441-50)

The poet again associates avarice and liberality when he praises Durmart's generosity:

Cant haus hom est bons chevaliers
 Et il est trop fel et trop fiers
 Et trop avers et trop vilains,
 Certes, sa proëce en vaut mains.
 Un cortois larges, bien apris,
 Doit estre plus tost de haut pris
 C'uns fels avers plus preuz de lui
 Qui plains est d'envie et d'anui.
 (ll. 15899-906)

Avarice is an important theme only in those works which have a strong religious bias, where it is treated much in the manner of the moralists, with sometimes subtle shifts of emphasis to allow the subject-matter to harmonise with secular criteria in general, and courtly ideals in particular. Therefore, even in these works, avarice is opposed to liberality rather than to charity.

Within the context of the narrative, avarice loses much of its character of a deadly sin. It is the cause of social disgrace, which would hamper the courtly hero in his career were he to be victim of it, which, of course, a true courtly hero never is.

b) Practice of Avarice and Covetousness within Courtly Society.

The actual practice of both failings is quite rare in the romances.

The courtly poets were more interested in the liberal gestures of their heroes than in the less noble actions of other people. Examples of covetousness are inevitably to be found in the villains of the romances who are contrasted with the generous heroes.

In Florimont, King Camdiobras decides to wage war on Philip. He is inspired to do so by covetousness:

"Quevoitise l'esprent et art
Et li dist que icele terre
Poroit avoir, le roi conquerre;
(ll. 1196-98)

This is the motivating force of all those wicked, uncourtly characters who disinherit either the courtly hero himself or those whom the hero champions. The heroes of the romances align themselves on the side of justice and liberality, against the forces of evil and covetousness.

In Alexandre, Daire is presented as a very rich, but miserly king⁽²²⁾. He had amassed a huge fortune, but had neglected his soldiers. Challenging Alexandre to a contest of power, he contents himself with an impressive display of his hoarded treasure. Alexandre's fortune is inferior, but has been wisely utilized. Much of it has been distributed amongst his soldiers in the form of payment and supplementary gifts. Alexandre is, therefore, backed by a devoted, well-equipped army who easily triumph over Daire's unhappy soldiers. The moral drawn is that liberality, and not hoarded treasure, brings honour⁽²³⁾:

De quoi Daires se tint le jor por fol provés
Et dist qu'avoirs n'est preus qui trop par est gardés,
Mais beneois soit cil dont on est alosés.
Pire est riches malvais que povres honorés,
Bone chevalerie est molt grans richetés.
(Branch II, ll. 2582-86)

In Troie, it is covetousness which drives Aeneas to betray the interests of Troy in his negotiations for peace with the Greeks. He puts his own well-being before that of Troy. He, therefore, ensures that he will lose nothing in the subsequent settlement. His own possessions would remain to

him, and he would receive, in addition, a large share of the riches captured from the Trojans. Aeneas was thus assured of great wealth for the rest of his life:

Porparlee ont la traïson,
 Ensi com nos la vos diron,
 Qu'Eneas ait tot quitement
 Tot l'erité qu'a lui apent
 E son aveir, senz perdre rien,
 Et si li asseurent bien
 Que de l'aveir comunal pris,
 Quant sera partiz e devis,
 Avra tel don e tel partie
 Qu'a toz les jorz mais de sa vie
 Sera d'aveir enmanantiz,
 Riches, comblez e repleniz.
 (ll. 24915-26)

In Thebes, covetousness becomes a weapon in the hands of Adrastus. He is fighting on the side of Polynice who is trying to recover his share of the kingdom jealously guarded by his brother, Etioclès. In consultation with his military advisors, he devises a stratagem which will enable them to take the castle of Montflor, and thence advance towards Thebes. Polynice will withdraw with one battalion and await his chance to effect an ambush. Another battalion will simulate a return in battle formation pretending to come from Thebes, sent by Etioclès, to help the besieged. To convince the occupants of the castle, Adrastus and his army will feign a retreat, leaving, in their camp, riches and fine equipment. He predicts that the occupants of the fortress will be stirred by covetousness at the sight of such treasure and will rush out to seize it:

"Ci lesserez les chevaux cras,
 l'or et l'argent et les bons dras,
 tentes et tres de mil manieres
 toutes seules par les jonchieres,
 et granz avoires de meinte guise.
 Cil du chastel par couvoitise,
 Saudront au plein, prendront la proie
 que il verront par ceste herboie."
 (ll. 3383-90)

When the fortress is abandoned for the seizure of the riches, Adrastus and his men will be able to take possession of it, while those outside will be dealt with by Polynice and his troops. The plan thus hinges on

the covetousness of the enemy soldiers, which Adrastus confidently takes for granted (ll. 3403-36). He is not disappointed. The plan works.

One notes that the instances of the practice of avarice and covetousness, which are explicitly described as such, all occur in the earliest romances: Troie, 1150, Thèbes, before 1170, Alexandre, 1180, Florimont, 1180. In later romances, the motivating force which drove men to unjust wars, was undoubtedly the same, but the later poets do not seem to pause to analyse their reasons. The charge of covetousness remains implicit, while the theme of liberality is developed at great length. Avarice is, however, a topic for the later poets in the form of a personal, didactic comment, whereas in the narrative, it is liberality and the generous heroes which hold the stage.

c) Avarice and Women.

Avarice, a loathsome trait in a nobleman, is equally repugnant in a noblewoman. In le Chastoiement des Dames⁽²⁴⁾, Robert de Blois, instructing women in courtly etiquette, warns them not to be tempted by gifts of finery and jewels. If offered a gift which she has not deserved, a woman should refuse. Acceptance will compromise her honour and show her to be guilty of covetousness:

Et quant dame tel jouel prise,
Saichiés ce vient de covoitise.
(ll. 227-28)

In Eracle, we have the hero's opinion on avaricious women. They are attractive, but wicked. A covetous woman considers herself poor even though she may possess a fortune. Moreover, says Eracle, as long as she is covetous, she is indeed poor. Equally reprehensible is the woman who is desirous of acquiring wealth in order to attract suitors. Riches, she thinks, will make her more sought after. Thus rich, finely-dressed ladies are often secretly evil and scheming:

"Si n'a en feme piéur vice
 Ne piéur tache qu'avarice,
 Qu'il n'a el siecle avere espeuse
 Qui ne soit povre et soufraitouse,
 Encore ait ele en sen tresor,
 Mil mars d'argent et mil mars d'or;
 Si est povre n'i a celi,
 Pour qu'ele ait couvoitise en li,
 Et s'ele a tel fais encharchié,
 Si fait de quanqu'ele a marchié,
 Pour qu'ele soit souvent requise.
 Moult a grief fais en couvoitise;
 Qu'il n'a el siecle nule rien
 Ou paine avoir autant de bien.
 Com en cesti, mais bien vilaine
 Voit on souvent bien tainte en graine.

(ll. 2234-49)

To Eracle falls the responsibility of choosing a wife for the emperor. He eliminates several candidates on the grounds that they are tainted with avarice. He finally selects a girl who is free of the vice, and who becomes an excellent empress. Eracle is a religious work, and only in one section do courtly attitudes prevail, and, surprisingly, this is in connection with avarice.

Chosen for her lack of covetousness, the empress is later charged with the vice, but in somewhat unusual circumstances for a work of this moral nature. She is courted by a young knight whose advances she at first repels, as her duty as a loyal married woman commands her. However her conscience is troubled. Personified, it accuses her of avarice, of refusing to accord her love to a worthy person, and compares her to the evil usurer:

"- Suer, teus n'a onques se mal non
 Dont l'ame est a perdition:
 Ne voiz tu l'usurier aver,
 Qui al couchier et al lever
 Est en douleur et en tourment?
 S'ame est perdue voirement.
 - De lui est droiz, car avarise
 Le luote touz jours et atise,
 Qu'il soit vilains, qu'il soit engrès;
 Mais cui amors tient auques près,
 Orgueil li tout et felonie
 Et fausseté et vilonie,
 Et si l'estruit de grant largece,
 De courtoisie et de prouece;

(ll. 3714-27)

The empress, eventually yielding to the dictates of her conscience, decides to be generous and return the love of Paridès:

"Or amerai, si serai large,
Car amours fine le me charge,
Que je le soie, et jel serai,
Et sour içou si akerrai."
(ll. 3732-35)

Her attitude seems to meet the poet's approval⁽²⁵⁾. The only person not pleased is the Emperor, who divorces her.

This is a strange, immoral interlude in a work which is otherwise remarkable for its pervading Christian spirit and which encourages the practice of charity rather than liberality. Eracle, the hero, chooses poverty, so that he may better serve God.

In Eneas⁽²⁶⁾, covetousness has disastrous consequences for Camilla. She sees a richly adorned helmet lying on the ground, and, advancing to pick it up, she is killed by the enemy (ll. 7187-89). The poet claims that covetousness drove her to desire the helmet, and that she received her just deserts:

mais ainsi vait de coveitise:
mainte chose coveite l'on
dont l'en n'avra ja se mal non.
(ll. 7190-92)

With few exceptions, of which Camilla is allegedly one, women in the romances are as generous as their courtly male counterparts. However, we meet another example of a covetous woman in the Roman de la Violette ou de Gerart de Nevers⁽²⁷⁾ by Gerbert de Montreuil. It is rather a curious situation: Aiglente covets not wealth, but Gerart, the hero. In an attempt to dampen her enthusiasm, Gerart tells her a horrific tale of his past conduct. He pretends to be a thief, a rapist and, moreover, poverty-stricken:

"Par Diu, ma dame,
Jou reubai l'autr'ier une fame,
Qui de grant avoir estoit riche;
Baron avoit eult trop niche,

Un chevalier riche et escars,
 Son avoir ne traist uns cars,
 K'il avoit ensamble a^lné
 Molt cuidai bien avoir finé,
 Que la dame une nuit ravi
 Por l'avoir que jou encovi.
 A moillier le pris et a per,
 Quant ele me pot eschaper,
 A la justice se clama;
 Ensi la terre tolu m'a.
 Poi sui poissens, n'i os aler."
 (ll. 3274-88)

Rather surprisingly, Aiglente is not in the least discouraged by this confession. Indeed she is gratified to find that Gerart is covetous, because she thinks that she will be able to attract him with her wealth:

Quant le pucele l'ot parler,
 K'il se demente k'il est povres,
 Bien le cuide par ses biaux offres
 Atraire a s'amour et avoir,
 Puis k'il est convoiteus d'avoir.
 (ll. 3289-93)

This scene shows quite clearly that Aiglente is quite unworthy of Gerart. She remained unmoved by his apparently villainous character and conduct. Obviously she has no respect for the courtly virtues and is not herself a courtly lady. She seeks to exploit Gerart's covetousness by literally buying him. A true courtly heroine would not want the type of man Gerart pretends to be. The poet makes no comment on her reaction, but the disapproval is implicit and undeniable.

4. Non-Courtly Characters and Avarice

Within courtly society, the only characters tainted by avarice or covetousness are those who are opposed to the courtly hero in whom the virtue of liberality is embodied. Outside courtly society, avarice is to be found associated with other social categories in the romances.

a) The Clergy.

The charge of avarice is directly levelled at the regular clergy in two works. The attacks are made as a personal and didactic comment by the poet, and resemble in character the all-embracing censure of

society made by the authors of the "Etats du Monde" poems.

In Protheselaüs⁽²⁸⁾, the poet, Hue de Rotelande, singles out monks in his prologue. He accuses them of being over-interested in money and property. Hue attributes the monks' preoccupation with riches to *Envie*, which seems to be used as a synonym for covetousness here:

Kar jo sai b'en, si sui s'eur,
 Ke tut li monz pent en eur,
 Kar li secles est decevables
 Et mult frailles et mult changables.
 Envie vei par tut regner,
 Nuls ne volt altre fei porter.
 Li moine nis de l'abbëie
 Li un a l'autre ad grant envie,
 Kar pur une baillie aver
 U pur garder un lor maner
 Serreit li un d'els acuse
 En plein covent a son abé.
 Si li abes alkes i prent,
 Ben crerra cel acusement.
 Pur envie ne voil laiser
 De ceste estoire avant traier.

(ll. 15-30)

One notices that the tone of this prologue resembles very much a "contemptus mundi" writer.

We find another, similar attack on monks, reminiscent of the "Etats du Monde" poems in Yder. The poet accuses men of ignoble motives in entering the cloisters, and compares them to the parasitic drone in a hive:

Religion n'est pas en haire:
 Les blanches chapes ne les neires
 N'i font forse vaillant dous perres.
 Li bosoignes e li vilain
 Devient moine por le pain
 E por jeter soi de la cure
 De vivre e de la vesture.
 Que si vait a religion,
 Si ad la costume au bordon,
 Qui vole od les es, pus s'enbusche
 Por mangier le miel de la rosche.

(ll. 3681-91)

Having become monks to escape from poverty, instead of to embrace it, the false religious do not carry out their duties. They spend alms on luxurious living, undermine the genuine monks and establish themselves in the style of rich lords:

Ja tels gens ne tendront bon ordre:
 De cels, qui plus font a remordre,
 Qui plus sunt fels de felonies,
 Fait l'om bailliz es abefes:
 Il ne font pas co que il deivent,
 S'il des almosnes qu'il recoivent
 Despendent le meins en bon us,
 Mult en metent en mal le plus:
 A dous bons en sunt de mals mil.
 Es abefes tienent vil
 E li prodome e bon clerc
 E li vilain i sunt esterc;
 Sil i demainent les maistres,
 Sil sunt seignors des abefes,
 Pur atraire fort mainte force
 Maldehé ait moine qui fait borce."

(ll. 3691-3706)

The poet concludes that a covetous man cannot be a sincere religious.

There is no worse vice, he says, and then remarks rather unexpectedly that avarice has no place in the heart of a true courtly lover which is full of largess. One notes that, even though the poet is speaking of monks, he contrasts their covetousness not with charity, but with courtly largess:

Qui cruël est e coveitos,
 Ne poet estre religios,
 Car l'om ne set plus malveis vice
 Ne plus vilaine que avarice.
 Mes el cuer del verai amant
 Ne regne il ne tant ne quant,
 Mes largesse e autre vertue.

(ll. 3713-19)

The papal court at Rome does not escape criticism in at least two courtly works. In Robert le Diable⁽²⁹⁾, an apparently satirical comment occurs within the framework of the narrative. Robert goes to Rome to seek an audience with the Pope, and the poet describes the crowds thronging outside, adding an observation often met with in the didactic works: only those bearing rich gifts were admitted.

.....tant i avoit gent venus
 De plusors lieus grans et menus
 Por confession et por plaintes,
 Que si grans erent les enpaintedes
 Et la presse devant la porte
 Que nus n'i entre s'il ne porte
 Riche present et grant avoir.

(ll. 493-99)

One cannot help wondering whether or not this final statement is made with satiric intent. Bearing in mind that such an accusation is commonplace in the didactic works, where it is, without doubt, intended as bitter criticism of the papal court, one tends to assume that this is also the case here. However, the poet does not develop the theme, nor does he seem to show any particular attitude. Could he simply be making a statement of fact? Could it seem to him perfectly natural that one paid dearly to enter the papal curia? One cannot say for sure.

Association of the papal court with covetousness also occurs in the prologue to Athis et Prophilias by Alexandre de Bernay⁽³⁰⁾. This attack is direct and unequivocal:

Rome est mout fiere et anvieuse,
 Sor tote rien est si coveiteuse,
 Et fu par itel cure asise,
 Je ne faudra sa coveitise.
 (ll. 143-46)

The role of the clergy, regular or secular, within the narrative of courtly romance, is very small. Yet they are rarely absent from these works. However unchristian the protagonists of the romances, the poet often appears to feel it incumbent upon him to put on stage a token churchman and so christianize his work. In some cases this is a curious gesture for it becomes an anachronism. In Thèbes, the events recounted belong to a pre-Christian era, and yet we see the Greeks elect an archbishop. The poet comments that he was fairly appointed, simony, one of the social malpractices arising from covetousness, having no part in the choice⁽³¹⁾:

Li Grieu par grant devocion
 firent iceste election;
 estre son gré, sanz symonie,
 Theodomas ot la baillie,
 (ll. 5375-78)

Occasionally, in these works, one finds examples of churchmen who, if not exactly prey to covetousness, betray an attitude which is extremely

worldly and which betrays a preoccupation with wealth.

The bishop who is present at the reunion of the hero and heroine of Le Comte d'Anjou⁽³²⁾ is evidently a nobleman. Thus, in spite of his ecclesiastical position, he shows courtly attitudes. Witnessing the joy of the couple, he comments that their happiness makes them radiant, and if only they possessed great wealth, which illuminates people, they would appear to be king and queen:

....se chascun eüst assez
 Richesce, qui genz enlumine,
 L'un semblast roy, l'autre royne.
 (ll. 6084-86)

Later, in the style of a courtly hero, he holds a magnificent banquet, where he displays his largess to the assembly, not forgetting to reward the minstrels (ll. 6396-6408). Such conduct on the part of a bishop would have provoked much criticism from a didactic writer, who bewailed the noble life-style of the clergy. The giving to minstrels, too, was in direct opposition to Church teaching. This bishop would have been accused of covetousness, because of his attachment to the material. The poet here does not disapprove of the attitudes and actions of the bishop. He evidently shares the admiration of the minstrels for his wealth and generous use of it:

Diënt chascun du bon proudomme
 Qui n'a si large jusqu'a Romme.
 (ll. 6407-08)

In Ille et Galeron⁽³³⁾, the hero is obliged to refuse the offer of the Emperor of Rome's daughter and half the empire, because he is already married to Galeron. The emperor is indignant at his refusal. Equally so is the Pope. The latter takes Ille aside and stresses the extent of the material wealth he is rejecting. He appears to take no account of the fact that Ille is already married:

"Savés quel preu vos en avrés?
 De quanque vos sos ciel. savrés
 Que tient cis emperere nostre,
 Iert des or mais la moitiés vostre,

Et si avrés, avoec la rente,
 Ganor qui tant est biele et gente,
 Et de par li tolte l'onor
 Apriés la mort l'empereor."
 (ll. 2750-57)

By putting wealth before the sacraments of marriage, the Pope is demonstrating an unchristian attitude. By preferring wealth to love, his attitude is also uncourtly.

We find a similar disregard for Church teaching in La Manekine⁽³⁴⁾. When the king's wife is dying, she makes him promise that, if ever he were to remarry, he would choose someone who equalled her in beauty. Remarriage is considered necessary by the barons of the kingdom in order to ensure a male heir and to prevent the king's daughter, Joie, from inheriting and mismanaging the land. The only woman to be found who matched the queen's beauty, was Joie, the daughter. Doubtless thinking of their own material interests, the prelates and archbishops express their approval of this incestuous marriage. The Count predicts their consent and their motives:

"Mais se li prelat qui ci sont,
 Qui en grant orfenté seront
 Se malvais sires vient sour aus
 Voloient faire que loiaus,
 Fust li mariages d'auls deus."
 (ll. 325-29)

The prelates agree to the marriage and are confident that the material good which will come from the marriage will serve to reconcile the Pope to it.

En la fin li clerc s'acorderent
 Que il le roy en priéroient
 Et sur aus le pecié penroient.
 A l'apostole monterront
 Le grant pourfit pour quoi fait l'ont.
 (ll. 336-40)

Such cases are exceptional. More usually the churchmen of the romances perform, as minor characters, the function of their calling.

b) Merchants.

The rich bourgeois of the romances have a dual role. On the one hand, they are the generous hosts of the courtly hero, and are richly rewarded by him for their excellent service (See Chapter Six, D, 2, c). On the other hand, they are people who earn their living by uncourtly means, and whose attitudes to wealth are subtly contrasted to those of the courtly characters. This disapproval is often implicit. The bourgeois of the romances do not provoke the bitter invective directed at miserly lords, the Church, and, as we shall see, the villeins. While demonstrating how their mentality differs from a courtly one, the poet's attitude is generally one of tolerance and acceptance.

The avarice of a bourgeois is found in Joufroi⁽³⁵⁾. The hero marries the daughter of a bourgeois. This, in itself, is an act of covetousness since her wealth alone attracted Joufroi. However his action does not provoke censure since the wealth was intended for the practice of courtly largess. The poet evidently approves of Joufroi's immoral attitude, but pokes fun at the bourgeois who is horrified to find himself with a spendthrift son-in-law. He desperately tried to persuade Joufroi to stop giving and to build up his capital as he had hypocritically promised:

"Sire, fait il, vos m'i disistes,
 Quant vos ma fille me quesistes,
 Que metriez avoir ensemble.
 N'en faites rien, si con mei senble,
 Ainz lo vos voi a mal geter.
 Trop me sot diable enchanter
 Quant je vos donai a oisor
 Ma belle fille Blanche flor,
 Quar bien sai que vostre largeche
 La me metra a grant povrece;"
 (ll. 3559-3568)

The unrepentant Joufroi mocks the bourgeois' parsimony, declaring that he will continue to give and yet will never know poverty:

"Beaus pere, bien sachiez san gas
 Qu'a ma vie toz jorn donrai,
 Et toz jorn riches reserai."
 (ll. 3576-78)

In L'Escoufle⁽³⁶⁾, when Guillaume, impoverished, has to work for a burgess, the poet comments, not without irony, that Guillaume, out of necessity, adopts the bourgeois habit of saving money. He is not, however, attempting to accumulate a capital merely to hoard it. He needs a large sum of money in order to continue his quest for Aelis. The poet says that Guillaume is showing his prowess in a strange manner:

Mout est preus d'estrange maniere,
 Il set mout bien bouter ariere
 Ce c'on li done et ce qu'il a.
 Toute l'entencions qu'il a
 Si est d'esparnier et d'aquerre.
 (ll. 6605-09)

In Guillaume d'Angleterre, it is merchants who are gently satirized. This is apparent in the conflict between the means of getting rich acceptable to merchants and methods worthy of a courtly person. All means are good for the merchant who is concerned only with the resultant wealth. This is the advice he gives to his adopted son:

"te loç jou et commant
 C'onques ne t'en caille comment
 Tu puisses avoir assanler."
 (ll. 1585-87)

The boy, who is, in reality, the son of King Guillaume, instinctively finds the prospect of exercising merchant activities repugnant:

De tout çou n'a li enfes cure;
 N'a soing deprester a usure,
 Que se nature li caloigne:
 (ll. 1589-91)

King Guillaume also has dealings with merchants; he becomes the servant of one, who is generous after his own fashion. As a reward to Guillaume for his loyal service, he makes a magnanimous offer: he will lend Guillaume a capital sum so that he may make a profit as a trader. The merchant will recover only the original loan (ll. 1960-76, quoted my pp. 696-97). The gesture is generous, but one notes that the merchant will not lose any money by it. His generosity is not courtly liberality which seeks no return. What he suggests to Guillaume is more of a commercial

proposition, though without usurious interest.

The traders' obsession with profit is again good-naturedly mocked at the conclusion of the romance. When restored to the throne of England, King Guillaume and his queen wish to reward their son's merchant foster parents; they give them rich garments. The merchant's reaction is one of dismay. They are reluctant to accept these costly goods, because, as they explain, they would never find buyers for such expensive articles:

"Ja vos reubes ne querons prendre ,
Car nos ne les porriemes vendre."
(ll. 3193-94)

Evidently amused, the queen solves the problem; she buys the garments from them at a handsome price, and then again presents them as gifts. This time she elicits the promise that, having got their profit, they will now wear the clothes:

"or me vendés
Ces reubes, puis ses reprendés;
Mais li merciés ensi prendra,
Que vestir les vos convenra."
(ll. 3203-06)

We meet a miserly merchant in le Comte d'Anjou. His wife has given shelter to the impoverished heroine. Arriving home, the merchant tells his wife to throw her out as soon as possible. He does not earn his wealth in order to give it away in hospitality to strangers:

"Ostez! dit il, met je té paine
A gaaingnier pour si despendre?
Je m'en sarai molt bien deffendre!
Trouvee avéz belle raison!
Demain widera ma maison."
(ll. 4510-14)

This is one of the extremely rare instances of inhospitality to be found in the romances.

The worst social manifestation of the vice of covetousness, usury, hardly appears in the romances. Philippe de Beaumanoir mentions it in Jehan et Blonde, as a means of acquiring wealth unworthy of a courtly knight:

Entendés bien en quel maniere,
 J'entens que cascuns honeur quiere;
 Je n'entench pas par usurer,
 (ll. 6187-89)

As we have seen above (page 479), King Guillaume's sons had inborn courtly instincts and, therefore, found usury an ignoble pursuit.

When Eracle and his mother dispose of all their worldly wealth in order to help the poor, they help, amongst others, those whom circumstances have forced to put their land in the hands of usurers. This land is redeemed:

Lour terres lour ont rachetees
 Des usures et aquitées.
 (Eracle: ll. 351-52)

Alexandre actively wages war on usurers. With his father's permission, he dispossesses them and distributes their ill-gotten riches to poor knights and squires:

Par le congié son pere a pris les usuriers,
 Les sers de put afere, les felons pautonniers,
 Qui les tresors avoient et les mons de deniers
 Qu'il lessoient moisir a muis et a sestiers;
 Touz les a departiz aus povres chevaliers,
 Aus povres bacheliers qui il estoit mestiers;
 (Alexandre: Branch I, ll. 648-53)

c) Peasants.

Surprisingly it is the villeins which provoke the most scorn in the romances. Far from being the laudable poor of the didactic works, they are in many romances objects of hatred. It is, apparently, in people of this lowest social rank that covetousness has an ideal breeding-ground.

This association of covetousness with villeins is perceived more in the didactic comment of the poet than in practice in the narrative. Usually when a courtly hero has occasion to meet a villein in the course of his adventures, the villein rarely betrays the base attitudes of which the poets accuse him. On the contrary, he does all in his limited power to offer assistance to the knight errant⁽³⁷⁾.

Let us first consider the attitude to villeins in a courtly-didactic

work: L'Enseignement des Princes. Robert de Blois claims that serfs should be kept to their function of humbly serving. They should never be trusted or allowed to rise above their station. Many a powerful man has been brought to nothing by his villeins:

Sor totes choses vos gardez
 Que jai en serf ne vos fiez;
 Maint grant mau en sont avenu
 En maint proudome confondu.
 Cui nature vuet abaisier
 Nus frans hons nu doit essaucier;
 (ll. 677-82)

The poet implies that people of this lowly position can see no further than their own material interests. They are too base to have any idea of the concepts of love, loyalty, altruism. They do not remain faithful to one lord:

A lor gré voudroit chescun jor
 Tel genz avoir nouveaul seignor,
 Qu'il ne sevent de cuer amer.
 (ll. 699-701)

The poet cites the example of Daire who elevated his serfs and thus brought about his own downfall. He also claims that Alexandre was poisoned by his serfs.

Turning to the Alexandre romances, we find the same mistrust of serfs. Alexandre felt antipathy for them and never allowed them in his company:

Onques sers de put ere ne devint ses privez,
 Mes a la franche gent volt fere touz lor sez,
 (Branch I, ll. 227-28)

In the late thirteenth century work, Cleomadès⁽³⁸⁾, King Marcadigas follows Alexandre's example. Villeins were banned from his presence, and he was always careful not to give them any money. He justifies this by saying that a villein is naturally corrupt. He is always in the grip of covetousness. The more he has, the more he wants, and he will seek to acquire riches by any means:

car sa nature a ce le coïte
 que plus a et il plus covoïte;
 pou li touche de quel part viengne
 avoirs, mais k'a son oés le tiengne.
 (ll. 153-56)

The dangers of enriching serfs had already been expressed in an Alexandre romance. Aristotle advises the hero never to put money within their grasp: There is no-one so evil as a wealthy serf. He will turn against his lord, and the riches will be lost to the lord for ever. Nor will his gift inspire loyalty in a serf:

Nule riens n'est si male comme sers enrichis;
 Qant il a son segnor tous ses avoires froïes
 Portés en autre terre, et desous lui fuïes,
 L'avoir, se li sers muert, a cil qui'n est saisis;
 Ja n'en avra ses sires vaillant une pertris.
 (Branch III, ll. 58-62)

In contrast to this, there are several references in the romances to barons being the custodians of their suzerain's wealth. They receive it in the form of gifts, are appropriately grateful, but hold the riches always at their lord's disposal in times of need.

Similar sentiments are expressed in L'Escoufle, illustrated by a case in point: The Emperor of Rome had enriched his serfs with disastrous results. Greedy for more wealth and power they rose in revolt against their suzerain, threatening the security of the empire. Count Richard, with the astute use of courtly liberality and his military prowess, restored the accepted social order. The Emperor's barons had not come to their lord's aid because, in enriching his villeins, he had neglected them. They, in protest, withdrew their military support. Richard's gifts soon remedied the situation. He won the renewed loyalty of the vassals and quashed the revolt. Afterwards he lectures the Emperor on political largess - give to your barons thus cultivating their loyalty, keep your villeins in their place (ll. 1632-51). The Emperor, however, had learned his lesson from the moment of the revolt when he lamented this conduct:

"Que honis soit princes qui laist
 Por ses vilains ses gentix homes."
 (ll. 1496-97)

In Partonopeus de Blois ⁽³⁹⁾, Marés is an evil, rich villein who betrays his lord. Born a villein, he has become a count through the misdirected generosity of his suzerain, King Sornegur. When the latter is engaged in a war, Marés abandons him. Sornegur curses his folly in ennobling a villein:

"Ja fu il fix a un vilain,
 Povre et caitif, de basse main;
 Povres et vix fui et chaitis,
 Quant ainc en son conseil me mis!
 Haut le levai et fis justise,
 Trop li rendi bien son servise,
 Quant je de vilain ai fait conte,
 Bien m'en doit avenir grant honte,"
 (ll. 2555-62)

So it is with the ordinary soldiers who, motivated by covetousness, have been alienated from the king by the evil Marés. They will fight only for pay, not out of loyalty. When their lord is in difficulties and his gifts diminish, they leave him. Sornegur explains their attitude to Partonopeus:

"Or ont eü lor livresons,
 Après demanderont lor dons.
 Cascuns i est en l'ost por soi
 Et por le mien, n'ent por moi,
 Se ne lor caut de mon damage."
 (ll. 2599-2603)

In the continuation to this work (Vol. II, ed. Gildea), Partonopeus meets Anselot his former squire, who is the nephew of King Sornegur. Anselot is obviously in great distress and is complaining aloud about evil villeins. Partonopeus attempts to defend villeins against the bitter attack of Anselot by pointing out that Christ chose his companions from villeins. Anselot counters that Christ's companions may have been poor, but that they were not villeins. Even if they were, then Christ chose them merely to demonstrate his miraculous powers which enabled him even to convert villeins into virtuous men (ll. 239-60). Anyone without this exceptional power should not enrich villeins. Riches corrupt further a base heart whereas they ennoble a courtly one. Only those worthy by birth

to assume the responsibility of wealth and power should be allowed access to them:

"Mais hons qui ne puet amender
 Ne si son cuer enluminer
 Qu'il ſi mete nule noblesce
 Ne li doit pas donner richesce.
 Richece mauves homme empire
 Et franc cuer a noblesce tire;
 Por ce set l'en bien porveoir
 A richesce bien asseoir,
 Que cil ne soit chasés ne sire
 Qui por l'avoir en devient pire.
 Ains l'ait cil qui le miex en vault;
 Cil est dignes de monter haut."
 (ll. 261-72)

Unconvinced, Partonopeus cites the case of the villein Seran, who, made count of Rome, ruled well. Anselot dismisses this example: Seran was made a count for a period of one year and so was conscious of the fact that his power could easily be taken from him. He was, therefore, careful not to behave in a way that would prompt criticism. He did not have the confidence which comes from absolute power and which would have enabled him to show his true nature. A more pertinent and representative example, says Anselot, is that of Marés, whom wealth and power corrupted and who was largely instrumental in engineering the downfall of King Sornegur and of Anselothimself.

Thus we see in the romances an extremely harsh attitude towards villeins, their desire for riches, and the corruptive influence they have on them. This attitude is, however, supported by few examples in these works.

Earlier I observed that the villeins of the romances, in their restricted role, are usually helpful to the courtly hero when the occasion presents itself. The porter in Floire et Blancheflor⁽⁴⁰⁾ is covetous and yet, unwittingly, useful to Floire precisely on this account. He is guarding the tower where Blancheflor is a prisoner. Daire comes to the assistance of Floire who is seeking to devise a plan of rescue. His plan depends for its success upon the covetousness of the porter. That

he is covetous is taken for granted. He is no courtly hero, his lowly birth precludes any aspiration to courtly virtues. Floire is to win his "friendship" by allowing him to win at chess, and by surrendering voluntarily generous winnings. Then, with the additional gift of a precious goblet, the porter is to be further bribed. Daire predicts that, won over by Floire's generosity, he will do all in his power to serve him, thus betraying his master. Everything goes as planned, although the porter realises he has been tricked by his covetousness. With remarkable good grace he admits his weakness and agrees to help Floire, although he thinks the latter will meet death at the hands of the Amiral by trying to abduct Blancheflor:

"Mau m'avez escharni.
Engigniez sui par vostre avoir
Et decellz par mal savoir;
Par couvoitise en ai le tort,
Pour vostre amor avrai la mort,
(ll. 2057-61)

We see, therefore, that the treatment of the topic of avarice is very varied in the romances. When the subject of didactic comment, it sometimes coincides exactly with the attitudes and presentation of a "contemptus mundi" writer. At other times the style of didactic writers is retained, but the attitudes of the courtly poet are modified to harmonize with the ideals of courtly society. Notably liberality is substituted for charity, and avarice becomes a social weakness rather than a deadly sin. On a purely courtly level avarice is reduced^{in social circles}/to the status of an obstacle to a knight's social reputation, his "pris".

Outside courtly society, avarice and covetousness are found in the other social ranks. The Church, specifically the Papal court and the monks, is reprovved for its covetousness, but, otherwise worldly clerics receive no censure. Covetousness is apparently tolerated in bourgeois and merchants. The vice is mocked rather than attacked, except in the

case of usurers, who, although rarely mentioned, are obviously despised. The greatest fervour in the romances seems reserved for a full-scale attack on the covetousness of villeins. The prevailing attitude here is that covetousness and base birth are closely linked. A villein is by nature covetous. Thus we see that it is not only the vice, but also the whole social category which is repugnant to courtly eyes.

The didactic works all attacked avarice and covetousness with great feeling and at great length. Amongst the courtly romances, comparatively few dwell at length on the subject. The courtly poet opts, in general, for a more restrained approach; that is, their condemnation of avarice is not very often plainly stated, but it is rather implicit in their exaggerated praise of liberality. It is to this end that they deploy their literary talents. The glorious pictures of ideal liberality and of super-generous heroes and heroines are the real characteristic of the courtly romance, and it is the aspect I propose to study in the second part of this chapter.

B. Liberality.

The first part of this chapter has shown that, for the courtly poet, the converse of avarice was usually liberality rather than charity. In the second part, I propose to show how one of the most characteristic themes of courtly romance was the glorification of courtly liberality with its essentially secular motives and worldly manifestations. The only major theme to rival that of liberality was courtly love which, itself, was inseparable from the theme of courtly largesse (see my Chapter Eight).

The topic of avarice provoked many a personal, didactic comment on the part of the poet. These, we noted, resembled in style, if not in motive, the treatment received by avarice in the didactic works. Extra-narrative preaching of liberality is less common in these works. When

the poet rails against avarice and covetousness, he is usually lamenting the demise of liberality. We have already considered examples of this (see above, section A, 2). We saw how a poet would sometimes single out his patron and compare him favourably to his miserly peers, as did Gautier d'Arras, in the case of Thibaut de Blois, in his prologue to Eracle⁽⁴¹⁾ (my page 448).

It is within the framework of the narrative that, in association with the generous courtly heroes, liberality assumes the status of a major literary theme. The poet of Cristal et Clarie⁽⁴²⁾ claims that his aim is to edify his listeners. He will preach the two greatest virtues: courtly love and courtly giving of gifts:

Aprendre voeil a tos amans
Les deus cortoisies plus grans,
C'on puist savoir: l'une est d'amer
Et l'autre après est de doner.
(ll. 361-64)

This he does through the medium of the story of Cristal and Clarie. A lesson is to be drawn from their attitudes and actions, but is not given directly by the poet himself. This is the usual practice of the courtly romances.

1. Liberality, a Virtue Necessary to the True Courtly Knight.

Within the narrative, liberality becomes the subject of didactic comment when a young courtly hero receives from one more experienced than he, advice on his future conduct in courtly society.

a) Advice to young knights.

A commonplace scene in the courtly works is that of a father or feudal lord advising a newly-dubbed knight on courtly ethics. The advice stresses the importance of being generous to others with one's money and possessions.

Such a scene occurs in Cligès⁽⁴³⁾. In this instance Alixandre wishes to leave his father's court to join the knights of King Arthur. His father

consents and equips him well for this venture. He advises Alixandre to take care to be very generous:

"Mes molt covient que soiez larges."
(line 180)

A similar piece of advice is given to Guillaume, hero of L'Escoufle. The counsellor is Guillaume's cousin, the Count of St. Gilles. He urges Guillaume, who has just been knighted and made Count of Normandy, to be generous to those loyal subjects who had loved his father:

"Soiés larges et debonaire
A ceus qui vo bon pere amerent."
(ll. 8412-13)

Florimont's father is not rich, but he, nevertheless, impresses on his son the importance of giving generously. Florimont is setting out for Esclabonia where he will serve the king. Florimont's father provides him with arms, and urges him to make liberal use of any wealth he may acquire:

"Biaus fils, tu moenras de ma gent
Deniers porterais et argent;
N'en ai gaires, se poiset moi.
Quant vendras a la cort le roi,
Tant d'avoir com poras avoir
Done et /si/ despent a pooir."
(Florimont, ll. 2915-20)

In the romance of Durmart le Galois, the seneschal, Kay, lists the qualities essential to a knight worthy of his place at the court of King Arthur:

"Sens et largece et cortoisie
Et treshaute chevalerie
Covient le chevalier avoir."
(ll. 9531-33)

It is in this work also that one sees that largesse is regarded as a duty by the ruling class. Durmart's father tells the prince that the son of a king should cherish his knights and should give them rich gifts:

"Sez que doit faire filz de roi?
Il doit amer les chevaliers,
Et honorer et tenir chiers;
Donner lor doit les riches dons!"
(ll. 460-63)

One notices here that the beneficiaries of the prince's liberality are to be the "knights". This is not generosity to those most in need, but rather a means of securing loyalty from the prince's feudal entourage. Later we shall see several instances of this attitude towards liberality.

Liberality is also presented as a duty in Cleomadès, where the hero is advised by his father, King Marcadigas, never to neglect to give presents to good knights wherever he goes:

"Et vous pri, se vous tant m'amez,
 que se vous chevaliers trouvez
 qui soient preu et de bon non,
 que de vous ne partent sans don
 tel qu'il a fiert a fill de roi.
 Sagement et sans nul desroi
 alez par estrange pays
 et largement donnez tous dis,"
 (ll. 8077-84)

On other occasions the courtly hero is urged to be generous by the lady he loves. Often in the romances, the practice of liberality is one of the conditions stipulated by the lady before she will accord him her love.

Here it is Melior who gives advice to the young squire, Parthonopeus, whom she intends to marry once his reputation for chivalry is established. She promises to provide the necessary riches for his exercise of liberality. Presumably, Melior wishes Parthonopeus to win the approval of courtly society, so that he may later be considered a worthy husband for herself:

"Si soiés larges de doner,
 Car ne vos estuet pas douter
 Que vos n'aiés asés de coi,
 C'assés avrés avoir par moi,"
 (Parthonopeus: ll. 1921-24)

Amadas receives similar advice from Ydoine, as he is about to set off on a series of adventures in order to make his name as a valiant knight.

"Large soiés et frans et prous:
 Li vostressoit dounés a tous."
 (Amadas et Ydoine: ll. 1251-52)⁽⁴⁴⁾

Liberality, or "largesse", as it is called in the romances, was therefore an essential quality in a courtly knight. The reason for its importance in courtly eyes will become apparent in subsequent sections.

b) Liberality, the fount of all good.

Just as avarice was the root of all evil in both the didactic and courtly works, so its courtly converse, liberality, is considered the fount of all good.

In Cligès, Alixandre's father portrays liberality as a queen reigning over all other virtues⁽⁴⁵⁾:

"Biax filz, fet il, de ce me croi
Que largesce est dame et reïne
Qui totes vertuz anlumine."
(ll. 188-90)

He continues by expounding that however rich or powerful a man may be, he will bring discredit upon himself if he is ungenerous to others. No number of virtues or other favourable personal attributes or social position can compensate for the lack of the prime virtue of liberality:

"Ne n'est mie grief a prover.
A quel bien cil se puet torner,
Ja tant ne soit puissanz ne riches,
Ne soit honiz, se il est chiches?
Qui a tant d'autre bien sanz grace
Que largesce loer ne face?
Par soi fet prodome largesce,
Ce que ne puet feire hautesce,
Ne corteisie, ne savoir,
Ne gentillesce, ne avoir,
Ne force, ne chevalerie,
Ne proesce, ne seignorie,
Ne biautez, ne nule autre chose."
(ll. 191-203)

Alixandre's father adds a final elaboration to his praise of liberality. Whereas, in the beginning, he lauded the virtue as being a queen, he now adopts another simile. For him, liberality is like a rose which eclipses all other flowers by its radiant beauty:

"Mes tot ausi come la rose
Est plus que nule autre flors bele,
Quant ele neist fresche et novele,
Einsi la ou largesce avient,
Desor totes vertuz se tient."
(ll. 204-08)

In the romance of Gilles de Chyn⁽⁴⁶⁾, we again see the belief in the

supremacy of largesse over all other courtly virtues, indeed the belief that largesse engenders the other virtues.

Gilles is on a crusade and is displaying his courtliness by distributing rich gifts. News of this liberality reaches the ears of the King of Jerusalem who concludes that such generosity can only be found in a man possessing many other virtues:

Car il set bien qu'en grant larguece
A sens, courtoisie et proëce,
(ll. 2244-45)

We see here instances when largesse is glorified as an abstract virtue possessing the power to engender other virtues, at least in the eyes of society. In a later section we shall see largesse praised on a much more practical level, since it serves on many occasions as simply the means to an end.

2. Description of Liberal Courtly Heroes.

I have quoted above a few of the many instances where courtly heroes are urged to be liberal and where the praises of liberality are sung. I turn now to the eulogy of these courtly heroes by which the poet illustrates that to be portrayed as "larges" was the greatest compliment which could be paid to a courtly personage. This particular compliment was, however, inevitable in the portrayal of any courtly hero. Such portraits varied little. Superlatives abounded in them, often reaching hyperbole. In the lists of courtly virtues liberality held an important place.

The association of largesse and the hero of romance is to be found from the earliest works. The characters of the classical romances possessed the courtly virtues, especially that of liberality. Athis and Ipomedon in Thèbes (ll. 6013-28; ll. 6931-44). In Troie, the Greek and Trojan heroes are nearly all described as generous: Jason: "mout amot gloire e largece (line 736); Achilles: "Larges esteit e despensiers" (line 5165); Patroclus: "Larges, donere merveillos" (line 5177); Priam: "onques nus reis plus riches dons/ Ne sot doner a ses barons" (ll. 5311-12); Hector: "De sa largece ne

fu rien,/Quar, se li mondes fust toz sien,/Sil donast tot a bones genz" (ll. 5341-43); Troilus: "Bien fu sis frere de proeice/De corteisie e de largece" (ll. 5445-46); Polidamas: "Larges e douz e frans esteit" (line 5490). In marked contrast there is Aneas: "E mout coveita manantie" (line 5472). We see, therefore, that, as early as 1155, in works which recount the legends of Antiquity, far removed from the feudal world of twelfth century France, courtly virtues and attitudes have been introduced into the material used. We see also that, already, it is as a matter of course that the poet describes his heroes as "larges".

There emerges from these early romances the prototype of the courtly hero, the shining example of largesse, the very epitome of that virtue in the romances: Alexandre.

a) Alexandre.

Alexandre is presented as the ideal courtly knight not only in the cycle of Alexander romances, but often in other romances where he is the superbly liberal hero to be emulated by all knights aspiring to the title of "courtois". He is the yardstick by which the generosity of other courtly personages is measured.

In the Alexandre of Alexandre de Paris, the hero manifests his courtly attributes at an early age. At ten years old he tames Bucephal, and is rewarded with rich gifts by his mother. These gifts were promptly passed on to his young companions, a gesture which greatly enhanced his prestige in the eyes of the world:

La roÿne en fu liee, qui le sien i ot mis,
 Son or et son argent et son ver et son gris,
 Qu'Alixandres donnoit aus damoisiaus de pris,
 Aus fuiz aus nobles hommes de par tout le païs,
 Tant que par tout le mont est si montez ses pris
 Qu'en ne cuidoit qu'el siecle fust autretieus hom vis.
 (Branch I, ll. 497-502)

Later he was to become the enemy of misers (ll. 638-45 (see my page 452), depriving them of their hoarded wealth which he distributed amongst his needy knights. He also became the saviour of the noble poor

who had recourse to him in cases of disinheritance, as did the nephew of King Daire, arriving at court barefoot and penniless. His land has been taken from him by his powerful uncle. He counts on Alexandre to help him:

"Or sui venuz a toi, que j'ai oï conter
 Que tu retiens les povres qui ont oeus d'amender,
 Et plus povre de moi ne pues tu esgarder,
 Car je n'ai tant d'avoir dont je pregne un diner.
 (Branch I, ll. 719-22)

Alexandre dresses him richly, promises him gifts and the recovery of his inheritance. In return he asks only for his loyal service (ll. 723-41). Alexandre's extraordinary liberality persisted throughout his lifetime. The version of his life by Alexandre de Paris concludes with an appraisal of his largesse: Since his death, man has not seen the like of this hero, who gave more than others could dream of giving:

"Onques puis qu'il fu mors ne vit nus home son per;
 Plus donast Alixandre qu'aucres n'osast penser.
 (Branch IV, ll. 1683-4)

It is worth noting here that it is only in the courtly romances that Alexandre is renowned and praised for his liberality. Paul Meyer⁽⁴⁷⁾ claims that it was the author of the romance, Alexandre de Paris, who was chiefly responsible for creating Alexandre's image of liberality. Henry Dupin⁽⁴⁸⁾ maintains that the historical Alexandre does not appear to have been perfectly suited for his literary role as the ideal courtly hero. His personality was borrowed and greatly modified to meet the needs of the poet Alexandre de Paris.

The attitude of philosophers towards Alexandre's legendary liberality is very different from the one of obvious admiration exhibited by the Old French courtly poets. George Cary⁽⁴⁹⁾ analyses the views of some early philosophers. According to Seneca, Alexandre's liberality was to be dismissed as prodigality motivated by vanity, without thought of the good done to the recipient. Cicero also qualified it as prodigality inspired not so much by vanity, but by naïve political motives. These philosophers

would doubtless have held the same opinions of the majority of the courtly heroes who people the romances and who are all disciples of the legendary Alexandre.

We shall see later that the approach of the Old French poets was far less philosophical and analytical. They glorified the act of giving, either regardless of motive, or sometimes ^{by} over-praising motives which seem to us dubious. Not only did courtly ideals differ from those of classical philosophers, but they are often at variance with the ideals of our modern society.

b) Arthur.

Rivalling the splendid reputation for liberality held by Alexandre, King Arthur is also renowned for his largesse in the romances. His character and virtues are established from the earliest of the Old French verse works about this legendary Celtic king: Le Roman de Brut ⁽⁵⁰⁾.

Like Alexandre, Arthur developed his courtly virtues at an early age. By the age of fifteen he was a valiant knight, humbling the arrogant, comforting the humble. He was a generous giver of gifts, willingly helping those in need. He was eager for renown and glory, seeking to be remembered for his great deeds. Throughout his life he outshone all other princes by his courtliness, his nobility, his virtue and his liberality:

Chevaliers fu molt vertueus,
 Molt prisanz et molt glorieus:
 Contre orgueilleus fu orguilleus
 Et contre hunble dolz et piteus;
 Forz et hardiz et conquerans,
 Larges donnerres, despandanz;
 Et se besoigneus le requist,
 S'eidier li pot, ne l'escondist.
 Molt ama pris, molt ama gloire,
 Molt volt ses fez metre en memoire;
 Servir se fist cortois emant.
 Et si se tint molt noblemant
 Tant com il vesqui et regna
 Toz altres princes sormonta
 De corteisie et de noblesce
 Et de vertu et de largesce.

ed. Polak (ll. 477-92)

When he became king, Arthur's generosity and the splendour of his court attracted many knights from different lands. He was loved by rich and poor alike:

De plusors terres i venoient
 Cil qui pris et enor queroient,
 Tant por oïr ses corteisies,
 Tant por veoir ses mananties,
 Tant por conuistre ses barons,
 Tant por avoir ses riches dons.
 De povres homs ert amez
 Et de riches molt enorez.
 (ll. 1233-40)

Arthur's liberality, established in the Brut⁽⁵¹⁾, is often evoked in other romances where he is a secondary character.

In Beroul's Tristan⁽⁵²⁾, King Arthur and King Mark make themselves available for requests of money after the tournament:

Chascun rois sist a Sa demande,
 Qui ont devices n'est pas lenz.
 ed. Ewert, (ll. 4090-91)

In the works of Chrétien de Troyes, Arthur plays an important role especially in Erec et Enide⁽⁵³⁾ where he is portrayed as the superbly generous host first of Erec's wedding, later of his coronation. Throughout the Arthurian romances, he courageously grants "rash boons" and makes magnificent presents. Robert de Blois in L'Enseignement des Princes cites him, together with Alexandre, as the incarnation of the perfect courtly ruler, generous to good knights, enemy of the wicked, in short the example to be followed by all knights:

Cil rois dut bien terre tenir,
 Car il savoit bien conjoïr
 Les bons et doner les beax dons.
 Et les orgoilloux, les felons
 Abaisier et confondre toz.
 ed. Fox (ll. 1057-61)

Qui est qui muedres n'an deveigne
 Cui de sa largesce soveigne?
 (ll. 1093-94)

The highest praise from an Old French poet was for him to describe his hero as more liberal than Alexandre. Such a compliment is paid to

Arthur in Erec et Enide. The occasion is Erec's coronation. Arthur has distributed many sumptuous gifts. The poet comments that this display of liberality puts Alexandre and Caesar in the shade, making them seem miserly in comparison to Arthur:

Alixandres, qui tant conquist
 que desoz lui tot le mont mist,
 et tant fu larges et tant riches,
 fu anvers lui povres et chiches;
 Cesar, l'empereres de Rome,
 et tuit li roi que l'en vos nome
 an diz et an chançons de geste,
 ne dona tant a une feste
 come li rois Artus dona
 le jor que Erec corona
 (ll. 6611-20)

One notices that no mention is made of those who received the gifts. The poet is only concerned with the quality and quantity of the gifts given and with the person who is giving them. This lack of concern for the beneficiaries of courtly largesse, frequent in the romances, will be given further consideration in my next section.

In Erec et Enide, Erec himself is also compared to Alexandre, among others. He has just distinguished himself at a tournament both by his knightly prowess and by his largesse. His various qualities are enumerated by the poet, and, for each one, Erec is compared favourably to a historical or legendary character: to Absalom for his good looks, to Solomon for his wise speech, to a lion for his proud courage, to Alexandre for the extent of his generosity and expenditure:

Or fu Erec de tel renom
 qu'an ne parloit se de lui non;
 nus hom n'avoit si boene grace
 qu'il sanbloit Ausalon de face
 et de la lengue Salemon,
 et de fierté sanbla lyon,
 et de doner et de despandre
 refu il parauz Alixandre.
 (ll. 2207-14)

Similarly, in Le Roman de la Rose ou de Guillaume de Dole⁽⁵⁴⁾, Guillaume's prowess at a tournament and his subsequent generosity cause the poet to

claim that neither Alexandre nor Perceval could have achieved such honour in a single day:

Cil ne raporta se bien non,
 qu'il n'ot qu'un povre gamboison,
 qu'il et tot doné as hireus,
 (Il estoit toz des armez lués!),
 Et ses armes et ses chevaus.
 Alexandres ne Percevaus
 n'orent tant d'onor en un jor.
 (ll. 2875-81)

Alexandre and Arthur are the two major incarnations of largesse in the romances, but they do not by any means have a monopoly of the virtue. Indeed every hero in these works possesses the courtly virtues. In whatever age or country the hero has lived, his character is always the traditional, stereotyped ideal of the medieval French courtly hero. Personages from ancient times, for example Alexandre, are situated in their age and location, but the atmosphere and customs are those of twelfth and thirteenth century France as portrayed by the writers of the romances.

c) Other Liberal Courtly Heroes.

I do not propose to study all the generous heroes, since each one possesses the virtue of liberality and their portraits are largely repetitious. I shall, however, single out some of the more interesting or most representative examples of the perfect courtly hero.

In Thèbes, we encounter this eulogy to the recently-killed Athis. It lists the magnificent gifts he made during his life-time, and describes his essentially courtly way of life. He gave away arms, fiefs and feudal possessions. He ruled a large and impressive household, whose occupants were kept happy by gifts of military supplies, mules and palfreys, arms, ornaments, greyhounds, falcons, gold and silver and expensive cloth. In short, they received all they could desire. It is one of his cherished knights who sings the praises of the lamented Athis:

"Tu donoes les guarnemenz,
 Les fuez et les granz chasemenz;
 Tu tenoies la grant mesniee,
 tu la fesoies baude et liee
 car tu donnoies les confoiz,
 A

donnoies mulz et palefroiz,
 armes, robes et couvertors,
 bliauz et deduiz et otors;
 tu donnoies les chevax cras,
 or et argent et riches dras.
 Ti chevalier ierent joieux,
 onc jor n'en fu nul soufraitex;
 tu leur donnoies les avoirs
 et faisoies touz leur vouloirs;
 tu amoies les chevaliers,
 tu les tenoies forment chiers."

ed. Raynaud de Lage, *ŕ* (ll. 6011-27)

In conclusion, never was a man better endowed with the virtues of courtly prowess and liberality:

"Onc ne vi hom de ta proece
 ne qui eüst si grant largece,"
 (ll. 6027-28)

In this work, Ipomedon is similarly praised. One aspect of this description is unusual. He is described as being moderately generous. The poet was obviously aware of the dangers of prodigality, a vice apparently unknown, or at least unacknowledged, by the majority of courtly poets. This poet also makes the point that Ipomedon carefully chose his beneficiaries according to their need. As we shall later see, most courtly donors are not so discriminating:

Larges fu mesureement;
 espier fait priveement
 li quel ont sousfrait d'avoir,
 et puis que il le puet savoir,
 tant lor donne, tant lor secort
 qu'en grant honor sunt a la cort.
 (ll. 6931-36)

The last line suggests, however, that even though the donees were carefully selected, they belonged to the category of poor knights, whom Ipomedon raised to a position of glory within the court. Ipomedon's generosity did not, apparently, extend beyond the bounds of his own court entourage. It is confined to this one class of society, nobles and knights. The peasantry and all who knew true poverty have no place in courtly romances, and certainly are not worthy to receive the fruits of courtly largesse. Again we see how far removed courtly largesse is from Christian charity.

Later in Thèbes, Parthonopeus's last gesture, before he dies, is a generous one. He orders that his senechal should distribute his wealth amongst the knights of his household, that he should knight his young squires. Having been consistently generous during his lifetime, Parthonopeus does not wish his loyal followers to suffer unduly through the loss of their lord:

" que il departe tout mon or
 a ma mesnie, et mon tresor;
 mon or et ma vesselemente
 a ma mesnie tout presente;
 mes danziaux et mes escuiers
 richement face chevaliers.
 Je leur donnai mout en ma vie
 tant com je ting chevalerie. "

(ll. 8813-20)

Consideration for the donee again occurs in Ille et Galeron, but the beneficiary is, as usual, a member of the knightly class. Ille captures a horse in armed combat and immediately presents it to a poor knight. The senechal approves of his action and remarks that Ille may have seemed covetous in wanting to capture the horse, but he showed his true generosity by giving it to someone in need:

"Avés veü com il le fist,
 Com il le bon ceval conquist,
 Com le dona al sofreitols?
 Del gaagnier fu convoitols,
 Non por retenir a son oüls:
 Large, ce l'en delivra lués."

(ll. 1474-79)

The senechal's surprise is explained by the fact that Ille is himself poverty-stricken, an object of scorn to the other knights. He is clad in old armour borrowed from the senechal.

When Ille explains his motive for giving away the horse although he himself was in need, his gesture seems to us perhaps not to be so creditable, although perfectly acceptable within the courtly code. He says that it was the first mount he had ever won in combat and so he gave it to the poor knight as a tribute to God in the hope that God would reward his charitable gesture by enabling him to capture some more horses:

"Ainc mais ceval ne gaagnai,
 Por cho si donai le premier
 Por Deu al povre chevalier,
 Qu'altre me doinst par son plaisir
 Qui de cestui me fist saisir."
 (ll. 1509-13)

We have here a strange fusion of charity and the courtly custom of "don" and "guerredon" (see Chapter Six, D). If indeed Ille was being charitable, his is not disinterested charity, since he expects a return from God. One cannot, however, accuse Ille of covetousness, since the horses he subsequently captured were also given away. No, he is simply practising courtly largesse which is so natural to him. His justification of such largesse on the part of a poor man is undoubtedly untrue. It seems inconceivable that Ille, the successful knight, earlier rewarded by Duke Conan for loyal and courageous service, should never have before captured a horse in combat. He is merely trying to excuse what must seem, to those who know him only as a poor man, misplaced generosity.

Jean Renart's romance, L'Escoufle, deals to a great extent with the theme of giving and hence with liberality. Count Richard is the conventional courtly hero:

Bons chevaliers fu et mout biax
 Et frans et larges, et courtois,
 (ll. 94-5)

He is unrivalled for his good qualities (ll. 101-05). Such laudable courtly attributes were shared by Richard's son, Guillaume, who did not regard his wealth as his own, but available for all to use:

Mou^t fu preus li noviaus quens.
 Ses avoires n'estoit pas tous suens,
 Ançois en prent qui prendre en velt.
 (ll. 8477-79)

Guillaume becomes Emperor of Rome. During his reign he ruled well and maintained a close interest in the fortunes of his knights. He made himself responsible for their welfare, while his queen looked after the ladies and young girls. The poet comments that if it had rained riches it could not have provided more than the amount of wealth the emperor showered on his

knights. One notices once again that the social rank of those receiving the gifts does not sink below that of poor knights.

C'onques li rois ne pot savoir
 Chevaliers cui il ne donast
 Del sien, ançois qu'il s'en alast,
 Mout se fait a tous lor amis.
 La dame s'a abandon mis
 Ses joiaus pour los acueillir.
 Ainc nus n'i vit dame faillir
 Ne puceles qui n'en eüst.
 Je cuit, se li avoirs pleüst
 N'en l'eust il plus doné.
 (ll. 9030-39)

A case of particular merit, analogous with that of Ille, is presented in Le Lai de l'Ombre⁽⁵⁵⁾. A knight, although not very rich himself, is generous with the little he possesses. Whenever he acquired riches, he invariably passed them on to someone who had nothing:

Il n'ert mie de grant richece,
 Mes il se sot mout bien avoir
 Bien sot prendre en un lieu l'avoir
 Et metre la ou point n'en ot.
 (ll. 70-73)

The poet adds that he gave away more rich furs than a person with ten times his wealth. He never denied his companions anything that he possessed:

Plus donoit il et gris et ver
 C'uns autres de dis tans d'avoir,
 Et toz jors veut o lui avoir,
 Set compaignons ou cinc aus mains
 Ne ja riens ne tenist aus mains,
 S'on le vousist, que on n'eüst."
 (ll. 96-101)

Another courtly hero renowned for his largesse is Gui de Warewic. Having been dubbed a knight, Gui builds up a reputation of great valour at tournaments and also became renowned for his liberality:

Que par doner, quei par largesce,
 Que par bunté, quei par prouesce,
 N'est chevalier tant preisé
 Desqu'en Antioche la cité.
 (Gui de Warewic: ll. 1549-52)

Unusual is the apparent distinction in this text between "doner" and "largesce", which are often interchangeable in the romances. In this instance, however, "largesce" probably refers to that aspect of courtly

liberality which is ^{not} strictly giving. It is the custom of spending lavishly, a custom often praised and admired in these works (see pages 529-544 below).

Preoccupation with the welfare of one's knights also occurs in Durmart le Galois. Durmart had a good relationship with his knights. He did not disdain them, but sought to help them with material aid:

Durmars lor estoit bon compains,
 Et si n'avoit mie en desdains
 Les povres bachelers gentiuz.
 Il ne lor estoit mie eskiuz,
 Ains lor donoit les riches dons.
 (ll. 131-135)

Once again we notice that those who receive may be poor within their own social milieu, but doubtless richer than people of the third estate, the peasantry and serfs who never seem to attract the generosity of the courtly heroes.

There is a similar instance in Joufroi. The hero, Joufroi, goes at his own request to the court of Henry of England in order to be knighted. There he soon becomes very popular because of his courtly virtues, particularly his generosity (ll. 169-73). Like Durmart, and the majority of courtly heroes, Joufroi bestows his rich gifts upon the needy members of the knightly class:

Mult se fist amer a la gent,
 Car il lor donoit beaus joiaus,
 Bele cotes et beaus mantiaus.
 Armes et robes et destriers
 Donoit as povres chevaliers.
 Qui voleit prendre son avoir
 Maintenant ne pooit avoir.
 (ll. 176-82)

d) Liberal Courtly Ladies.

Equally as generous as the courtly heroes are their female counterparts. It is common practice in the romances to portray the hero's wife or mistress as the epitome of the courtly attributes fitting for a lady, especially the virtue of largesse.

Arthur's queen, Guinevere, possesses the qualities of liberality and wise speech:

Molt fu large et bone parliere.
(Brut: line 1115)

Another courtly heroine, Enide, is generous as well as kind and wise:

Tant a d'afaitement apris
que de totes bontez ot pris
que nule dame doie avoir
et de largesce, et de savoir.
(Erec et Enide: ll. 2419-22)

The romances abound in such examples of generous ladies⁽⁵⁶⁾, although detailed descriptions of liberality in practice are usually reserved for the courtly heroes. One notes also that the women are more usually associated with charity than with courtly liberality. While the courtly hero is staging lavish displays of wealth and giving rich gifts to his knights for a very worldly and precise purpose (see sections 3, a, b), his wife is more preoccupied with disinterested generosity which aims at relieving the needy of all social ranks for whom she and her husband are responsible. The courtly hero takes care of the military of his household, while his wife, not constrained to establish her personal glory or win allies, can fulfil her more modest social duties.

Fresne shows compassion for the poor, and even when she herself is forced to earn her living she does not neglect those in need:

Des povres gens a grant pitie,
Si les repest de sa gaaigne.
(Galeran de Bretagne: ll. 4306-07)⁽⁵⁷⁾

In Eracle, the empress chosen by the hero for her good qualities proves that she is not tainted by covetousness or avarice. Her generosity is viewed as charity which will be rewarded a hundredfold by God.

Si fait mout bien, çou qu'il couvient,
Et quant ^{vient} qu'om doit jethner,
Ce~~z~~ povres prent a gouvrener
De quanque onques ont mestier;
Qu'ele set bien contre un sestier
Qu'ele en i met cent en prendra,
Car Deus meïsmes li rendra.
(ll. 2959-65)

When Joie becomes queen, she, too, carries out her duties. She looks after poor people and marries off poor women. One notes, however, that

here the poor are also well-born:

Anchois en donoit largement
 Meismement la povre gent.
 Povres gentils femmes marie,
 (Manekine: ll. 2431-33)

This is not the case in le Comte d'Anjou, where the heroine is generous to the truly needy. As a child, she cherished the poor. Love of God inspired her to be humble to them. She gave away her clothes and money to orphans, widows, poor brides:

Povres genz avoit en chierté;
 Vers eulz ot cuer humble et piteus,
 Et contre orgueil l'ot despiteus.
 Toute fu sa pensee mise
 En Dieu amer et Sainte Yglise.
 Aus damoiselles orphelines,
 Aus veuves, aus povres meschines,
 Quant entroient en mariage,
 Fesoit souvent grant aventage,
 Volentiers s'i habandonnoit
 Et de sez robes leur donnoit,
 Et de ses deniers mainte fie:
 (ll. 124-35)

At the end of the work, the poet again praises her charitable deeds, noting that she was prompted by the purest Christian motives, not by desire for worldly glory:

Molt se maine devotement
 Envers Dieu et vers Sainte Eglyse;
 Vers les povres ert toute esprise
 De doucheur et de charité:
 Souvent par grant humilité
 Les sert en sa propre personne,
 Leve les piez, l'argent leur donne,
 Et puis a mengier et a boire,
 Sanz appetit de vaine gloire.
 (ll. 8008-16)

e) Beneficiaries of Courtly Largesse.

With reference to many of the texts quoted above, I have emphasised the class and social standing of the beneficiaries of courtly largesse. I believe these circumstances to be of great significance in any analysis of the virtue of liberality. We have noted that the courtly hero gave presents to knights, at best to poor knights. Occasionally we find mention

of gifts being presented according to merit⁽⁵⁸⁾, but more often the courtly knight's generosity is apparently indiscriminate within his own society. We have noted also that charity was often considered the province of the courtly lady. If one refers back to the earlier part of the chapter, where the attitudes to villeins were studied, one is not surprised to find that this despised social category did not benefit from the munificence of the courtly hero. There are, however, other reasons why the hero did not deign to honour villeins with his noble largesse, reasons which we shall consider in the following section.

The fact that the romance hero usually gave gifts within his immediate circle did not in any way detract from his virtue in giving, in the eyes of the romance writer. Whether the knights were especially poor or not is often irrelevant, as is their respective merit. Courtly liberality involved more than just the giving of gifts for its own sake or for the sake of those receiving them. It is this aspect of liberality I propose to study in the next section. By examining the motives for largesse we shall see that the choice of beneficiary was by no means haphazard or indiscriminate.

3. Motives for Liberality.

When largesse is practised in the romances, all attention is usually focussed on the giver. The role of the receiver is small, often non-existent. In some cases the rich noble or knight gives his riches indiscriminately, and here the poet does not mention the donee. All the glory goes to the predominant benefactor. In other cases, it is specified that the rich man gives to his knights, men of his personal entourage who are no doubt relatively poor in a closed circle of prosperity.

There are various reasons why the beneficiaries are sometimes not considered worthy of mention, and at other times are identified as being of the knightly class. These reasons are closely linked with the basic motives for giving within the courtly code of ethics.

In the late G. Cary's work, The Medieval Alexander⁽⁵⁹⁾, true liberality is contrasted with that found in medieval secular literature, such as the courtly romances. In his analysis of true liberality Cary quotes William de Conches⁽⁶⁰⁾ who bases his theory on the writings of Cicero: the act of giving falls into two distinct parts. Firstly there is the state of mind of the giver, termed "affectus", which may be a state of pure benevolence or guided by some particular motive. Secondly there is the art of giving itself, termed "effectus".

"Virtus animi beneficiorum erogatrix, quiam eandem pro affectu benignitatem, pro effectu beneficentiam appellamus. Haec Virtus tota in distribuendo constitit."

William de Conches.

To a philosopher, giving springs from true liberality when the affectus is pure benevolence, free from any hint of self-interest, together with consideration of the financial position, merit and benefit of the recipient. If self-interest in any way influences the giver, then the act of giving, the effectus is not motivated by true generosity and cannot be called liberality.

This philosophical attitude to liberality is certainly not predominant in the courtly romances. Here the act of giving is of prime importance, and, although the motive may be partly benevolence, it seems inevitably tempered by some other less disinterested motive. Only the act of giving aroused admiration, and the greater the gift, the greater the admiration. Any selfish motives were not, as we shall see, subject to moral censure.

a) Political Largesse.

One of the main motives for liberality in the romances, a motive usually clearly stated, is quite simply in order to win and retain the loyalty of one's followers. Hence the choice of knights as beneficiaries of courtly largesse. This appears as quite a normal practice, a harmless and usually effective power-orientated manoeuvre.

In some cases I have found it difficult to distinguish such "liberality" from bribery. For the purposes of this study I have reserved the term

bribery for instances when the so-called "largesse" has been exploited for some dishonourable end. Generosity prompted uniquely by the desire to secure loyalty may be regarded as a form of bribery, but, when it is devoid of any evil intent, then I have chosen to accept the courtly poet's assessment of it, as "largesse". In short, when the courtly hero uses such means, to the partial poet, it is liberality. In the hands of the hero's adversaries, inevitably not truly "courtois", any such self-interested gifts become bribery.

In Thèbes, Etioclès's counsellors advise him to adopt a policy of systematic liberality if he wishes to be successful. Above all he should seek to win the love of his men, and he, in turn, should love them, great and lowly alike. This will bring him honour. He should be generous to all his people, but especially to his knights. He should avoid at all costs the vice of avarice. If his wealth should fail, he must promise gifts for the future and honour his promises at the earliest opportunity. Failure to follow this code of conduct would result in his own ruin:

"Larges soies a toute gent,
 n'amasser ja or ne argent.
 A tes houmes donne ton or,
 Car souz ciel n'a meillor tresor;
 et quant tu n'avras que donner,
 si vas o eus rire et jouer,
 promet ce que lores n'avras
 et donne leur quant tu l'avras,
 S'ainsi ne fez, tu as perdu,
 et nos te verrons confondu."
 (ll. 1129-38)

One notes that the benefits of Etioclès's liberality should be available to all: "a toute gent" (line 1143); yet, still, it is the knights, on whom Etioclès's security and military successes depend, who should receive the rich gifts: "A tes houmes donne ton or". In the last two lines (1137-38) the underlying motive for such generosity is explicit. Etioclès's liberality is the chief contributory factor to his position of powerful king.

Aristotle's advice to Alexandre in the Old French romance runs along similar lines, although Aristotle concentrates more on the military glory

which is attained by knights who are loyal and contented, and whose material welfare is generously fostered by their lord. Aristotle⁽⁶¹⁾ tells Alexandre to proceed by selecting twelve men to be his faithful companions and to cultivate their loyalty by generous gifts:

"Eslisiez douze pers qui soient compaignon,
 Qui menront voz batailles touz jorz par devisaon,
 Et amez touz voz hommes et leur fetes gent don.
 Ce sachiez: qui bien donne, volentiers le sert on,
 Pardonner puet l'en bien amoloier felon;
 Qui tout veut trestout pert, des auquans le voit on.
 Se voulez estre larges, plus en serez preudon
 Et conquerrez les terres jusqu'en Oceanon;"
 (Branch I, ll. 674-81: Alexandre)

Alexandre, as we know, followed this advice and gained an international reputation for liberality and for military successes. In his appreciation of the king, the poet says that no-one ever regretted entering his service. He adds that Alexandre was astute in his choice of beneficiary. He knew whose loyalty was worth securing, and refused gifts to those he judged treacherous. He upheld justice, and rewarded good men with his generous gifts:

Si fu larges li reis, si nus le vaut servir,
 Onques de son service ne se pot repentir.
 Bien sot qui dut amer et qui il dut folir
 Comment il dut doner tres bien le sot veir,
 Branch IV, ll. 1644-47.

The ideal and expected result of such systematic liberality is well illustrated in Emenidus's rallying speech to the troops before they engage battle. Emenidus is one of the twelve noblemen chosen by Alexandre as companions in peace and generals in war. Having benefited from Alexandre's generosity Emenidus urges his troops to express their thanks for the rich gifts received by fighting courageously:

"Deservons les saudees
 Que nos a Alixandres par maintes fois donees,
 Mal avroit emploié son vin et ses pevrees,
 Ses chars, ses venisons et fresches et salees,
 Ses riches dras de soie et ses porpres listees,
 Ses biaux henas d'argent et ses coupes dorees
 Et ses beles richeces qu'il nos a presentees,
 Se ci ne sont por lui nos proëces mostrees.
 (Branch II, ll. 1022-29)

It is evident that Emenidus is under no illusion about the nature and aims of Alexandre's liberality. Having accepted the rich gifts, he has thereby accepted Alexandre as his lord to whom he owes complete loyalty. Emenidus' attitude would appear to suggest that Alexandre's liberality and his own loyalty form an honourable exchange of services. This is analogous to the courtly custom of gift and counter-gift. ("Don" and "Guerredon", see chapter Six, D).

Liberality prompted by such motives was apparently practised by the historical Alexandre. In Cary's work, there is a reference to a passage from Cicero⁽⁶²⁾ where the latter quotes a letter from Philip of Macedonia to his young son, Alexandre. In this letter, Philip shows his disapproval of this motive for largesse, namely to gain faithful followers. Philip maintains that the only result of such a practice would be the corruption of the recipients of the rich gifts and the loss of royal dignity for Alexandre himself. Thus Philip did not acknowledge, as true generosity, largesse which was inspired by political motives⁽⁶³⁾. Such largesse was, however, perfectly acceptable within the courtly code of the Old French romances.

Like Alexandre, Priam, king of Troy, used gifts to win the love of his men and to rouse their spirits during the long war. During the truce after the second battle, he ensures that his knights had luxurious lodgings, sumptuous meals, and he himself gave them rich presents. After such treatment Priam was confident that they would never fail him on the field of battle:

Chevalerie i a assez
 E de vitaille granz plentez;
 Riches osteus i ot tenuz
 E mainz chiers aveirs despenduz,
 Maint bel convive fait sovent
 E presenté maint bel present.
 Prianz les sot mout bien avoir,
 Que a chascun fait son voleir;
 E il sont tuit encoragé
 Qu'ensi come il ont commencié
 De bien faire le parsivront:
 Ja a nul tens ne li faudront.
 (Troie: ll. 10459-70)

When Florimont assumes the responsibility of defending King Philip and his country from the invading King Camdiobras, he begins by creating new knights, providing them with arms, then by giving presents to the other knights and to the ladies of the country. His gifts were accepted and so the knights committed themselves to his service. Such largesse won great acclaim, and together with his other attributes of wisdom and prowess, Florimont became very popular in the country. The poet reminds us that the hero is poor and is still being financed by the trusting bourgeois Delphis.

Mout fist de cheveliers noviaus
 Et les armes et les destriers
 Donoit as atres cheveliers
 Et a ses dames del païs
 Donoit et le vair et le gris;
 Selui mout boen grei en savoit
 Que son avoir prendre veloit,
 Et Delfis, ses ostes, li rant
 Seu que il donet et despant.
 Tuit l'amoient por sa largesse,
 Por son sens et por sa proësse.
 (Florimont: ll. 6444-54)

Florimont selected a hundred knights many of whom abandoned their king and declared themselves the vassals of Florimont who had won their hearts by his generosity:

.C. cheveliers i ot eslis.
 Del roi sont perti li plusor,
 Del Povre Perdu font signor;
 Et por despence et por dons
 Et por sols et por livresons
 C'est chascuns d'iaus a lui rendus.
 (ll. 6614-19)

The poet explains Florimont's conduct. As a foreigner, he has no friends or allies at Philip's court. He must, therefore, like any other person in his position, establish his worth in the eyes of the court society. This he can only achieve by giving rich presents and by spending lavishly. Gifts will ease relationships and liberality results in the giver being honoured.

Mai hons qui vient d'atre païs
 Ne puet avoir en cort amis,
 Se il ne donet ou despent;
 En don ait bel acoentement.
 Grant honour done largetez.
 (ll. 7077-81)

In Athis et Prophilias the giving of rich presents is considered not only a practical necessity, but the duty of a nobleman. Speaking of Theseus, duke of Athens, the poet says that his social rank demanded that he should have a considerable following of knights. This he could secure only by practice of largesse:

Ne retenoit or ne argent,
 Chevaus ne murs ne palefroiz,
 Ainz donoit tot, et il ert droiz,
 Car par hautesce de lignage
 Devoit il bien mener barnage.
 (ll. 10176-80)

In the case of Count Richard of L'Escoufle, it was only partly by his liberality that he retained the loyalty of his men which enabled him to emerge victorious from any military encounter. In addition to "largesse" he possessed the qualities of "franchise": openness, and "gentelise": kindness.

Et quant nus hom li faisoit guerre,
 Tot erranment l'avoit conquis,
 Car il avoit tot si conquis,
 l'ounor des homes par franchise,
 Par biaux dons et par gentelise.
 (ll. 64-68)

The praise of Count Richard continues: he was skilled in warfare and always distributed any material gains won therein. The arrangement was reciprocal, for when Richard found himself in need, his men readily contributed their wealth to help him. He was loved by his vassals and their families to whom he often sent presents of clothing, mantles and cloaks.

Mout par savoit li cuens de guerre,
 Et ceus par k'il pooit conquerre
 Donoit quanqu'il tenoit as poins;
 Et quant c'estoit c'aucuns besoins
 Li revenoit par aventure,
 Le leur et le sien par droiture

Remetoient en son service.
 Ensi avoit tot a devise
 L'amor de ses boins vavassors.
 A lor femes, a lor oissors
 Envoiot plichons et mantiax.
 Bon chevaliers fu et mout biax
 Et frans et larges, et cortois.
 (ll. 83-95)

Count Richard preaches political liberality to the Emperor of Rome. The latter has neglected his vassals while indulging his serfs. The power of the serfs had grown so considerably they were threatening to take over the empire. The ill-used barons refused to quell the riot. Richard pacified the angry barons by presenting them with rich gifts, and with their consequent support, the revolt was soon ended. The moral which Richard draws from this incident is that the Emperor should henceforth cherish his barons so that they will help him in times of need:

"Se grans avoires vos vient as mains,
 S'en departes as gentix homes.
 Cil porteront por vos les sommes
 Es batailles et es estors.
 Cil assaudront por vos as tors
 Et metront le feu en l'atrait."
 (ll. 1646-51)

When Joffroi inherits the country of Poitiers on his father's death, his first action is to win the love and loyalty of his vassals. This he does by the presentation of gifts. Consequently the vassals are completely won over to his service, and prepared to sacrifice themselves to further his glory, and, in short, declare themselves thoroughly satisfied with their new lord:

Lors fist et dist, et tant lor done
 Que chascuns por lui s'abandone
 De s'onor croistre chascuns jor;
 Mult lo findrent a bon seignor.
 (Joufroi: ll. 705-08)

Emperor Conrad (Le Roman de la Rose ou: de Guillaume de Dole) was an exception to the rule in that he practiced largesse outside courtly society as well as within it. He did not, like the Emperor of Rome in L'Escoufle, neglect his barons in favour of his villeins, but treated all his subjects

generously. Conrad gave rich gifts to his knights like all courtly rulers (ll. 2842-53), but in the case of his peasants and the merchants of his land, his generosity consisted not in the giving of presents but in the refusal to take from them in the form of feudal dues. His subjects were not taxed. Conrad reasoned that this generosity on his part would secure him faithful subjects who would not hesitate to help him in times of trouble. When things went well he was pleased to see them get rich, but he and his subjects knew that the latter were merely the guardians of the emperor's wealth. Should the need arise, the riches would revert to their original owner:

L'empereres voloit mout miex
 que li vilain et li bourgeois
 q'aaignassent de lor avoires
 qu'il lor tolist por tresor fere;
 Car, quant il en avoit afere,
 Il savoit bien que tot ert soen.
 Et ce li venoit de grant sen,
 q'a son besoig estoit tot prest
 Et le chatel et le conquest:
 Et n'en erent se garde non,
 (ll. 593-602)

As a result Conrad's lowly subjects became rich. They did not, however, forget to show their appreciation of the generosity of their lord. His merchants often presented him with gifts acquired in their travels to fairs, spontaneous gifts which he valued more than taxes forcibly levied. For the merchants, too, he waged an active campaign against robbers and bandits. They were driven out of the country so that all travellers might journey safely. The poet considers Conrad's policy a very wise one:

Et s'erent riche et de grant non
 Et marcheant de grant avoir.
 Il ne trovoient bel avoir
 A nule foire ou il alassent,
 Ne biau cheval, qu'il n'achatassent
 Por presenter l'empeereor.
 Mout li fesoient plus d'onor
 Cil present que s'il les taillast.
 Ja nuls marcheanz qui alast,
 Ne siens ne autres, par sa terre,
 Por nul besoig, por nule guerre,

Ne soufrist qu'il fust destorbez.
 Tant larrons avoit essorbez,
 Tant robeors fet essillier,
 Si sellr com par un moustier
 Aloit chascuns par mi son regne.
 Bien vit li hauz princes et regne
 Qui si sagement tient sa terre.
 (ll. 603-20)

Thus we see that one of the motives for courtly largesse is practical expediency. It is merely a means to an end, in this case the end being a reliable military force.

b) Personal Glory.

The next motive for liberality that I propose to study is more abstract, but very explicit in the courtly romances. The objective, while not so easily recognized, is nevertheless of paramount importance to any courtly hero. It is personal glory or prestige.

The securing of personal prestige was indisputably the chief reason for the giving of rich gifts in the romances. Reprehensible as this may seem by modern standards, it was considered perfectly natural, even commendable, within the context of courtly ethics.

Such self-interest appears to make the immense gulf between courtly largesse and Christian charity even wider. One remembers, however, that often charity as presented in the didactic works was not always inspired by true benevolence, seeking only the benefit of the poor. Often the end in sight appears to be the salvation of the benefactor's soul. (cf. Chapter Two, A, 8, c). The aim of courtly largesse was more immediate and essentially worldly.

Courtly largesse also differs from the concept of generosity found in the Chansons de Geste. C.B. West⁽⁶⁴⁾ maintains that the courtly hero is always conscious of the approbation and admiration his liberality will bring him. In the Chansons de Geste, she observes, the generosity is more objective, the hero is more concerned with the merits of, and the benefit to, his followers, rather than with any personal glory.

One cannot deny that the courtly hero is usually very aware of the value of his largesse to himself. This is moreover plainly stated.

In Erec et Enide, Enide speaks these words over the "body" of Erec whom she believes dead. She says that if one is not liberal one has no "pris", that is honour and a social reputation:

"largesce t'avoit coroné,
cele sans cui nus n'a grant pris."
(ll. 4604-05)

In Gilles de Chyn, there is a bitter attack on avarice and evil rich men. The reason why avarice is so abhorred is that it prevents men from gaining prestige. Again the word "pris" is used:

Rice mauvais, Dix voz maudie!
Ne poés estre sans envie,
Dehait fel et entors vilains,
d'orgueil et d'avarisse plains!
Cil ne pueent en pris monter.
(ll. 4837-41)

Concern with "pris" is again of prime interest in Athis et Prophilias. Athis is being sent from Athens to Rome to learn the art of chivalry. His father gives him some advice as he departs: that he should be generous if he values the opinion of the world:

Au departir Athis beisa,
Mout grant avoir si li charja;
De lui large estre le semont,
Se il aime le pris del mont.
(ll. 265-68)

Here "pris" is used not in the sense of personal prestige, but rather to mean public respect or admiration, that is the good opinion of society.

In Durmart, we read that the act of giving is of the greatest importance. It is shameful not to fulfil promises of gifts because thereby one's own prestige suffers. Bruns tells Durmart that he will give him arms as promised, and adds that if he fails to do so he cannot enhance his reputation in society. We again meet the ubiquitous phrase "en grant pris monter".

Car de promettre sens doner
Ne doit nus en grant pris monter.
(ll. 9261-62)

In the same work the poet comments that valour is of less importance than largesse to the good reputation of a courtly person. A valiant, but avaricious, man cannot compete with a liberal person of less valour:

Uns cortois larges, bien apris
Doit estre plus tost de haut pris,
C'uns fels avers plus preus de lui
Qui plains est d'envie et d'amui.
(ll. 15903-06)

This romance abounds in references to the ability of largesse to secure renown for a knight; it is the sort of advice which is commonplace in the courtly works:

Haés orguel et felonie
Et avarice et vilenie;
Largece et cortoisie amés,
Si iert vostre pris coronés.
(ll. 15913-16)

On another occasion Durmart's father advises his son to cherish liberality and hate avarice so that his reputation should be unimpaired:

"Se vos estes faus et avers,
Ja vostre pris ne sera clers."
(ll. 1443-44)

We noted earlier in this chapter that it was believed a man who possessed the virtue of liberality inevitably possessed other virtues. In this work we read that if a man acquires the reputation of being mean he will find himself accused of many other vices:

"Car uns avers mal entechiés
Est de mainte chose blasmés
Dont uns cortois seroit lœés."
(ll. 1446-48)

In Athis and Prophilias, the king of Greece tells his son that if his valour fails him, he can compensate for this weakness by his liberality:

"Que vostre granz hautesce pere!
Se vos n'avez asez proésce,
Vos les veintrøiz toz par largesce,
Donant fet en maint bon ami,
Si rabat en maint malvés cri."
(ll. 14176-80)

Largesse precedes prowess in Floire et Blancheflor ⁽⁶⁵⁾, where personal glory is seen as being dependent on liberality:

Homs qui est proz et cortois
 Puet conquerre honor et proece,
 Desqu'il a et sens et largesce."
 (ll. 12-14)

In Florimont, a great deal of consideration is given to the merits of liberality. Firstly the poet attributes to it the other virtues of love, prowess and valour. He then claims that liberality enables the giver to enjoy the love, respect and praise of society and to be honoured even after his death:

Car largesce est meire d'amour
 Et de proësce et de valour.
 Ensi puet del siecle joïr,
 Amors et honors maintenir
 Dont il ert del siecle loqüz
 Et apres sa mort remanbréz."
 (ll. 95-100)

Later in this romance, there is a long and somewhat repetitive speech made by Florimont's father to his son, extolling the benefits derived from liberality by the giver. Not once is any mention made of those who should benefit as recipients. His father urges Florimont to give with a good grace as much as he can afford. Largesse will exalt him, endow him with superiority over others, earn him the love of all men in his own court, and even in other lands. Liberality is rooted in joy and enhances the giver's prowess. He then contrasts the good engendered by liberality to the evils begotten by covetousness: the shame and contempt, the hatred of men and God. Florimont then seems to confuse selfish courtly liberality with selfless Christian charity. To support his attitude, he refers to the Holy Scriptures which, he claims, preach liberality. In his speech he compares liberality to a dear friend, to a sweet milk, to a flower more fragrant than a rose and to a medicine which cures all ills in the giver.

"Biauz fils, tot done de boen gré
 Quanque tu jai avoir poras;
 Per lergeté mout conquerras.
 Largesce done signorie
 Et a son ami, est amie:
 Selui cui ele vult norrir
 De plusors gens le fait servir,

Plus halt le met que ne puis dire.
 Biaux fils, nus ne poroit descrire
 Le bien que largeté ait fet.
 Se tu wels boivre de son lait,
 Il est plus dous que atre chose
 Et si est plus fres que n'est rose.
 Le cuer vos tendrait et le cors
 Em vostre pais et dehors.
 Per largesce seras amez,
 En cort servis et honorez.
 Biaux fils, largesce est med&cine
 Que totes bontez enlumine.
 Si com Nature fait planter
 Oils en chef por enluminer
 Les cors de totes criatures,
 Ensi dient les escritures;
 Largesce est en joie plantee
 Dont proësce est enluminee.
 Honors ne proësce ne voit,
 Por que largesce nen i soit;
 Largesce fet veoir honor
 Et proësce et bone amor,
 Covoitise tot le veoir;
 Cil que l'aimmet nen ait p^oir
 Que il conoisse sa vergoigné.
 Fols est cil qui ne s'en esloigne,
 Car en maintes cors est honis,
 De Deu et de la gent haïs."

(ll. 1920-54)

Later in the same work, this theme, the extraordinary power of largesse to confer honours and glory, is again taken up (ll. 2773-76)⁽⁶⁶⁾.

There occurs another piece of advice for an ambitious knight which runs along similar lines, but which goes one step further: If you wish to be admitted to a great court you must distribute your wealth generously. Be well-disposed to all those who receive, more so than if you had received from them. By this gesture you will be loved, served, honoured. If you need followers, then loyalty will be secured by your liberality, and they will come from far afield to serve you:

"Se tu wels en grant cort venir
 Et por honor et por servir,
 Soies de boen acoentement,
 Ton avoir done largement.
 Qui le prendroit, saches l'en grei
 Plus que c'il le t'avoit donei;
 Per seu serais loing mentéüs,
 Ameis, servis et reseüs,
 Et se tu ais de gent besoing,
 Il te vendront servir de loing."

(ll. 2751-60)

The motive mentioned in the latter part of this text has already been studied in the preceding section: the securing of loyalty by liberality.

We see, therefore, that liberality was strongly urged in the romances so that the courtly hero might accede to a position of great social honour. I turn now to gestures of practical largesse to show how the poet assesses the results of such generosity in terms of personal prestige for the courtly hero.

Parthonopeus confesses that it is the rich gifts he has made to kings, counts, barons, knights and bourgeois that have established his glorious reputation. It is the woman he loves, Melior, who has financed his expenditure and it is therefore she who is directly responsible for his social glory:

"Molt m'a doné or et argent,
 Pailes et pierres d'orfont;
 Del sien ai fait molt larges dons
 As rois, as contes, as barons,
 As chevaliers et as borjois,
 Et as homes de totes lois.
 Par li sui venus en cest pris,"
 (Parthonopeus: ll. 4453-59)

Florimont follows the advice given to him by his father and his counsellor, Floquart, and, as they predicted, he rises dramatically in prestige and social position. He succeeds Philip as king of Esclabonia, and is loved and honoured by his subjects. It was his largesse which was chiefly instrumental in enabling him to accede to such honour:

Li petit et li grant l'amoient
 Por la bonté qu'an lui veoient.
 Per sa bonté, per sa largesce
 Fut il montez en grant hatesce;
 (Florimont: ll. 11415-18)

The Emperor Conrad displays his liberality at the conclusion of a tournament. His unbounded generosity earned him the enhancement of his already great renown, and hence the friendship of powerful men both in his own empire and abroad:

Essauça mout son bon renon
 L'empereres, li bons prodom;
 Com bien qu'il i ait d'avoir mis,
 Mout en a conquis hauz amis
 Et de son regne et de l'autrui.
 (Guillaume de Dole: ll. 2943-47)

Gauvain, the glorious victor of a tournament at Rigomer, crowns his success by staging a banquet to which his prisoners are invited. If they consent to accept his hospitality, he will not demand ransoms from them (ll. 13211-17). This apparently generous gesture was made uniquely for the furtherment of Gauvain's "pris":

Por son pris croistre et avancier.⁽⁶⁷⁾
 (Merveilles de Rigomer:line 13212)

That Gauvain's prisoners should be excused their ransom in return for accepting the gift of hospitality seems perhaps to us to be a strange condition to be imposed on them, certainly not one which involved any sacrifice on the part of the prisoners themselves. However, the receiving of gifts implied a great deal within the context of the romances. Gauvain's prisoners were all powerful men, kings, counts besides ordinary knights. By agreeing to benefit from Gauvain's generosity they would be subordinating themselves to him. They would become the knowing and consenting instruments of Gauvain's increased prestige at the expense of their own. This is an aspect of courtly liberality we shall have the occasion to study in greater detail in Chapter Six.

Accordingly, on Sunday, the banquet takes place which provides Gauvain with yet another opportunity to display his courtly qualities, especially his largesse. His prestige was considerably increased and all those present pledged their services to him.

Dont ot Gavains fait se prouece
 Et ses bontés et ses largueces.
 Lors est en si haut pris montés,
 Tout d'fent q'il a lor bontés.
 (ll. 13355-58)

We see from this study of the two main motives for courtly largesse that such generosity was basically a means to an end. In the first instance

the objective is a reliable fighting force to maintain military supremacy. In the second case the end is more abstract, but no less clearly defined; it is the personal glory of the giver.

c) The Seven Kinds of Largesse in "Florimont".

I continue this section on the motives for courtly liberality with an analysis of the virtue which occurs in Florimont. This analysis is unusual in that it condemns, to a certain degree, the motives for largesse encouraged in most other romances and indeed elsewhere in the same romance (see my pages 511-512). For this reason, I propose to consider the text in detail.

One of the characters describes seven kinds of so-called liberality, six of which he rejects as unworthy of the term. Unlike most courtly poets, Aimon de Varennes does not accept the blanket term of largesse applied to any kind of giving. With good psychological insight he analyses motives and shows how they are reprehensible if inspired by self-interest. Such an intelligent appraisal of liberality is, in my experience, unique in the romances. In all the works I have quoted it was made clear that as long as the courtly hero gives, his motives are not the object of censure. Only the failure to give is considered shameful. In Florimont we have a quite different point of view.

The circumstances which provoke this close examination of liberality are these: Florimont, the hero, is poor because he has given away all his wealth. Floquart accuses him of not practising the right kind of largesse. Consequently, Florimont is penniless and so are his knights, because Florimont has also generously distributed their wealth:

"La gent doit aler son pain querre.
Tot lor avoir avez eü,
Pris et donei et despendu."
(ll. 4188-90)

Floquart points out that Florimont's chief mistake was in giving without earning. It is no good to be generous with one's wealth if one does not

constantly replenish it with the riches gained by deeds of knightly valour. Largesse which is not supported by a constant revenue eventually destroys the giver:

"Poc valt largesce sens conquerre.
De tel largesce n'ai ge cure
Que si tost vient et si poc dure;
Tel largesce n'est pas d'onor,
Puels qu'ele destruit son signor."
(ll. 4194-98)

Floquart then begins to list the seven kinds of largesse.

The first case is that of an avaricious man who pretends to be generous until he has reached a position of power by means of his liberality. Then his real character comes to the fore and he no longer gives. Liberality for such an ignoble end is not true liberality:

"A largesce tant s'abandone
Qu'il est eslus en halt astaige,
Mai puels chainget il son coraige;
De largesce ne s'entremet,
(ll. 4208-11)

Secondly there is the avaricious man who is generous from fear. He gives in order to ingratiate himself with potential enemies who might rob him. Such false liberality brings no honour:

"Tel i ait de ses riches gens
Qui est avers et si despent
Et prent largesce de crienbor
Ou d'anemi ou de signor,
Qu'il crient c'on ne li fasset guerre
Per coi soit gastee sa terre.
Tant est lars com il ait regart
Que malz ne li vinge d'atre part.
Mai puels qu'il puet estre seurs,
Largesce le trueve mout dur;
N'ait pas despendu per honor;
Seu est largesce de crienbor."
(ll. 4219-30)

Next there is the largesse whose motive is again avarice of a kind. It is practised by powerful noblemen who give their wealth to their vassals, but never to anyone else. This, says Floquart, is a subtle way of hoarding wealth, for although he has been seen to be generous, he can easily recall his money from his faithful followers. He will have bought their loyalty

and they would readily surrender their own wealth to the baron when he was in need. One may contrast this attitude to that found in the majority of the courtly romances where the investing of one's wealth in one's knights was regarded as good policy:

"Telz i a de ses hals barons,
 Larges sont a lor compaignons,
 Son avoir a ses homes met,
 Des estrainges ne s'entremet,
 Cil welt estoier son avoir:
 Seu est largesce de savoir,
 Muelz ne puet son avoir garder
 Qui a sa gent le fet doner;
 Car cil metent por lor signor
 Trétot son avoir et le lor.
 Se il sont riche, grinor faix
 D'anemins et de guerre maix
 Il pueent soffrir et atandre,
 Cil ont que doner et que prendre.
 Tel largesce n'est pas folie,
 Mais non est de grant baronie;
 Ne puet estre de grant honor;
 Tote remaint a son signor."
 (ll. 4237-54)

Next comes the man who sells liberality in that he puts his money where he knows he can expect some return and so make a profit. This subtle form of usury is the practice which Floquart appears to dislike most if one can judge by his angry words:

"Telz i ait que largesse vent,
 Se dist que lars est, car despent;
 Une largesce ait cil emprise,
 Son avoir despent en tel guisse
 Que bien seit en cui ou en coi,
 Por plus trere d'avoir a soi.
 Quant puet servir acun baron
 Fuels demande le gueredon.
 N'est pas grant honor de despendre,
 Se gueredon de don welt prendre.
 Seu est largesce de fumier.
 (ll. 4261-71)

The fifth kind of liberality is the one which Florimont is guilty of. He has given generously, but has not acquired sufficient wealth to match his largesse. So he is soon poor as are his followers. Floquart explains that a person of any social rank: knight, bourgeois or peasant, can be generous in this way and so claim to lead a courtly life, although he may be motivated by pride or wish to impress a lady. However, unless he

replenishes his wealth by deeds of valour worthy of a knight, then he cannot be truly courtly, and his liberality will inevitably be short-lived. He will bring about his own downfall and that of those dependent on him:

"Sire, vos l'avez tant següe
 Que vostre gent est confondue.
 Que plus welt doner et servir
 Que sa rante ne puet soffrir
 Et poc conquiert et si despant,
 Sa largesce vient a noiant.
 Tel i ait qui se fait cortois,
 Chevalier, vilain ou borjois:
 Faït soi de mener bele vie
 Ou par orguel ou por s'amie.
 Un an ou II ou trois est larges;
 Puels li fat avoïrs ou coraiges.
 Quant il laisset, seu ait perdu
 Que il ait mis et despendu."
 (ll. 4277-90)

Another form of false liberality which incenses Floquart is that found in a person who spends his wealth lavishly, but always on himself. He spends everything on food and clothes. He becomes obese and unfit for knightly combat. This self-indulgence is more akin to avarice than liberality:

"Tel i ait qui est lars por soi
 De gent vestir, de bel hernoï,
 De bial conduit, endroit sa goule;
 Seu est une largesce soule.
 Sire, non est mie d'onor,
 Tost trait a honte son signor.
 Telz est de hernoï aaisiés
 Qui est d'onor toz despoilliés;
 Te(l)z ait grant cors et grosce pansce
 Qui est poc doutez de sa lance,
 Ceste racyne est d'une visce
 Qui atochet a avarisce."
 (ll. 4297-4308)

Finally we come to what Floquart considers true liberality. It is a liberality which is not based on any dishonourable motives, but which is linked with other courtly virtues: "sens", a sense of moderation, and "proesce", knightly valour. Largesse needs these accompanying virtues just as a ship needs a helm to steer it. Floquart uses the image of prowess as a tree supported by the roots of "sens" and "largesce". The flowers which are borne by largesse are "acoentement" and "dousor". Finally there is the fruit of the tree: honour, gifts and loyal service.

"Largesce portet bone flor
 D'acoentement et de dousor.
 De la flor fait frut a sa guisse
 D'onor, de don, de bial servisse,
 Puels ~~de~~ doit proèsce florir;
 La flors ne puet del frujt pertir,
 La flors est de chevalerie;
 Li fruis doit mener bele vie
 De maintenir riche coraige
 Et de poier en halt estaige.
 Que tel largesce welt avoir
 Son signor met en grant pooir;
 Tel largesce met son signor
 De povreté en grant honor."
 (ll. 4345-58)

This is a complex concept of the relationship between the courtly virtues. Largesse cannot be true unless supported by its sister qualities of moderation and gentleness and knightly courage⁽⁶⁸⁾. The results of largesse for the courtly person are prestige, loyalty of followers and personal wealth. This is exactly as in all other romances with the only difference being the attitude of the courtly person. According to Floquart he must not have these material and social advantages as motives for his largesse. Largesse should be inspired only by the fine qualities already listed. The worldly gains should be gratuitous, unplanned, unsought for directly.

I have already demonstrated that in most courtly works the motives are interested and clearly stated. This is also true of Florimont where on other occasions the poet accepts the less rigorous definition of liberality and its motives.

d) Disregard for the Beneficiaries of Courtly Liberality.

In none of the situations I have cited above do the beneficiaries play an important part in the practice of courtly largesse. They are merely instruments in a mechanical process designed to exalt and protect the giver. Their role extends as far as their usefulness as either loyal followers of the giver or witnesses of his generosity who are able to applaud his largesse and enhance his prestige.

This reminds one of the occasional attitude towards the poor man, held by some moralists whereby the poor man is reduced to the role of the instrument

by which a rich man may gain salvation.

An interesting example of this disregard for the beneficiary is to be found in the Roman d'Alexandre⁽⁶⁹⁾. A knight has been taken prisoner and, being penniless, he craves a little material aid from Alexandre:

"Et sui venus a toi, mestier ai de t'aie,
Que tu me doignes don selonc ta segnorie,
Que ta grant largece ait ma poverté renplie."
(Branch II, ll. 2099-2101)

Alexandre's immediate reaction is to give the knight a city and extensive land:

"Tien, je te doins Araine et la terre en baillie."
(line 2114)

However, the knight is frankly dismayed by this show of largesse. He obviously did not want so much, or indeed the attendant responsibility of ruling a city. He begs Alexandre to change his mind, to give him money or clothes:

Et cil li respondi, qui molt ot le cuer bas:
"Rois, done me autre chose, or ou argent ou dras,
La cité ne me plaist ne je ne la voil pas
Ne ja de li deffendre n'esteraï un jor las."
(ll. 2121-24)

As the poet records the knight's reply, he clearly indicates his own opinion of the man, calling him base-hearted for daring to refuse such a splendid gift from King Alexandre. We shall see later (Chapter Six) that it was contrary to the courtly social code to refuse a gift from a superior.

Alexandre, faced with this refusal, becomes angry and points out that what the knight wants is unimportant. What is important is what is fitting for a powerful king to give in order to maintain his own dignity:

Alixandres respont: "Se devient droit en as;
Je ne sai qui te tient ne le cuer que tu as,
Mais itel sont li don au roi mascedonas."
(ll. 2125-27)

Meanwhile Alexandre's men mock the poor knight. They feel nothing but contempt for a knight who wants a small gift and who has the effrontery to demand such an insignificant gesture of Alexandre (ll. 2130-32).

Eventually Alexandre compromises and bestows a gift of 500 marks which represents the smallest possible gift from a person of his rank and dignity:

Au prisonier commande a doner cinq cent mars;
Ce fu li menres dons au roi macedonas.
(ll. 2134-35)

In Alexandre's case, the show of largesse was apparently not intended to gain prestige, that he already had. However, bound by convention, he always had to give munificently in order to maintain his personal dignity.

This anecdote was used by writers of "exempla" to illustrate Christian charity⁽⁷⁰⁾. A philosopher would surely have given a different interpretation to this gesture. For a philosopher such extreme largesse is prodigality. He would doubtless disapprove because a city was such an unsuitable gift for the poor knight, and primarily because the gesture was made from purely subjective and not truly benevolent motives. No such philosophical analysis is made of giving in the courtly romances⁽⁷¹⁾.

The attitudes revealed in this incident in the roman d'Alexandre leads me to a consideration of the notion of dignity which is involved in giving and is displaying one's largesse. From the above example we see that a great king, renowned for his liberality, refused to give small gifts. Thus it would appear that a nobleman must give according to his wealth and social standing. The wealthier and more powerful he was, so his gifts had to be correspondingly greater and more lavish. Hence Alexandre's embarrassment and anger at the knight's refusal of a city. How could he sacrifice his dignity by granting the man's modest request? The gift should be worthy of the giver. This aspect of courtly conduct is an important one and encompasses more than just the giving of gifts. It concerns the whole way of life of the courtly heroes: their residences, the splendour of their courts, their food, clothes, armour, ornaments, horses, etc.; in short, their extravagant spending habits. Lavish spending, whether money and goods are given as gifts or used to stage a flamboyant display of luxuries, in short, what is usually known as noble expenditure,

is the aspect of courtly life that I propose to study next.

4. Noble Expenditure.

a) Reasons for Noble Expenditure.

Noble expenditure may be considered as being part of courtly largesse. It is an integral part of the showiness, the exhibitionism and the preoccupation with personal glory and social approval peculiar to the courtly way of life, as depicted in the romances. It has already become clear that liberality was the chief quality necessary to the courtly hero. Another important quality which may be regarded as an extension of courtly liberality, is the willingness to spread one's wealth about with great show, not only by presenting gifts, but also by spending lavishly. In its extreme form this custom may become known as conspicuous waste. The beneficiaries are not carefully selected individuals, but constitute all those who found themselves in the presence of the courtly hero on the occasion of his munificence. Since noble expenditure was usually practised at celebrations, those present would be court people of noble birth, with the exception of the "jongleurs", who were, usually, also showered with gifts.

This social phenomenon which bears little relation to true liberality, but which is entirely subjective on the part of the donor and spender, is explained by Thorstein Veblen⁽⁷²⁾. He maintains that if a man wishes to gain the respect of others, he must not only possess wealth or power, but must be seen to possess them. He must put them clearly in evidence. Hence what Veblen calls "conspicuous consumption". In order to display his wealth and establish his financial superiority the rich man gives valuable gifts, stages lavish and obviously costly feasts and celebrations. Those whom the rich man wishes to impress are invited to benefit from these gifts and to partake in these feasts⁽⁷³⁾.

In the romances we are dealing with the leisure class and the situation is not dissimilar, although it is perhaps more exaggerated. Fabulous sums

of money are spent, money which has no practical source. We should remember that courtly romance has little to do with reality. It deals with one class of society, the nobles and their immediate entourage. The courtly nobles are exalted beyond the realm of truth into superhuman beings.

One critic⁽⁷⁴⁾ has made the point that it is the fantasy element of courtly literature which characterizes it. It was not particularly concerned to record faithfully the living conditions of feudal society at the time, but rather the ideals of that society.

We may presume that noble expenditure which occurs frequently in the courtly romances was the ideal not only of the court poets who benefited from it, but also of the noble audience who enjoyed being portrayed as magnificently generous, delving continually into a never-failing fount of wealth, thus enhancing their personal prestige.

b) Historical Examples of Noble Expenditure.

Historians have found authentic accounts of noble expenditure practised in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Henri Dupin⁽⁷⁵⁾ quotes such instances: he recounts the anecdote about Count Henri de Champagne who was on his way to church with one Ertaut de Nogent. They meet a poor knight who asks for material aid. Ertaut orders him off, berating him for begging from Henri who has given away so much of his wealth that he has nothing left. This was hardly a tactful remark to make about Henri who had all the pride of his class. Angered, Henri rebukes Ertaut for publicising his poverty, and adds that he still has something to give. Thereupon he presents Ertaut himself to the poor knight. Ertaut extricated himself from this predicament by fixing his worth at £500 and duly paying this sum to the knight.

The thesis that the practice of noble expenditure was common in the noble life of western Europe in the Middle Ages and that, to a large degree, the worth of a noble and knight was judged according to the quality and quantity of his gifts and by the extent of his extravagant spending is

supported by S. Painter⁽⁷⁶⁾. He notes that the register of the Black Prince, son of Edward III of England⁽⁷⁷⁾, contains entries recording the munificent gifts presented to lords and minstrels. The case of the Black Prince cannot be regarded as typical because he was not a contemporary of the majority of the courtly romances. It also seems unlikely that many men were so rich as he. His case merely indicates how highly such liberality was valued since the Black Prince is immortalised as a shining example of medieval chivalry.

On the subject of courtly largesse, Painter suggests that literature and reality fostered each other. He records that some nobles around the eleventh century had been enriched by land gains and demonstrated their prosperity by displaying it. Soon lavish spending and entertaining became a status symbol to which all nobles aspired, especially as it was presented in the guise of the supreme courtly virtue of liberality. So practice preceded fiction which encouraged further practice. This is quite plausible, but difficult to prove.

Several examples of noble expenditure are given by the historian Achille Luchaire⁽⁷⁸⁾. He mentions the case of the son of Henry II of England, who indulged in reckless spending and consequently incurred massive debts. Debts were not, however, considered dishonourable, but rather a sign of nobility.

Another example which Luchaire finds in the records of the historian Gilbert de Mons concerns Count Baudouin V of Hainault (father-in-law of Philippe-Auguste). In 1184 he was summoned to the court held at Mayence where Frederic Barberossa assembled all the princes of the empire. There were 70,000 knights present. The barons tried to outdo each other in extravagance and prodigality, as was apparently the custom. There was a contest to find the possessor of the greatest retinue of knights and the largest number of tents, to see who could dispose of the most money and

gifts to the ordinary soldiers and to the court entertainers. At one time Count Baudouin was reported to be in debt to the sum of £40,000. He, therefore, levied taxes and was able to pay off the debt in seven months.

A. Luchaire⁽⁷⁹⁾ also quotes the chronicler, Curé Lambert, who records the knighting ceremony of the son of Count Baudouin II in 1181. After the dubbing, the new knight advanced into the middle of the assembly and distributed gold and precious objects. He gave away so much that those present were to remember ever afterwards such an outstanding example of generosity. He gave away not only what he possessed but also what he could borrow. At the end, he had very little left for himself.

Another real life incident is described by the medievalist, Marc Bloch⁽⁸⁰⁾. It concerns barons who were determined to prove their superiority by treating their wealth carelessly. The account has been preserved by a chronicler⁽⁸¹⁾. It took place in Limousin. In the contest, one knight had a plot of land ploughed up and sown with pieces of silver, another burned wax candles to use for cooking, and a third ordered thirty of his horses to be burnt alive. In this case we pass from the noble expenditure favoured by courtly romance to vulgar, wasteful expenditure. Acts of this kind are not, in my experience, to be found in the romances. There, noble expenditure is a joyful, non-competitive activity, intended for the glorification of the spender, but not for the open humiliation of an opponent or rival. In these historic examples of noble expenditure we are made aware that debts were incurred and that they had to be paid off. In at least one case taxes were levied on the peasantry. Such harsh realism never sullies the splendid wealth of the courtly romances. The nobles are rich, their source of wealth a mystery which bothers no-one. There is no hint of taxes or of the poor over-taxed peasantry to break the charm of the fairytale atmosphere of the romances.

c) Noble Expenditure in the Courtly Romances.

Noble expenditure in the romances starts with King Arthur in the Brut.

It is apparent on the splendid occasion of Arthur's coronation at Caerleon. King Arthur gave many rich gifts which the poet describes at length (ll. 2041-72). Wace then sums up the proceedings by pointing out that King Arthur showed such liberality in order to demonstrate his wealth and to prompt men to talk of him:

Artus enora toz les suens,
Molt ama et dona as buens,
Por ses richescs demonstrer
Et por fere de soi parler.
(ll. 1653-56)

Arthur's noble expenditure also figures in Erec et Enide, where he is the host at the wedding of the couple. The poet gives us a long description of the riches, the entertainments and activities, the generous sums paid to the jongleurs. He also adds his own approving comments about the royal provision of food and drink:

Li rois Artus ne fu pas chiches:
bien commanda as penetiers
et as queuz et aus botelliers,
qu'ils livrassent a grant planté,
chascun selonc sa volanté,
et pain et vin et veneison.
(ll. 2006-11)

The wedding celebrations lasted for more than fifteen days. Arthur ordered that the company remain assembled and the festivities continue so long in order to do honour to Erec:

Ensi les noces et la corz
durerent plus de quinze jorz
a tel joie et a tel hautesce;
par seignorie et par leesce
et por Erec plus enorer,
fist li rois Artus demorer
toz les barons une quinzaine.
(ll. 2065-71)

We have a hint here of the attitude towards such occasions. We do not doubt that Arthur wanted all those present to enjoy themselves, but one notices that they were under orders to attend, and, in doing so, they were formally bearing witness to a great show of wealth and, by participating in the fruits of that wealth, they were paying tribute to it and thus acknowledging the

superiority of Arthur and his guest of honour, Erec. It is an attitude that will be treated more fully in a later section.

It was again King Arthur who financed the celebration for Erec's coronation. On this occasion, the poet exclaims that neither Caesar nor Alexander would have dared to spend as much as Arthur did. The poet thus frankly admits his admiration at the boldness displayed by such a glorious showering of wealth for a public celebration:

ne tant n'osassent pas desprendre
 antre Cesar et Alixandre
 Com a la cort ot despandu.
 (ll. 6621-23)

Weddings and coronations provided ideal occasions for the extravagant display in Erec et Enide. At the wedding of Amadas and Ydoine, held by the Duke, Ydoine's father, the poet does not slip into hyperbole, but merely remarks that besides the rich feast, enough gifts were given to the counts and barons. We understand that the gifts were of sufficient quantity and quality to do honour to the occasion, that is, they were many and rich:

Rice feste tenue i ont;
 Assés i ot douné grans dons
 Et as contes et as barons.
 (Amadas et Ydoine: ll. 7824-26)

The wedding of Guillaume de Palerne and Melior was the occasion for numerous exchanges of gifts between barons. The celebrations, which lasted more than a month, were accompanied by rich banquets, held for a distinguished company, and their splendour defeats the descriptive powers of the poet:

Ne sai que vos deviseroie
 Des vins, des boires, des mengiers,
 Des dames et des chevaliers,
 Des puceles ne des barons,
 Des presens ne des riches dons
 Que s'entrefisent li signor.
 (Guillaume de Palerne: ll. 8928-33) (82)

At the marriage of Athis and Gaite, it is Evas who stages the lavish festivities. He spent great sums of money, distributed his riches amongst his friends. Such extravagant expenditure was in order to do honour to

his daughter and her husband. In this text we meet a phrase which is commonplace in descriptions of such occasions: "joie feire", which means the presentation of gifts, a source of joy to the giver rather than the receiver in the romances:

Mout i desparent a foison.
 Li sire Evas la recomance
 Et sa maisniee et soi r'agence,
 De joie feire ne s'alente,
 A ses amis le suen presente;
 Riches hom est et richement
 Por les enfanz le suen despant.
 (Athis et Prophilius: ll. 8970-76)

Cleomadès concludes with the coronation of the hero and a series of weddings: that of Cleomadès himself and also those of members of his family. When crowned king, he gave many rich gifts to all those present at the celebrations. The poet comments that never was so much given by a king on such an occasion:

Ains rois a feste ne douna
 tant de grans dons que il fist la
 as dames et as chevaliers;
 chevaus, palefrois et deniers,
 plenté de dras d'or et de soie,
 or monnée et sans monnoie,
 coronnes, fermaus et joiaus
 donna assez riches et biaux.
 Hanas d'or, pos, platiaus d'argent
 donna li rois a pluseur gent
 et d'autres manieres de dons
 (ll. 17967-77)

The festivities which succeed tournaments are also favourite occasions for the display of wealth. The victorious knight, his wealth replenished by his gains on the field, can afford to crown his prowess by his reckless liberality.

When Amadas emerges as victor of a tournament, he assembles the other knights and poor squires and takes them to his lodgings where they are dined and entertained, and presumably presented with gifts⁽⁸³⁾ by the joyful Amadas:

Puis va querant les chevaliers,
 Les povres bacelers legiers
 Par le castel; tous les en maine
 A son ostel et mult se paine

D'els hounerer a son pooir.
 La nuit n'ot u castel, pour voir,
 Ostel u eüst tjel repaire
 De gent ne si bel luminaire
 Ne u fuissent tant honéré,
 Ne leu ou donast tel plenté
 A mangier ne si llement,
 (Amadas et Ydoine: ll. 4559-69)

In Guillaume de Dole it is not the victorious hero to whom the glory and joy of practising noble expenditure falls, but to the sponsor of the occasion, the emperor Conrad. After the conclusion of the combats, he made a gesture of unparalleled generosity and boldness, one which many would consider folly, but which earned him the admiration of all to the present time, says the poet. He dispatched his senechals, laden with money and precious articles, amongst the participants of the tournament. All losses were compensated, all ransoms paid. This gesture cost the emperor 10,000 marks, but earned him a glorious reputation for generosity:

Ses hauz cuer li fist la nuit fere
 Une honor et une vaillance
 Dont ses pris monta mout en France,
 Qu'il envia ses seneschaus
 D'une part et d'autre as chevax
 Qui portent argent et avoir,
 Por fere les gages ravoir
 A trestoz ceuls qui voudrent prendre.
 N'est or rois qui osast reprendre,
 Qui miex ne vouzist estrê ars,
 Que bien cousta .X. mile mars;
 Et encor en parolê on.
 (ll. 2842-53)

Gliglois' first tournament is crucial to his career. He has fought hard to be allowed to participate in it and has been knighted especially for the occasion. Upon his success at arms and his consequent behaviour depend his knightly reputation and his chances of winning the hand of Beauté, whom he loves. When he is knighted, the importance of lavish spending is impressed upon him by Beauté's sister who promises to give him sufficient riches for a noble life-style during the tournament:

"Et se vous kerqueray deniers,
 Or et argent et gent assés,
 Et vous largement despendés,
 Sy gardés bien soit emploiés.
 Ne demant plus mais preus soiés.
 (Gliglois: ll. 1954-58)

He sets off with an impressive retinue of sixty knights and a magnificent supply of riches (ll. 2017-21). Once settled into his lodgings, he sends the town crier to announce publicly that he would extend hospitality to poor knights, prisoners, ex-crusaders, anyone in need, also to "jongleurs" and other entertainers. Anyone who came would receive rich gifts:

Il font crïer al crïeour
 Se povre chevalier i a,
 Prison, croisié, ja n'i avra
 Un sol qui d'avoir ait mestier,
 S'il vient al novel chevalier,
 Qu'il ne l'en doïnse largement
 Et volentiers et l'emant,
 Et si vignent li gougleor,
 Li menestral et canteor.
 (ll. 2186-94)

A competitive spirit reigns amongst the various lodgings. The courtly hosts try to outdo each other in lavish hospitality, or so the poet suggests, by discerning the prize for noble expenditure to Gliglois and his companions:

Tant fait Gliglois et sy serjant
 Et sy compaignon, çou m'est vis,
 Que del castel orent le pris,
 Que si riche ostel i eüst
 Nesun tout sol qu'on i s'eüst
 Ne que la moitié despendist
 De tant d'asés con Gliglois fist?
 (ll. 2316-22)

The next day, at the tournament, Gliglois excels at the exercise of arms and leaves the field with many valuable gains. These are given away at his lodgings that evening. He retained nothing:

Ne retient vaillant un ronchi,
 Ains dona tout et departi.
 (ll. 2675-76)

He gave to his companions, to captured knights, crusaders and "jongleurs". Everyone went away happy (ll. 2672-89).

By his behaviour, particularly his noble expenditure, Gliglois proves his worth. His liberality and his prowess combine to make him the perfect courtly knight, and also worthy to become the husband of the proud Beauté.

Although celebrations were obvious occasions for the giving of such

rich gifts and for lavish spending, there are also other reasons for a show of extravagance besides to mark and honour a special occasion. Often a knight far from home, will practise noble expenditure in order to establish himself in a strange, foreign society. Unknown and unproved, the young inexperienced knight abroad has only his skill at arms and his riches with which to impress others. It would appear that, initially at least, great wealth and liberal use of it, speak louder in the strange knight's favour.

Gliglois practised noble expenditure not only at his first tournament, but ever since he arrived at Arthur's court, even though he was not then a knight. His generosity endeared him to the people at court (ll. 79-80). He disposed of great sums of money in order to achieve his popularity:

Molt y despent et molt li couste.
(line 91)

Although Gliglois is not yet a knight, and is the son of a modest German châtelain, his spending habits rival those of a powerful prince:

A son hostel s'en vait Gliglois.
Ne ses peres fust cuens u rois,
Ne donnast il plus riches dons.
(ll. 1039-41)

In Cligès, Alexandre's case is similar to that of Gliglois⁽⁸⁵⁾.

At the court of King Arthur he led a luxurious life, gave many gifts and he spent a great deal, as was fitting for a man of his rank. This display of wealth amazed all at court. Alexandre put so much effort into these activities that soon he had gained the love and respect of the king, the queen and the barons:

Bele vie a son ostel mainne
Et largemant done et despant,
Si com a sa richesce apant
Et si con ses cuers l'en consoille.
Trestote la corz s'an mervoille
Ou ce que il despant est pris,
Qu'il done a toz chevax de pris
Que de sa terre ot amenez.
Tant s'est Alixandres penez
Et tant fet par son bel servise
Que molt l'aimme li rois et prise,
Et li baron, et la reïne,
(Cligès: ll. 404-15)

Stressed in Alexandre's case is the conscious effort he makes to give generously and spend extravagantly. His liberality appears not to be spontaneous and joyful. The poet paints the picture of a young man conscientiously following the instructions of his father:

A ce que li ot comandé
 Li emperere et conseillié
 Que son cuer ellst esveillie
 A bien doner et a despandre
 Voldra sor tote rien attendre.
 Molt i antant et met grant painne,
 (ll. 398-403)

In Galeran de Bretagne, the hero at one point prepares to travel abroad. He takes with him huge sums of money and riches because he knows that he will be better received on his journey if people can see that he is very wealthy. He knows that wealth commands respect. It is important to note that he does not take the money chiefly to meet his own material needs. He will most probably give a great deal of it away in a noble display to inform people who and what he is:

Monnoie, esterlins et besans
 A fait le jour peser et querre;
 Aller veulst en estrange terre,
 Si li estuet porter avoir.
 De ce fait il moult grant savoir,
 Qu'estranges homs est mal venuz
 Qui d'avoir est povre tenuz,
 Et li richez est a houneur,
 Si le tiennent touz a seigneur.
 (ll. 3278-86)

When Florimont arrives in a strange land, he practises noble expenditure on credit. With the uneasy cooperation of the generous Delfis, he, like Gliglois, widely publicises his forthcoming noble expenditure. He will equip and enrich any poor knight, squire or soldier who will accept his gifts. Florimont is confident that, by his prowess, he will earn sufficient riches to pay for his extravagance:

"Savoir faites as chevaliers,
 A/s/ damoisiaus, as sodoiers:
 Cheveliers qui n'avrait hernois,
 S'avoir en welt, vignet a moi;

Damoisiaus qui armes vodrait,
 C'il vient a moi, il les avrait.
 C'il i ait povre chevelier
 Qui nen ait armes ne destrier,
 Cheval, armes et palefroi
 Avrait, c'il welt venir a moi.
 D'avoir conquerra ju assez;
 (Florimont: ll. 4956-61)

Guillaume's conduct in the land of Emperor Conrad resembles that of other knights abroad. He gives very rich gifts at his lodging. His host is so impressed that he tells the emperor. The latter predicts that Guillaume cannot possibly continue expenditure on such a grand scale without incurring his own impoverishment. Guillaume's host, however, reassures Conrad that the knight always repaid his debts to his hosts and creditors, adding generous gifts to the original loan.

"Onques si gentil creature,
 Ce sachiez, ne fu ne si large.
 Puis que j'alai en cest voiage
 Ou ge ne voil demorer gaires,
 A il doné de robes vaires
 Et de joiaus, qui vaut .c. livres.
 - Einsi sera par tens delivres
 De son avoir, s'il ne se garde",
 Fet l'empereres. - "N'aiez garde,
 Sire, qu'il en avra assez:
 Mout est as borjois bel et sez
 Quant il vient emprunter le lor,
 Qu'il lor done et fet grant honor,
 Et si sont bien a point paié."
 (Guillaume de Dole: ll. 1874-87)

Joufroi is another courtly hero who proves his worth abroad by spending extravagantly. To ensure a large assembly of witnesses, he, too, has an invitation to his lodgings announced publicly. Invited are knights and jongleurs who need money.

"Et si refaites a cr'ier
 Qu'a mon hostel veignent soper,
 S'en la vile a nule chevalier
 Ne juleor qui ait mestier
 Que on li dont: a l'ostel viegne,
 L'en li donra, si prendre deigne,
 Largement et a grant pleinté,
 (Joufroi: ll. 2815-21)

True benevolence has little or no part to play in such invitations which have as their sole aim the introduction of the courtly hero into

the courtly society of a foreign land. By a lavish display of wealth and liberality, the giver proves his noble background, his courtliness. He is accepted, respected and loved by those he has been seeking to impress. Noble expenditure was, therefore, a practical expedient for the young nobleman travelling abroad.

In the romances it is not always the courtly hero or the person of highest rank who indulges in noble expenditure. In the instances cited above, we have seen either the courtly hero or a powerful suzerain practices noble expenditure in order to show his superiority, to impress his inferiors who accepted to benefit from the show of liberality. Or when it is a young knight abroad, the objective is similar: to impress and win admiration and hence social acceptance.

On other occasions, the courtly hero, while remaining the central character, does not dominate in the giving of gifts. This role is assigned to his vassals who display their wealth as a mark of honour to their lord. We see this at the wedding of Gerart and Euriaut in the Roman de la Violette where it is noted that the barons spent a great deal to do honour to the occasion and to their lord:

Ne vous arjoie anuit les saus,
 Les livres ne les mars contés
 Que li baron des deus contés
 Ont despendu por lor signour;
 Ainc ne vit nus feste grignour
 Que il font trestout d'Euriaut.
 (ll. 6606-6611)

There is probably a dual motive for such extravagance. The barons are of noble rank and distributing their wealth thus confirmed their nobility. However, since the main object of the festivities was to celebrate the wedding of their feudal lord, they cannot, by such a magnificent display, have been asserting their own superiority. Here they can only be showing their respect as inferiors of Gerart, as well as behaving as their own noble station demanded.

There is a similar scene at the coronation of Guillaume at the

conclusion of L'Escoufle. After the feast, the barons gave gifts and by thus spending their riches, honour accrued to their new lord:

Des dons que la baron donerent,
 Apres mangier, vous di jou bien,
 C'onques nus n'i servi de rien
 Ki n'ellst robe u garniment.
 Mout ot le jour li sire onor
 Pour cui ce fu tout despendu.
 (ll. 8998-9003)

A tournament is held to celebrate the betrothal of Galeran and Fleurie. Knights from the surrounding areas flock to the scene, partly to fight to increase their chivalric reputations, partly to spend carelessly in order to honour Count Galeran:

De dela Saint Martin a Tours
 Jusqu'a Troyes n'a chevalier,
 C'om sache errant ne travaillier
 Par sa proesce en los acquerre,
 Qui vountiers n'ysse de serre,
 Garniz d'atour fres et novel.
 Si s'achattissent, par cevel,
 De despendre le leur sans conte,
 Pour l'ounour Galeren le conte.
 (Galeran de Bretagne: ll. 5486-94)

After the tournament there are the usual celebrations. The poet refers to the social obligation of those participating to spend recklessly and offer sumptuous hospitality. Those who are not rich benefit from the extravagance of their financial superiors. Such is the custom at tournaments, says the poet:

Cilz doivent bien grans despens faire:
 Grant feste mainent celle nuyt
 De grans despens, cui qu'il ennuyt;
 Se vont compassant par grant royes
 Sur autruy cuir larges couroyes:
 Telz est de tournoy la coustume.
 (ll. 6230-35)

At the wedding of the Emperor Conrad to Lienor, again it is the barons who distribute wealth and gifts to those ready to accept them. This they did to earn the good will of the emperor:

Tant garnement, tant riche ator
 I ot doné, ainz l'endemain,
 Nus ne s'en vet a vuide main

Qui i fust venuz por avoir.
 Li baron, qui voustrent avoir
 Le bon gré de l'empereor,
 I donerent tant por s'amor
 Chapes, sorcos, cotes, mantiaus,
 Qui eüst tant de blans buriaus,
 S'en péüst on vestir. III. ans
 Les renduz d'Igni et d'Oscans.
 Mout en i ot doné plenté.
 (Guillaume de Dole: ll. 5489-5500)

Their gesture is not in vain. The emperor shows his appreciation of their expenditure, the following day, when he reciprocates their liberal gifts. It is now the turn of the barons to receive from their emperor. The value of the gifts depended on their length of service to the emperor:

Si i parut bien au lever,
 C'onques nus ne li vout rouver
 Riche don qu'il ne li donast.
 Ainz que li haus ber s'en alast
 Ne que la granz cors departist,
 Sachiez que il lor departit
 Ses biaux joiax a grant plenté,
 Ensi com il orent esté
 En s'onor et en son service.
 (ll. 5516-24)

These descriptions of lavish spending, ubiquitous in the romances, leave us in no doubt that the idea of extravagance, an unnecessary display of wealth, was considered far from reprehensible by the courtly poets and presumably by the court audiences. On the contrary, such displays are extolled with great enthusiasm, and are evidently an essential ingredient of the style of living in the noble class within the context of courtly romance. Such a style is glorified by the poets and no doubt flattered the noble audience. To what extent these liberal gestures were common in the real life of the aristocratic audience, we cannot know.

Although it would seem that fact and fiction concur to a certain extent, one cannot affirm that the feudal lords of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were prototypes for the courtly heroes. The few examples I have cited, all concern men either of royal birth or of high noble standing. Thus their number is inevitably restricted. Twelfth and thirteenth century

France did not boast as many kings and counts as Courtly romance, and surely few could afford to emulate the Baudouins of the twelfth century.

One has only to remember the innumerable complaints and accusations to be found in the didactic poems about the miserliness of the nobles, complaints occasionally echoed in the prologues of the romances. I have already given the reasons why the nobles were probably greatly impoverished at this period in history, thus justifying the claims of the didactic poets. It is true that commercial links with the Orient had given the rich the opportunity to acquire splendid articles of luxury. But how many could afford them on a large scale? This pleasure was more likely the privilege of the emerging merchant class, the bourgeois, rather than that of the provincial feudal nobility.

Courtly romance lays no claim to be a true reflection of contemporary society. Didactic literature, on the other hand, does. Moreover its aim to reform and moralise distorts the truth and we are left with a very black picture. I think one might assume that noble expenditure was not unknown in the twelfth and thirteenth century society, but that it was not part of a rigorous code of ethics as it appears in the courtly romances.

d) Prodigality.

Prodigality is rarely a vice in the romances. This is not surprising since what, for many, merits the term prodigality is, for courtly poets, in general, the courtly virtue of lavish spending and giving, that is, what we have called noble expenditure. There are, however, occasions when the bold, reckless noble expenditure does not win the wholehearted approval of the poet. We have already noted that the romance hero, Ipomedon (see my page 499) was praised for his moderation in liberality (Thèbes). In Troie, a lady rebukes Diomedes for his foolish generosity. He had given her a horse. In the subsequent battle he loses his other horse and so finds himself without a mount. The lady, Breseida, criticises his earlier unnecessary generosity which caused the giver trouble and put him in a

position of need:

"Sire," fait el, "trop grant largece
Apovrist home e gieste e blece:
Li plusor en sont sofretos."
(ll. 15093-95)

Richard le Beau also incurs personal suffering by his obsessive giving. The poet comments that he gave away more than was necessary.

Plus donne qu'il ne fut^s mestiers
Car puis en ot mainte soufraite.
(Richard le Beau: ll. 4196-97)

The poet of Florimont sees the danger of giving more than one can afford. Floquart explains to the young hero the folly of spending without replenishing one's riches. (See my pages 524-525)

One of the important courtly virtues is "mesure", that is, moderation in all things. Very few poets apply it to courtly largesse. The poet of Athis et Prophilias is an exception:

Sor tote chose vaut mesure: (line 9200)

He counsels men to beware prodigality and miserliness:

Ne trop larges ne trop tenanz. (line 9225)

On the whole, consideration or even acknowledgment of prodigality is extremely rare in the romances. To admit that prodigality is a vice, would imply disapproval of noble expenditure and munificent liberality. The latter, however, constituted a courtly virtue. It was not in the poet's interest to preach the dangers of prodigality, since he often benefited from the fruits of courtly largesse. Prodigality is not, therefore, a favourite topic in the courtly works.

To conclude this chapter on courtly liberality, I propose to examine why courtly romances were so preoccupied with this particular virtue and its powers, why liberality was held to be the chief attribute of any courtly hero.

We have already studied the case of that epitome of courtly liberality,

Alexandre. We remember that Alexandre had a historical existence which bears little resemblance to the courtly Alexandre. Why did the courtly poets feel bound to transform him into a supreme liberal person, the model for all other courtly heroes? Why were his acts of generosity, dismissed by the philosophers as reprehensible prodigality, glorified by the courtly poets? Cary⁽⁸⁶⁾ suggests that the anecdotes about Alexander were reinterpreted for books of exempla "in keeping with the needs of the parish priest seeking alms for his poor, or the dependent begging money from his patron". This may well be true of religious exempla used by a preacher whose main concern was the collection of alms. He would therefore be likely not to press the philosophical view of liberality provided that the alms were forthcoming. This does not, however, explain the attitude to be found in the courtly romances, although one may perhaps consider the point that the modifications of legends found in the "exempla" gave the lead to the courtly poets as far as the fixing of Alexandre's new image was concerned.

The role of the parish priest has, therefore, little relevance to the courtly works. Courtly romances were recounted or written by professional "jongleurs" or by noblemen. They were intended for the ears of a noble audience, the people of the courts. The romances deal almost exclusively with the noble estate. The clergy rarely appear in these works, and then only as minor characters. Certainly in the romances the clergy are not the chief beneficiaries of courtly largesse. We can thus dismiss the role of the parish priest in the fixing of the importance of liberality in the courtly romances.

In the case of "the dependent begging money from his patron", this was undoubtedly partly the reason behind the praise of liberality and the condemnation of avarice. This applies particularly to the personal digressions of the poets who often treat this subject outside the narrative,

usually at the beginning or at the end of the work. This is not, however, limited to courtly romance. We have already encountered it in the didactic works. This theory has its supporters. S. Painter⁽⁸⁷⁾ explains the exaltation of courtly liberality as being "propaganda" from hungry minstrels and impecunious knights. If this is the true reason, how does one account for the same attitude occurring in courtly works written neither by jongleurs nor by poor knights. Marie de France, for example, falls into neither category, and yet her "lais"⁽⁸⁸⁾ glorify courtly liberality. Her heroes are all described as "large"⁽⁸⁹⁾. What is more Marie de France is one of the earliest courtly writers (c. 1160) and one cannot, therefore, accuse her of following a long-established literary tradition. Another presumably rich and powerful poet was Philippe de Remi, sire de Beaumanoir, author of La Manekine and Jehan et Blonde. Evidently there are other factors involved in the explanation of the rise of liberality.

My own interpretation of the greater interest shown, in the romances, in the act of giving, regardless of motive, centres on the basic fact that these romances constituted the literature of the courts. They were designed to entertain the nobles, knights and their ladies. What better entertainment than to hear stories of people of their own class, which incorporate adventure, love interest, an element of fantasy, all set against a background of fabulous wealth - wealth not hoarded by misers, but joyfully distributed with great show by the gallant courtly heroes. Surely such idealised portraits of generous, brave heroes were intended to flatter the court audiences. These were characters with whom they would be pleased to identify. Nobody would care why the heroes were so generous, but everyone would be interested in the results. They would doubtless have revelled in the lavish descriptions of rich palaces, armour, horses, jewels, robes, banquets, exotic goods from the Orient - all of which the courtly hero was able to distribute freely. Such liberality brought great personal glory to the

characters in the romances. This must have appealed to the not so rich court audience. Indeed for those nobles impoverished by the crusades, or whose wealth and power had been eroded by the rise of the towns and the transfer of wealth to the bourgeois, these romances would provide a welcome means of escapism, spiced with nostalgia.

CHAPTER SIX

The Gift Theme in Courtly Romance

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CHAPTER SIX

The Gift Theme in Courtly Romance

Hitherto I have attempted to establish that in the verse romances, liberality was the prime virtue of the true courtly person. I have shown that in order to exhibit this liberality he gave gifts and spent money lavishly. I have already given some consideration to the gift theme when studying the explicit and stated motivation for such a display of wealth, that is the desire for personal prestige, and for loyalty from others. In this section, I propose to study in greater detail the psychological aspect of the gift theme, showing how it is intricately woven into the everyday social intercourse of the courtly characters.

In the preceding section, liberality appeared as an abstract virtue, cultivated and exhibited for certain precise ends. Where the motive was personal prestige, the donor drew attention, while the donee often remained anonymous. When the gift was to secure loyalty, the beneficiaries were vaguely termed "les chevaliers", or, to underscore the merit of the donor, "les povres chevaliers", that is, the knights who made up the military following of a feudal lord and who depended upon him for their livelihood. The giving of gifts in both these instances formed part of the practice of noble expenditure, a habit expected of the noble knight at court which though doubtless benefiting others, was primarily designed to enhance his own social standing, to prove his superior endowment. His wealth was invariably distributed with the maximum of ostentation, often before an assembly of worthy witnesses, such as the lord's vassals.

There are other occasions in the romances when the donor does not hold the stage alone. The nature of his relationships, social and personal, with the donee is more subtly presented than in the examples cited in my previous

chapter. When the donee is not anonymous, the giving, or exchange, of gifts acquires a deeper significance. Additional factors come into play. In these works, external circumstances, social rank and personal relationship usually dictate who gives what to whom and when. The acts of giving and receiving engage the donor and the donee in a complex pattern of personal and social statement. The same situations recur so frequently that there emerges from the apparently conditioned responses of those involved a definite pattern, with few variations, which justifies its insertion in a recognized code of courtly behaviour.

A. The Gift or "Don".

Before passing on to the act of giving, let us consider the gift, usually termed "don".

1. Nature of the "Don".

The "don", in the courtly works, at once implies an article or articles, of ostensibly great value. I have already mentioned some occasions which provoked distribution of gifts. The reaction clearly sought is admiration at both sumptuous quality and huge quantity⁽¹⁾.

The "don" is also found to possess a wider meaning. It is not necessarily a material gift but may be a service or favour. A kind act is usually referred to as a "don". For example, in Richard le Beau, the hero frees an imprisoned king and refuses to accept the customary ransom. He disdains the king's wealth, declaring himself satisfied with what he has (lines 4826-32). Whatever Richard's motives, the grateful king hails him as "larghe donneour" (line 4839). Here the "don" is a gesture of refusal to accept money. It is not therefore a material gift.

We shall later have occasion to study other aspects, primarily the gift of love also described as "don"⁽²⁾, besides the gift of a woman, presented by father or feudal lord to a future husband⁽³⁾.

2. Function of the "Don" and the Rash Boon or "Don Contraignant".

Another use of the term "don" to be found in the courtly romances, is the service or boon which Jean Frappier calls the "don contraignant"⁽⁴⁾. Such a "don" was sought and granted according to an apparently fixed pattern. A person, very often a complete stranger, seeks a boon from a courtly personage, often King Arthur. The nature of the service remains a mystery until after it has been granted. Unwillingness to grant the service entails dishonour. The courtly hero invariably complies with great dignity, even though he may later regret his rash promise.

The tradition of "le don contraignant" serves as an effective literary technique. Often the "don", sought at the beginning of the narrative, sets in motion the various adventures from which the courtly hero emerges victorious. Such is the case of L'Atre Périlleux⁽⁵⁾. At King Arthur's court a feast is in progress. A lady arrives and addresses a request to Arthur. She asks him for a "don", assuring him of the inoffensive nature of the service sought:

"De mon païs vous vienc requerre
 Que vous me creantés un don.
 Ja ne vous querrai mesproison
 Ne outrage ne vilonnie.
 (ll. 38-41)

Although he does not know to what he is committing himself, the king readily grants the request:

Li rois bonement li otrgie
 Que volontiers le don ara.
 (ll. 42-43)

The girl's demands appear modest. Wishing to serve as cup-bearer to King Arthur, she desires that one of his knights should be assigned to her to ensure that she should not come to any harm (ll. 49-57). Gauvain is chosen for the task. The arrival of a mysterious knight, who abducts the girl, heralds the subsequent series of adventures. The "don contraignant" makes three more appearances in this romance (ll. 874-80; ll. 1807-15; ll. 5394-5403).

Le Bel Inconnu⁽⁶⁾ also begins with a rash boon. The hero asks King Arthur to grant an unspecified wish at a future date. His imperious tone represents a direct challenge to Arthur. The Bel Inconnu reminds him that as a "preudon" the king ought not to refuse. Arthur does not refuse:

"Ains m'escoutés;
 Hartu, venus sui a ta cort;
 Car n'i faura, coment qu'il tort,
 Del premier don que je querrai:
 Avrai le je, u je i faurai?
 Donne le moi, et n'i penser;
 Tant es preudon, nel dois veer.
 - Je le vos doins," ce dist li rois.
 Cil l'en merchie con cortois.
 (ll. 82-90)

There arrives at court a girl seeking a brave knight prepared to help her lady. This gives our hero the occasion to define his "don". He asks to be chosen for the task. To the dismay of all, King Arthur can only agree that this young, inexperienced squire should assume the responsibility of performing the task. He also makes a second gift (one notes here the use of "redoner" to signify "to pile gift on gift") by knighting the Bel Inconnu and admitting him to the Round Table:

"Je vos redoins un autre don:
 Je vos retieg a compaignon
 Et met en la Table Reonde."
 (ll. 225-27)

The rash boon which opens Le Chevalier de la Charrete⁽⁸⁾ has unfortunate consequence. A strange knight offers to release Arthur's imprisoned knights if he will order Guinevere to follow him. Arthur hesitates and thus outrages Kay who declares he will no longer stay at court⁽⁹⁾. He eventually agrees to stay on condition that Arthur will grant him a boon. Prompted by the queen, Arthur does so (ll. 158-59). The king and queen are both horrified to learn that they have consented to Kay's plan of following the mysterious knight and of taking Guinevere with him. The queen regrets the granting of the boon in a whisper to the king:

"Ha! rois, se vos ce s'üssiez
 ja, ce croi, ne l'otroiesiez,
 que Kex me menast un seul pas."
 (ll. 209-11)

In Erec et Enide, it is Erec who solicits a "don" from Enide's father. He has not yet revealed his identity, but Enide's father unhesitatingly grants his unspecified request, and is promised that his generosity will be rewarded:

"Mes ancor vos voel querre un don,
 don ge randrai le guerredon,
 Se Dex done que je m'an aille
 a tot l'enor de la bataille."
 Et cil li respont franchemant;
 "Demandez tot seüremant
 Vostre pleisir, comant qu'il aut:
 riens que je aie ne vos faut."
 (ll. 631-38)

Erec then asks permission to seek the sparrowhawk for Enide in the contest arranged for the next day. The reward is as follows: Revealing his identity, Erec declares he will marry Enide, thus conferring honour upon her family. He also undertakes to redress their financial situation. Enide's father is delighted.

In the courtly works all such requests⁽¹⁰⁾ are granted. No courtly hero ever exposed himself to the disgrace brought by refusal to show himself worthy of the challenge, although initial hesitation and subsequent regrets are not uncommon. In Erec et Enide we find one of the rare occasions when a situation created by a "don contraignant" has unsatisfactory results. It concerns Mabonagrains, a valiant knight and his lady. It is the lady who begs a service from the knight. He readily complies out of love for her. He declares that it is the duty of a true lover to do all in his power to serve his lady, when he is telling his story to Erec:

" ele me demanda
 un don, mes el nel noma mie.
 Qui veheroit neant s'amie?
 N'est pas amis qui antresait
 tot le boen s'amie ne fait,
 sanz rien leissier et sanz faintise,
 s'il onques puet an nule guise.
 Creantai li sa volante,
 (ll. 6006-13)

Only then did the lady explain what he had to do in order to fulfil his promise. He was to be imprisoned in an orchard until defeated in armed

combat by a knight. For a courtly knight this was a moral dilemma. In conflict with his desire to please the lady was his repugnance at challenging all knights who passed that way and who would die by his hand. It was a contradiction of the generosity of spirit of a courtly knight. He has, however, accepted the challenge of the "don" and could not retract without considerable dishonour and the loss of the lady's love. Concern for his knightly reputation forbade him to take the obvious escape route - that is, to allow himself to be defeated by one of his opponents. He would regain his freedom, but would be equally dishonoured:

"Et ge feïsse mesprison,
 se de rien nule me fainsisse
 que trestoz ces ne conquêsse
 vers cui ge eïsse puissance:
 vilainne fust tex delivrance."
 (ll. 6048-52)

Thus he had no choice but to endure the situation by killing all the knights he encountered. This he considered preferable to breaking his word to the lady⁽¹¹⁾:

"de ce ne me poi ge garder,
 se ge ne volsisse estre fax
 et foi mantie et deslax."
 (ll. 6062-64)

Erec secured his liberation by overpowering him in a fierce fight.

Interesting in this episode is the motive of the lady in making such an unreasonable demand of her knight. Mabonagrains explains that she was afraid of losing his love, and so tricked him into accepting a life of solitude where he was available only to her. So confident was the lady of her lover's prowess, that she was consoled by the thought that he would never be free to leave her (ll. 6040-47), a sentiment akin to avarice if one makes the analogy between an imprisoned loved one and hoarded wealth.

When Erec frees Mabonagrains, the lady is very upset and believes she has finally lost his love. That is not the case, however, and all ends happily.

The rash boon or "don contraignant" represents a challenge to the courtly

personage. Although it is rarely a material gift which is solicited, appeal is nevertheless made to the hero's generosity. A person who accepts the challenge must be confident of his wealth since a costly gift may be asked of him. Moreover he proves his generosity of spirit in according that which may entail sacrifice on his part. To be able to grant such requests to strangers also indicates his moral courage. These qualities he shows by first accepting to undertake whatever is asked of him even before he knows what it is, and then by resolutely executing the service demanded of him. He thus proves his essential courtliness and worth, and thereby gains considerable personal prestige.

B. Occasions for Gifts, and their Beneficiaries.

1. Celebrations.

We have already seen from the chapter on liberality that, in the courtly works, any kind of celebration provided an occasion for giving gifts. Usually the central personage was responsible for the distribution of presents, and this donor was most often the courtly hero. It has been noted that the donees were unimportant in these displays of wealth. They were merely agents for the hero's ascension to glory.

a) Gifts at Weddings.

When Durmart is betrothed to the Queen of Ireland, the festivities are on a grand scale. Amidst the feasting and merrymaking, Durmart, the centre of attraction, marks the occasion with his rich gifts to poor knights and minstrels:

Grans fu la joie, je vos di
 En la sale de Limeri;
 Cel jor i ot asses donees
 Robes tranchies et coëes.
 Li bon menestreu de haut pris
 Orent palefrois et roncis
 Et beaz j'beaz et bons doniers.
 Molt lor fist doner volentiers
 Mesire Durmars li gentiex,
 (Durmars: ll. 15127-35)

One notes that the instigator of such largesse did not personally present the various gifts to the minstrels and others.

At the wedding of Galeran and Fresne, the poet comments that Galeran, by the quantity of his splendid gifts, proved his worth:

Galeran a donner s'i preuve.
(Galeran de Bretagne: line 7732)

In a setting of celebration the courtly hero appears at his most munificent. Weddings, especially, often form the climax of the narrative. Having triumphed over the vicissitudes of fortune, the courtly hero crowns his achievements as a brave warrior with the pacific demonstration of courtly largesse, while apparently remaining aware that both spheres of activity contribute to his personal glory. However, on such occasions, while recognition of the attenuant prestige is never entirely absent, the predominant atmosphere is that of a celebration and the main intent of the courtly hero would appear to be to make everyone joyous by presenting them with rich gifts.

b) Gifts to Jongleurs.

The absence of any political motives for largesse at weddings is indicated by the importance accorded to "jongleurs" as beneficiaries⁽¹²⁾. Of course they earned their reward, but often in the romances it is stressed that the "jongleurs" received more than they could reasonably expect. Thus the poet further emphasises the generosity of the courtly hero.

The "jongleurs" received many gifts at the wedding of Erec and Enide, where the celebrations were staged by Arthur. In addition to their normal payment, they were allowed to chose supplementary gifts of clothing, money or horses:

Ce jor furent jogleor lié,
car tuit furent a gré paié:
tot fu randu quanqu'il acurent,
et molt bel don doné lor furent:
robes de veir et d'erminetes,
de conins et de violetes,
d'escarlante, grise ou de soie;
qui vost cheval, qui volt monoie,
chascuns ot don a son voloir
si boen com il le dut avoir.

(Erec et Enide: ll. 2055-64)

On other occasions the "jongleurs" figure low on the list of beneficiaries, amidst the obscure and anonymous donees. They are nevertheless singled out as a category. At the wedding of the parents of Robert le Diable they are summarily dismissed:⁽¹³⁾

Les noches en furent mout riches,
Assés i ot contes et prinches;
Assés dona li dus argent
As jogleors et autre gent.

(Robert le Diable: ll. 21-24)

It is not always the courtly hero himself who distributes gifts to the minstrels. While he is preoccupied with generosity in quarters where he may gain some prestige, it is the lesser characters who see to the needs of the entertainers. At the wedding of Galeran and Fresne, the "jongleurs" receive gifts at the hands of the barons. Since the barons, of lesser rank, cannot give to Galeran, they turn to rewarding their own inferiors. By this gesture they are also giving for Galeran. It is a token of respect. To honour him and to prove their allegiance they spend lavishly⁽¹⁴⁾.

Et tuit li baron pour li donnent.
Si grant avoir y abandonnent
Et departent aux menestreulx
Qu'ilz en revont a leurs hostieulx
Li plus povre bien aaisié.

(Galeran de Bretagne: ll. 7733-37)

It is with reference to the payment of the jongleurs at Durmart's wedding (see page 557 above), that the poet protests against the rich gifts demanded by inferior entertainers in his day. He laments the passing of an age when entertainers were deservedly paid for their talent. Now, however, the standards have fallen, the "jongleurs" exact ever more while giving less in return. This is a curious point of view in the romances, where the poet, if he makes a personal comment, usually complains that entertainers are not as well paid as they once were. The poet, as a rule, attacks contemporary noblemen for their avarice, or, at least, warns them against the dangers of the vice. Here, however, the poet exposes the situation whereby the minstrels put forward claims for higher payment in return for inferior achievement:

Cil ert molt amés et molt sire
 Qui bien savoit a cel tens dire
 Des hystoires et des chançons;
 A ceaz donoient les beaz dons.
 Or voi errer et chevacier
 Une voide gent sens mestier
 Qui ne sevent raison mostrer
 Par coi on lor doive doner.
 Li un dient: "Je sui al roi".
 - "Je vois de tornoi en tornoi,"
 Fait li altres qui ne set el
 Que tencier et braire al ostel.
 Li un contrefont le sot sage,
 Si sunt lor mot nice et volage;
 Li atre font si le cortois
 Qu'il heent les amans des dois.
 Li un sunt de cent contenances,
 Si contrefont autrui semblances,
 Et li plusor portent paroles
 D'unes amors nices et foles.
 Portant velent beaz dons avoir,
 Et si quident asses valoir.
 Cil qui set livre contrefaire
 Rueve maintenant robe vaire;
 Trop en voi de fouz et de nices.
 Cui on done beaz dons et riches.
 (ll. 15089-15114)

c) Gifts to New Knights.

A feature of courtly celebrations was the creation of new knights. Certain rites⁽¹⁵⁾ were attached to this ceremony, one of which was the presentation of dubbing gifts to the new knight.

At Erec's coronation, Arthur dubbed more than four hundred squires and presented each one with three horses and three sets of rich court clothing (Erec et Enide: ll. 6599-6610). Once again this was not disinterested generosity on Arthur's part. His motive was the desire that his court should reflect his wealth by its splendour:

por ce que sa corz mialz apeire.
 (line 6604)

By tripling each present the royal donor piles gift on gift in overwhelming fashion.

In Beroul's Tristan, King Mark creates new knights during the celebrations after the queen's return. He gives the traditional dubbing gifts of arms.

He also freed a hundred serfs:

Le jor franchi li rois cent sers
 Et donna armes et haubers
 A vint danzeaus qu'il adouba.
 (ll. 3007-9)

Mention of serfs is unusual in the romances⁽¹⁶⁾. This is the only reference I have found to the freeing of serfs as part of celebrations.

When Dumart becomes betrothed to Queen Fenise, he knights a hundred squires and presents them with horses and garments:

Et bien dusqu'a cent esquiiers
 A fait li Galois chevaliers;
 Mout cointement les adoba,
 Chevaz et robes lor dona.
 (Dumart: ll. 14943-46)

d) Celebrations at accession or return of feudal lord.

The courtly hero appears in his habitual role of benefactor when confronting his vassals and dependants, whether for the first time, or after a long absence. The accession or return of the feudal lord to his lands was an occasion for celebration.

Arthur's coronation in the Brut furnishes just such an occasion. Arthur's success in war has already secured his military supremacy and he now turns to internal politics. The beneficiaries chosen for the honour which accompanied his gifts were the squires to whom he gave fiefs, and his loyal barons who received fortresses, bishoprics and abbeys. Barons who came from other lands, presumably as a mark of respect, were also honoured with gifts. Arthur thus gained loyal allies abroad:

Li rois ses bachelers ffa,
 Enors delivres devisa;
 Lor servises a ces randi
 Qui por terres orent servi;
 Bors dona et chasteleries
 Et evesquiez et abates.
 A ces qui d'autre terre estoient,
 Qui por amor au roi venoient,
 Dona copes, dona deniers,
 Dona de ses avoirs plus chiers,
 (Brut: ll. 2043-52)

One notes that, whereas Arthur's own vassals received gifts of land, the portable luxury items were presented to visiting nobility. The poet heavily stresses the generosity of the king by his long itemised list of the courtly

gifts; also his stylistic use of anaphora emphasises the repeated act of giving:

Dona deduiz, dona joiaus,
 Dona levriers, dona oisiaux,
 Dona peliçons, dona dras,
 Dona copes, dona henas,
 Dona pailles, dona eniaus,
 Dona bliauz, dona mantiaus,
 Dona lacez, dona espees,
 Dona saietes acerees.
 Dona cuivres, dona escuz,
 Ars et espiez bien esmoluz,
 Dona lieparz et dona ors,
 Seles, lorains et chaceors.
 Dona haubers, dona destriers,
 Dona hiaumes, dona deniers,
 Dona argent et dona or
 Dona le mialz de son tresor,
 (ll. 2053-68)

Rather than the magnificence of the gifts, the honour of receiving them from King Arthur appears to earn for the foreign noblemen considerable prestige:

N'i ot home qui rien valsist
 Qui d'autre terre a lui venist,
 Cui li rois ne donast tel don
 Qui enor fust a tel baron.
 (ll. 2069-72)

It is clear that Arthur's generosity is not indiscriminate; the beneficiaries of his gifts are his own vassals from whom he must win loyalty; moreover there are the representatives of other lands whom Arthur must wish not only to please, but also to impress. By honouring foreign noblemen he was assured of a far-flung reputation for liberality and thus courtliness.

Returning home to his kingdom with his queen, Durmart gives gifts to the knights and barons. His motives are clear: he is their new king; they are his most influential and precious subjects. He must, therefore, from the outset, establish his superiority and, at the same time, win their love and loyalty. By singling them out to receive his gifts, he flatters their self-esteem and enhances his own reputation. By accepting his gifts, the barons and knights indirectly demonstrate their allegiance and their inferiority, in the way of all donees:

Et li bons rois Jozefens tint
 Sa cort plenièrè uit jors entiers,
 A toz les povres chevaliers

Done li rois Durmars beaz dons,
 Et a tos les riches barons
 Se fait moult durement amer,
 Car moult bien les set onorer.
 (Durmart: ll. 15422-28)

The two queens complement their husbands' generosity with their own gifts. Whereas Durmart's gifts are politically oriented, the queens' gifts go to cases deserving of charity:

Les deus roïnes sagement
 Donent lor avoir largement
 Et as dames et as meschines
 Et as puceles orfenines
 Et as povres nonains gentïex;
 Molt orent lor cuers ententiex
 Les deus roïnes en bien faire.
 (Durmart: ll. 15429-35)

The tactic of honouring barons and knights is also employed by King Arthur at a court feast in L'Atre Périlleux.

Et li rois grant honor lor fist,⁽¹⁷⁾
 Car moult lor dona rices dons.
 (ll. 14-15)

In these texts we note the close connection between the giving of gifts and the conferring of honour. When the gifts are presented by a supreme ruler, a king or emperor, those receiving them are put at no disadvantage, since their social inferiority is manifest and accepted. Therefore to be chosen as a beneficiary by the suzerain was a compliment and an honour: The acceptance of such gifts, while indicating a social inferiority, did not entail any disgrace since the social distance from the donor was so wide. We shall see later that when the giver is not the acknowledged superior or liege-lord of the intended beneficiary, other factors, not least a spirit of competition, come into play, which make the giving and receiving of gifts a much less straightforward procedure than in the examples already cited.

2. Social Rank and Giving.

On certain occasions, it is not the courtly hero, for whom a celebration is held, who has the right to give gifts. That right reverts to the overlord. At Erec's coronation, the privilege of giving is not Erec's. It was King

Arthur who presided the splendid coronation festivities, giving gifts and receiving the consequent glory. The beneficiaries were more than four hundred new knights. The poet, in his enthusiasm, compares Arthur to Alexandre and Caesar whose generosity Arthur easily eclipsed by his largesse on this occasion (Erec et Enide: ll. 6596-6623). (See my page 497).

The coronation itself was a gift Erec asked of King Arthur (ll. 6488-89). Arthur stresses that he is doing Erec a service in bestowing the royal insignia on him:

"Aler nos an covient
de si qu'a Nantes en Bretagne;
la porteront roial ansaigne,
corone d'or et ceptre el point:
cest don et cestæ enor vos doing."
Erec le roi an mercia,
et dist que molt doné li a.
(ll. 6494-6500)

Although Erec is of royal birth and about to be crowned, he cannot claim equal social rank with King Arthur. Their mutual affection and esteem does not alter the fact that Arthur cannot be upstaged, the words and actions of the king and of Erec showing that they are both conscious of the former's superiority. One imagines that Arthur would continue to take precedence even after the coronation on account of his superior age, prestige, military prowess, and also for the simple reason that the literary tradition of the "matiere de Bretagne" fixed Arthur in his role of supreme patriarch, a role never usurped by minor, rival kings.

Celebrations after a successful tournament are common in the courtly works. Here, the courtly hero is usually the person who gives, distributing the fruits of his prowess. In Galeran de Bretagne, Galeran and the Bretons celebrate their victory. In the course of the festivities the customary show of largesse takes place. Galeran, however, is out-ranked by his lord, the Duke. It is to the latter that the main part of the glory goes, even though Galeran's largesse is also emphasised by the poet:

Desarmé sont et revestu
Li Breton et li abatu.
Lavé ont et puis ont mengié,

N'ont mie encoires prins congié.
 Ainz y depart le duc meint don
 Car il met a abandon
 Or et argent, robes et dras,
 Roncins, destriers, palefrois cras,
 Et armes, et autre richesce.
 Li Brez y moustre sa largesce,
 Car son avoir y abandonne :
 Tant y depart, et tant y donne
 Que meint povre y fait du sien riche.
 (ll. 4927-39)

Although Galeran is the hero of the hour, it is understandable that the Duke should take precedence. He is of superior rank, he is Galeran's overlord, and he is also host of the celebrations. Nevertheless, although not described in detail, Galeran's liberality is characterised as enriching the poor (ll. 4935-38).

At celebrations of this kind it is rare for a social inferior to claim the right to present gifts. Such is the case, however, in L'Escoufle: Count Richard arrives in Jerusalem and is guest of honour at a feast held by the king in order to welcome him. During the celebrations Richard presents rich gifts to the king's knights:

Et que donkes de pluisors dons
 --- K'il done a chevaliers estranges?
 Ne de bordes ne de losenges
 Ne servi pas com on fait or,
 Mais de mout riches joiaus d'or
 Et de hanas d'or et d'argent.
 N'i a chevalier ne serjant
 Qui voelle prendre qui riens vaille
 K'il n'ait du sien ains k'il s'en aille,
 Mout i dona biax dons et gens,
 (ll. 734-43)

According to the poet, the donor's smiling countenance shows that he felt more joy at giving than did those who received, a not uncommon observation in these works:

Mais plaisoit encor as gens
 Ses biax soulas; ses biax samblans
 Moustre k'il est plus liés, X, tans
 Des dons que cil cui il les donne.
 Tot quanqu'il a lor abandonne,
 Car ce fait sa grans gentelisce.
 (ll. 744-49)

The immediate result of this generosity is that the foreign knights put their services and possessions at Richard's disposal for his crusade against

the pagans (ll. 750-51). Whether Richard gave for the prime joy of giving, or whether he was also seeking to rally his followers is not explicitly stated. However, we know from other cases that the courtly personage was never unaware of the practical results of his generosity.

The fact that Richard gave the gifts and not the king of Jerusalem is apparently a departure from the custom whereby the host was donor. There is one immediate explanation for this anomaly. Social rank may bow before military superiority. Richard is here attributed the role of saviour, for he is about to rout the pagan invaders. Thus he is in a position of some power.

One may note also that the king of Jerusalem himself does not receive gifts from Richard. The beneficiaries are knights, inferior to the Count. The king does not acknowledge Richard's superiority by accepting gifts from him. Indeed later, his mission accomplished, it is Richard who accepts gifts from the king. In the present instance the reversal of roles has a practical explanation: Richard needed the services of the king's knights and, in order to get himself accepted as a worthy leader, Richard, as it were, buys their services and loyalty. Once again we have an example of liberality used as a political manoeuvre. Richard's largesse is also analogous with that noble expenditure practised by knights who use this effective means of creating for themselves a glorious reputation. Thus in the case of Richard at the court of Jerusalem, protocol is sacrificed for political expediency.

The scene is very different when Richard goes to the aid of the Emperor of Rome, threatened by the revolt of his peasants whom he has enriched at the expense of his vassals (see Chapter Five, p.483). At court Richard is welcomed by a sumptuous feast. The emperor offers lavish hospitality and gives gifts to his visitor (ll. 1439-48). Initially, the courtly hero is not here the glorious giver of gifts. As the guest of the emperor, he accepts gifts from his superior. Later, however, when the emperor has explained his problem, Richard makes use of courtly largesse. He summons all the emperor's vassals and wins them over by his rich gifts:

Il les fait si tos ses amis,
 Que par biaux dons que par franchise,
 Que chascunsiert a son servise,
 Cors et avoir et quanqu'il a.
 Sor ceus cui l'empereres a
 Guerre mortel et mal talent
 Vait en ost plus seurement
 Quant il a les cuers des barons.
 C'est par son sens et par ses dons,
 Par l'onor qu'il lor fait et porte.
 (ll. 1568-77)

In courting the favour of the barons, Richard is merely practising what he later preaches when he has restored the empire to a state where the barons are rewarded for their services by the emperor and do not take second place behind the "vilains". Richard warns the emperor that he should use his wealth so that in time of war he can depend on the loyalty of his nobles (ll. 1632-51). When Richard gave gifts to the knights at court, he was simply demonstrating this means of securing loyalty. The barons defeated the serfs, although previously they had been unwilling to help their sovereign.

Richard did not, therefore, on this occasion have priority over an emperor. At their first encounter, the emperor's superior rank decreed that he should give presents to Richard, who had no reason to refuse. In the relations with the barons, circumstances dictate that Richard should by his largesse repair the harm done by the misguided generosity of the emperor. At this point Richard holds the stage and it is he who wins prestige and the loyalty of the barons. Finally the emperor recovers his ascendancy, by offering Richard presents, which include a wife, as a reward. Richard gratefully accepts and agrees to stay in Rome in the emperor's service⁽¹⁸⁾.

We see from courtly largesse at celebrations that the act of giving was not merely a duty, but also a privilege. It enabled the ruler to gain personal prestige, private gratification, political allies and it confirmed his position of superiority over all others. This privilege was reserved for the person of highest rank only, and sometimes was not the courtly hero. On rare occasions the social hierarchy is ignored, for exceptional reasons.

Those receiving the gifts play a secondary role. They are either poor knights and therefore dependents, or they are newly-dubbed, receiving customary gifts necessary for the exercise of their profession; sometimes the donees were the more powerful noblemen upon whom a ruler depended for military support. The other category of donees at celebrations were the "jongleurs".

3. The Courtly Hero, Receiver of Gifts.

In order to demonstrate the courtly virtue of liberality, the courtly hero is essentially a giver; rarely does he deign to receive them. There are, however, certain occasions when he may do so without sacrificing his personal dignity.

a) Setting Out Gifts.

When the young courtly hero was setting out to prove his valour, he usually received practical gifts. These would be horse, armour and money for expenses. The donors were usually the hero's parents or his feudal overlord. In a position of inferiority and dependence, the knight can, without forfeiting his dignity, accept the gifts.

In Cligès, when Alexandre leaves his father's court to join the knights of King Arthur, his father puts his fortune at his disposition, telling him to take gold and silver, and, moreover, to use it to show his generosity:

"An mes tresors poez seisir
D'or et d'argent plainnes deus barges,
Mes molt covient que soiez larges."
(ll. 178-80)

In Athis et Prophilias, Evas, prince of Rome, sends his son, Prophilias, to receive a good education in Athens. For the journey, Evas provides his son with rich clothing, gold and silver and a retinue of servants:

Prophilias vesti mout gent.
Si li dona or et argent
Et bons sergenz a lui servir,
Qui bien le saichent costèir.
(ll. 237-40)

When Richard le Beau, recently knighted, leaves home, his adoptive

father undertakes to finance his travels.

"Esta encor," ce dist li quens,
 Car ie te weil livrer despens
 Por accater fuerre et vitaille."
 II grans somniers d'argent li baille,
 II escuiiers li a livres,
 (Richard le Beau: ll. 853-57)

The riches given to Richard are designed to buy food and provisions. Galeran de Bretagne is similarly equipped when he leaves court. In this case it is the king, Galeran's suzerain, who provides clothes, horses, gold and silver:

Du sien li donne grant tresor,
 Robes, chevaux, argent et or,
 Et despens pour fournir sa voye,
 (Galeran de Bretagne: ll. 2729-34)

We have already examined Galeran's motives for taking riches with him when travelling abroad. He seeks to create a favourable impression with his rich equipment and by his generous use of his wealth (ll. 3278-86, my p.539).

Such scenes of leave-taking are commonplace in the courtly romances⁽¹⁹⁾. Consequently refusals to comply with this courtly custom become noteworthy. Special circumstances lead Floire to modify the normal pattern. He is about to embark on his quest for Blancheflor who has been sold as a slave. His father, the king, repentant because he was responsible for her disappearance wishes to equip Floire for his venture. He promises him rich garments, gold and silver, fine horses and a knightly entourage:

"Dites moi ou aler volez;
 Car vostre volenté ferai
 Et quanque faudra vos querrai:
 Riches pailles, or et argent
 Et biaux chevaus et bele gent."
 (Floire et Blancheflor: ll. 927-31)

Floire, however, plans to pass himself off as a merchant in order to frequent the milieux into which Blancheflor has been taken. The necessary equipment is no less costly, but does not include the usual retinue of knights who followed princes on their travels. Floire wants rich merchandise and money. Instead of war-horses, he requires pack-horses laden with valuables of all kinds. In the place of knights, he will need men capable of engaging in

commercial transactions. He explains this to his father (ll. 932-56). The king agrees to his son's demands.

Erec encounters more opposition when he also acts individually. The accepted custom was that a nobleman should be properly equipped and accompanied on journeys, so that, when Erec rejects this, his father is disturbed and upset. Erec announces his intention of leaving court alone, taking with him only his wife. He refuses money, presumably intending to live on his prowess. His father, King Lac, begs him to travel in an appropriate manner. A king's son does not travel without an escort and resources:

"ne doit seus aler filz de roi."
 (Erec et Enide: line 2706)

When King Lac urges his son to leave properly equipped, his concern is that Erec should do what his noble rank required:

"Biax filz, fai chargier tes somiers,
 et mainne de tes chevaliers
 XXX ou XL, ou plus ancor;
 Si fai porter argent et or,
 et quanqu'il covient a prodome."
 (ll. 2707-11)

Despite the pleas of his father Erec sets off as he intended.

We see from the above examples that the courtly hero usually accepted gifts on leaving home. Those offering the gifts for the journey were the young knight's parents or feudal overlord. In both cases, they were natural protectors of the knight who is willing to accept their gifts. Later in this chapter we shall see how the courtly hero is less ready to receive gifts when the circumstances are different. In this case, however, there is no competitiveness in the relationships between the knight and his parents or suzerain. Mostly the young knight has not yet established himself in the courtly world. He has no material resources of his own and relies therefore upon his protectors to equip him. From this point of view it seems right that he should receive gifts. Solicitous parents usually bestow on their children as much material support as they can give.

There is another aspect to this custom, as has been demonstrated in the case of Erec. Prestige plays a part in this presentation of gifts. The parents are not seeking personal prestige, but that of their sons. The attitude of King Lac casts doubt on the motives of the other givers of going-away gifts. His is the reaction of the scandalised parent who worries about the poor impression his ill-attired, vagrant son will make in the world. Given the excessive preoccupation with prestige and public esteem in the romances, I feel this is the motive probably dominant in the parents who showered the departing offspring with all the outward signs of wealth. One remembers, too, that these departures were often occasions for a discourse on the advantages of liberality, particularly the prestige it brings. Hence the gold and silver, not uniquely for normal travelling expenses, but for a show of wealth and thereby a demonstration of social superiority.

b) Dubbing Gifts.

The courtly hero, when knighted, usually receives dubbing gifts from his overlord or father, and sometimes he himself also gives gifts to others.

Durmart receives a jewel-encrusted belt from his mother (Durmart: ll. 1286-91). From his father Durmart receives a sword (ll. 1296-7) and a helmet with a gold circlet: ...

En par deseure la ventaille
 Li ont fait lacier et fermer
 Un helme fort et dur et cler
 Qui freschement fu toz dorés.
 Li helmes estoit coronés
 D'une riche corone d'or;
 Les pieres valeⁿ/t un tresor
 Qui flamboient en la corone.
 (ll. 1298-1305)

Alexandre, together with twelve others, is knighted by King Arthur. To each Arthur gives a horse, harness and armour:

Chascuns le suen hernois demande,
 Li rois baille a chascun le suen,
 Beles armes et cheval buen.
 (Cligès: ll. 1124-26)

Glignois is dubbed by the sister of the woman he loves. She offers him splendid robes, a valuable belt:

Molt par fu richement vestus,
 De seble noir fu l'orleüre.
 Ele li çainst une çainture
 A une chiere boucle d'or,
 Bien le cuide avoir en tresor
 Quant elle l'a Gliglois donnee.
 (Gliglois: ll. 1854-59)

She also gives him considerable riches so that he may spend lavishly and display his courtliness:

"Et se vous kerqueray deniers,
 Or et argent et gent assés,
 Et vous largement despendés,
 (ll. 1954-56)

Yder acquires his knighthood and his arms in an unusual way. Accidentally overlooked by Arthur, he leaves court in search of a lord (seignor veit quere, line 191). He meets King Ivenant who promises to dub him if he can resist the amorous advances of the queen. This Yder does in a somewhat brutal fashion and so the king honours his promise by knighting him and giving him arms. Immediately after the ceremony, the king takes Yder to church where the new knight makes an offering of his sword to the altar. He then redeems his sword for thirteen deniers. By this symbolic gift he signified his intention of dedicating his chivalry to the service of God:

Yder mist sor l'autel s'espee,
 A deu l'offri e presenta,
 De treze deniers /la/ rachata,
 (Yder: ll. 482-84)

Gui de Warewic and his co-knights receive the customary arms, horses and rich garments. Jehan is knighted by King Louis of France and is given charge of a fief. He becomes Count of Dantmartin (Jehan et Blonde: ll. 4986-90).

When Robert le Diable is dubbed, it is he who distinguishes himself by the distribution of gifts at the ceremony:

Che fu la nuit de Pentecouste;
 Qui que il plaist ne que il couste,
 Fu Robers chevaliers noveus.
 Armes et destriers et chevaux
 En dona a cent por s'amor.
 A Argences fu cele honor
 Et cele feste et cele joie.
 Mout i dona or et monoie;
 As menestreus et as garçons
 I ot doné mout riches dons.
 (Robert le Diable: ll. 265-74)

Amadas asks the Duke, his lord, to knight him. After the ceremony, Amadas wins the love of those at court by his gifts and liberal spending:

Mult largement doune et despent
Si que tuit cil communament
Qui de riens l'aiment en sont liet.
(Amadus et Ydoine: ll. 1347-49)

The knighting ceremony was, therefore, chiefly an occasion for the courtly hero to receive gifts. Rarely does he give gifts at this time. Those from whom he accepts the presented arms, horses and garments are his acknowledged superiors, his overlord or father.

c) Tribute.

Does the courtly hero ever deign to accept gifts from inferiors? Instances of this are few, and when they occur it is usually emphasised that the gifts are presented in the guise of tribute.

At the wedding of Erec and Enide, Erec is showered with presents. They come from knights and townsmen. After listing the gifts: horses, armour, hunting-dogs and birds, precious vessels (ll. 2384-93), the poet adds that the donors were doing their utmost to serve Erec.

Onques nus rois an son rēaume
ne fu plus lieemant veüz
n'a greignor joie receüz.
Tuit de lui servir se penerent.
(Erec et Enide: ll. 2394-97)

No ordinary wedding-presents these! Awareness of social rank emerges as always. We are conscious that Erec can joyfully accept these gifts from his dependents, who would not presume to challenge his superiority.

The desire to serve is evident when the loyal followers of Guillaume present him with gifts when he is made Count of Normandy. By this gesture, Guillaume's vassals were demonstrating their acceptance of him as their new lord and their love for him:

A mout grant joie le receurent
Comme conte tuit li baron.
Molt ont poi esté a maison,
Kant plus valurent de m. mars
Li present de tires, de dras

U de rices vaissiaus d'argent
 Que li aporte/rent/ sa gent:
 Mout li font grant samblant d'amor.
 (L'Escoufle: ll. 8304-11)

Tribute or homage must come, however, from inferiors, as is shown by an incident in Protheselaüs. The hero defeats King Theseus of Denmark in combat. The latter humbly offers him his services, a gesture which Protheselaüs feels obliged to decline. He explains to Theseus that he could not accept homage from a powerful king. It would be folly on his part:

"Del riche ofre mult vus merci.
 De l'homage dunt vus parlastes,
 Sire, pur n/e/ent en pensastes;
 Jo f/e/reie trop grant desrei,
 S'homage de si riche rei
 Prèisse, ço serreit folie."
 (ll. 5711-16)

Only gifts presented to the Courtly Hero as tribute are accepted from social inferiors.

C. Gifts Offered and Refused.

It is not uncommon in the romances for the courtly hero to find it necessary to refuse gifts. The motives behind such refusals may be either love, loyalty to a mission or to a lady or overlord, or else pride and awareness of social rank. Sometimes two or more of these reasons for refusal may be combined.

1. Refusal of Conditional Gifts.

There figures in the romances a category of gifts which may be described as conditional gifts. These the courtly hero was wont to refuse. The circumstances follow a general pattern: the courtly hero has been of great service to someone, perhaps a foreign king, and the latter is loth to lose his services when the hero considers it is time for him to leave. In order to retain him at court the grateful king offers him generous gifts of land etc., if he will only consent to stay. Usually the hero takes no account of the enticement and continues on his way⁽²⁰⁾.

a) Conditional Gifts Refused for Love.

Throughout the romance of Gui de Warewic, the hero consistently refuses gifts from thankful rulers. At the beginning of the narrative, Gui, the son of a senechal, falls in love with Felice, his social superior. For this reason his love is rejected. Gui sets off to prove his valour, his courtliness and to make his fortune honourably. His exploits lead him far afield. Having routed the Germans, he declines the magnificent offer of land and wealth made by his host, the Emperor, and by the Duke of Segur. All attempts to change his mind fail. The Duke vainly entreats Gui to stay, as follows:

"Sire, fait il, vostre merci!
 Uncore ne l'ai pas deservi!
 Ensemble od mei remanez;
 Demi mes chastels e mes citez,
 E de Luvein demi l'onur,
 Vus durrai hui a icest' jur."
 Gui prent congié, si s'en va;
 Li duc de pité en plura.
 (ll. 2865-72)

The emperor has no more success with his promises:

Li emperere s'en est parti,
 Ensemble od sei en mena Gui;
 Chastels li offre e citez,
 Granz honurs e riches fez;
 Mais il recevoir nes voleit,
 Por nule aventure que esteit.
 (ll. 2873-78)

It is love for Felice, and the hope of eventually marrying her, which prompt Gui to refuse the gifts of land and the attendant responsibilities which would keep him there. This is clear from the next refusal of gifts from Gui. He goes to Constantinople to help the Emperor who is besieged by a pagan sultan. Gui eventually kills the Sultan and restores the Emperor's land to its rightful owner. Unwilling to lose his saviour, the Emperor offers Gui half his empire and also the hand of his daughter:

"Ma fille vus doins, si la pernez,
 Demi ma terre ensemble od lui,
 Co vus ottrei, sire Gui,"
 (ll. 4216-18)

Gui is dazzled by the extent of the Emperor's rich offer, and is momentarily tempted to accept:

"Sire emperere, vostre merci,
Mult par ad noble dun ici!"
(ll. 4223-24)

In time, he remembers Felice, and regrets having considered accepting another love for the sake of wealth.

"Ore sai ben que mesfait ai,
Quant pur richesce altre amai;
Ore m'en repent, si m'en doil,
Autre de vus amer ne voil,
Mielz amereie tun cors solement,
E senz or e senz argent,
Que une altre od tut le mund,
Od les richesces qui dedenz sunt."
(ll. 4233-40)

A companion, Herault, is not moved by Gui's love for Felice. He urges Gui to accept the offer and the attendant wealth and power:

"Se la fille l'empereur preissez,
Riches e poissanz remaindriez,
Apres lui fuissez empereur,
Mult par vus fait Deus grant honur;
El mund ne serreit un si vaillant;
Ne tant riche ne tant poissant,
Tels mil baruns en avrez,
Qui plus unt chastels et citez
Que n'ad li quons Rualt li ber;
L'onur ne devez refuser."
(ll. 4287-96)

This uncourtly attitude provokes Gui's anger. He refuses to betray Felice.

Later Herault compensates for his lapse in courtly conduct when he becomes the next target of the Emperor. He is entreated to stay behind when Gui leaves. In return he is promised wealth and high position. His loyalty to Gui is manifested in his refusal to accept the proffered riches (ll. 4513-20).

There ensue more glorious exploits, until Gui decides it is time to return home and find Felice. Count Terri tries to persuade him to stay, using the same tactics as Gui's previous hosts, and with the same negative results. The bait takes the form of gold and silver, cities, fortresses and land. A further concession is his promise not to exact feudal dues from Gui:

"Se vus ici remeissez,
 Or e argent assez avriez,
 Beles citez e forz chastels,
 De la terre les plus bels.
 Od le duc Loher remeindrai,
 Tote Guarmeise vus durrai
 Et le riche honur que i apent;
 Aprés, vus ferai un serment
 Que ja la valor d'un dener
 Ne quer en l'onor challenger."
 (ll. 7193-7202)

Gui refuses, returns home and marries Felice. One wonders how he managed to make his fortune since he refused all reward for his services. Presumably the reputation for valour that he had acquired counted for more in the eyes of his lady.

An unfinished mission together with love of a woman also lead Ille to reject the offers of a foreign Emperor whom he has helped. He is promised half the empire and the Emperor's daughter. Ille loves his wife, Galeron, and so he refuses (Ille et Galeron, ll. 2687-2757, see my pages 476-7). The refusal causes consternation and indignation. The Emperor cannot believe that a modest knight should decline such a magnificent offer:

"Tel offre ne fist ainc mais nus,
 Ne ne refusa cuens ne dus."
 (ll. 2792-3)

The courtly hero's love for his lady often explains his refusing gifts from other ladies. By accepting presents from another lady, he would implicitly accept her love and so betray the lady he loves.

Protheselaüs has to repulse the advances of a lady who has fallen in love with him. In addition to her love the lady offers him land, a dukedom, and considerable wealth. He would be able to lead a life of leisure and luxury. She pleads with him as follows:

"Hui mes n'irez cumbatre el bois.
 De dous choses estes a chois:
 Vus serrez dux, bel duz amis,
 Sire, de mei et del païs,
 Sin avrez quatre vinz castels;
 El mund n'ad plus forz ne plus bels.
 Et si vus di certainement:
 Despendre purrez richement,
 Si n'ad el mond si riche terre,
 Purquei /que/ la voillez cunquerre,
 Qu' /i/ ne vus trusse or et argent
 A tenir chevalers et gent."
 (Protheselaüs: ll. 6600-11)

Protheselaüs loves Medea, and his refusal of the gifts is firm. The lady does not accept his refusal with the good grace of the emperors we have met. She forthwith orders Protheselaüs to be thrown into prison!

Similarly, in the Roman de la Violette, Gerart finds himself pursued by Aigline who offers herself and her possessions to the hero. Love for Euriaut makes Gerart refuse. Aigline promises Gerart some freedom. He may stay or go as he pleases. She does not even insist on marriage:

"Puis porrés vostre plaisir faire
De l'aler ou del remanoir.
Ma terre et trestout mon avoir
Et quanque j'ai vous abandon,
De moi-meïsme vous faich don,
Volés a femme ou a amie."
(ll. 2183-88)

Acceptance would nevertheless be a betrayal, and he tells Aigline that he would not abandon his quest for Euriaut for any riches:

"Dame, dit Gerars, pour l'avoir
C'ot Constantins, li rois de Romme,
Ne lairoie, chou est la somme,
La voie que jou ai emprise."
(ll. 2197-2200)

The significance of accepting gifts from Aigline is underlined when we compare Gerart's relationship with his next hostess, Marote. Gerart asks her how much he owes her for his lodging, and she refuses to accept payment because he looks so poor. She judges him courtly and honest, and is confident that he will repay her one day when he is better able to:

A la pucele prie et rueve
Que savoir fache son despens.
"Sire, fait elle, je m'apens
Que vous n'avés pas grant avoir;
Si ne feroie pas savoir,
Se jou retenoie vos gages,
C'asés estes cortois et sages
Pour rendre; je le vous querrai."
(ll. 2443-50)

They pledge a pact of friendship, and Gerart promises that he will always be at Marote's disposition should she ever need him (ll. 2474-79). He leaves with gifts of fine clothes:

Mais Marote li a donné
 Linges, dras ki sont de cainsil,
 Plus blancs que n'est nois ne gresil,
 Et reube vaire et caucemente,
 (ll. 2483-6)

Marote's friendship in no way infringes upon Gerart's liberty, nor does it compromise his attachment to Euriaut. He is in need and is glad to receive practical gifts given with affection.

Gerart's next entanglement with a woman has very different results. Aiglente and her maid Florentine have both fallen in love with Gerart. Having challenged her servant's pretensions to such a love by a complacent assessment of her own material advantages, Aiglente declares herself to Gerart. His refusal of her love takes a surprising form, as have already seen (pages 470-471). In order to discourage the lady, Gerart paints a very black picture of himself. He accuses himself of theft and rape, for which crimes he was brought to justice and left destitute. Undismayed, Aiglente becomes more confident that her wealth will win over this penniless, money-grasping man (ll. 3289-93) She is, of course, given a further refusal.

b) Conditional Gifts refused through Loyalty.

Loyalty, or a sense of duty, impels the courtly hero to refuse conditional gifts. When Eliduc is offered a third of a kingdom and the king's treasure in return for his continued service, he declines saying that he must depart in order to assist his own lord.

Del suen li ad offert asez,
 La tierce part de s'herité,
 E sun tresur abaundonné;
 Pur remaneir tant li fera
 Dunt a tuz jurs la loëra.
 (Marie de France, Eliduc: ll. 628-32)

He does, however, accept gifts from the king as he leaves (ll. 643-46). Since Eliduc was socially inferior, acceptance in this case was honourable. We note, however, that social inferiority did not prevent him refusing the conditional gifts of land and power.

Similar situations arise in Florimont and Joufroi. Florimont wished

to leave the court of King Medon of Esclabonia, and declined the king's offer to make him his heir. He insists on going home in order to help his father with his military conflicts. Unlike Eliduc, Florimont also declines the unconditional leave-taking gifts subsequently offered by the king (ll. 2963-68).

King Henry of England tries to retain Joufroi at his court. He has the usual reasons to be grateful to the courtly hero, and offers him land, high rank and wealth. The king makes his plea as follows:

" Biaus sire cuens,
Mult par m'aviez fait de mes buens,
Que par vos ai tot mon voloir
De ma guerre que suoil avoir;
Mult bien et bel m'avez servi,
S'est bien droit qu'il vos soit meri.
Faites prendrè or et argent
Et riches pailles d'Orient,
Que tant vos en ferai doner
Con vos ja en voudrez porter.
Si volez terre ne chasteaus,
Seit vos en donrai des plus beaus
Et des meillors de mon païs,
Que mult vos aim, beaus dolz amis."
 (Joufroi: ll. 3723-36)

Joufroi refuses. His duty lies elsewhere. He sets off to defend his own land in Poitiers which is threatened by invaders.

Ille, too, refuses gifts for this same reason, that of a sense of duty or loyalty towards his own land. The king of France offers land to force Ille to stay in his kingdom. Ille justifies his refusal by saying that he already has land in Brittany which he has neglected. He feels unworthy to accept more land from the king. Instead he proposes to take up his duties at home:

"N'est dignes d'avoir altre tiere
Qu' la soie lait a conquiere
Par malvaistié et par perece."
 (Ille et Galeron: ll. 235-37)

Ille may have declined the conditional gift but he shows that he is not opposed, on principle, to receiving gifts. He asks the king to supply men and money in order that he might undertake the journey to Brittany:

"Mais or faites almosne et bien ,
 Si me balliés de vostre gent
 Et cargiés tant de vostre argent
 Que j'en puisse aler en Bretagne."
 (ll. 246-49)

Ille is the social inferior of the king and can without dishonour accept gifts from him⁽²¹⁾. As in every case, his motive for refusing land from the king, is a noble one. He would feel unjustified in accepting territory when he has a duty to defend land he already possesses.

In the above examples, we have seen some reasons why the courtly heroes refused gifts. The conditions imposed by the gifts were in conflict with the hero's mission. Very often the mission involved the love of a lady, or loyalty towards family or towards feudal lord, or personal duty and responsibilities in his own land. We note, however, that where gifts happened to be unconditional, they might be accepted, though only from someone of higher social rank.

2. Unconditional Gifts often Not Acceptable.

Gifts which do not have obvious conditions attached to them may often prove as unwelcome to the courtly hero as conditional ones. We have seen instances of the hero refusing conditional gifts, but consenting to accept other gifts when he leaves court. Some courtly characters refuse these gifts when status differentials assume a certain importance and the courtly hero's pride, or awareness of social rank, obliges him to refuse gifts.

a) Gifts refused through Pride.

An attitude of pride associated with the refusal of gifts is illustrated in Gui de Warewic. Having convinced the Emperor of Constantinople that he would not stay whatever the offer, Gui is then presented with rich farewell-presents. These presents were probably motivated by gratitude, a payment for services rendered. Gui persists in his refusal. The Emperor's gifts were passed on to Gui's men.

Mais il rien prendre ne deigna,
 Des Sarazins assez conquis a.
 De ço fist l'emperere que barun,
 Qu'a tuz les compaignuns Guiun
 Ses riches tresors abandona,
 Or e argent assez lur dona,
 Tant cum chascun prendre voleit,
 Car l'emperere comandé l'aveit.
 (ll. 4489-96)

Gui stated that he did not need the Emperor's riches, having accumulated sufficient booty from the Saracens. We may deduce more than is expressed from the use of the word "deigna" (line 4489). It suggests an attitude of pride, as if Gui would find it humiliating to receive gifts from the Emperor. Gui is socially inferior, but, in his role as the Emperor's saviour, he has an advantage, and is evidently reluctant to relinquish it. While the Emperor is beholden to Gui for his military successes, Gui has the ascendancy in their relationship. Accepting gifts would reverse the position. Gui would then be paid for his services, thus becoming, instead of the glorious hero, a paid soldier, a "soudoier" in the service of the Emperor.

It is interesting to note that when gifts are presented to Gui's men, who cannot, and probably do not wish to, refuse them, they are distributed not by the Emperor himself, but by a baron. The ruler does not honour the inferior soldiers with a personal presentation. They are nevertheless gifts of the Emperor and it is to him that the consequent glory and prestige for such largesse pass. Gui's men express their admiration at such generosity:

Grant pris donent a l'empeureur,
 Co diënt mult est de grant valour.
 (ll. 4497-98)

A subsequent gift refusal by Gui shows the same attitude. This time it is the Duke of Loher who wishes to reward Gui:

Asez li ofre or e argent,
 Mais prendre n'en deigna nient.
 (ll. 7139-40)

We understand, therefore, that, on neither occasion, would Gui's pride allow him to be the agent for the enhanced prestige of the would-be benefactor. ⁽²²⁾

Durmart is another courtly hero who repeatedly refuses to accept gifts. On the rare occasions when he does receive presents, he is careful to point out that they will be immediately distributed amongst his men. When Procidas presents gifts of armour to Durmart, Durmart tells him that they will be passed on to new knights:

Fait /l/ i Galois: "Je sai molt bien
Annui/t/ mais seront trestot mien
Cist escut et li elme ausi,
Mais il seront demain parti
A ceaz qui chevalier seront."
(Durmart: ll. 12083-87)

In Amadas et Ydoine, Amadas comes to the aid of a chatelain in a tournament. The chatelain offers him payment in return. Amadas refuses:

Puis li prie cortoisement
Et bel et envois'ement
Que ses gages prenge de lui,
S'i ne li tort a grant anui.
Il l'en mercie, mais por rien
N'en prendroit nuls, ce li dist bien.
(ll. 4579-84)

Amadas's reward would not take the form of a gift. "prendre gages" implies payment for services rendered and has a degrading overtone to a courtly hero. The true courtly knight does not perform his valourous deeds in anticipation of payment. Acceptance thereof would cancel the generosity of the deed. Amadas must refuse.

The term "gages" recurs in Erec et Enide, with a slightly different meaning. The "comte vaniteux" asks Erec to allow him to pay for his lodgings. Erec's reaction shows a proud attitude: he will not deign to receive money from the count, thereby admitting an inferiority which he denies. He states quite clearly that he has no need of the count's money:

Li cuens li porofre et presente
et prie que il le consante
que de lui ses gaiges repraigne.
mes Erec baillier ne li daigne,
einz dit qu'assez a a desprendre,
n'a mestier de son avoir prandre.
(Erec et Enide: ll. 3269-74)

One motive for Erec's refusal is explicit. Implicit is the pride of rank

which forbids Erec, the son of a king, to accept gifts from an inferior. Moreover the count is a complete stranger who has no good reason for offering Erec money. The reader knows that the count has heard of Erec's fine reputation for valour, and is jealous of him. He is, therefore, challenging Erec by trying to force him into a position of inferiority. Had Erec accepted the count's offer, the latter would have triumphed. The conflict between the two men starts here, long before the physical combat which is to follow.

The courtly hero in general is loth to receive payment for his services. Florimont insisted on acquiring his wealth directly from the enemy in battle. King Philip begged him to accept some form of payment, but Florimont steadfastly refused:

Et li rois li a mout proié
 Qu'il prest de lui livreson
 Et il et tuit sui compaignon.
 Et il respont: "n'en prendrait mie,
 Livrer li doit li rois d'Ongrie.
 A Calocast/r/o irons prendre
 Seu que devons issi despendre.
 (Florimont: ll. 6420-26)

Cristal expresses the belief of the courtly hero in his mission to right wrong, and to help those in distress, not for payment, but for the joy of doing good:

"Car je ne sui pas soldoier
 Ne por argent ne por or mier;
 Mais tot tort fait et tot oltrage,
 C'on fait bone pucele et sage,
 Voeil adrechier et amender."
 (Cristal et Clarie: ll. 5795-99)

Cleomadès was another courtly knight who always refused reward for his services. Having defended the Greeks in war, he declines the gifts the grateful victors present to him:

Lors firent venir tout errant
 chevaux, joiaus, or et argent,
 pour donner et lui et sa gent;
 mais onques ne volt recevoir
 joiel ne tresor ne avoir.
 (Cleomadès: ll. 9010-14)

The attitude of these courtly knights shows that refusals in the romances

may stem from the pride of the courtly hero, often through awareness of social rank. Pride cannot always be explained by awareness of social differences. The courtly hero is often inferior to those offering gifts. His pride in refusing them comes from the elevated idea of his mission which excludes any payment in return. Different again is the reason for Tristan's proud refusal of presents from King Mark. He is about to leave court, and the king offers him gold, silver and rich furs. The rivalry between the two men is not subtle, but obvious. Tristan who loves the king's wife, Iseult, cannot honourably accept money from King Mark in such circumstances, although he is his social inferior. Tristan's refusal is categorical:

Quant qu'il voudra, tot li dorra;
 Mott par li a a bandon mis
 Or et argent et vair et gris.
 Tristan dist: "Rois de Cornoualle,
 Ja n'en prendrai mie maalle;"
 (Beroul's Tristan: ll. 2920-24)

b) Friendship modifies pride and social rivalry.

On occasion, the courtly hero's refusal of gifts is not so categorical. When considerations of friendship have a part to play, the hero may hesitate before declining gifts, or he may grudgingly accept them.

Durmart makes it a point of honour to refuse gifts, but sometimes his resolution wavers. Yet, when a friend, Bruns, presents him with armour, in accordance with a promise made earlier, Durmart seems unwilling to commit himself completely by accepting all the gifts. He refuses to exchange his own horse and sword (Durmart: ll. 9292-94). However, since his friend's motive for giving is not rivalry but a promise to this effect he had previously made to Durmart, we need not seek a deeper motive for our hero's refusal to accept the sword and the horse beyond the fact that he really preferred to keep his own. The sword, we remember, had been presented to Durmart by his father on the occasion of his knight^{ing} ceremony.

At the castle of the ten maidens, Durmart is offered gifts by way of

thanks from the knights of the castle. They present him with armour.

Politely but firmly, Durmart refuses all these gifts:

Beles armes de mainte guise
 Li presentent li chevalier;
 Li uns li presente un destrier
 Et li autres sa bone espee,
 Clere et tranchant et amoree,
 Et li aultres elme doré.
 De quant qu'il li ont presenté
 Ne vout rien prendre li Galois;
 En merciant come cortois
 A tos les presens renfusés.

(ll. 6600-6609)

The stated motive is simple: Durmart has no need of these things and so he refuses them:

Mesire Durmars a assés
 De plusors desduis, ce sachiés,
 Et ses chevalz fu aaisiés
 Si bien que riens ne li faloit
 De quant que il li covenoit.

(ll. 6610-14)

One might add that the would-be donors were knights whereas Durmart was a king's son, and this social difference doubtless made his refusal easier.

On the same occasion, Durmart's attitude was different when he was presented with gifts from the maidens themselves. He, at first, refuses, and is approved by the poet who comments that this was a wise gesture, since Durmart was well-schooled in courtly customs:

Les damoseles totes dis
 Li font de lor jueaz present,
 Et li Galois mout sagement
 Renfuse ce qu'il ne vuet prendre,
 Car il n'estoit mie a aprendre,
 Ains ert sages et bien apris.

(ll. 6560-65)

He then has second thoughts. Anxious not to offend the young ladies who were thus expressing their gratitude, he finally consents to accept some of the gifts. He does not keep them, however. Before he leaves he gives them to the servants:

Neporquant des jueas a pris,
 Car se il alcun n'en preïst,
 Paor a qu'il ne mespreïst

Vers les puceles qui li tendent;
 A lui servir totes entendent.
 Li Galois de lor jueaz prent,
 Ensi que de rien ne mesprent,
 Car anchois qu'il s'en soit partis,
 Les a donés et departis
 As chamberieres de laens;
 (ll. 6566-75)

Durmart's first reaction was to refuse the gifts as his social position and courtly upbringing demanded. His social instinct is, however, in conflict with his personal feelings. The young ladies are obviously eager to serve him, and Durmart finds it hard to reject their trinkets, and so hurt their feelings. His solution to this moral dilemma is appropriate. He accepts some of the gifts. There is no fear of social competition from girls, and he is not dishonoured by his role of donee. Lest it should be thought that he had actual need of the gifts, Durmart promptly disposes of them to those who would experience need. The gifts are described as jewels, gifts suited to ladies, so the romance hero easily redeems himself. The poet admires the way he solved this delicate problem:

Tot ce fu cortoisie et sens.
 (line 6576)

Awareness of social rank is very evident in the relationship of Durmart with King Arthur. Both are of royal blood, and, although on excellent terms, neither will defer to the other by accepting rich gifts. When Durmart leaves Arthur's court he is offered many costly items. Durmart accepts just one lance:

La li a om molt presenté
 Chevaz et armes et jbeaz
 Et riches dons plaisans et beaz,
 Mais mesires Durmars n'en prent
 Fors une lance seulement.
 (ll. 10330-34)

By refusing the rich gifts, he shows that he has no need of them. He also avoids humbling himself before King Arthur. As a concession to their friendship he accepts a token gift. No dignity is lost, and neither of the amiable protagonists is rebuffed or humiliated.

The situation is later reversed. King Arthur attends the wedding of Durmart to the queen of Ireland. When the king and his retinue depart after the celebrations, Durmart gives them all rich gifts. Moreover, he pledges himself and his land to Arthur's service. This is an attitude of humility which Durmart reserves uniquely for King Arthur. The spirit of rivalry is no longer present. Durmart, although a king, seems to recognize Arthur as his superior:

Li rois Durmars le convoia,
 Si vos di qu'il li presenta
 Trestot son cors entierement
 A faire son commandement
 Et ses manoirs et ses chasteaz,
 Et si dona de ses jöeaz
 Al roi Artu et a sa gent;
 Les plusors done or et argent
 Et as atres comme cortois
 Done chevaz et palefrois.
 Hernas et copes et doniers
 Donoit as povres chevaliers;
 Gerfauz et ostoirs et faucons
 Ce donoit il as hauz barons.
 (ll. 15179-92)

Interesting is the matching of gifts with social rank: cups to poor knights, hunting-birds to the barons for use in their noble leisure pursuits.

Durmart's deference to Arthur is not, however, that of a vassal to his lord, and indeed Durmart's gifts are not interpreted as tribute. Consequently Arthur refuses to accept costly presents. Like Durmart earlier, he accepts only one token gift: a single falcon.

Des jöeaz prent li rois Artus
 Un bel ostoir norois sens plus.
 (ll. 15193-94)

King Arthur is sufficiently conscious of Durmart's rank to refuse to lose face by accepting all that Durmart offered, though he evidently permitted his barons and knights to do so. Thus, even between friends, social rivalry imposes restrictions upon a personal relationship. Yet a small concession to friendship is made, but Durmart and Arthur are careful to choose token gifts of such little value that need must be discounted and the gesture of acceptance becomes symbolic.

When King Arthur is offered gifts by someone with whom he has no particular tie of friendship, he is able to refuse all that is offered. However the person wishing to reward him is a queen, and about to marry Durmart. Arthur makes a conciliatory gesture by remarking that he would value her friendship above her material gifts:

La roïne mout grant joie a;
 Le roi Artu abandona
 Tos ses jüeaz et son avoir,
 Mais li bons rois n'en vuet avoir
 Fors le gre de li solement.
 (ll. 14767-71)

This is the attitude of Cristal when pressed to accept presents by the countess whom he has saved from invaders. The lady has also fallen in love with the hero, but realises that Cristal loves someone else. Cristal evidently does not wish to wound her further, and explains that he cannot accept gifts because it is contrary to his custom. All he wants from the lady, he says, is her friendship and goodwill:

La contesse li presenta
 Son tresor et mout li proia
 Qu'il en presist a son voloir.
 "Dame", dist il, "n'en voeil avoir
 De toteçriens que vos avés
 Fors vostre amors et vostre gres;"
 (Cristal et Clarie: ll. 5789-94)

Cleomadès finds himself in a difficult position in relation to a friend. Our hero is incognito and is befriended by a knight, Durban. The latter makes a generous offer to the apparently landless Cleomadès of half his own land. Cleomadès, in reality the son of a king, cannot honestly accept this offer. He, therefore, evades the issue. He takes his leave of Durban and says he will give his reply on his return. He thanks Durban profusely:

Le don ne refuse ne prent,
 mais mout l'en merciø forment.
 (Cleomadès: ll. 11955-56)

Later, Cleomadès's identity is revealed and the offer is not repeated.

We see, therefore, that the courtly hero's rule of always avoiding the situation where he is put at a disadvantage by receiving gifts, is relaxed

slightly in the case of friends he does not wish to offend.

c) The dishonour of gift acceptance.

In the section on liberality, we examined at length the stated results of courtly largesse, and particularly the glory that comes from giving. In the romance of Florimont, the shame of receiving gifts is clearly stated. We have already recognized this attitude in instances of gift refusal. However in Florimont the attitude is explicit. Florimont wishes to be knighted, and, before the ceremony, he receives advice from Floquart as follows:

"Florimont, se prinses ne beir(s)
 Te welt de son aveir doner,
 Nel prendre, se t'en puels guenchir;
 Grans faix est d'atruï don baillir,
 Et grant honor ait qui despant;
 Grant faix ait que don quiert et prant.
 Mout est grans honors de despandre:
 Grans faix est de querre et d'atandre.
 Cil que donent sont honoré
 Per siaus cui li don sont doné.
 Qui prent l'avoir n'ait pas l'onor;
 Qu'ele remaint a doneor."

(Florimont: ll. 2761-72)

The above advice contrasts the honour of giving with the dishonour of receiving gifts or, what is worse, soliciting them. By receiving gifts the receiver is conferring honour on the beneficiary and thus voluntarily acknowledging his own inferiority. It follows clearly from this that the duty of the courtly hero is to avoid at all costs putting himself in a position of inferiority by accepting gifts. The Florimont passage explains the motivating force which has guided the actions of courtly heroes such as Durmart, Guide Warewic and others. The advice offered by Floquart confirms the presence of a "competitive spirit" which dominates in the courtly works. This spirit of emulation manifests itself not only in military feats of courage, but also in the social custom, apparently innocent, but in reality calculated, of giving and receiving gifts. The giving of gifts, especially when associated with "noble expenditure" was designed to invite pecuniary comparisons. To give in this context was to gain honour and prestige. To

receive, conversely, was to associate oneself with need and so with dishonour.⁽²³⁾

d) The Dishonour of Gift refusal.

The advice in Florimont does not completely cover the matter of accepting and refusing gifts. Florimont is told to refuse at all costs. Other poets apparently find it acceptable for the courtly hero to receive from a social superior, and we have met many instances of this. The poet of Cleomadès goes further and states that one is compelled to accept all such gifts. King Carmant sends presents to Cleomadès and Durban. Cleomades has already left, but Durban accepts his share graciously. This prompts the poet to remark that to refuse the gifts of a king would be folly. Social etiquette demands that such gifts be accepted:

et Durbans les joiaus reçoit.
 Le roi Carmant mout en mercie,
 car dou refuser fust folie
 et encore demain seroit,
 qui don de roi refuseroit ,
 car n'est pas chose a refuser.
 (Cleomadès: ll. 12152-57)

We have seen from other instances that some courtly heroes are reluctant to accept gifts even from emperors. The poet of Cleomadès, while advocating acceptance, is nevertheless aware of the social stigma attached to the taking of gifts. He suggests as a solution, one already adopted by the Hero, Durmart, that the gift, once received, should be passed on by the beneficiary to his inferiors. By immediately presenting the gifts to a squire, honour accrues to the first receiver who is now donor, to the young and presumably needy squire, and also to the original benefactor. There is thus a chain reaction since all participants in the giving/receiving process can exploit the honour-conferring property of the gift, and participate in the honour.

Mais qui a un bon bachelier
 le donne avant, il fait honneur
 et a lui et au predeour
 et celui aussi de cui mains
 li dons issi de premerains.
 Ainsi d'onnour en honneur va
 teus dons, ce set on bien pieç'a;
 car dons qui est a point donnez
 doit estre prisiez et loez,
 si est il et tous jours sera.
 (ll. 12158-67)

Thus far we have seen Durmart pass on the gifts he received from the ten maidens (pp.586-7). Gauvain does likewise in Les Merveilles de Rigomer. By triumphing in the adventures of Rigomer, Gauvain wins the hand of Queen Dionise, an honour which love for another forces him to decline. He is subsequently presented with gifts by the Queen and her household. Gauvain's reaction is said to be one of pleasure, but he, nevertheless, promptly distributes the gifts amongst the assembly:

Et mon segnor Gavain presentent
 Avoirs qui mout li atalentent,
 Et il les prent, a tant les done,
 A tous son avoir abandone.
 (ll. 14771-74)

Similarly, Cristal has great difficulty in refusing both the love and the gifts of a grateful countess. He convinces her that he is not free to return her love, but submits to taking the presents pressed upon him. No sooner does he have possession of them than he distributes them amongst his knights. This gesture brings him pleasure because he is able to reward those impecunious squires who have served him so well:

Joiiaus et robes et monoie
 Tramist Cristal une grant charge.
 Et Cristal tantost s'en descharge,
 As chevaliers trestot le done,
 Entierement lor abandone;
 De gentil cuer et liement
 Tot lor depart communalment.
 As povres bacelers en done,
 Qui erent preu por sa besoigne.
 (ll. 5320-28)

e) Reactions to Gift refusal.

When rank and upbringing prompt the hero to refuse gifts, the attitude of the frustrated donor is rarely recorded. We take it, therefore, that such refusals were expected and did not cause any ill-feeling between the courtly hero and his would-be benefactor. Evidently such refusals were a fundamental part of courtly manners and provoked no surprise or criticism. If the poet comments at all it is to approve the hero and to comment on his courtliness.

In my experience, on two occasions only does the refusal of a gift

provoke censure. One is the wellknown incident in the Roman d'Alexandre when a poor knight refuses the overwhelming gift of a city from Alexandre. This is no courtly refusal, the knight's motive is not pride, love or loyalty, but simply cowardice. He does not want the burden of ruling a city. Alexandre is outraged because his gift reflects his own power and honour. He cannot or will not give modest gifts. He compromises, however, and presents the knight with the smallest sum of money possible in keeping with his royal dignity (see my pages 527-8).

Another example I have already cited is when Ille refuses the magnificent offer of half the empire of Rome together with the hand of the Emperor's daughter. Refusal on the part of an untitled knight of such a great honour caused disbelief and indignation not only from the Emperor but also the Pope! (See my pages 476-7).

The courtly hero is characterised as a consistent and munificent giver of gifts, often refusing them from other people and rarely accepting. Apart from the example in the Roman d'Alexandre, cited above, never do we see the courtly hero rebuffed by a refusal of his own gifts. In the romances, he is the liberal hero, displaying his largesse at every opportunity. The other characters of the romance do not thwart this liberality. Even King Arthur deigns to receive a token gift from Durmart, although prestige accrues to the latter from his splendid gifts to Arthur's knights. Guillaume de Palerne almost meets with a refusal from the King of Spain. Both are kings, and there is doubtless an element of social rivalry in their relationship. When the King of Spain and his entourage decide to leave the court of Guillaume de Palerne where they have been for the last month, Guillaume wishes to shower them with valuable gifts. They refuse (Guillaume de Palerne: ll. 9105-13). Guillaume, however, is most unwilling to admit this refusal. The barons are forced against their will to take rich jewelry. Guillaume uses more covert means in the case of the king and his family. He has their chests filled with gifts. In spite of Guillaume's somewhat heavy-handed

generosity, it is evident that his aim is not to humiliate his royal guests. The gifts which he has secreted in their luggage will be, he assumes, given away on their arrival in Spain:

Li rois n'estoit mie a aprendre;
 Tos les barons, estre lor grés,
 A mult riches joiaus donés;
 Le roi d'Espagne et la roine,
 Sa seror et Alixandrine
 En a fait lor coffres emplir
 Por doner et por departir,
 Quant ele vendront en lor terre.
 (ll. 9114-21)

It is not uncommon, in the romances, to see the courtly hero vainly trying to escape from the unwelcome largesse of a potential social rival. The reverse is extremely rare, and Guillaume de Palerne is a curious example of a hero inflicting gifts upon someone. The courtly hero may often ignore the benefit his gifts have on the donees, but it is not usual for the hero to override the interests or wishes of his beneficiaries.

3. Contempt for Gain and Gift Refusal.

There remains one minor motive for the refusal of rich gifts in the romances; a motive reminiscent of the attitudes prevalent in the didactic works I have studied, and which is directly inspired by what may be termed the contemptus mundi ethic. Courtly attitudes are eclipsed in certain of the romances by religious sentiments. Thus refusal of gifts is sometimes motivated by a scorn of material things, the riches of the world.

As a reward, Robert le Diable is offered the hand of the Emperor's daughter and great wealth. His motive for refusing is that he will serve God as a hermit. His attitude is clearly that of the "contemptus mundi". All the riches in the world would not deflect him from his chosen course:

"Puis que vous tout savés mon estre,
 Aler m'en voilg, n'i quer plus estre.
 Que, qui me donroit tout le monde,
 Si grans com est a la reonde,
 Et quanque les gens dedens ont
 Et les richesses qui i sont,
 La demoranche ne feroie,
 Ne al siecle un jor ne seroie."
 (Robert le Diable: ll. 4979-86)

In Richard le Beau, the White Knight refuses gifts from Richard. The gifts consist of prizes from a tournament and a lady, but the knight wishes Richard to keep them, since he himself seeks spiritual, not material profit:

"Ains weil c'atles la damoisele,
Et tout l'avoir et la rikeche.
Chevaliers sui de tel nobleche,
Que nulle cose terrienne
Ne weil, mais la celestienne."
(ll. 5324-28)

Earlier in the romance, we saw that Richard shared the same disregard for material wealth. When Richard liberates an imprisoned king he refused the customary ransom to avoid being tainted by the possession of riches. He already has far too much:

"Ne weil c'avoirs de riens m'empire.
Trop en ay, ce vous fay savoir,
N'ay covvoitise a vostre avoir,"
(ll. 4826-28)

Richard's attitude changes when he later experiences abject poverty. His desire to escape from poverty is, however, altruistic. He merely wants to be able to continue giving.

Scorn of material possessions is an occasional, lesser idea, and is confined to exceptional works with a strong religious bias. Refusal to accept wealth in the form of gifts for the three main reasons - love, loyalty, pride - is far more common.

In conclusion, the courtly hero avoids accepting gifts whenever possible. Conditional gifts are almost invariably declined through love or loyalty. Unconditional gifts may be unacceptable to the proud courtly hero who is aware of his social rank. Whether explicit or implicit, most courtly heroes seem to find the acceptance of gifts degrading. Concessions are made, however, to friendship which tempers the underlying social rivalry. As to the acceptance from a social superior, particularly kings and emperors, there appears to be a divergence of opinion in the romances. Some, like Cleomadès, see no shame in accepting gifts from a social superior, and indeed see

acceptance as an obligation. Other courtly heroes find it permissible to refuse even royal gifts. Finally, one notes that if the merit of the donee is not of paramount importance in the romances, the merit of the donor, apparently is. A courtly hero may give indiscriminately but he is very selective and wary about those from whom he consents to accept gifts.

D. "Don" and "Guerredon".

The unwillingness of the courtly hero to remain under an obligation to anyone partly explains the tradition of "guerredon" or counter-gift in the courtly romances. When one receives a gift, or benefits from a kind deed, one is honour bound to reciprocate sometime in the future. To receive without return damages the dignity of the courtly personage.

The term "guerredon"⁽²⁴⁾ covers a wide range of gifts and activities in the romances. It can simply mean a counter-gift; by extension it also means payment for services rendered or reward. It can also signify gifts or money offered in return for some service not yet performed. It has a symbolic significance in the language of love.

1. The Counter-Gift or Counter-Service.

"The principle of reciprocity seems to be fundamental to most human relationships", says a social anthropologist, Raymond Firth⁽²⁵⁾, and he shows how it manifests itself through the practice of gift-exchange in contemporary primitive societies, in particular the Tikopia⁽²⁶⁾. In literature the theme of gift-exchange is a long-established one. It plays an important role in the *Odyssey*⁽²⁷⁾, as it does in medieval courtly romance.

In all cases, the gift received places the beneficiary under a moral obligation to repay it. In the case of primitive societies M. Mauss studies the compulsion to repay gifts and its origins⁽²⁸⁾. This compulsion also exists in the courtly society of the romances. Exponents of the courtly code of behaviour, whether poets speaking through their characters, or whether moralists setting down courtly manners in didactic style, attach

great importance to the counter-gift or counter-service.

a) Didactic comment.

In the thirteenth century, Alard de Cambrai, in his Livre de Philosophie et de Moralité, gives moral counsel and practical advice to the members of courtly society. He stresses the importance of the *guerredon*. In one section he preaches that an honourable man should never forget services rendered him. "Sallustes dist que on ne doit mie service oublier ne renoier." (XXII. Page 74). Alard attacks those who do not repay a kind deed (ll. 825-37). It does not suffice to counter the gift or service. There are certain rules to observe: Alard warns against repaying the gift too soon, which would smack of commercial transaction. Courtliness and "mesure" demand that a decent interval should elapse before the *guerredon* is effected. ("Socrates dist c'on ne se doit mie trop haster de merir les bienfais". XX, pages 72-73). Alard then advises a courtly person not to give in anticipation of a counter-gift. He should forget his gift, once given. The recipient, however, should remember the gift until he has found a suitable occasion to repay it. ("Macrobes aprent as donneurs comment il doivent exploitier". LXXX, pages 183-184). Alard distinguishes two kinds of *guerredon*: one comes from the heart, the other from the purse. The former is better since it is sincere. The second is too facile a way of repaying a kindness. ("Dyogenes dit que graindres guerredons vient dou cuer que de la borse." CXII, pages 251-255). We met an example of the latter type of *guerredon* in Amadas et Ydoine (my page 583 above) when the hero was offered "gages" by a chatelain whom he had helped in a tournament. Amadas refused this reward.

The necessity of the *guerredon* from a truly courtly person is expressed in didactic style in some of the romances.

Durmart says that a man of noble birth should never accept kindness from someone without intending to repay it:

"Et jo par verité vos di,
Que haus hom ne doit bonté prendre,
S'il ne vuet le guerredon rendre,"
(Durmart: ll. 9306-8)

~~"Et jo par verité vos di,
Que haus nom ne doit bonte prendre,
S'il ne veult le guerredon rendre."
(Durmart: ll. 9306-08)~~

In Florimont, it is once again Floquart who gives the courtly advice. He stresses the dishonour which results from a failure to return a gift or service:

"Florimont, se hons t'ait servi,
Garde nel metes en obli;
Si tu le fais, de mainte gent
En avrais damaige sovent.
Chascuns dirait: "seu fist celui
A tretel referoit atrui."
A grant besoiing tost te faudroit
Cil que muelz aidier te poroit
Se retenois guerredon
Ne de servisse né de don."
(ll. 2831-40)

Not only dishonour ensues, but people will be wary about offering their services in the future if they know they will go unrewarded.

The poet of Cleomadès, Adenet le Roi, regrets that the guerredon is often unjustly withheld or misattributed. Cleomadès's gifts to his loyal companion, the minstrel Pinchonnés, prompt him to consider this practice of counter-gift and reward for services rendered. He says it is a pleasure to serve people who show their appreciation by material rewards. Often undeserving people are rewarded for nothing.

Grant eür a a servir gent
qui aient tel entendement
que service sachent merir
ceaus qui le sevent desservir,
car mout souvent ont le bienfait
cil qui n'ont pas service fait
par quoi le deüssent avoir.
(ll. 16547-53)

Thus whereas some people who have given their services do not receive the "guerredon" for their pains, those who are already sufficiently paid for their services receive an additional and undeserved reward:

Ce puet on en mains lieus veoir
que cil qui desservi aront
le merir au merir faurront,
et enporteront le merite
cil qui aront este tout quite
de desservir le guerredon
dont il enporteront le don.
(ll. 16554-60)

The poet severely criticizes such unjust conduct. He advises those who owe a service or reward to acquit themselves of this obligation and thus to gain honour. Failure to repay a service is, according to the poet, a sin:

Ne sont ne avisé ne sage
 cil qui maintiennent tel usage;
 mais je ne l'amet a nului.
 Bien se gart chascuns endroit lui
 qu'il paie le desserveour,
 si avra aumosne et honnour;
 car qui autrui service prent,
 pechié fait se il ne le rent.
 (ll. 16563-70)

The obligation under which a gift puts a recipient is well-illustrated in L'Atre Périlleux. A knight needs a service from his brother-in-law. The latter replies that since he had received his castle from the knight, he was in no position to refuse him anything:

"Par foi, fait il, ce n'est pas drois
 Que je de rien vous escondie.
 Non ferai jou ja en ma vie
 De rien que je puisce aramir:
 Bien vous devroie a gré servir,
 Qui me dounastes le castel."
 (ll. 1810-15)

b) Guerrèdon Promised.

As Alard de Cambrai advised, the courtly hero does not immediately render the guerredon of a gift or service, but it is usual for him, on receipt of a gift, to announce his intention of giving a guerredon some time in the future.

When Erec asks a "don" of Enide's father, he promises a guerredon (ll. 631-32, see my page 555). He tells Enide's father what the guerredon is to be. It is twofold: firstly he will marry Enide, thus making her a queen. For Enide's father he offers two castles, gold, silver, and rich garments.

"Mener vos ferai an ma terre,
 qui mon pere est et moie apres;
 loing de ci est, non mie pres.
 Iluec vos donrai deus chastiax,
 molt boens, molt riches, et molt biax;....
 (Erec et Enide: ll. 1314-18)

Einz que troi jor soient passez
 vos avrai anvoié assez
 or et argent et veir et gris
 et dras de soie et de chier pris
 por vos vestir et vostre feme,
 qui est ma chiere dolce dame."
 (ll. 1325-30)

Erec, of course, kept his promise:

Molt li tint bien son covenant."
 (line 1803)

When Durmart wins a combat on behalf of a mysterious lady, she promises him a guerredon:

"Vos m'avés fait mout gent socors,
 Guerredonés vos iert aillors."
 (Durmart: ll. 2737-38)

She specifies the nature of the guerredon: an introduction to the Queen of Ireland for whom Durmart is searching.

Later when Durmart is fighting on behalf of the Queen Fenise against Nogant and his troops, the Queen sends him a message to say that he would be amply rewarded: she does not say how (ll. 12643-47). In the event, Durmart is allowed to chose his guerredon, and he asks for the hand of the Queen, which she grants.

On another occasion it is Durmart who promises a guerredon. He has received arms from Bruns de Branlant, and in return pledges himself to the service of Bruns, should the latter ever need help:

" Ne ja Deus ne me laist morir
 Si vos aie guerredonés
 Tos les biens que vos faiz m'avés."
 (ll. 9298-9300)

In Le Chevalier de la Charrete, Lancelot, incognito, has urgent need of a fresh horse. He meets Gauvain and asks him to give him one of his - either as a gift or a loan. He promises the guerredon for this service which Gauvain readily renders (ll. 279-87).

Later Lancelot is promised a guerredon when, after some hesitation, he presents the head of a slain opponent to a young girl. It is she who swears

to repay him at an appropriate time:

"Uns guerredons de moi t'atant
qui molt te vanra an boen leu."
(ll. 2934-35)

When Lancelot is in prison, she honours her promise. Lancelot recognizes that his service has been well repaid:

"bien me sera guerredonez
li servises que je vos fis,
se je fors de ceanz sui mis."
(ll. 6584-86)

The don/guerredon process does not end there. Lancelot, grateful for his release, now esteems that he owes the girl a service. He puts himself and his wealth at her disposal (ll. 6683-86). The reason for this becomes clear when Lancelot tells Arthur of his adventures. He recounts how he would still be in prison were it not for the timely help of the girl. He refers to his service as being very small in comparison with such a great service on her part. Lancelot, therefore, still feels obliged to the girl:

"Cele por assez petit don
m'a rendu large guerredon:
grant enor m'a faite, et grant bien."
(ll. 6879-81)

In L'Atre Périlleux, it is Gauvain who promises to reward a kind host who provides him with new armour and arms:

Et Gavains dist: "Ja Dix ne place
Que cest service soit perdu;
Et Dix me doinst force et vertu
Et pooir qu'en tel liu vous truisse
Ke gueredoner le vous puisce,
Que moult m'avés fait grant honor."
(ll. 2026-31)

The guerredon has an important place in Gui de Warewic. We have seen how the hero was loth to accept any gifts. When faced with the necessity of benefiting from a service, he immediately promises repayment. On one occasion he asks an abbot to bury his companion Herault, whom he believes dead and swears to repay the service:

"Le guerdun vus rendrai,
Se jo vif, quant purrai."
(Gui de Warewic: ll. 1479-80)

There is also Terri restored to health thanks to Gui, and who promises a guerredon for our hero (ll. 5053-57).

When the narrative follows the promise of a guerredon by its execution, we note that the courtly hero usually repays the gift or service, as it were, with interest. The return usually outweighs the original "don" in value, e.g. Erec's reward to Enide's father (pp. 599-600 above). Hence Lancelot's embarrassment when he thinks the guerredon rendered him exceeds the merit of his original service.

We find another example of an extravagant guerredon in Gui de Warewic. The hero is attacked when unarmed. He asks a nearby peasant for the loan of his spade. He promises a prompt reward:

"Ami, cest pel car me donez!
De ço tut assuree seez
Que le gueredun vos rendrai
Al plus tost que jo purrai."
(ll. 5911-14)

His opponent overcome, Gui returns to the peasant and presents him with the horse he has just captured:

"Amis, fait il, cest cheval
Vus doins par nun de guerdun,
De Deu aiez la beneiçun!"
(ll. 5926-28)

c) Execution of Guerredon.

The courtly hero may not expressly promise a guerredon when a beneficiary of a gift or service. However it is evident that the hero never forgets the obligation under which he remains until he has effected the "guerredon".

In Gilles de Chyn, guerredon takes the form of a kind act. Duras has shown great hospitality to Gilles. Later, in a tournament, Duras finds himself in difficulties, and Gilles hurries to his rescue to repay his earlier kindness:

La ou Duras oï crïer
Fait le ceval le chief torner,
Cele part vait a esperon;
Ja li donra le gueredon
De son boire et de son mengier,
Tout premerains li vait aidier.
(ll. 707-12)

In the story of the two friends, Athis and Prophilias, the former gave Prophilias his wife when he fell in love with her. Opportunity to return such a service occurs when Athis is accused and convicted of murder. Prophilias rescues him by claiming responsibility for the crime. Prophilias regards this act as the *guerredon* for Athis's earlier kindness:

Mout rant Prophilias Athis
 Gent *guerredon* et grant amor
 Del grant servise et de l'enor
 Que il li ot fet en Athene,
 Quant por lui antre en la ch#ene.
 (Athis et Prophilias: ll. 2280-84)

Because of his poverty, Florimont is unable to repay the kindness of Prince Rysus who has enlisted him in his army. The only means of offering thanks available to Florimont is to offer himself body and soul to the service of the prince:

"De mort m'avez torné en vie,
 De povreté en signorie.
 Ne vos em puis *gueredon* rendre,
 De tot me p#ez vos bien vendre."
 (Florimont: ll. 7207-10)

Aeneas is in a similar position when he receives generous hospitality from Dido and also her love. He cannot return either for the Gods have ordered him to leave the country. He tells Dido that although he may not be able to repay her properly, he will never forget her kindness and will always love her:

"Se nel vos puis *gueredoner*,
 je nel porrai mie obliér,
 memberra m'en tant com vivrai,
 sor tote rien vos amerai."
 (Roman d'Enéas: ll. 1781-84)

d) Women and *Guerredon*.

The practice of gift-exchange, "don" and "*guerredon*", was not the privileged domain of the courtly hero. Courtly ladies are no less bound by the convention of the *guerredon* than their male counterparts. We have already met the examples of Queen Fenise (Durmart: my page 600) and the girl who frees Lancelot (Charrete: my page 601).

In L'Escoufle, Aelis, temporarily poor, and her companion, Isabelle, make gifts for the Lady of Montpellier. Delighted, the lady decides that the gift merits a valuable counter-gift.

"Certes," fait ele, "de cest don
Doivent estre grant guerredon."
(ll. 5677-78)

To Aelis she gives rich clothing and to Isabelle a goblet:

~~"I hanap de mare et d'ami~~
"Prennés," fait ele, "de par mi
Cest hanap, bele, en guerredon
De vo joiel et de vo don."
(ll. 5789-93)

In Le Chevalier au Lion, Lunete has waited for long to repay the kindness shown to her by Yvain when she once visited Arthur's court. Yvain, alone, did not ignore and scorn her on that occasion. Now Yvain falls in love with her mistress, Laudine, and Lunete seizes the opportunity to effect the guerredon by helping his suit:

"mes vos, la vostre grant merci,
m'i enorastes et servistes;
de l'enor que vos m'i fëistes
vos randrai ja le guerredon."
(ll. 1012-15)

e) Guerredon solicited.

Ideally the guerredon is spontaneous, rendered at the discretion of the original beneficiary when circumstances are suitable. There are, however, instances where the guerredon is solicited. It is rare, and a practice which Alard de Cambrai condemns. He says that the giver of a gift or the performer of a service should forget his gesture until such time as the beneficiary can repay him with the guerredon.

"li donnere
Doit estre de tele matere
C'om ne doit pas conte tenir
De son don, ne ja souvenir
Ne li doit de chose qu'il donne
Duqu'a tant c'om li guerredonne."
(Livre de Philosophie et de Moralité: ll. 3559-64)

In Galeran de Bretagne, Gente claims a guerredon from Galet. She says that he has received great benefits from her in the past. Now she needs a

service from him, namely that he should dispose of one of her twins:

"Tu scez moult bien que je suis toute
 Preste adés de toy avancier
 Et de ton bien croistre et haulcier;
 Si t'ay donné maint riche don,
 Or t'en demant le guerredon,
 Par si que grant preu t'en vendra
 Ja nulz tollir nel te pourra
 Mais que tu facez mon vouloir."
 (ll. 324-31)

Although Gente claims she is asking for a just guerredon, the offer of more material help in the future suggests bribery for the execution of an act which she knows to be wrong. This is an uncourtly lady with uncourtly attitudes.

A guerredon is also solicited in L'Atre Périlleux. A knight has given Gauvain a horse when he desperately needed one. He asks Gauvain to grant a guerredon when asked.

"Mais un don vous demant et ruis,
 Ançois que vous aiiés men don,
 Que me dongniés un gueredon
 Au jor que je demanderai."
 (ll. 2892-95)

Here we have two meanings of the word "don": line 2892 refers to the service required by the knight, that is to receive a guerredon when needed; line 2893 refers to the gift which he is making to Gauvain, that is the horse. Before riding off, he asks Gauvain for his sparrowhawk, explaining that the bird will remind him that Gauvain owes him a guerredon. He reappears sometime later and demands his reward:

Il le salue, si li quiert,
 Com cil qui a besoig le quiert,
 C'or li rende le gueredon,
 (ll. 4241-43)

He wants the hand of a girl he has loved for three years. This match is arranged by Gauvain.

In Glignois it is Gauvain who solicits a guerredon. He has fallen in love with Beauté and decides that the Queen can help him. He accordingly reminds her of his loyal service, and asks as a reward that she will support his suit:

"Dame, merchy je vous requier,
 Car aidiéz vostre chevalier
 Qui en maint lieu vous a servie,
 S'ay fait mainte cevalerie
 Pour vostre corps, bien le savés.
 Le guerredon huy m'en rendéz,
 Jel voüs requier, mestier en ay."
 (ll. 265-71)

It was doubtless the strength of Gauvain's passion which caused this lapse in courtly conduct. In this romance, Gauvain is not the courtly hero. The honour for perfect courtliness goes to Gliglois.

To thus demand a guerredon is unusual and seems uncourtly. Whereas the receiver of a gift has a moral obligation to return the gift at some future date, the benefactor is bound by a similar obligation not to treat his gift as the overture of a commercial transaction and expect the guerredon⁽²⁹⁾. More typical of the generous attitude of the courtly hero is Erec's gracious dismissal of the need for a guerredon. When he has saved Cadoc from two giants, Cadoc's lady is in despair over repayment. Erec replies he does not want a guerredon:

"Mes qui porroit guerredoner
 ceste desserte nes demie?"
 Erec respont: "Ma douce amie,
 nul guerredon ne vos demant;
 amedeus a Deu vos comant."
 (Erec et Enide: ll. 4530-34)

2. Payment for Services Rendered.

We have already studied the courtly attitude to receiving gifts, the numerous occasions when the courtly hero refused gifts and the reason he did so. We noted, too, that when the hero had rendered service to a foreign ruler he was invariably offered gifts. Some heroes refused these gifts, others accepted. The motive for refusing has been examined above. The motive for accepting is less clear. It was no dishonour for a courtly hero to accept gifts from a social superior. Another possible reason that may be advanced for some seeing no disgrace in accepting such gifts is that they considered them as "guerredon", that is as a deserved reward for the services

rendered to a foreign king or emperor. Such a thank-you gift lies outside the context of challenging-gifts between two potential rivals. The hero has already proved his worth and superiority by saving his host from whatever disaster threatened him. He does not sacrifice his prestige by accepting gifts as he departs. On the other hand, of course, some heroes thought differently (Gui de Warewic, Durmart, Florimont).

The term "guerredon" is often used to describe these gifts of gratitude. I propose now to study this category of gifts which could be considered payment for services rendered, whether or not they are classed as "guerredon".

a) Payment for Military Service.

In the Roman de la Violette, Gerart has been of great service to Duke Miles in his military campaign. After consulting his assembled court, the Duke rewards Gerart by offering him the position of senechal (ll. 3815-21). Gerart accepts this post of honour and power, carrying out his duties admirably. One notes that the reward does not comprise material gifts, as is more usual, but it bestows a position of responsibility which confers honour and which, presumably, gives our hero access to greater wealth.

In L'Escoufle, when Richard has successfully halted the pagan invasions, he departs from court. The King of Jerusalem sends him on his way with gifts whose value exceeded a thousand silver marks. He treats Richard and his men so generously that they take their leave with much sadness:

Li don que li rois li dona
 Valent plus de mil mars d'argent.
 Il n'a chevalier ne serjent,
 Cui li rois n'ait joiaus donés,
 Et si les a tant honerés
 K'il s'en departent emplorant.
 (ll. 1336-41)

The term "don" is used, but these are gifts of gratitude to the saviour, Richard. By such gifts, the king was honouring Richard.

Richard also accepts gifts, which include a wife, from the Emperor of Rome, whom he has helped (see my page 567).

It is not military prowess, but advice on strategy which earns Ille

rich gifts. The seneschal who has benefited from Ille's counsel gives him costly clothes, armour and a retinue of knights:

Li senescals l'oneure et aime
 Et tolt adieés segnor le claime.
 Molt par li va sovent entor,
 Si li va livré riche ator,
 Et armes a sa volenté
 E molt chevaliers a plenté
 Qui l'ont servi molt bonement.
 (Ille et Galeron: ll. 1654-60)

As with the preceding examples, the donor's attitude is one of warmth and gratitude. We discern a desire to please which differs greatly from those donors who seek to assert their authority and superiority.

When Prince Rysus and his army successfully conclude the first battle against the Hungarians they are offered a reward by King Philip: that Rysus and some others, including Florimont, should have a conversation with Romadanaple, the king's daughter. It is a strange reward, but was recognized as a great honour by Rysus who accepts gratefully:

Li princes respont: "Je l'otroi
 Et por mon signor et por moi.
 Sire, biaux est cist gueredons;
 Ne fait a ranfuser tez dons."
 (Florimont: ll. 7271-74)

Florimont distinguishes himself on the battlefield and^{is} largely responsible for the final victory. King Philip is at a loss how to reward the hero, since Florimont refuses all payment and all material gifts. Unable to have recourse to the usual thank-you gifts, Philip eventually offers him his daughter, a gift which Florimont, in love with the girl, joyfully accepts.

King Philip: "Ains ne prist de moi livreson.
 Or l'en wel rendre gueredon:
 De lui ferai et fil et oir;
 (ll. 11251-53)

The motive for the "gueredon" is similar in Cligès when King Arthur wishes to reward Alixandre for his prowess:

"Amis, dist il, molt vos vi hier
 Bel assaillir et bel desfandre:
 Le gueredon vos an doi randre.
 (ll. 1434-36)

The guerredon takes a more material form however. King Arthur gives the hero five hundred knights and a thousand men, and promises that, when peace comes, Alixandre will be made a king of Wales until he recovers the empire which was his just inheritance (ll. 1437-48). The appellation "Ami" indicates the king's attitude of affection, an attitude, we have noticed, which usually accompanies the presentation of "thank you gifts" or "guerredon".

Arthur's meticulous care in rewarding those who have served him well is established in the Brut. Having conquered the whole of France and established peace, he sets about rewarding his loyal soldiers. The older men he retires with a generous pension (ll. 1591-96). He compensates any losses incurred. All are rewarded according to merit:

A ses homes randi lor pertes
Et guerredona lor dessertes;
Son servise a chascun randi
Selonc ce qu'il avoit servi.
(ll. 1607-10)

In the case of Guillaume d'Angleterre, his reward is earned not by military service, but by peaceful service. Although a king, Guillaume has been working as a servant for several years. In recognition of his devotion, his merchant employer offers him the opportunity to enrich himself, a gift suited to the status of the giver. The merchant proposes to give Guillaume a capital which, if successful, he will increase. The merchant would then reclaim the original loan, leaving Guillaume with the profit. (Guillaume d'Angleterre: ll. 1960-76). Guillaume makes a great success in this uncourtly career.

In this instance we would not expect the use of the term "guerredon" which belongs to the language of the court, not to that of traders. The shrewdly devised gift of the merchant, who loses nothing by it, may suggest a satirical attitude on the part of the poet. This impression is confirmed in a later scene when the poet openly, but not unkindly, treats the merchants as figures of fun. He ridicules their mercenary attitude, and the lack of

courtly manners shown by their reaction to gifts.

The scene occurs when Guillaume has been restored to his throne. He does not forget the people who helped him when in poverty-stricken exile. The children's foster-parents and Guillaume's former employer, all merchants, are handsomely rewarded. The merchants are delighted with the costly furs and other rich robes because they will be able to sell them at a good price!

Tot maintenant lor fist doner
 Mantiax vairs et pelices grises,
 Qui a ses perces furent mises.
 Cil se tinrent a bien paié,
 Des reubes furent forment lié,
 Et disent que il les vendroient,
 Deniers et argent en prendroient.
 (ll. 3162-68)

The merchants remain indifferent to the courtly ritual of gift presentation. They are not interested in any ulterior motive, or social significance. That is the prerogative of the noble estate. For them it is the value, the market value, of the gifts that counts.

They then consider that they would never find buyers for such valuable goods and become reluctant to accept the gifts. An unusual motive for the refusal of gifts! Guillaume's queen solves the problem by buying the furs from them, and then giving them back as gifts. (See my page 480).

b) Gifts rewarding help to the hero.

As with Guillaume d'Angleterre, it is often at the end of the romance, when all has been successfully concluded that the courtly hero and his lady recall the various people who have helped them, and take measures to reward them. This reflects the courtly attitude which makes the hero reluctant to remain indebted to anyone.

Rewards of this kind, as with the gifts in response to military service, tend to be material presents, actual payment for services rendered. We see the difference between this and "guerredon" in the sense of counter-gift. Guerredon in the latter sense does not have a rigid aspect. It is not payment, but rather repayment, which occurs according to the dictates of circumstances. Guerredon in the sense of reward tends to be effected nearer in time to the

service rendered. There is no lapse of time until the benefactor is himself in need. Furthermore, with the exception of gifts of love (see section E), the *guerredon* in the sense of counter-gift proves most often to be a counter-service. It is thus far removed from a material reward or payment. It falls into the courtly pattern of reciprocity of kindnesses, material or not.

In L'Escoufle, when Aelis and Guillaume are finally married, the former remembers past kind deeds. She sends fine presents to the Countess of St. Gilles and her household. This lady had been her employer when Aelis was poor and in search of Guillaume:

Mais li presens fu bias^u et gens
 Qu'ele envoia sa bone^u dame
 A S. Gille: onques mais feme
 Ne fist i ausi bel et tel.
 El n'avoit laissié a l'ostel
 Damoisele qu'ele n'envoit
 Des plus /biaus/ joiaus qu'ele avoit,
 Par cierté et par ramembrance.
 (ll. 8348-55)

Similarly, in the Comte d'Anjou, those who helped the countess during her period of poverty are richly rewarded (ll. 6715-19).

So great is the courtly hero's aversion to any sense of obligation that often the most modest of services is lavishly recompensed. When Gui de Warewic's host tells him about a local tournament, Gui gives him a horse:

A l'hoste un palefrei ad doné
 Pur la novele qu'il li ad cunté.
 (Gui de Warewic: ll. 789-90)

Floire also responds generously to any useful information. Throughout his search for Blancheflor, he rewards those who help him to trace her. To one hostess he gives a golden goblet (ll. 1122-29, Floire et Blancheflor). To the sailor who brings him to Babylon where he is confident of finding Blancheflor, he gives twenty gold marks and twenty silver marks. His joy at the prospective reunion makes him particularly generous:

Floire li done volentiers:
 Vint mars d'or fin et vint d'argent
 Li fet donner moult lieement,
 Qu'avis li fut qu'en paradis
 L'eüst mis, quant iert ou país
 U s'amie cuide trouver
 Que il quiert par terre et par mer.
 (ll. 1217-23)

c) Reward for Hospitality.

The numerous missions and adventures recounted in the courtly works led the heroes far afield. While away, they were dependent on the hospitality of strangers. The generosity of the hosts is an important trait in these works⁽³⁰⁾. Belonging to no particular social estate, ranging from emperor to peasant, the hosts had in common their joy at receiving the courtly hero, whether he was richly attired and accompanied by an impressive retinue, or whether he was alone and poverty-stricken. In addition to lodging the courtly hero, they often supplied clothes and arms to enable him to continue his way⁽³¹⁾.

Secondary characters in the romances, the hosts nevertheless share the courtly virtue of generosity, a generosity apparently unmotivated. It goes without saying, however, that they were in their turn rewarded by the courtly hero, immediately, if the knight errant was able to, or at a later date when he had regained his wealth and position.

The relationship between the courtly hero and his host appears to be one of mutual dependence. The hero needs the services the host offers. There is no question of refusing his gifts, especially when the hero is in financial distress. The host, on the other hand, rarely demands payment for his hospitality. He depends on the generosity of his guest. One notes that the hosts are usually described as anxious to serve and as offering shelter with genuine joy, apparently indifferent to any reward.

Floire is a generous guest. His search for Blancheflor is long and he often has to depend on willing hosts. To one he gives a hundred "sous" (Floire et Blancheflor: ll. 1364-65). At his next lodging, he is exceptionally well-treated. The poet describes in detail the sumptuous fare presented to Floire (ll. 1455-75). In addition this host, Daire, has valuable advice for Floire with regard to his quest. Floire promises him a rich reward, hoping that he will have the opportunity to recompense him more adequately:

"A Damedieu pri qu'il me lest,
 Biau sire, a vos gerredonner
 Et l'ostage et le biau parler."
 (ll. 1474-76)

The Roman de la Violette stresses not the rich fare, but the joy shown by the host. The chatelain derives more pleasure from the chance to serve Lisiart than if he had received two hundred pounds.

Quant li castelains l'ot,
 Pour deus cens livres a son lot
 Ne fust il pas si liés, je quit.
 (ll. 350-52)

Erec and Enide encounter various hosts while on their adventures. To the squire who gives them food, Erec presents a horse as a reward. He asks the squire to find them lodgings for the night (Erec et Enide: ll. 3173-80). The squire finds a suitable host who is pleased to welcome the couple. He makes no mention of payment, but Erec recognizes his merit and rewards him accordingly. The host is overwhelmed by the gift of seven fine horses, and humbly thanks Erec:

"Sire, de mon despans
 n'avez ancores rien conté.
 Enor m'avez faite et bonté,
 et molt i afiert grant merite;
 por set destriers me clamez quite:
 de plus ne vos puis mon don croistre
 nes de la monte d'un chevoistre."
 De ce don fu li borjois liez,
 si l'an anclina jusqu'as piez;
 granz merciz et grasces l'an rant.
 (ll. 3498-3507)

Knights also need lodgings when attending distant tournaments. On these occasions the hosts often receive the prizes of the tournaments in lieu of payment. In Gilles de Chyn, Gilles and his men distribute all their gains to their hosts:

Tout lor gaaing departi ont,
 A lor osteus puis si s'en vont.
 (ll. 1258-59)

Even when the hosts are very poor, they readily receive their courtly guests. The daughter of the Count of Anjou stays with a poor peasant woman. The poet describes at length the rich food and wine to which the countess

is accustomed, and then, in contrast, names the simple fare offered by the peasant woman: black bread and water. The latter diet is nevertheless appreciated and the countess gives a florin, partly as payment, partly to secure the woman's discretion (Le Comte d'Anjou: ll. 1180-84). The woman is overjoyed. To one as poor as she, a florin represents a fortune:

Lez mercie de leur bonté
Et dist qu'or a le mont monté,
Quer en richesse est en joie.
(ll. 1189-91)

In L'Escoufle, we meet another poor hostess, Isabelle. At first she and her mother are unwilling to receive Aelis, on account of their poverty:

"Mal croi que feme de vostre estre
D'aignast en si povre ostel estre
Conme est li ma mere et li miens."
(ll. 4923-25)

Isabelle urges her to seek lodgings where she will be treated according to her station (ll. 4926-39). Isabelle then confesses that she has no food to offer. Aelis provides the necessary money for their food. The poet comments that she gives without limiting the cost:

S'auomosniere: . adois/e/ et atouche,
S'en trait deniers qu'ele li baille
Por acater de la vitaille.
Assés l'en a baillié sans conte,
Ensi com li livres nos conte.
(ll. 5042-46)

Aelis is fleeing from home and is not rich at the time. However she gives her mule to Isabelle's mother, and promises future rewards. Isabelle leaves home with Aelis, and receives clothes from her.

Like the courtly heroes, the ladies are anxious not to be indebted to anyone. Aelis, about to enter the service of the Countess of St. Gilles, pays her former hostess, the lady of Montpellier, and ensures that she has left no debts unsettled:

Els ont bien paié lor escos
Par le castel et lor despense.
La demoiselle se pourpense
S'ele doit mais rien a nului:
Mout harroit qu'ele eüst anui
De rien qu'ele eüst acrell.
(ll. 6048-53)

Guillaume, whom Aelis is searching for, is equally generous to his hosts, although he is very poor. To one townsman he gives his rich apparel in return for his hospitality:

Il despoille sa robe et oste
 Dont li samis estoit tos frois;
 Si la fait doner au borjois
 En guerredon de son service.
 (ll. 360-63)

There are also generous hosts at the other end of the social scale. Guillaume's father, Count Richard, is a guest of the Emperor of Rome, who refuses to allow him to seek lodgings in the town. The Emperor was very anxious to entertain Richard and would not have denied himself the pleasure for five hundred marks:

Il fait les gens as ostex prendre,
 Car por V^c mars a despendre,
 Ne vousist il que li preudom
 Mist ostel, se le sien non.
 (L'Escoufle: ll. 1377-80)

The hospitality offered by the emperor defeats the powers of description of the poet who claims that the occasion was the most lavish since Merlin's day:

Ne m'en blasmez pas se jo lais
 A raconter la grant richece
 Et la plenté et la largece
 Des viandes et des bons vins,
 K'ainc, puis que li sages Mellins
 Fu mors, nus hom tant n'en dona.
 (ll. 1430-35)

Richard did not let such generosity pass unrewarded. He cannot, however, present gifts to the Emperor. He thanks him by rendering him a valuable service. (See my page 483).

Another rich hostess was Dido in the Roman d'Eneas. She is particularly generous and anxious to serve Aeneas as best she can, indefinitely if he so wishes.

"Se sejourner vult Eneas
 et demorer ci al trespas,
 ja mar i despendra denier
 por rien nule dont ait mestier;
 tot le ferai del mien servir
 et molt li donrai al partir,
 plus li ferai que ne vos di."
 (ll. 621-27)

Eneas reciprocates her generosity with gifts of robes. This is more in the nature of a counter-gift to another courtly personage, rather than payment for services rendered:

treis guarnemenz que il aveit;
 porpensa sei qu'il les donreit
 a la reïne de Cartage,
 ki molt li faiseit bel ostage.
 (ll. 735-38)

Thus the gift of hospitality, so readily and joyfully offered by the hosts, appeared necessary to the courtly heroes and gratefully accepted. It never went unrewarded. As we have remarked, the reward given by the hero often far exceeded in value the expenses incurred by his stay. Calculation of expenses is repugnant to the courtly hero, who gives lavishly and without counting. His gifts thus transcend the mundane payment for services rendered, and become instead, by their lavishness, a further manifestation of courtly liberality. We remember, however, that such liberality was necessitated by circumstances. Accepting hospitality put the hero under an obligation, which he was anxious to cancel by his rich presents.

3. Reward in Anticipation of Service.

"Guerredon" in the truly courtly sense should follow a gift or service. The term is also to be found in the romances in the sense of a reward offered in anticipation of a service. Thus, in certain circumstances, it is used to mean bribery, when the end desired is evil or at least uncourtly.

This is not the case in Gui de Warewic. Gui offers a reward in return for information. The senechal has killed Gui's lion. Gui offers a reward to anyone who will reveal the name of the killer. The reward will consist of Gui's loyalty, a thousand gold besants, fifteen coats of mail and fifteen war-horses:

"Mult l'en durreie grant gueredun!
 Sis hom liges devendreie
 E mil besanz d'or l'en dorreie
 E quinze halbercs et quinze destrriers,
 De tut le regne les plus chers."
 (ll. 4389-92)

In Guillaume de Palerne, the emperor offers reward money for the capture of the two lovers, Guillaume and Melior, who are disguised as bears!

Cil qui ces ors lor porra prendre
 Tel gueredon em puet attendre,
 Jamais n'iert povres en sa vie."
 (ll. 3811-13)

In a parallel situation in L'Escoufle, the term "guerredon" is not used. The emperor lists the rewards he will give for the capture of Guillaume and Aelis who have fled his court. He offers land, castles, manors and cities (ll. 4184-89).

In Beroul's Tristan, the hero has a price on his head. Ogrin informs the lovers, who have escaped from court, that King Mark has offered a hundred marks for their capture, dead or alive. The king's barons had accepted the challenge and were hunting Tristan. Ogrin speaks as follows:

"Sire Tristran, grant soirement
 A l'en juré par Cornoualle:
 Qui vous rendroit au roi, sans falle
 Cent mars avroit a gerredon.
 En ceste terre n'a baron
 Au roi ne l'ait plevi en main,
 Vos rendre a lui o mort ou sain."
 (ll. 1370-76)

In these cases "guerredon" is not used in a courtly sense. The reward is being offered to prevent "courtly love", and is promised by angry fathers and an angry husband. We are far from the concept of the counter-gift or counter-service which formed an essential part of courtly behaviour. Here "guerredon" is devalued to the level of money offered as bait to anyone willing to undertake a service. The terminology is similar, but the attitude of those offering the guerredon is very different.

4. Guerredon as Just Desserts or Punishment.

"Guerredon" sometimes has an abstract connotation, meaning just desserts in the sense of punishment. In Joufroi the hero defends the queen who has been slandered by a senechal. In the armed combat the wicked senechal is beheaded. The poet approves of this punishment and wishes a similar fate

or "guerredon" on all slanderers:

Tuit cil qui ont cuer d'encuser,
 Les dames mal metre as maris,
 Et les amies as amis,
 Sin aient itel glerdon
 Cum li senescaus, et tel don!
 (ll. 576-80)

When Etioclès plots an ambush which kills forty-nine of his brother's troops, the sole survivor, Thidëus sends a message forecasting punishment for his evil deeds as follows:

"Tu as fete tel traïson
 dont tu avras tel guerredon
 que tu seras desheritez
 et hors de cest regne gitez."
 (Thèbes: ll. 1887-90)

The Count of St. Gilles speaks in similar language when addressing his aunt who had caused misery by her malevolent machinations:

"Je vous feré u feu bouter,
 Ja si preeschier ne saréz,
 Si que droit guerredon aréz
 Desoevres que vous avéz fectes.....
 (Le Comte d'Anjou: ll. 7838-41)

In other instances when "guerredon" signifies a punishment it is qualified by "mal" as we see in Protheselaus. The hero thus threatens his female jailer:

"Vus en avrez mal guer/e/don."
 (line 6892)

His friend Melander issues a similar warning to Pentalis who has disinherited Protheselaus:

"Par mal vus ert guer/e/doné."
 (line 8081)

In Gui de Warewic, "mal gueredun" has a more literal translation. It means a poor reward. When Herault is believed killed during an ambush, Gui blames himself, since he had not saved him from his aggressor⁽³²⁾:

"Par vus ai eu mult grant honur,
 Rendu vus ai mal gueredun,....."
 (ll. 1434-35)

"Guerredon" is later used with apparently ironical intent. When Gui

discovers that the senechal caused the death of his lion, he kills him.

Gui comments that he had returned the senechal's service:

"Mais rendu li ai le gueredun,
En une chambre gist detrenché,
Sun servise lui ai guerdonné."
(ll. 4440-42)

E. Gifts of Love.

1. Courtly Largesse differs from Giving for Love.

One of the main characteristics of the gifts given by courtly heroes, particularly when wishing to impress, is their great value and their number. In his dealings, the courtly person is always on the defensive. At every available opportunity he seeks to prove his worth by disposing of his wealth ostentatiously. He thereby establishes his financial superiority, and confirms his social superiority, both of which are linked with his moral superiority, his courtliness. Largesse was, as we have seen, indispensable to the courtly knight.

In the sphere of gifts given for love, the attitude of the courtly hero changes. Absent is the spirit of competition, the attitude of pride and of superiority. Absent, too, is the extravagance, the noble expenditure. In his relationship with his lady, the courtly hero becomes humble, his most sacred wish is to serve her. Gifts between lovers are not intended to provoke admiration. They are of a more modest, and more intimate nature. Often their value is minimal⁽³³⁾, and when this is not the case their value is neglected in favour of their symbolic significance. The lover cherishes gifts from his lady not for their material worth, but as a sign of her love. He gives presents in exchange, not from fear of remaining under an obligation, but because he wishes to demonstrate his affection for her.

In Durmart we see the exchange of small gifts as one of the rituals between lovers. The hero exchanges gifts with his mistress, the wife of the senechal:

L'uns change a l'autre de juiaz,
 Mout lor semble lor desduiz biaz.
 (Durmart: ll. 327-28)

Later Durmart falls in love with the mysterious queen of Ireland whom he has never seen. He confesses his love to a young damsel he meets. She asks whether he has had any messages and gifts from his lady?

"Ore, beaz sire damoisealz,
 Avez vos eus ses juealz,
 Ses salus, ne ses messagers?"
 (ll. 1975-77)

Durmart admits that he had not received such signs of love from the queen. The girl manifests surprise, judging his unrequited love to be proud, but true (ll. 1981-84).

2. Nature of Love Gifts.

a) Proceeds of knightly valour.

The gifts of the courtly lover to his lady are often the proceeds of his knightly valour. He thus proves that he is performing courageous deeds to earn her love, that he is worthy of her love, and that while away from her, his feelings remain constant. The lady's love serves as an inspiration for the knight's prowess.

The adventure of the sparrowhawk in Erec et Enide is a typical example. It was a contest for knights who wanted to win the prize, the sparrowhawk, for their ladies. In daring to claim the sparrowhawk a knight was maintaining the superiority of his lady. He then upheld his claim in armed combat. (ll. 570-78).

In Durmart, the victors at a tournament offered prisoners and horses to their ladies.

Les dames ont maint prisonier,
 Et si ont maint riche destrier;
 Car qui cheval i gaaignoit
 U qui chevalier i prendoit
 As dames en faisoit present
 Et as puceles ensement.
 (ll. 7651-56)

Partonopeus in Thèbes sends a captured horse with its harness to

Antigone, thus informing her that he is performing deeds of valour for her sake:

"Amis", dist-il, "alez me tost
As puceles qui sont en l'ost,
O le frain et o la sele
Le presentez a la pucele
qui a la pourpre ynde vestue
tout senglement a sa char nue.
Par ces enseingnes mant m'amie
Pour lui ai fet chevalerie."
(ll. 4591-98)

By accepting the gift, Antigone accepts his love. She promises a "guerredon", that is her love in return for the gift:

Cele respont: "Seue merci,
Sache bien que por icest don
l'en cuit rendre grant guerredon.
Ce sache bien sanz nule doute
que il a moi et m'amor toute."
(ll. 4616-20)

When Amadas is separated from Ydoine, he regularly sends her presents while on his round of tournaments:

Aniaus, çaintures, guimples, mances
De cainsil ridees et blances.
(Amadas et Ydoine: ll. 1467-8)

b) Gifts from ladies.

In the matter of love, the courtly hero's pride and sense of rank disappear when he is offered gifts by the lady he loves. Any token of her love is gratefully and joyfully received.

The gifts presented by courtly ladies to their lovers are usually small and of little material value. It is their symbolic nature which, in the eyes of the courtly lover, confers upon them an incalculable value.

At tournaments, the knight would declare himself the champion of a lady by carrying her sleeve or wimple. By the offering of such a token gift, the lady was publicly affirming her love for the knight. The knight thus honoured was inspired by this tangible proof of love to perform deeds of chivalry to the utmost of his ability.

The knights who participated in the tournament at Tenebroc (Erec et

Enide) sported these tokens of love as they fought for their reputation and their ladies' esteem:

La ot tante vermeille ansaigne,
 et tante guimple et tante manche,
 et tante bloe, et tante blanche,
 qui par amors furent donees,
 (ll. 2084-87)

The description of the setting of the tournament at Blanches Mores in Durmart resembles that in Erec et Enide. The knights wore the same tokens of love⁽³⁴⁾. This poet comments that a knight thus honoured by his lady should excel in the art of chivalry:

Deus! tant/e/ guimple et tante mance
 Et tante bele conissance
 Qui fu donee par amors
 Veñssiés porter les plusors.
 Bien doit faire chevalerie
 Qui porte jüel de s'amie.
 (Durmart: ll. 6827-32)

In tournaments, therefore, we often see our courtly hero proudly displaying the sleeve of his lady. When Tristan takes part, incognito, in a tournament, he attaches to his lance such an ensign which has been given to him by Iseult⁽³⁵⁾:

A sa lance ot l'enseignemise
 Que la bele li ot tramise.
 (Beroul's Tristan: ll. 4003-4)

Iseult recognizes her gift and rejoices in this confirmation of Tristan's love for her⁽³⁶⁾,

In the romances it is sometimes the lady who first offers love-gifts. The courtly hero has made his verbal declaration of love and the lady's gifts tell him in a subtle way that his love is accepted and reciprocated. In Gilles de Chyn, it is the countess who takes the initiative in declaring her love to Gilles. She has been his hostess, and when Gilles leaves, the countess sends a maid to Gilles with presents of a belt and a sleeve. By this subtle tactic she makes him her champion and her courtly lover:

Lor palefrois ont demandé,
 Congiét ont pris, puis sont monté.

Gilles a daarrains monta;
 La contesse li envoia,
 Par une suie damoisele
 U se fioit, qui mout ert bele,
 Cōlement par acointaunce,
 Une chainture et une mance.
 (ll. 603-10)

By accepting the gifts, Gilles accepts her love. While he is away, they exchange gifts: the countess sends him rich arms, Gilles sends captured horses to her.

For Alixandre, the first sign that his love for Soredamors is reciprocated is when she made a shirt for him and sewed into the embroidery a strand of her golden hair. (Cligès: ll. 1587-99). Soredamor's reluctance to declare her love openly resembles that of Queen Fenise in Durmart. The queen loves Durmart, and the hero himself professes to love her although he has never knowingly met her. The queen wishes to translate her love into symbolic gifts, and yet she will not openly admit her love to Durmart, nor does she want her feelings to be known by anyone else. She compromises by sending gifts not only to Durmart, but also to all his knights. The poet explains her gesture:

Car s'ele al Galois solement
 Eüst fait des joiaz present,
 Ele dotast que li plusor
 N'aparceüssent lor amor.
 (Durmart: ll. 12667-70)

In Joufroi, it is an anonymous lady who sends love-tokens to the hero. Her messenger tells Joufroi that the gifts signify that the lady considers herself his "amie":

"Ainz vos aime, si vos envoie
 De ses joiaus une partie,
 Et dit que ele est vostre amie."
 (ll. 2230-32)

The gifts are of great value:

Tot plains l'escrin de joiaus trove.
 De verges d'or et de centures,
 De joiaus et de fermatures,
 Qui molt estoient buen et chier.
 Bien vos puis por voir afichier
 Que plus de mil livres valoient
 Li joël qu'en l'escrin estoient.
 (ll. 2252-58)

Joufroi's reaction concords well with his nature of liberal courtly hero, and also with his role of dedicated courtly lover. He accepts the gifts, but distributes them amongst the knights at court. He retains for himself a single ring, showing thus that he acknowledges and accepts the lady's love:

Et li buens cuens i met les mains,
 Qui ne fu escars ne vilains:
 Assez an done as chevaliers,
 Quar molt li seoit cist mestiers,
 C'onques chevaliers n'en i ot
 De toz cels que en la cort sot,
 Qui non aüst riche joel.
 Solement un petit anel
 En retint li cuens a sa part;
 Trestoz les autres lor depart.
 (ll. 2159-68)

Joufroi's casual acceptance of a mysterious love indicates another aspect of the giving of love-gifts. On the one hand such gifts are the manifestation of a genuine love between two people who, in these romances, are usually aiming at marriage. On the other hand these gifts were part of the conventional ritual of courtly love, where the lady deigns to acknowledge the court paid to her by her humble lover. The latter aspect is well-illustrated in Athis et Prophilias. Cardiones and Gaite have both contracted marriages based on love. When they attract the amorous attentions of two young knights, they at first decline to respond to these advances. Later, however, Cardiones decides that there is no harm in encouraging them. She reproaches Gaite for not giving a love-token to her admirer (ll. 11235-40). Gaite is still unconvinced, but seeing that the ardour of the knight, Pirithöus, is not diminished by her aloofness, she receives his profession of love in a more gracious manner. She tells Pirithöus that she will give him love-tokens, and accordingly presents him with a ring. She expresses her love for him. She is, however, careful to make clear that she has no intention of betraying her husband, Athis, nor will she compromise her honour. Her love for Pirithöus comes second to that which she reserves for her-legal husband:

"Mes mes avoires et mes jöeus,
 Mes ceintures et mes aneus
 Et quanque vos porrai doner,

Senz mon seignor desenorer,
 Vos otroi je mout bonement,
 Et s'en tenez comencement
 Cest anel d'or, si vueil mout bien
 Que vostre cuers penst vers le mien,
 Car plus vos aim que nul qu'en voie,
 De cui baillie je ne soie."

(ll. 14793-14802)

c) The Giving or Exchange of Rings.

In courtly literature, the ring was the most usual gift between lovers. The ring symbolised the acceptance of love together with an oath of fidelity. Its significance in courtly terms differs from its modern meaning now that the ring has lost much of its symbolic significance. The convention of the exchange of rings now seals an official union, betrothal, then marriage. In courtly society it also might seal a union, but often it had little to do with marriage, with the lady already married. The ring was then the only external sign of a love pact which was, of necessity, secret. The convention developed in Provençal love lyrics⁽³⁷⁾. In the courtly romances I am studying we occasionally see the exchange of rings between lovers who know they will never be wed. In the majority of cases, however, the hero and heroine of the romances wished to be married. The exchange of rings constituted a preliminary stage in their relationship. It followed a mutual declaration of love and confirmed their intention to become man and wife, when various obstacles had been surmounted. Often the ring symbolised an attachment which was temporarily secret, while waiting to be sanctioned by society.

Let us first consider the exchange of rings between lovers who do not or cannot entertain the hope of marriage. The ring thus figures in the exchange of love-tokens between Tristan and Yseult. They are about to part. Yseult is to rejoin her lawful husband, King Mark. She is not however renouncing her love for Tristan. Tristan suggests that they exchange love-tokens:

"Qant ce vendra au departir,
 Ge vos dorrai ma drüerie,
 Vos moi la vostre, bele amie."
 (Beroul's Tristan: ll. 2686-89)

Yseult asks Tristan to give her his hunting dog, Husdent, to be a constant reminder. In return, she asks Tristan to wear her ring as a sign of his love for her:

"Amis, Tristran, j'ai un anel,
Un jaspe vert ~~ou~~ un seel,
Beau sire, por l'amor de moi,
Portez l'anel en vostre doi."
(ll. 2707-70)

The ring also has a practical use. Tristan is to use it as a seal for his letters to Yseult, so that she may be sure of their provenance.

The symbolic exchange is effected, and Tristan thus promises fidelity to his lady.

"Husdent vos doins par druerie.
- Sire, c'est la vostre merci,
Qant du brachat m'avez seisi,
Tenez l'anel de gerredon."
De son doi l'oste, met u son.
Tristran en bese la roïne
E ele lui, par la saisine."
(ll. 2726-32)

In this scene, we encounter the vocabulary peculiar to courtly love. The exchange of gifts follows the pattern of "don" and "guerredon". The love-token is the "druerie". The final kiss concludes the pact whereby Tristan becomes Yseult's liegeman, vowed to her service. The feudal term "saisine" which means the right of possession in the matter of land, is adapted in the code of fin amors to mean the supremacy of the lady over her courtly lover who is her vassal⁽³⁸⁾.

In the short work Le Lai de l'Ombre, the knight begs his sweetheart to retain him, in the feudal sense, by giving him a small gift, such as an article of jewelry, a belt or a ring. He begs her to receive a gift from him, since he commits himself entirely to her service, even if he loses his life:

"Mes fetes cortoisie et bien:
Retenés moi par un joiël,
Ou par çainture ou par anel,
Ou vous recevés un des miens.
Et je vous creant qu'il n'ert riens

Que chevaliers face por dame,
 Se j'en devoie perdre l'ame,
 Si m'aït Diex, que je ne face."
 (ll. 514-21)

The lady will promise nothing at first. The knight offers his ring to her reflection in a well. Won over by his persistence, she reciprocates by giving him her ring in exchange (ll. 933-39).

Gilles de Chyn and the Countess also exchange rings as they are about to part. Gilles refers to them as signs of their love. The ring will help him to endure all ills because of the love it represents:

"Enseignez sont de nostre amour
 Par cele foi que je vous doi
 Ne mandez, se l'anel voi,
 Nule coze que je ne face,
 Cui qu'il soit lait ne cui qu'il place."
 (Gilles de Chyn: ll. 1213-17)

We do not know whether Gilles de Chyn intends to marry the countess or indeed whether she is free to marry. In any event she dies while Gilles is away. However there is a striking difference between the traditional gift of a ring from the lady of the Provençal love lyric and the scene between Gilles and his lady. Here the lady would not appear to be the superior, revered from afar. She and Gilles seem to be on an equal footing. One notes also that it is Gilles who takes the initiative and first presents the ring. Absent too is the feudal vocabulary which was used in Tristan in the "fin' amors" tradition.

In the Lais of Marie de France, the exchange of rings is often effected between lovers. — Equitan and his mistress exchange rings and the "saisine" here appears reciprocal:

Par lur anels s'entresaisirent,
 Lur fiaunces s'entreplevirent,
 (Equitan: ll. 181-2)

In Chaitivel, the lady has four would-be lovers. Unable to choose between them, she gives love-tokens, a ring or a sleeve or a standard, to all of them:

Tuit la teneient pur amie,
 Tuit portouent sa druërie,

Anel u mance u gumfanun,
 E chescuns escriot sun nun.
 (ll. 67-70)

Although in love with Guillfadun, Eliduc cannot honourably declare his love, being already married. Guillfadun's chamberlain advises his despairing mistress to test Eliduc's love by sending him gifts, a belt or ring (Eliduc: ll. 355-61). Eliduc accepts the gifts, but still remains silent. Finally Guillfadun takes the initiative and confesses her love. Eliduc responds, but is soon forced to leave. Before his departure the lovers exchange rings:

Lur anels d'or s'entrenchangierent .
 (line 701)

This is a love-affair which, unpredictably, ends in a marriage. Eliduc's wife recognizing the strength of their love, graciously abdicates as his wife.

In Amadas et Ydoine, the proud heroine, Ydoine, intends to marry Amadas, but only when he has established his reputation for chivalry. In the meantime Ydoine adopts the role of the haughty lady of "fin' amors" who demands devoted service from her humble knight-vassal. Accordingly, on his departure, she gives him a ring by which she effects a "saisine":

"Amis,
 Par cest anel d'or vous saisis
 De m'amour tous jors loiaument."
 (ll. 1263-65)

Amadas gives her a ring in exchange.

Lyriopé also gives Floris a ring when he has to leave court. Her motive is not the same as Ydoine's. Although his social superior, she is prompted by love alone. There is no hint of the pride of the revered lady of "fin' amors".

"en remembrance
 De moi et per reconnoissance
 D'amors, cest mien anel avroiz."
 (Floris et Lyriopé: ll. 1146-48)

Romadanaple's reason for giving Florimont a ring is different again. They have already declared their mutual love, but there are still obstacles

to their marriage. Romadanaple's gift of a ring symbolises her love, but is also intended as an incentive to Florimont to distinguish himself in the forthcoming battle:

"Se li dois tel juël doner
Per coi il ait le cuer plus fier
Por ses anemins damagier."
(Florimont: ll. 9826-28)

In L'Escoufle, Aelis and Guillaume intend to marry, but encounter great opposition from family and society. Their love is nevertheless sealed by an exchange. Aelis gives Guillaume a ring. The symbolic significance is explicit: with it she gives her person and her love. Aelis, comments the poet, is bestowing great honour upon Guillaume. She has chosen him against parental wishes, and, as an emperor's daughter, she could aspire to suitors of higher rank than Guillaume, who is the son of a count.

"Par cest anel qui mout est gens
vos doins je mon cors et m'amor."
Ainc mais fille d'empereor
Ne fist si biau don ne si riche."
(ll. 4488-91)

Although there is no question of Aelis making Guillaume her liegeman in the service of love, he nevertheless betrays an attitude of humility. He humbly acknowledges that never has such a gracious gift been given to one such as he. He, in return, offers Aelis himself and his heart:

"Dame," fait il, "je vos en rent
Moi et mon cuer en guerredon,
L'ainc mais feme ne fist tel don
A nul hom de mon afaire."
(ll. 4498-4501)

As for the ring, Guillaume is overwhelmed not by its value, but by the love which it symbolises:

Plus li plait l'amors que li ors
Et que l'aumosniere ne fait."
(ll. 4506-07)

We note that Guillaume does not give Aelis a ring. His counter-gift, the "guerredon", is his love. The theme of don and guerredon is often treated with this abstract significance.

3. "Don" and "Guerredon" in relation to Love.

In the courtly works, love is given as a gift and returned as a counter-gift. This concept figures prominently in love lyrics where the courtly lover humbly offers his love in the hope that his lady will deign to render the "guerredon" of her love⁽³⁹⁾. In the courtly romances the procedure is not so stereotyped. Either the man or the woman may take the first step and be rewarded by the symbolic "guerredon".

There is an example of the traditional pattern in Eracle. Paridès loves the Empress, who is married. Such is the difference in their social position that he despairs of ever having his love returned:

"En si haut leu s'est adonez (his heart)
Que ja nen iert gueredonez,
Car qui n'a soing de povre don
Ne rent merci ne gueredon."
(Eracle: ll. 3768-71)

His fidelity is nevertheless rewarded, but their love is no secret, and is eventually officially sanctioned by the emperor.

The "guerredon" of love is referred to by Marote, a friend of Gerart in le Roman de la Violette. Again it is associated with the service of love celebrated by the troubadours:

"mais li amans, li de boin aire,
Velt adies miels et miex servir,
Par coi il puisse deservir
Le guerredon c'amors puet rendre."
(ll. 2401-04)

When Guinglains is reunited with the Pucele aux Blanches Mains for whom he has been pining, the gift of her love is referred to as the guerredon for all his suffering.

De tos les mals et le contraire
C'Amors a fait a Guinglain traire
Iluec le gerredon li rent.
(Le Bel Inconnu: ll. 4825-27)

The poet makes a comment on women in general: when they are loved, they have such influence that, when their love is accorded in return, it erases all memory of suffering in their faithful knights:

Que dames ont tel signorie
 Que, quant veulent gerredonner,
 Si font le travail oublier
 Que il avra lonc tans eü.
 (ll. 4838-41)

Durmart states the necessity for some degree of suffering before the lover may aspire to the "guerredon" of love from his lady. The hero is love-sick for Queen Fenise and temporarily disheartened. He soon returns to action, however, since he knows that "Faint heart never won fair lady" -

Coars cuers n'oze deservir
 Ce qu'amors puet guerredoner.
 (Durmart: ll. 8838-39)

The hero is able to render valuable military service to Queen Fenise and eventually meet the object of his love, whom he has known for some time without realizing it. The queen offers him a reward:

"Je le vos doi mout bien merir,
 Car qui bel service oze prendre
 Bien en doit bel guerredon rendre."
 (ll. 14782-84)

When consulted about his wishes, Durmart does not seek a material gift, but the gift of the Queen's love. Durmart explains that he is in the power of "Fine amors" and can request only the love of Queen Fenise (ll. 14812-21). We have in this instance a curious reversal of the "don", "guerredon" pattern. The queen has offered a "guerredon" in return for his loyalty and military service. Durmart solicits not the "guerredon" of love in the Provençal sense, but the gift ("don") of love. Yet the situation is analogous with that of the troubadour and his lady, since Durmart now humbly begs that his lady should accord her love. He even claims that he is the servant of "fine amors". The essential difference lies in the fact that Durmart understands that the love he is seeking should be that of man and wife. The queen realises that he is making a marriage proposal and grants his request.

There is an amused reaction to Durmart's wish. It was made in public, and Arthur's knights tease Durmart good-naturedly about this unusual payment

for military service rendered:

"Par mon chief, fait mesire Yvains,
 Cis sohais n'est mie vilains."
 Li plusor r'ient de ces mos.
 "Dex", fait mesire Lancelos,
 Com est li Galois bien paiés!
 Ains mais sodoiers, ce sachiés,
 Ne rec'ût si beles sodees
 Cum al Galois sunt hui donees."
 (ll. 14893-14900)

F. Charity

Before leaving the gift theme, I propose to study the manifestations of charity, in the Christian sense, which occasionally figure in the romances. Courtly and Christian ethics differed and even conflicted on many points. Yet the dichotomy between the didactic and courtly works is not always clear-cut. In many instances, we see evidence of a symbiosis, which allows the co-existence of courtly and Christian principles, particularly in the courtly works. The courtly ideology glorifies interested largesse, the possession of wealth and sometimes adultery, as opposed to the charity, poverty and chastity preached by the Church. Yet the courtly works are by no means unchristian. Religion plays a minor role in most of the courtly works, a major role in certain of them, such as Eracle, Guillaume d'Angleterre and Richard le Beau. The courtly poet often indiscriminately mixes courtly ideas with Christian ones, oblivious of any contradictions.

As regards the gift theme, the offering of gifts for personal prestige is important, but does not prevent the courtly hero also giving for God.

1. Courtly-religious Works.

The works which have an obvious religious bias differ within themselves as to the degree of their Christian aspects. Very occasionally is the saintly state of poverty permanently embraced by the hero.

a) Charity and Temporary Poverty.

Guillaume d'Angleterre is a work more influenced by Christian than courtly principles. Guillaume is not liberal, but charitable:

Li rois fu plains de carité;
(line 27)

He and his queen give away all their wealth:

Por Dieu le done tot et livre.
(line 186)

This differs from courtly largesse where the donor gives generously, but remains rich. On the occasions when the courtly hero gives so generously that he finds himself with nothing, he provokes the censure of family, friends and courtly society⁽⁴⁰⁾. Poverty is a dishonourable state in the romances and is usually a passing condition. Indeed Guillaume d'Angleterre becomes rich again at the end of the work, although he continues to be charitable. His period of poverty becomes the equivalent of a knightly adventure from which the hero emerges triumphant. Having patiently suffered for many years, he is allowed to recover his wealth. The moral to be drawn from this conclusion may be a Christian one, but it is not an anti-wealth one. Poverty is not glorified and is not regarded as a saintly condition. Guillaume is able, without censure, to alleviate his poverty by working as a merchant. The moral would appear to be rather that one should deserve one's riches. A privileged social position should not be taken for granted, but should be earned, by effort or suffering. The divine vision which prompts Guillaume's voluntary poverty, plays in this work the same role attributed to Fortune in others.

Richard le Beau makes gifts in a courtly manner, but significant mention is made of the truly poor. He gives military equipment to poor soldiers, clothes to those in rags:

As povres sodoiiers redonne
As uns tyres, pailles, cendaus,
As autres destriers et chevaus,
Les povres desviestis reviest,
Donne cascun selonc qu'il est,
Les povres en oubli n'a mis.
(Richard le Beau: ll. 1646-51)

Richard, however, is too generous for he soon becomes poor himself:

Tout a donné quanqu'as mains tint,
 Pour lui nulle riens ne retint.
 (ll. 1659-60)

The poet disapproves of his generosity, which has turned to prodigality. He considers that Richard gave more than was necessary and so brought misery upon himself:

Plus donne qu'il ne fut ^smestiers
 Car puis en ot mainte ^asoufraite.
 (ll. 4196-7)

Nor does Richard find solace in his poverty. His reaction is one of dismay, though it is not for his own sake, but because he can no longer give:

N'a mais que donner, mout l'en poise.
 (line 4201)

It must be noted, however, that Richard's generosity was a mixture of charity and courtly largesse. The latter brought him great prestige which he did not disdain. His acts of generosity were performed with ostentation and were not therefore wholly altruistic. Moreover at the end of the romance, Richard becomes rich again and is pleased to be so. One assumes that, chastened by his experience of poverty, he does not abandon his charitable acts, but learns to moderate them, applying the courtly virtue of "mesure".

b) Charity and Permanent Poverty.

The story of Eracle depends on the theme of charity. The Roman senator, Miriados, and his wife Cassine gave away much of their wealth for love of God:

Et por Deu grant avoir donoient.
 (Eracle: line 134)

After the death of Miriados, his wife and son, Eracle, give away everything they possess. Cassine's motive is not so much the relief of the poor, but the salvation of her husband's soul. She says to Eracle:

"Ten avoir donroie et le mien
 Pour amour Deu, le createur,
 Qu'il mete l'ame men signeur,
 Vostre bon pere, en paradis."
 (ll. 314-17)

Eracle, too, is partial to the "contemptus mundi" doctrine. He scorns possession of worldly goods:

"Ne de l'avoir ne de le terre
Ne me quier je faire saisir."

(ll. 332-33)

They found abbeys and monasteries, give to the poor, reclaim land from usurers and restore it to its rightful owners (ll. 344-52). They soon become the poorest people in Rome, and lose all their friends. Their only concern, however, is that they have no more to give (ll. 376-80). Eracle solves the problem by suggesting that his mother sells him as a slave. He insists that she gets a good price for him (ll. 421-25). Unlike other charitable persons in the romances, Eracle embraces poverty permanently. He is still poor at the end of the poem. The only other courtly hero to do likewise is Gui de Warewic. After a brilliant courtly career, he withdraws from the world, and dies in a hermitage in voluntary poverty. (Gui de Warewic.)

2. Charity in the Courtly Poems.

In the romances which do not have a strong religious bias, we find isolated incidents of charity.

a) Charity as duty of Courtly Ruler.

In Erec et Enide, the hero performs a charitable act after the death of his father. He reclothes 169 poor people and gives them money. He also gives gifts of clothing to the poor clerks and priests:

Molt fist bien ce que fere dut:
povres mesaeisiez eslut
plus de cent et .LX.IX.
Si les revesti tot de nuef;
as povres clers et as provoires
dona, que droiz fu, chapes noires
et chaudes pelices desoz.
Molt fist por Deu grant bien a toz:
a ces qu'an avoient mestier
dona deniers plus d'un seitier.
(Erec et Enide: ll. 6475-84)

This act of charity is presented as a duty which Erec had to accomplish (line 6475). There is no mention of the joy which so often accompanied courtly largesse.

When Ille returns to Brittany, he makes himself responsible for the poor and destitute:

Savés que fait li senescals?
 Les nus conselle et les descals,
 Les povres et les orphenins;
 Ainc mais ne fu si bons voisins.
 (Ille et Galeron: ll. 2958-61)

When Jehan inherits his fief, he and Blonde prove to be charitable to their vassals and tenants. The truly poor and Church people were not forgotten:

Les povres nonains releverent,
 Les povres femes marfierent,
 As bons ki vaurrent honour querye
 Donerent et deniers et tere,
 (Jehan et Blonde: ll. 6151-54)

Pitex furent vers povre gent,
 Del leur donerent largement.
 (ll. 6173-4)

It has already been noted that often a woman was responsible for acts of charity such as the care of the poor, while her husband was preoccupied with political largesse. We have met instances of their charity: the Countess in Le Comte d'Anjou: ll. 124, 129-135; 8008-16; Fresne in Galeran de Bretagne: ll. 4306-07. While Gui de Warewic was away on a crusade the responsibility for the care of the poor and his estates fell to Felice. She carried out her duties conscientiously: she fed the poor, patronised monasteries, restored abbeys. Furthermore she initiated the construction of roads, bridges and gave equipment to prisoners. Felice undertook these tasks gravely, not as a mere pass-time.

Unques puis pur veir ne fina
 De povres pestre, de musters aprester
 E povres abeies restorer,
 De chalcees faire, de redrescer punz,
 Sovent dona herneis as prisuns;
 Ja pur deduit que hom li feist,
 Pur rien rire ne la veist.
 (Gui de Warewic: ll. 8980-86)

b) Gifts to the Church.

Another form of giving for God in the romances consists in magnificent gifts to churches. These gifts do not appear as alms, but are rich articles of decoration for the altar.

In L'Escoufle, before Richard sets off on a pilgrimage, he presents an altar-cloth for a church (ll. 198-200). The courtly nature of this gesture

is indicated when the clergy make counter-gifts. They present Richard with his robes (ll. 202-14). Finally, Richard gives alms, followed by his knights:

Li quens ala offrir premiers,
Devant les autres chevaliers:
1 marc d'or offri en besans.
(ll. 233-35)

In all, claims the poet, Richard gave more than ten pounds to the needy, and his annual life donations ranged between twenty and thirty silver marks (ll. 259-62).

Upon his arrival in Jerusalem, Richard offers to the altar a valuable gold cup, engraved with scenes from the story of Tristan and Yseut. To us this seems a strange choice of subject, although one perfectly acceptable in a courtly romance. The gift was well received by the keeper of the Church treasure (ll. 628-30).

Richard's son, Guillaume, does not neglect the Church. When he is made Count of Normandy, he first makes a visit to the Archbishop with offerings worth twenty-five marks:

Si j'en ment, je arai pechié;
Mais bien valut XXV mars
L'offrande, qui eüst tout ars
Les deniers qui offert i furent.
A mout grant joie le receurent.
(ll. 8300-04)

Offerings to churches emphasise the great value of the gifts, and hence the donor's wealth and generosity. Whereas charitable acts were inspired by love of God, gifts to the Church tend to become part of the courtly setting without any religious sentiment. This is further stressed in Erec et Enide.

When Erec visits his father, King Lac, he and his wife first call at a monastery. They offer sixty silver marks and a gold cross:

LX. mars i presanta
d'argent, que molt bien anplea,
et une croiz, tote d'or fin,
(ll. 2323-25)

The cross, studded with gems, is described at length. Then the poet gives

a description of the costly silk altar cloth and chasuble offered by Enide. No mention is made of alms for the poor. Giving for God is subtly adapted in these works to fit the courtly tenor. The splendour of the courtly scenes extends to the churches and monasteries, where a more modest setting might be expected. The poet highlights not the hero's religion, but his courtly liberality.

Giving to a church assumes a symbolic significance in Yder. When Yder has been knighted by Arthur, they go together to the Church. There Yder offers his sword to the altar. Having made this gesture, whereby he is presumably offering his knighthood to the service of God, he recovers his sword by paying thirteen deniers:

Yder mist sor l'autel s'espee,
A deu l'offri e presenta,
De treze deniers /la/ rachata;
(ll. 482-84)

3. Adaptation of Didactic Commonplace in Courtly Works.

There are instances in the romances when didactic commonplaces are expressed in courtly terms.

a) Charity and Liberality.

Guillaume d'Angleterre is urged to give away his worldly wealth in a style that is decidedly courtly. The poet translated the biblical text: Matthew 19: 28-30 into a courtly setting. The king is urged to give objects usually associated with lavish display. The repetition of "Donés" followed by a list of rich articles is reminiscent of the anaphora noted in the Brut⁽⁴¹⁾ where Arthur gave generously. In Guillaume d'Angleterre, however, the poor are to benefit and Guillaume will not gain social prestige, as did Arthur. A cleric interprets the vision as follows:

"Por Dieu aiiés tot en despit
Et departés sans contredit
Tout vostre or, et tout vostre argent
Departés a la povre gent,
As maisons Dieu et as eglises:
La sont bien les aumosnes mises;

Dounés copes, donés aniaus,
 Donés cotes, donés mantiaus,
 Donés sourcos et covretoirs,
 Donés gierfaus, donés ostoirs,
 Donés destriers et palefrois,
 Donés si tout a ceste fois
 Que le vaillant d'une castaigne
 De tos moebles ne vos remaigne;
 N'en portés vaillant un festu
 Fors tant que vos arés vestu;"
 (Guillaume d'Angleterre: ll. 145-60)

b) "Don" and "Guerredon".

Guillaume's gifts to God's poor will receive a counter-gift from God. He will be rewarded a hundredfold⁽⁴²⁾. The poet uses the courtly term "guerredon".

Et Diex, quant li termes venra,
 A cent doubles le vos rendra:
 Ne descroistra pas vostre moebles,
 Car vos rarés tot a cent doubles
 Le guerredon et le merite."
 (Guillaume d'Angleterre: ll. 161-65)

The use of the term "guerredon" to convey the idea of spiritual reward after death also figures in Eracle. Eracle has been sold by his mother in order that she may continue to give alms to the poor. When she begins to regret her action, Eracle reassures her. He describes God as the supreme giver of gifts who never fails to render the counter-gift of what he has received. All charitable gifts and deeds are rewarded by God and should not be regretted. It is folly, says Eracle, to prefer material well-being to the spiritual reward that God reserves for the charitable.

"Ainz est pour Deu, qui mout cler voit
 Quanqu'om pour lui fait et despent;
 Et nus hom fors Deu seulement
 Ne done a home large don
 Ne ne set rendre gueredon:
 Riens n'est envers le soie grace,
 N'est hom el mont qui pour lui face
 Que cent itant ne puist trouver,
 Si ne li doit nus reprovver
 Bien faiz, aumosnes ne biaux dons,
 Car mains en vaut ses gueredons;
 Et qui le plus pert pour le mains
 N'est mie de grant savoir plains."
 (Eracle: ll. 618-30)

The conclusion of Durmart takes on a religious note. Durmart reflects on the transience of the joys of this world and the eternal joy offered by God to those worthy of it. Among other didactic commonplaces, there is mention of how at death a man is separated from his material assets. God rewards good deeds, and punishes evil ones. The expression "rendre guerredon" is once again used:

Cant li hom muert, rien ne li vaut
 Ses grans beubans ne ses parages.
 Cil qui Deu aime, cil est sages;
 Car Deus rendera, ce savons,
 De tos services gerredons,
 Et des biens et des maz ausi
 Que chascuns ara deservi.
 (Durmart: ll. 15488-94)

Thus, some at least of the didactic commonplaces are evoked at times in the courtly romances. Charity exists alongside largesse, and indeed borrows certain traits from the latter. Even when being charitable, the courtly hero often accompanies his gesture with the pomp and show of courtly largesse. The ideas on charity are basically the same as in the didactic work, but are expressed in courtly language, and sometimes intermingled with ideas which are more peculiarly courtly.

From this study of the gift theme in the courtly romances, we see that the courtly hero is principally a giver of gifts, rarely a beneficiary. The true courtly knight is characterized by his willingness to give generously and to render service promptly and courageously. The main motive for giving was the desire to assert his authority and social supremacy. Whereas he might make gifts out of affection, out of love, out of gratitude, the manifestation of courtly largesse at its most glorious is reserved for grand occasions, celebrations, when the courtly hero, before a large public, could practise an impersonal largesse obviously intended to gain prestige rather than to benefit others. Weddings and feasts provided an ideal setting for the rich man to display his wealth in courtly fashion by joyfully giving

much of it away. The supreme challenge to his liberality and courtly worth came in the form of the "don contraignant" when he was morally obliged by courtly convention to grant whatever was asked of him.

Although wealth became a tool in the hands of the courtly personage, he never sacrificed his ideals and his duty to it. When offered magnificent gifts he always refused if they conflicted with a mission which he had undertaken. A reputation for prowess and courtliness counted more than great wealth and high social position.

Pride was behind many of the refusals of gifts we have met. Part of the courtly ideology was the belief that it was better to give than to receive. This has no connection with the Christian ethic, since the motive was so different. Christian ethics urge giving in the form of charity for the sole benefit of one's fellow-men. Courtly ethic demands the giving of gifts for personal benefit. Benefit to others is purely incidental. The courtly hero gives proudly, not humbly. Pride prevents him from receiving, because he knows it will bring dishonour to himself, honour to the giver. He can receive honourably from a superior, or if he considers that the gift is offered out of gratitude for services rendered and does not represent a challenge to his personal prestige.

Whenever circumstances forced him to receive a gift, the principle of counter-gift or "guerredon" was employed. To avoid remaining under an obligation, the courtly knight returned gifts and services from which he had benefited. We have seen that in the case of hospitality and other minor services, he often over-reacted and his rewards were disproportionate to the original gift or service. He is thus emphasising his superiority.

When does the courtly hero receive gifts? When setting out on a mission he often accepts them from his feudal overlord or his parents with whom he is not vying for supremacy. He willingly accepts the traditional dubbing gifts, but sometimes reciprocates with gifts of his own. He accepts the

gift of hospitality when necessary, but rewards it richly. He receives gifts presented in the form of tribute because they confirm, instead of challenging, his supremacy.

Only in the matter of love and love-gifts is the pride and competitive spirit of the courtly hero tempered. He shows humility and accepts with genuine gratitude the symbolic love-tokens and the gift of love itself granted by his lady.

In all other circumstances, the courtly hero is on the defensive. He can never forget his image of the liberal courtly hero. He attempts at every possible occasion to demonstrate the prime virtue of the courtly knight, and he welcomes its flattering results.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Poverty as Depicted in the Romances

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CHAPTER SEVEN

Poverty as Depicted in the RomancesA. Attitudes towards Poverty in the Romances.

An essential prerequisite for the practical application of the courtly virtue of liberality was sufficient wealth. Moreover, since, as we have seen⁽¹⁾, liberality had to be practised on a grand scale in order to achieve the desired results, much wealth was needed. It is, therefore, inevitable that poverty should be regarded as an abhorrent condition for the hero of the courtly romance.

1. Categories of Poor People.

One may distinguish four categories of people affected by poverty in the romances. They are: the voluntarily poor, motivated by religious principles; the indigenously poor, people of the third estate; poor knights, who often remain anonymous and who serve merely as a foil to the courtly hero by receiving his wealth; finally, the courtly hero himself, who, temporarily, has to endure poverty for a variety of reasons.

a) The Religious Poor.

The question of poverty, as depicted by the didactic writers, has already been considered⁽²⁾. These moralists extolled poverty as a state of grace. The poor man was held up as an example of virtue to the corrupt rich man. This concept is an incidental idea in the romances. Amidst the fabulous riches of the courtly characters and settings, the image of the saintly poor man, untainted by worldly wealth, is not entirely absent, but plays an insignificant role in these works. Such may be the case of minor characters like religious hermits who have renounced the world, but who make a brief

appearance in order to assist the hero in his adventures. These characters merge into the background, they do not seriously affect the main interest of the narrative, and usually do not prompt either praise or criticism as a moral or social type.

Exceptions to this general rule occur in those works where religious principles triumph over courtly customs. Here the hero voluntarily embraces the state of poverty, divests himself of all his worldly assets and directs his actions uniquely to the service of God. These works, notably Guillaume d'Angleterre and Eracle, are not typical of courtly romance, although some of the more obviously courtly works end in a similar way: Gui de Warewic and Robert le Diable⁽³⁾.

b) Poor of the Third Estate.

Concern for the involuntarily poor who stood at the bottom of the social scale: the overtaxed peasantry, is also rare in the romances. Poverty at this social level was evidently regarded as part of the natural order of things. Permanent, irremediable poverty is undramatic, and not worthy of great attention in these works. In general, therefore, such people also play a minor role. They are lay figures in a setting of poverty which temporarily includes the unfortunate hero - cf. the scene at the poor house in the Comte d'Anjou⁽⁴⁾; and they may offer their modest services to the hero, such as providing humble lodgings when he is in no position to expect better. For this the poor man will usually be richly rewarded, and, by virtue of the hero's gifts, his poverty will be alleviated.

In general, however, the villeins of the romances do not even merit the role of beneficiaries of the courtly hero's largess. They may be referred to in a portrait of the virtuous hero, usually at the end of the work, when, all adventures successfully terminated, he settles down to rule his land. Then the poet might allude to his charity towards poor people as distinct from his liberality to people at court. An exception to this rule is

Emperor Conrad whose introductory portrait alludes to his liberal attitude to villeins. He did not tax them, allowed them to get rich, confident that in any emergency they would repay his generosity by making over their property and riches to him:

L'empereres voloit mout miex
 Que li vilain et li bourjois
 Gaaignassent de lor avoires,
 Qu'il lor tolist por tresor fere:
 Car quant il en avoit afere,
 Il savoit bien que tot ert soen.
 Et ce li venoit de grant sen,
 Q'a son besoig estoit tot prest
 Et le chatel et le conquest:
 Il n'en erent se garde non.

(Guillaume de Dole: ll. 593-602)

The attitude to villeins, in the romances, is ambivalent. Co-existent with the principle of charity to the destitute and underprivileged, is that aristocratic bias which considers that the poor of the third estate should be kept so. Hence, in Cleomadès, King Marcadigas, an exemplary ruler in every way, avoided all contact with his villeins, but admitted to his company only high-born people (ll. 135-39). While Marcadigas showers gifts on his knights, he is careful not to elevate his villeins, since they are without courtly virtues. They easily fall prey to avarice and covetousness. To give them wealth is to put them in the way of temptation. Thus the king's attitude was one of frank distrust to the point of hatred:

Riches vilains ne serviroit
 ja mais se son preu n'i savoit,
 car sa nature a ce le coite
 que plus a eil plus couvoite;
 pou li touche de quel part viengne
 avoires, mais k'a son oés le tiengne.
 Pour ce Marcadigas haoit
 les vilains et gentis amoit.

(Cleomadès: ll. 151-8)

One remembers, also, the moral of an episode in L'Escoufle, where the Emperor of Rome finds himself faced by a revolution of peasants whom he had misguidedly enriched. Count Richard, after putting down the revolt, advises the Emperor to change his tactics in future: to court the favour of the barons, not that of the peasants:

Metés vos haus homes desus;
 Si les amés et tenés chiers.
 (ll. 1638-39)

Whereas villeins are greedy and unreliable, high-born people will not fail a generous lord in emergencies, and will keep the villeins firmly in their place (ll. 1643-45).

Thus the poor of the third estate have little direct contact with the courtly hero. They qualify usually as recipients of charity in which case they become synonymous with the "God's poor" of the didactic works.

c) Poor Knights.

The category of poor knights brings us into the environment of the courtly hero since they form his immediate entourage. Their social relationship was one of mutual dependence. The courtly hero, when he is a lord, relied on his knights for military support, and they on him for their livelihood. In the romances, poor knights are chief beneficiaries of the hero's largess. By receiving his gifts they enhance his prestige. In my sections on liberality and the gift theme, I pointed out that, whenever the beneficiaries of indiscriminate courtly liberality were mentioned, they were usually "les povres chevaliers". I have also studied the role of largess in winning loyalty from a military following. The poor knights, therefore, were an important element in the life of the courtly ruler. Care for their wellbeing was a social and moral duty for the nobleman. In Durmart, this duty is explained, when Durmart's father is giving him advice.

"Sez que doit faire filz de roi?
 Il doit amer les chevaliers
 Et honorer et tenir chiers;
 Donner lor doit les riches don
 (ll. 460-3)

Cleomadès' father gives him similar advice, adding that one should take into consideration individual merit:

"Et vous pri, se vous tant m'amez,
 que se vous chevaliers trouvez
 qui soient preu et de bon non,
 que de vous ne partent sans don
 tel qu'il afiert a fill de roi."
 (Cleomadès: ll. 8077-81)

Such precepts abound in the romances, and I have cited many examples in earlier chapters.

The poverty we are dealing with in the category of poor knights is not the absolute destitution of the first two categories. With the knights we are concerned with the first estate, the people of the courts. The "povres chevaliers" were poor only in relation to their wealthy lord or to the wealthy courtly hero. As long as they were in possession of their arms they presumably had the means to earn a good living, as is proved by those poor knights who are the heroes of the romances and who end up very rich. In these works, the poverty of the knights is above all convenient in that it justified a show of largess from the courtly hero.

In the category of poor knights we may include those people who emerge from anonymity and play a part in the action of the narrative - the friends of the courtly hero who fall upon hard times and whom he can help by his valour and generosity. In particular there are those people who, wealthy by rights, have been unjustly disinherited and on whose behalf the hero will undertake anything from single combat to full-scale war. We shall consider the role of these people in the next section under the heading of the theme of disinheritance.

d) The Courtly Hero.

Within the context of the courtly romances, poverty becomes interesting when it directly affects the hero or heroine, and my study of poverty will centre on this particular aspect. In the case of the courtly hero, poverty is dramatic in that it is unjust and contradicts the accepted social order. We shall see that, for the hero, poverty is a temporary state, an unfortunate accident of circumstances with which he has to cope and eventually to remedy. Poverty constitutes one of the many adventures which challenge the noble hero and which, by his courtly attributes, his skill at arms or his versatility, he can bring to a successful conclusion.

Unlike other adventures, the state of poverty, however temporary, has serious social and moral consequences. It was not therefore an adventure which the hero welcomed, but one which he had good reason to avoid at all costs.

2. Reasons for avoiding Poverty.

Whereas, in the didactic works, the emphasis lies on the moral aspect of wealth, in the courtly works, it is the social aspect which dominates. In general, the rich man is the villain of the didactic works because he sets the material above the spiritual. Preoccupation with the material, as long as it does not result in avarice, provokes no censure in the romances. The rich man is the hero. Generous with his wealth, he is morally and socially acceptable. That his liberality is not necessarily altruistic is of little consequence.

Poverty renders impossible the shows of largess displayed by the courtly knight for his personal and social prestige. Thus, on a practical level, poverty was a personal and social evil, since wealth was the point of departure for giving and consequently for the making of a knightly reputation.

In Yder, King Arthur voices the opinion that a poor virtuous man is far better than a corrupt rich man:

"Miels valt povres home ed bonté
Que malveis od riche conté.
(ll. 3287-8)

While this is indisputable, the prevailing attitude in the romances would appear to be that best of all is the man who is both virtuous and rich. The concept of virtue is attached not to poverty, but to the good use of wealth.

Warnings against poverty and its disastrous social effects are commonplace in the romances.

a) Shame associated with Poverty.

When poverty is under consideration in the romances, it is rarely the deprivation due to lack of material comforts which is lamented, but rather the shame which ensues and which casts its victim into a social limbo.

Erec, introducing Enide at King Arthur's court, has to explain her tattered clothes. He describes Enide's parents who, though of good birth and character, have been brought down by poverty. Erec remarks that poverty makes many people objects of scorn:

"povretez mainz homes aville;"
(Erec et Enide: line 1540)

Erec, however, can see beyond the exterior poverty to the excellent qualities of Enide's parents. His attitude is not one of scorn, but of friendly sympathy:

"Ses peres est frans et cortois,
mes d'avoir a molt petit pois;"
(ll. 1541-2)

Erec's willingness to look further than outward appearances is not typical of society in general in the romances.

It is fear of association with poverty and its disgrace, rather than pure benevolence, which lies behind many of the shows of wealth. Precisely this knowledge of the dishonour attendant upon poverty prompts Galeran to take plenty of money and equipment with him when about to set off on a mission. This is proof of his good sense, for he knows that a person who is obviously rich will command respect wherever he goes, whereas a poor man will always be unwelcome:

Aller veulst en estrange terre,
Si li estuet porter avoir.
De ce fait il moult grant savoir,
Qu'estranges homs est mal venuz
Qui d'avoir est povre tenuz,
Et li richez est a honneur,
Si le tiennent touz a seigneur,
Tant com a autre puet bien faire.
(Galeran de Bretagne: ll. 3280-7)

Concerning for the impression he will make on people prompts Guillaume de Dole's mother to urge him to take with him on his journey sufficient wealth:

"Gardez que riens ne vos souffraigne,
Que l'en ne die en Alemaigne,
Quant vos serez a cort venuz,
Que voz soiez povres ne nuz."
(Guillaume de Dole: ll. 1085-8)

Contempt for the poor is further stressed in Athis et Prophilius: Athis is in a state of extreme poverty, whereas his friend Prophilius is very rich.

When Prophilius passes him in the street, Athis curses his friend's pride and comments that, in general, a rich man cares little for a poor man. A poor man will always be hated and scorned:

"il s'orgoille.
 Teus est costume a richeté
 Qui n'a cure de povreté.
 Povres hom est vius et härz,
 Ia n'iert a leu ou soit jörz."
 (ll. 2000-4)

In Florimont, poverty is accused of making people objects of ridicule. Florimont's unwise liberality has impoverished not only himself, but also his parents who have helped his expenditure. Eventually his mother complains of the social ills of their position: they have become outcasts because no-one wants to be associated with the shame of poverty:

Un jor la duchesce Edorie
 Dist a duc: "Sire, de folie
 Avommes creü nostre fil;
 Por ce nos ait mis a essil
 Et toz nos a mis apovresse,
 Et per amor et per largesce
 Por lui somes livrei a honte."
 (ll. 4053-59)

Eracle experiences a similar reaction from society. Although his poverty is self-inflicted, he suffers the same misfortune. He and his mother are very soon ignored by former friends and social acquaintances. Eracle sadly reflects that a poor man is quickly forgotten:

"povres home, si com vous di,
 Est oubliëz en quinse dis."
 (Eracle: ll. 451-2)

One notes that, in all cases, it is not the physical hardship which is feared, but the shame resulting from poverty which damages one's social position.

Prestige always comes first for the courtly hero.

b) Poverty associated with lack of other qualities.

In the romances, the stigma of poverty sometimes goes even deeper. The consequent dishonour is allied with other faults. Just as liberality is related to other virtues and qualities, and avarice associated with other vices, one sees that it is not always liberality, that is, the good use of wealth, which

accompanies prowess, etc.,⁽⁵⁾ but the mere possession of wealth. Conversely, poverty, however undeserved, annihilates a person's other qualities.

The Roman de la Violette begins with thoughts on wealth, poverty and wisdom. The poet says that intelligence is not usually appreciated in a poor man. Lack of wealth infers lack of wisdom:

Sens de povre homm est poi prisiés;
 A painnes ert autolisiés
 Ja mais nus hom, s'il n'a avoir,
 (ll. 1-3)

The poet himself, however, does not place wealth above knowledge. He reflects on the instability of wealth:

Namporquant je pris miex savoir
 c'avoir. Avoirs est tost faillis;
 Assés tost est uns hom salis
 De grant avoir en la poverte.
 (ll. 4-7)

When wealth is lost, the consequences are socially damning. The poor man is snubbed by the rich man and not received at the court of a nobleman:

Ja puis ne li ert porte ouverte
 Volentiers; quant il vient a court,
 Erranment arriere racourt,
 Por chou c'on ne l'i laisse entrer,
 Por chou vous voel dire et moustrer
 Qui povres est, vils est tenus
 E o les riches mal venus,
 (ll. 8-14)

The poet, therefore, intends to compensate for lack of wealth by securing a reputation for wisdom, a reputation which circumstances cannot affect. Hence his "conte" (ll. 15-18).

Substituting intelligence and wisdom, as attributes of value, for wealth, however laudable, would appear to be no solution for the courtly hero. In order to maintain his social position he cannot afford to put his faith entirely in abstract values. He must bow to the criteria of his society. He must be rich and must be seen to be so. The poet of La Violette says that a poor man's intelligence is underrated. We shall see that this is indeed a common attitude in these works, to the point where a man without

wealth is held to be totally without intelligence.

This attitude of society obviously affects a knight's professional reputation. No longer will he be listened to. A poor man's opinion counts for nothing: so says Ille, who himself has known poverty and can speak from experience:

"Et si le savés tres bien, sire,
Que povres hom poroit molt dire
Anchois qu'il fust oïz de rien;
(Ille et Galeron: ll. 1602-4)

On the other hand, a rich man can speak only good sense: wealth confers wisdom:

"Mains riches hom dist tostans bien."
(line 1605)

This idea is found also in Guillaume d'Angleterre. It is expressed by a merchant, but the attitude towards poverty coincides with the courtly view. Where the merchant differs from a noble personage is in the means of acquiring wealth. To the merchant, the end justifies the means. Therefore all means are good. We shall see later that the courtly hero has higher standards: the means must be just and honourable⁽⁶⁾.

The merchant is giving advice to his adopted son who is, in reality, son of King Guillaume. He says that wealth brings friends, poverty contempt. A poor, wise man is held to be stupid, but the rich fool is considered wise. Such is the way of the world and one has to conform to it. The moral he draws is: secure riches by whatever means are available:

"Entour moi et s'aprenés
A gaignier si com jou fis.
Qui rices est moult troeve amis;
Et si est moult vix qui nient n'a,
Ja nus ne le apartenra.
Ne ne l'aime ne ne le prise.
Se tu vas en autrui servise
Et tu es povres, trestout cil
Qui te verront te tenront vil;
Que sage povre, hui est li jors,
Tient on por fol en totes cors,
Et rice fol tient on a sage;
Ensi l'ont mais tot en usage.
Por çou te loç jou et commant
C'onques ne t'en caille comment
Tu puisses avoir assanler,
Se tu veus sages resanler."
(ll. 1572-88)

It is the fear of being treated as a fool because of his poverty which haunts Tristan as he contemplates his imminent exile. He will be obliged to leave court penniless. He has no land, and Yseult has refused to recover the arms which he has pawned. He will thus not have the means to support himself. As a poor man, he will lose his reputation for knightly prowess. He would not dare voice an opinion or volunteer advice on military occasions:

"Ha, Dex! b~~ea~~u sire saint Evrol,
 Je ne pensai faire tel perte,
 Ne foïr m'en a tel poverte:
 N'en me~~nt~~ré armes ne cheval,
 Ne compaignon fors Govenal.
 Ha, Dex! d'ome desatorné,
 Petit fait om de lui cherté.
 Quant je serai en autre terre,
 S'oi chevalier parler de gjerre,
 Je n'en oserai mot soner:
 Hom nu n'a nul leu de parler."
 (Beroul's Tristan: ll. 238-48)

He overdramatizes because his words are destined to gain the sympathy of King Mark who, hidden in a tree, is within ear-shot. Poverty, implies Tristan, would rob him of his confidence, because he knows the attitude of society towards the poor man.

Gautier d'Aupais' reaction to poverty resembles that of Tristan. Gautier has fallen in love, but assumes that his poverty will make him repugnant to the lady. Bitterly he rails against his misfortune, commenting that a rich man is courageous, whereas a poor man can only be cowardly. He is resigned to love in vain, so sure is he that his poverty is an insurmountable obstacle to the desired marriage:

Ja por avoir qu'il ait n'en ert mes rachaté
 Lors dist: "Ha! las, dolenz, com sui mal^luré!"
 Puis dist a l'autre mot: "Honi soit povreté!
 Tels est ore coars, qui fust hardiz clamé
 S'il eüst tant d'avoir dont il fust honoré."
 (Gautier d'Aupais: ll. 155-9)

Loss of confidence is a common reaction, but not inevitable. An exception occurs in the Roman d'Alexandre. A poor knight is confronted with a manifestation of an attitude of scorn, and he protests vehemently:

He has been asked to take a message to Alexander and thus miss the forthcoming battle. He has been promised payment for doing so. As a professional soldier, he strongly objects to being treated like an errand-boy because of his poverty. He claims that his impoverished state does not mean that he is lacking in military prowess. He would not shirk his duty as a soldier for any amount of money, and insists on participating in the fight:

"Si je sui povres hom, ne me devés gaber,
 On ne doit povreté laidement reprover;
 Mais povres hom est vieus, sel devroit on tuer,
 Qu'a paines est si preus qu'on le veulle honorer,
 Ses oevres et ses fais a nul bien atorner.
 Por pramesse d'avoir me volés vergonder,
 Mais itant de respit vos en veul demander
 Que me laissiés les las de mon elme fremer
 Et monter el cheval, ou tant me puis fier;
 (ed. Armstrong, Branch II, ll. 329-337)

Poverty places Galeron in a dilemma. She is poor, but Ille, her husband, has become very rich. When they are reunited, Galeron is afraid to declare her love for him because she imagines that Ille will assume she is attracted uniquely by his wealth. Ille is dismayed by her cool welcome:

"Comment? ne m'amés vos encore?"
 (line 3312)

Galeron returns that it is commonly accepted that a poor person's word is not to be trusted. Ille would be justified in thinking that she is motivated simply by greed for personal gain. She prefers to say nothing when there is a danger that any profession of love may be interpreted as base flattery motivated by covetousness:

"Biaus sire, se je disoie ore
 Comment je t'ain, qui qu'il empregne,
 On i poroit noter losenge.
 Quant on voit povre vanteor,
 Sel tient on a losengeor.
 Con plus dist povres: "je vos ain,"
 Mains i tent riches om la main,
 Et mains s'i croit et mains si fie
 Et cuide adés qu'il le desfie
 Et face adés por recovrier."
 (Ille et Galeron: ll. 3313-22)

We see, thus, that the courtly romances attribute to society the opinion

that a poor man is stupid, useless, cowardly and fundamentally dishonest. The reaction of society would be to avoid him and mistrust him. He would be refused access to courtly society, because he could not exhibit his courtly qualities by the practice of courtly customs. Hence his poverty is not only a personal disgrace but a social one. Furthermore, his poverty is associated with moral degradation: one cannot expect to find virtue and finer feelings in a poor man. He must be obsessed with the problem of how to acquire riches, and so anything he says and does is necessarily motivated by covetousness and not to be trusted. A poor man is rejected on social and moral grounds: he is hated as a social type and as a moral type.

3. Poor Man Disguises and Courtly Attitudes to Poverty.

Society's attitude towards poverty and the poor is sometimes turned to advantage in the romances. On occasions when the courtly hero, in order not to be recognised, finds it necessary to adopt some sort of disguise, he often transforms himself into a poor man. He is thus consciously exploiting the attitude of society to the victims of poverty. Dirty, dressed in rags, he can be sure that he will attract no attention and will be totally ignored by those he wishes to avoid.

This is the reasoning of Protheselâus: he believes that Medea hates him and in order not to be recognised, he assumes the guise of a poor man, explaining his choice in this social comment:

"L'en prent del povre poi de cure;
 En totes curz sunt avilez
 u li riches sunt honurez."
 (Protheselâus: ll. 2897-9)

Poverty helps Tristan escape detection by King Mark and his courtiers. His disguise is more elaborate - he is also a leper. Tristan takes his role seriously, displaying great dramatic talent. With the skill of a veteran mendicant he collects plentiful alms:

En plaignant disoit: "Mar i fui!
 Ja ne quidai estre aumosnier
 Ne servir jor de cest mestier,

" Mais n'en poun or mais el faire."
 Tristan lor fait des borses trere,
 Que il fait tant, chascun li done;
 Il les reçoit, que nus n'en sone.
 Tex a esté set anz mignon
 Ne set si bien traire guignon.
 (Beroul's Tristan; ll. 363¹-36)

The willingness to give alms corresponds to the social rank of the people Tristan approaches. Those of lesser rank demonstrate the contempt which characterises the attitude of society in general. From these people Tristan receives many an insult and beating (ll. 3615-17). In contrast, noble people have noble instincts and give generously. Both King Arthur and King Mark, as perfect courtly characters, surrender articles of their rich apparel. Other noble people give him money (ll. 3625-27).

In Thomas's Tristan, the hero again takes the disguise of a poor man so that he may see Yseult without fear of discovery. On this occasion poor clothes suffice to make him unrecognisable:

Or s'aturne de povre atur,
 De povre ~~dras~~, de vil abit,
 Que nuls ne que nule ~~ne~~ quit
 N'aperceive que Tristran seit.
 (Tristan, Thomas: ll. 1774-7)

In this work, Tristan has no success with alms. Even Yseult, unaware that the beggar is Tristan, shows no charity. He is pushed away and beaten. All are unmoved by his plight and treat him as detestable (ll. 1807-11). The queen's servants are represented as misers and bullies. Their attitude of contempt intensifies as Tristan becomes more persistent. The poet comments that they do not know what it is like to be poor and in desperate need:

Il ~~vait avant~~ si lur requiert
 Que pur Deu alcun ben li face.
 Ne s'en returne pur manache,
 Tuit le tenent pur ennuius;
 Ne sevent cum est besuignus!
 (ll. 1812-16)

In another version, Tristan's motive for such a disguise is more explicit. He wants to go to England to see Yseult, but is too well-known to go as a knight. Hence his decision to go on foot, as a poor man. No-one at court

will pay any attention to him (Folie d'Oxford, ll. 31-40).

A parallelsituation occurs in Florimont. The hero is to have a secret meeting with his lady, Romadanaple, but he must not be recognised by her hostile parents. As in Tristan's case, the ideal disguise is that of a poor man:

Se il est povrement vestus,
N'iert jai per home conells.
(ll. 8535-6)

All these disguises are successful. Indeed Tristan is such a master of disguise that when he succeeds in reaching Yseult, he has great difficulty in convincing her of his real identity. On these occasions we see that the attitude of scorn provoked by poverty is clearly demonstrated, but channelled to the profit of the courtly hero.

B. Poverty and the Courtly Hero.

1. Social Reality and Literary Theme.

Poverty as a literary theme in the courtly works centres on members of the first estate, the nobility, the knights of the courts. This association of poverty and the socially privileged had its roots in reality. The character of the poor but courtly knight, dedicated to righting wrong, who makes his fame and fortune by his prowess is not entirely a literary creation.

France, at the time of the composition of these romances, was full of impecunious knights⁽⁷⁾ who led a nomadic life, and who were ready to fight for pay⁽⁸⁾. The lives of these knights were not easy. They travelled from court to court in search of military fees. They were, in fact, mercenaries.

In the courtly works, this is not how the poor heroes appear. Need to earn a living is overshadowed by the idea of a glorious mission. There is therefore a substitution of motive for the courtly heroes. The

disinterestedness of the courtly hero is proved by his proud refusals of payment for his services⁽⁹⁾. His reward lies not in material wealth, but in his prestige. For most of the courtly heroes, it is a point of honour not to accept payment or gifts. Their wealth, when its source is mentioned, accrues from tournaments and warfare, coming directly from their conquered opponents, not from a patron. It is with the gains from their military prowess that they can display their largess and further increase their prestige.

The romanticized picture of the knight errant of twelfth and thirteenth-century society was, says Jean Frappier⁽¹⁰⁾, a compensation for those knights of the time who were afflicted by poverty. The wandering knight of the courtly works is not a casual mercenary, but he is raised to a plane where he embodies the finest virtues and qualities of a courtly hero.

When it is the misfortune of the courtly hero to encounter poverty personally, he is always able, by his wit and skill at arms, to triumph over circumstances, to cover himself with glory and acquire land and wealth. Poverty represents a challenge to his prowess. The sordid social disgrace of reality is transformed into a noble adventure: Wrongs are righted; those in distress are rescued. Poverty never triumphs in the courtly works.

2. Causes of Poverty in the Romances.

The circumstances which lead the courtly hero into the grasp of poverty are many and varied. Some are born poor, some are unjustly robbed of their wealth, others lose their wealth through unfortunate circumstances or through some fault of their own, others deliberately inflict poverty upon themselves. Setting aside the voluntarily poor, the courtly heroes all share the desire to be rich and they always succeed in being so, usually as a result of their own efforts.

a) Disinheritance.

The theme of disinheritance occurs frequently in the romances. It is

occasionally the central theme of the narrative, for example in Thèbes and Protheselauls. Private warfare, feuding landowners are themes drawn from the reality of contemporary society⁽¹¹⁾. In the romances, victory goes to the just. The courtly hero is on the side of justice, or if it is he who has been disinherited, it is always undeservedly so. He has been the victim of a greedy neighbour, scheming relations, or of an evil enemy nation.

i. The hero disinherited.

The fact of being disinherited does not necessarily entail abject poverty for the hero. This is the case in Protheselauls. It is the story of two brothers, the elder of whom, Daunus, refuses to hand over to his younger brother, Protheselauls, his share of the inheritance, on the grounds that he will become an enemy, not an ally. The disinherited Protheselauls is not a victim to poverty because he has rich and powerful friends, notably Queen Medea. Wars ensue, but Protheselauls does not put his inheritance above all else. Face to face with Daunus on the battlefield, he refuses to kill him, preferring to lose his land rather than murder his brother albeit in fair combat:

"Mais, bels frere, ja deu ne place
Que vus par mei vie perdez;
Melz voil estre desheritez."
(ll. 1127-29)

Protheselauls, like all courtly heroes, puts love and honour above riches.

The siege and destruction of Troy rob Aeneas of his inheritance, but he does not leave empty-handed. From the flames of Troy he salvages much of his wealth and leaves to establish himself elsewhere:

Bel loisir ot del suen tot prendre,
tote sa gent fist asenbler
et ses tresors en fist porter;
grant aveir et granz manantises
et granz richeces en a prises.
(Roman d'Eneas: ll. 48-52)

When Aeneas and his men eventually arrive in the land that the gods have decreed should be his - Lombardy - they have trouble establishing their

claim. The king of Lombardy, Latinus, bows to the will of the gods, makes Aeneas his heir and promises him his daughter. In so doing, he outrages Turnus to whom the inheritance and the girl had been promised before the arrival of Aeneas. Turnus incites the people of the country to resist Aeneas. He sows the seeds of fear in the minds of the landowners, who soon believe that Aeneas will disinherit them and distribute their estates amongst his Trojan soldiers. Count Mesencius is their spokesman:

"Il nos voldreit deseriter
 et noz terres e cels donner
 ki en cest païs l'ont sell;
 tot en serion confondu,"
 (ll. 4193-6)

In order to defend their land and wealth, the people of Lombardy are ready to fight. But Aeneas and his men are the instruments of the gods. They have right and hence victory on their side.

The protagonists of the Roman de Thèbes are not courtly characters in the literary sense - two brothers, born of incest, cursed by their father, and henceforth destined to live in discord, they fight over their inheritance, Thebes. The arrangement is that they share the kingdom, each ruling for a period of one year. At the end of his term of office, Etioclès is reluctant to relinquish his power. Polynice has to fight for his rights. The situation does not immediately result in the poverty of Polynice, because he has made a rich marriage. The ensuing war, however, impoverishes Polynice's troops under the leadership of Ipomedon. There is a picture of famine amidst the soldiers, the scarcity and inflated prices of food, the physical hardship endured:

En l'ost avoit mout grant famine,
 pou y avoit de la farine,
 le pain vendoit on a or fin
 le cartier un marabotin.
 Meint pseudoïme de la fainvale
 estoient et jaune et pale,
 vivoient y a grant dolor;
 auques orent mué coulour.
 (ll. 7261-8)

On two occasions in Cligès does unjust disinheritance almost provoke

war. Alixandre, while at the court of King Arthur, is disinherited by his younger brother Alis. Alixandre leaves Arthur and prepares to fight for what is his (ll. 2384-86). Alixandre is not motivated by greed or fear of poverty (he is rich and already possesses a kingdom) but by a sense of justice. His lack of need is proved by the subsequent arrangement between the brothers: Alixandre allows Alis to keep the crown, land and revenues, but he, himself, will wield the power in the wings. Alis pledges never to marry so that the kingdom will pass to Alixandre's son, Cligès, as sole legal heir. Alis violates this pledge, marries and thus endangers Cligès' claim to the inheritance. Cligès enlists the help of King Arthur, always the supreme defender of the disinherited, and prepares for war, having explained the situation to Arthur (ll. 6555-61). As in his father's case, it is not desire for wealth which moves Cligès to action. He is already rich. He wants justice, because the land is legally his, and he also wants Fenice, Alis's wife, whom he loves.

A cruel attempt at disinheritance indirectly causes the poverty of Guillaume de Palerne's childhood. Guillaume is heir to the throne of Sicily, but in his infancy an evil uncle decides to have him killed so that he may inherit the kingdom. Guillaume's escape from his fate is unusual: a well-meaning werewolf snatches him before the assassination can take place, and leaves him with a herdsman who adopts him. Although poor, humble, and not of noble birth Guillaume's adoptive father teaches him that it is wrong for the rich to bully the poor - a courtly precept for a nobleman, presumably self-interest for a poor herdsman:

"As povres vos humiliés,
 Contre les riches lor aidiés."
 (Guillaume de Palerne: ll. 563-4)

This advice sums up the calling of the courtly hero, who distinguishes himself by defending others rather than his own interests. Of course the poor people rescued by the courtly hero are not those referred to by the herdsman. Those

who benefit from the generosity and liberality of the hero are certainly poor, but also of noble birth.

ii. The hero, defender of the disinherited.

Throughout the romances, the courtly hero is always willing to take up arms in defence of the unfortunate of courtly society - people of high birth who have encountered misfortune. By his prowess or his liberality, the knight errant relieves the distressed and punishes their aggressors. These noble actions are represented, in the romances, as the duty of the knight. His kind deeds form part of his liberality since like largess they are inspired partly by benevolence and partly by desire for prestige. The courtly hero certainly gains glory from his encounters with the forces of evil, but these conflicts also symbolise the opposition between the courtly generosity of the hero and the covetousness of others.

King Arthur and the knights of the Round Table are exemplary defenders of the poor. Hence the constant stream of disinherited maidens who arrive at court seeking a champion to defend their rights. Arthur's moral position against unjust disinheritance, against the covetousness which drives men to take other people's lands, is established early. In the Brut he condemns the practice of taking land by force:

"L'an ne tient mie ce par droit
Que l'an a a force toloit."
(ll. 2283-4)

Arthur's army was always ready to repel invading enemy forces from defenceless lands. The king reinstates the victims of the invaders. When he drove the Saxon invaders from Scotland, the landowners were able to recover their inheritances and also received supplementary fiefs:

"Les francs homes deseritez
A de tot son regne munde;
Lor heritez lor a randues,
Fiez donez et rantes creües."
(ll. 1073-6)

In Durmart, Arthur is prepared to help Nogant against the Queen of

Ireland and to accept the rich reward offered providing that no-one is disinherited. Nogant has promised him a city and twenty castles in return for his aid. Arthur replies:

"Vos m'aves fait molt bel present,
Et je le preng par tel covent,
Que sens nului desireter
Me pussiés cest don aquiter."
(ll. 12795-8)

Nogant's claim to the property, however, is unjust. Right is on the side of Queen Fenise, whom Durmart is defending. Arthur soon finds out and changes his allegiance. Later, when Durmart accedes to the throne of Wales, he also manifests the courtly horror of injustice:

Faus jugemens ne li pot plaire,
Ains n'ot talent de droit fauser
Ne de nului deseriter
(ll. 15516-8)

Cleomadès, too, is a just nobleman. Even when preoccupied with troubles of his own, he never refuses to help anyone in need. As he travels from country to country in search of his lady, he settles conflicts, rights wrongs, and crushes those motivated by greed.

Mainte guerre en fist apaisier
et maint outrage detriier
et relaissier mainte folie
qui ert emprise par envie;
(Cleomadès: ll. 8287-90)

Cleomadès elects to be the defender of orphans and distressed ladies who have been wrongly attacked or disinherited (ll. 8399-8404). When he hears that his lady's three female companions are in need of a champion to fight to prove their innocence, he does not hesitate to volunteer his services, recalling the solemn oath he made on the occasion of his dubbing ceremony - to dedicate his prowess to the relief of wronged women (ll. 10692-704).

This would appear to be the mission of Yvain⁽¹²⁾. When rejected by Laudine, he collapses into a state of madness and experiences poverty. Eventually he recovers his reason and henceforth devotes himself to deeds of

valour chiefly destined to help unfortunate women. He protects the Lady of Norison from invaders, rescues three hundred starving girls locked away in a workroom, and defends a girl who has been disinherited by her sister. The last is reluctant to start proceedings against her own sister, but her need forces her to claim her share:

"mes je ne la puis clamer quite,
que molt grant mestier en avroie."
(Yvain: ll. 5966-7)

When Count Terri, friend of Gui de Warewic, is disinherited by invaders and reduced to beggary, Gui undertakes single combat with the leader of Terri's aggressors. This was a particularly generous gesture on Gui's part since he was at the time doing penance as a pilgrim for all the killing he had done during his knightly career. Thanks to Gui's efforts, Terri is restored to a position of wealth and power, and is warned never to take advantage of this power to disinherit anyone. Gui claims that unjust disinheritance is a mortal sin for which the punishment is eternal damnation:

"De home desheriter ja ne pensez,
Car si a tort nul desheritez,
Ben voil que vus le sacez,
Del regne Deu desherité serrez."
(Gui de Warewic: ll. 10747-50)

Lancelot is asked to defend a widow who has been disinherited by her nephew. His first concern is to establish that the lady's claim is just. He makes enquiries:

"Sire, se vos me tiesmoigniés
Que la dame fust en son droit,
Consel en avroie or endroit."
(Merveilles de Rigomer: ll. 1544-6)

When he has been assured of her innocence, he gladly undertakes single combat in her defence.

Gerart, hero of the Roman de la Violette, also takes up arms to defend a disinherited lady. He has been offered lodgings by the lady and finds that her hospitality, although well-meant, lacks material comfort. The lady and her household are penniless (ll. 1593-94). Her chief reason for regretting

her poverty is that she can no longer receive travelling knights with the honour due to them:

"Et pour chou plus grant duel avons,
 Quant uns preudom cha dedans vient;
 Plus dolant estre nous couvient,
 Que ne l'ai de coi hounorer,
 Quant il velt chaiens demourer.
 (ll. 1596-1600)

One notes that, in the romances, poverty never stands in the way of hospitality. The lodgings may be modest, but the knight is always greeted joyfully, and any sacrifices are gladly made. As in La Violette, the courtesy and generosity of the host does not go unrewarded. With the assistance of the hero, poverty is converted to wealth.

Enide's father has lost his estates through war. He is poor, but is delighted to receive Erec:

de son oste grant joie fet.
 (Erec et Enide: line 396)

Erec gives him land and wealth, relieving his poverty and rewarding his courtliness.

A similar scene occurs in Yder, where the hero is offered lodgings by a poor couple. Again poverty has resulted from war. The poet's comment that it was a pity she was poor because she was generous underlines the feeling of injustice that poverty should befall courtly people:

La dame ert auques desgarnie,
 Kar par guerre fu apov(e)rie;
 Damage fu qu'el n'ert manante,
 Kar sovent ert large e vaillante.
 (ll. 587-90)

They go to great pains to honour Yder and succeed in providing lodgings fit for a count (ll. 597-600). Yder's host, himself once a valiant knight, has told his wife to expect three guests so that she would prepare sufficient food. The lady rises to the occasion, but the preparation of the meal necessitates sacrifices on her part. In order to pay for the food she pawns coats:

La franche dame se purpense
 Qu'enguagé sunt par la despense
 Pres de toz ses mantels qu'el out;
 (ll. 618-20)

She does not resent the sacrifice, believing that the most valuable treasure is the honour which comes from spending generously: a typically courtly attitude.

"Kar mult feit bel tesor e buen
 Ke a honur despent le suen."
 (ll. 634-5)

Yder is in no position to improve their circumstances immediately, but when his success at tournaments enriches him, he passes his acquired wealth to this generous family. His first gift consists of twenty horses. Later, when he becomes king, he knights the son and gives him three castles.

Disinheritance, therefore, was held to be morally and socially wrong since it is prompted by covetousness, and impoverishes those whose social position destined them to be rich. Representing largesse, and by nature opposed to greed, the courtly hero makes it his duty to align himself on the side of right, to bring offenders to justice, and to restore their victims to their proper place in society.

We note that it is stressed that the motive for contesting disinheritance is precisely this sense of injustice. The disinherited person is not presented as fighting for personal gain, but for his rights. Whether the disinheritance results in poverty or not, the principle is the same. Disinterest is also illustrated by the poor hosts whose distress springs from the curtailment of hospitality to strangers.

It is interesting that the courtly hero does not manifest the attitude of scorn provoked by poverty. Society in general may show contempt for the poor man, but the true courtly hero, of finer feelings, compassionate and just, will give sympathy and practical help. It matters little whether the person has lost his wealth as a result of an injustice. If a person is high-born and courtly, then poverty is incongruous and in itself an injustice, which the courtly hero will remedy.

b) Banishment or Flight.

The dramatic circumstances which result from the hero's banishment or flight from home often bring him into a state of poverty.

Durmart is one of the banished. After a scandalous love-affair with the wife of his father's senechal, his father issues him with an ultimatum - either he renounces the lady or he will receive no further material aid:

"Et se tu vuelz a el entendre
De l'atrui te covient despendre;
Car del mien n'avras tu ja point
Tant com tu soies en cest point."
(Durmart: ll. 495-8)

Durmart opts for the latter, and consequently lives in poverty for three years.

When Athis incurs the disapproval of his family by giving his wife to his friend, Prophilius, he experiences rejection and exile. His father banishes him, and all his family refuse any social contact with him:

Ses cors chëi an mout grant pene,
An povretez et an dolor.
Onques mes hom de sa valor
Ne reçut plus grant povreté.
Si parant l'ont tuit an vilté,
(Athis and Prophilius: ll. 1726-30)

Rejected by his father and family, Athis soon loses all his friends. He suffers the physical hardship of extreme poverty and becomes a social outcast:

Povres et vius et nuz de dras,
Megres, nuzpiez, cheitis et las.
Tuit si parant l'ont congée;
N'a mes amis en la cité,
Qui doner li voille a mangier,
Ne seul une nuit herbergier.
(ll. 1829-34)

Love is the cause of many a flight from home. Tristan and Yseult flee from the vengeance of King Mark and lead a difficult existence in the forest. They have to endure not only the lack of material comforts, but also the constant fear of discovery (Beroul's Tristran: ll. 1611-13).

Guillaume and Aelis flee to avoid an unwelcome marriage arranged for Aelis. They are accidentally separated, and each experiences poverty. Guillaume found difficulty in obtaining lodgings:

Maint povrece a puis elle
 Et mainte souffraite d'osteus
 (L'Escoufle: ll. 6174-5)

The final disaster strikes when what little money remaining to him is stolen:

En .l. bos qui torna fors voie
 Li fu tolus tous ses avoires.
 (ll. 6186-7)

Guillaume de Palerne and Melior are also forced to flee to avoid an arranged marriage. They envisage an idyllic life in the woods, believing that their love and the fruits of nature will suffice:

"Bien viverons de nos amors,
 D'erbes, de fuelles et de flors."
 (Guillaume de Palerne: ll. 3033-4)

Their optimism wanes when they begin to feel hungry. Fortunately the benevolent werewolf reappears to steal food and wine for them.

When Ille loses an eye in battle, shame drives him to leave home. He believes that his wife will no longer love him. Poor, he has to beg to be allowed to enlist as a humble soldier in the Emperor of Rome's army. In describing the kindness that permission to do so would represent, he links Christian charity with courtly generosity:

"Uns prodom qui me retendroit
 Feroit almosne et cortesia"
 (Ille at Galeron: ll. 1333-4)

Women have a hard time in the romances. Yseult shared the lot of Tristan in the forest. Aelis, when separated from Guillaume, is forced to seek lodgings with peasants, Isabelle and her mother. Aelis is not rich, by her own standards, but compared to the abject poverty of her hostess, she is well-off, and able to help the peasants.

After the disappearance of Ille, Galeron, his wife, leaves home to find him. For love, she accepts the personal suffering and social humiliation which poverty brings. She ends up wandering about as a beggar:

Tolte Bretagne en a lasscie,
 Si s'est por lui tant abasscie
 Qu'ele l'a quis come mendie
 En plus de lius que jo ne die.
 (Ille et Galeron: ll. 2650-3).

In La Manekine, Joie is forced to leave home on two occasions. After escaping from the prospect of an incestuous marriage, she is rescued from poverty by a king who marries her. Her second flight, caused by the machinations of an evil mother-in-law, finds her cast adrift, in a boat, recovered by fishermen, and bought by a Roman senator who wishes to rescue her from poverty, to which she is evidently unaccustomed.

The daughter of the Comte d'Anjou also flees from the incestuous designs of her father. She has had the foresight to take jewels and gold with her, but is nevertheless obliged to accept modest lodgings at the house of a peasant woman. Presented with a frugal meal she reminisces sadly and at length on the food and wine to which she is accustomed and which differ greatly from her present meal of black bread and water. At her next lodgings, the emphasis is shifted to the poor sleeping arrangement. The old lady warns her not to expect luxury. She does not possess sheets of fine linen, but only of coarse hemp. The blankets are not richly-lined with fur, and there are only two mattresses, one of which the hostess offers to her guest (Comte d'Anjou: ll. 1228-41). There is worse to come. During her second flight, after her marriage, the Countess cannot afford even humble lodgings. She is reduced to begging, and joins the crowds at the almshouse where she waits for the distribution of alms. Only then can she start searching for somewhere to spend the night.

Tout dementant est arrivee
 Au lieu ou l'en fet la donnee;
 Entre lez povres prent sa place;
 L'aumosne prent, et puis pourchace
 Hostel ou se pu;t herbergier.
 (ll. 4583-7)

Although flight or banishment from home are the direct causes of the subsequent poverty, in the examples cited above, the poverty stems indirectly from love crises. In other instances in these works, love, unrequited or lost, is the direct cause of the poverty of the courtly hero.

c) Love as a Direct Cause of Poverty.

The troubled course of a love-affair may lead the hero to despair, and thence to a state of poverty. When deprived of his lady, the knight no longer has a motive for performing chivalrous deeds. He sinks into a state of apathy, loses his source of wealth, and embarks on a path which sometimes leads not only to poverty, but also to madness.

So it is with Yvain, who when rejected by Laudine, goes wild with grief. He takes to the woods and lives like an animal, eating raw flesh. His only relief comes from a hermit who, though ill at ease in the presence of this strange person, gives him food and shelter.

Amadas loses Ydoine to the Count of Nevers. Heartbroken, he loses his reason and becomes a wandering beggar. Indifferent to his physical suffering, he lives in a cold, crumbling vault (Amadas et Ydoine: ll. 2829-32).

Guinglains does not become mad when pining for la Pucele aux Blanchés Mains, but he loses all interest in chivalry. His largess does not cease, but absent is the joy in giving. Eventually, as a result of giving indiscriminately and of not replenishing his wealth, he becomes extremely poor:

Despent, acroit, barate et donne;
 Quanques il a tot abandonne.
 Tant a illueques attendu
 Que son harnas a despendu
 Tote une quinsainne enterine.
 Bien l'a Amors en sa saissine."
 (Le Bel Inconnu: ll. 4171-76)

Florimont, too, abandons the pursuit of adventure and glory when he loses his lady. Like Guinglains, he does not forget to be generous. People flocked to benefit from his frenetic largess, but funds soon run low, and Florimont, his family, his household, his country are in abject poverty which lasts three years:

Florimons ait pertit de soi
 Toz ses chevaux et son hernoï,
 Trestot ai donei largement
 As estrainges et a sa gent:

Tant ait donei et despendu
 Que il n'en ait riens retenu,
 Des estrainges terres venoient
 Cil que sa largesce savoient,
 Ne il ne finoit de doner
 Tant com ses avoires puet durer.
 Sa terre mist a grant povresce
 Et ses homes per sa largesce.
 (Florimont: ll. 3995-4006)

Such extravagant giving which is motivated by despair, cannot qualify as courtly largess. It does not seek to benefit others, nor can it help the prestige of the donor, since giving on such a grand scale without an income must be of short duration. When the gifts are exhausted, the giver is left in poverty and thus in a shameful situation. Courtly largess is consistent, accomplished with joy, and universally beneficial.

In the cases quoted above the prodigality derives from unfortunate circumstances which affect the attitude of the hero. In other cases prodigality has no excuse.

d) Prodigality.

Spending more than he earned was the mistake of Richard le Beau. Motivated by liberality and charity he gave relentlessly. Those who received his gifts were not necessarily the deserving poor. His exaggerated generosity to his hosts contributed to the draining away of his resources:

Mais a ses ostes tant donna,
 Que ses avoires amenuisa,
 (Richars li Biaus: ll. 1293-4)

As he became steadily poorer, his faith that God would provide did not waver. Whenever the opportunity to acquire money presented itself, he took it, but immediately gave away all his gains. The reaction of those who witnessed his largess was a mixture of admiration and amazement. It was inevitable that poverty should eventually have the upper hand. Richard, to his dismay, finds himself without any money, and with worn out clothes. At this point the poet, who has praised his liberality until now, criticizes his conduct. He comments that Richard gave more than was necessary, his subsequent distress

being the proof of this.

Plus donne qu'il ne fut^s mestiers.
 Car puis en ot mainte soufraite,
 (Richars li Biaus,: ll. 4196-7)

Joufroi is another courtly hero who practised noble expenditure to an extreme. He makes a conscious effort to spend lavishly. His was indiscriminate largess, purely for show. No-one, says the poet, could find fault with his life-style. Robert does likewise, making sure that his largess was accomplished before many witnesses:

Li cuens ne voust pas obliier
 La largece ne lo doner
 Ne les beaus hosteaus a tenir,
 Ains voust a totes genz servir,
 Et s'i se peina del despendre.
 Nel puet om de nient reprendre.
 Mon seignor Robert qu'autretant
 Nel feïst bien o plus avant,
 Si que garanz en ot assez.
 (Joufroi: ll. 3337-45)

Poor courtly people benefited from such liberality, but there is no sense of justice behind Joufroi's giving. Anyone willing to accept his wealth, was welcome to have it. The main motive for this magnificent show of wealth was the rivalry between Joufroi and Robert. They are both trying to outdo the other in the matter of prestige. They go too far, however, and their wealth is exhausted:

Aus gentis homes de la terre
 Qui povre furent por la guerre
 Donoient armes et destriers,
 Robes, palefroiz et deniers
 Cil ne voloit lor avoir prendre,
 Que il ne fussent prest del tendre,
 Tant mistrent andui par content
 Que lor avoir vint a nient;
 Tot l'orent despendu et mis,
 (ll. 3365-73)

Joufroi is an amoral hero, and in order to remedy his poverty, is prepared to get wealth from uncourtly sources. At first King Henry of England supplies his own wealth. Although no longer spending their own riches, their extravagance does not diminish. Alarmed, Henry stops giving. Undeterred, they do not modify their extravagant living (ll. 3394-3402). Joufroi's next course of action

was to marry a rich bourgeoisie and spend her money, an unusual solution to the courtly hero's poverty.

e). Self inflicted Poverty.

When poverty is not unintentional in the romances, the hero usually chooses it out of love for God. He gives away his wealth to deserving causes and willingly suffers for the good of his soul.

Eracle came of a noble, charitable family. On the death of his father, Eracle's mother decides to abandon all their material wealth in order to ensure the salvation of her husband's soul:

"Ten avoir donroie et le mien
Pour amour Deu, le createur,
Qu'il mete l'ame men 'signeur,
Vostre bon pere, en paradis."
(Eracle: ll. 314-7)

Eracle agrees, professing indifference to worldly wealth:

"Ne de l'avoir ne de la terre
Ne me quier je faire saisir;"
(ll. 332-3)

They accordingly embark upon a systematic disposal of their wealth, aiming to achieve the maximum benefit to the destitute. With the proceeds of the sale of their property, they build hostels, abbeys and monasteries. They relieve the distress of the desperately poor, orphans and the socially dishonoured. They retrieve land from the hands of usurers and restore it to the rightful owners (ll. 344-52). Within a month, they have become extremely poor, and with their poverty comes social disgrace. Ignored by former friends, they frequent only poor people:

Ainz que li mois fust touz passez
Se sont plus povre fait assez
De touz les plus chetis de Rome,
Et om oublie tost povre home;
Car chose qu'on veoir ne vuent
Oublie om tost, avenir sueut;
Et il sont si mis en oubli
Qu'om ne conoïst ne lui ne li
Fors povre gent.

(ll. 353-61)

Anxious to continue her good works, Cassine proposes to sell Eracle, to which

he agrees. They are both confident that their charity and suffering will be rewarded by God, who will recompense them a hundredfold⁽¹³⁾. In the "contemptus mundi" tradition, it is stated that only the reward from God has any value. Those who forfeit eternal life for the sake of a lesser reward on earth are following the wrong path:

Ainz est pour Deu, qui mout cler voit
 Çuanqu'om pour lui fait et despent;
 Et nus hom fors Deu seulement
 Ne done a home large don
 Ne ne set rendre gueredon.
 Riens n'est envers le soie grace.
 N'est hom el mont qui por lui face
 Que cent itant ne puist trouver.
 Si ne li doit nus reprover
 Bien faiz, aumosnes ne biaux dons,
 Car mains en vaut ses gueredons;
 Et qui le plus pert pour le mains
 N'est mie de grant savoir plains.
 (ll. 618-30)

Guillaume d'Angleterre's poverty is not spontaneous. He has a divine vision which tells him to go into exile. The churchman who interprets the vision says that he should abandon all material wealth to the poor. Again we see the attitude of the "contemptus mundi" ideal in his words:

"Por Dieu aiiés tot en despit
 Et departés sans contredit
 Tout vostre or, et tout vostre argent
 Departés a la povre gent,"
 (Guillaume d'Angleterre: ll. 145-8)

The concept of "guerredon" is again evoked. God will reward him richly.

The poet adapts the same biblical text which was the source of Eracle ll.624-5:

"Et Diex, quant li termes venra,
 A cent doubles le vos rendra:
 Ne descroistra pas vostre moebles,
 Car vos rarés tot a cent doubles
 Le guerredon et le metite."
 (ll. 161-5)

Guillaume divides his wealth amongst the poor. Responsible for the distribution are the religious to whom the king passes his riches. The disposal of wealth is presented as an act of liberation from the evil hold of material wealth:

De son tresor est alegiés
 Et de son moeble se delivre,
 Por Dieu le done tot et livre.
 (ll. 184-86)

Guillaume and his wife leave court on foot and lead a hard life in the woods. Cold, wet and hungry, they also fall victim to a series of unfortunate circumstances.

There is only one occasion when a nobleman deliberately accepts poverty for other than religious reasons. He is the husband of the heroine of the Comte d'Anjou. The count of St. Gilles supposes that his wife is poor, and so to be found in the neighbourhood of the poor. He envisages her present conditions. He contrasts the rich clothes to which she is accustomed and the rags which she is probably now forced to wear:

"Et encor me sui avisé,
 Entre riches genz pas n'abite,
 Mez entre gent povre et petite;
 N'est pas vestu^e de tartaire
 Ne fourree de penne vaire,
 Ançoiz a robe desciree,
 Povre et en mains lieus renoee;
 N'a paz coronne suz le chief,
 Mes d'un ort mauvés cuevrechief
 Est, ce croi bien, enveloppee;
 (ll. 5272-81)

The count reasons that he has a better chance of finding his wife if he moves in the poor quarters in the guise of a poor man. He realises that he will incur the contempt of society wherever he goes, and will have to suffer insults and beatings (ll. 5281-88). The count lists the sacrifices he will be making: he will be deprived of wine and meat. He will travel on foot, wearing no fine linen or shoes. His attitude appears to be that of one doing penance by which he is soliciting the mercy of God, who will allow him to find his wife. He is ready to experience at first-hand the harsh reality of poverty (ll. 5246-55). The reality of poverty turns out to be more than he can bear. He experiences the horror of the poorhouse, where sixteen thousand starving people await the distribution of alms. They are kept in order by armed guards who are liberal with the use of their sticks, albeit without incurring grave injury:

Venus est droit a la donnee
 Ou la gent povre est atnee
 Pour celle aumosne recevoir.
 Si vous puis bien dire pour voir
 Plus en y ot de seize mile,
 Quer entour Crliens n'avoit vile
 Ne hamel que tous n'i apluevent
 Li povre qui aumosne ruevent.
 La donnee fu belle et gente;
 De gardes y ot plus de trente,
 Qui portent verges et boulaies,
 Dont il fierent sanz fere plaiez
 Et font les povres coiz tenir,
 (ll. 5647-59)

Disinheritance, banishment, unhappy love, prodigality and religious renouncement of wealth are the causes of poverty which recur most frequently in the romances. There are other minor reasons which are not important themes.

f) Miscellaneous

Knights who depended on their lord for financial security are occasionally disappointed. In the Lai de Graelent⁽¹⁴⁾, the knight is impoverished by the meanness of his lord. In Lanval, the hero is accidentally overlooked by King Arthur and so suffers poverty. Similarly, Yder is badly treated by Arthur who later realises his mistake - too late, however, because Yder has already left court to fend for himself (ll. 169-177).

Gerart de Nevers⁽¹⁵⁾ stakes his inheritance in a bet, but loses unfairly and eventually recovers his land. Gautier d'Aupais is an original case: he gambles away all his wealth in a tavern (Gautier d'Aupais: /ll. 57-8).⁽¹⁶⁾ He is consequently banished by his irate father and is away from home for seven years.

Jehan leaves home a poor man, determined to make his fortune independently. He sees his future inheritance eroded by his father's mismanagement and realises that he cannot rely upon that source of wealth:

Ne veut pas despendre la tere
 Que ses peres tient folement,
 Ains conquerra, s'il puet, plus grant
 (Jehan et Blonde: ll. 81-83)

The main causes of the courtly hero's poverty all arise from conflicts between what is dear to the true courtly knight and that which is abhorrent.

In the case of disinheritance, representing generosity, he opposes covetousness, whether on his own behalf or that of others'. Poverty incurred after banishment or flight derives from a conflict between a love match inspired by Fin' Amors and an arranged marriage of interest. The hero motivated by love resists those who put wealth and position first.

Religious poverty represents the conflict between the material and the spiritual. The hero rejects the material in the expectation of a spiritual reward from God.

Prodigality leading to poverty is the only instance when the hero is at fault. However, to courtly eyes, this was a pardonable mistake. The hero has merely carried his liberality too far, and it is usually only he who suffers. Failure to balance income and outgoings was no serious fault when motivated by liberality.

3. Reactions to Poverty

Accidental poverty is never welcomed by the courtly hero, because it is the negation of his way of life. Brought up to wealth, the deprivation of material comforts and social acclaim, appears to the courtly hero as a great injustice.

a) Hero blames Fortune

A common reaction to poverty is for the hero to rail against Fortune, usually personified as a malevolent being who pounces on the

rich and contented when they least expect or deserve to be beset by adversity.

In L'Escoufle, Guillaume, penniless and forced to accept degrading employment, attributes his fate to Fortune (ll. 3510-11).

Athis complains more bitterly, and addresses Fortune directly. He resumes many of the ideas commonly associated with Fortune: the ever-turning wheel, the extremes to which it leads its victims, the swift and unexpected reversals of situation (Athis et Prophilias: ll. 1971-86).

Fortune is often evoked in the Comte d'Anjou⁽¹⁷⁾ when the heroine is the victim of poverty. Her attitude is one of despair as she remembers the rich marriages she could have made before she lost her wealth and social position. She assumes that she will never again know comfort and happiness, but will remain the prisoner of cruel Fortune (ll. 744-57). Circumstances change. She is soon happily married. At this point the poet again turns to a consideration of Fortune. Such a digression in the romances, generally heralds a dramatic turn of events, invariably unpleasant. Fortune is fickle, says the poet, and shows no courtly kindness (ll. 3075-77). To some Fortune gives kingdoms and peace. On others she inflicts wars and drives them to mendicity. No-one should trust Fortune (line 3088). He develops his theme at great length (ll. 3455-3526). Fortune is as changing as the moon, and completely reverses situations within the space of a day; she is described as blind and perverse; she is not impressed by social position; she controls the fate of Emperors and peasants alike:

N'espargne ne povre ne riche,
 Ne lez prise touz unne chiche,
 Empereeur, roy, n'apostole,
 Ne cardonnal, ne cleric d'escolle,
 Advocat ne phisycien:
 Touz lez lie de son lien,
 (ll. 3479-84)

When Florimont realises that he is poverty-stricken, he, too, blames Fortune, stressing the injustice of his position. He asks why, when he never asked to be elevated to his former high social position, should he now be cast so low (Florimont: ll. 4110-16). In this work, also, thoughts

on Fortune (ll. 1129-78) link a period of contentment and wealth with imminent disaster. Philippe is peacefully ruling his land unaware that Fortune is plotting against him. Soon he will find himself in the throes of a full-scale war with the King of Hungary. The poet points out the lack of regard for justice in Fortune's moves. The good are brought down, the wicked exalted. Fortune contradicts the established social order.

Maint gentil cler(c), maint chevalier
 Fet parmi le mont mendier.
 Fortune met en haït estaige
 Un vilain de petit paraige,
 Signor le fet de mainte gent.
 (ll. 1137-41)

Fortune displays at the same time courtly liberality and avarice. By the latter trait, she in turn renders impossible the practice of courtly largess by her victims:

As uns donet mout largement,
 Les atres païet de noïent,
 En demi jor ait si gasté
 A cui ait .XXX. tans doné
 Qu'il n'ait a demain que desprendre,
 Autrui que doner nes que prendre.
 (ll. 1151-56)

Not only is Fortune blind to justice, but she is also represented as acting from pure malice and indulging in a cruel game. Thus the sight of Philippe's success and happiness is a temptation not to be resisted. Fortune will soon upset things (ll. 1177-78).

The flagrant injustice of Fortune, her unconcern for individual merits, is evoked in Floire et Blancheflor. Their presence in the tower has been discovered and they find themselves prisoners. The poet demonstrates the cruelty of Fortune who makes idiots kings, villains bishops, while virtuous clerics have to beg to survive:

Ce set en bien qu'aus fous provez
 Donne reaumes et contez,
 Et eveschiez donne as truanz
 Et les bons clers fet pain queranz.
 (ll. 2310-13)

When Enide's happily married life comes to an abrupt end, she accuses

Fortune of destroying the happiness given by God. The association of God and Fortune rarely occurs in these works.

"Hé! lasse, fet ele, a grant joie
 m'avoit Dex mise et essauciee,
 or m'a an po d'ore abessiee,
 Fortune, qui m'avoit atreite,
 a tost a li sa main ratreite."
 (Erec et Enide: ll. 2778-82)

According to the poet of La Manekine, Fortune's malevolent action, which ignores merit and virtue, is condoned by God: Manekine/Joie is poor and in exile (ll. 4704-08). It is interesting to note that although Fortune has the power to give as well as to take away, it is always the latter aspect which is stressed in the courtly works. When she is represented as giving, she does so to the wrong people. Hence Fortune appears only at times of disaster. Implicit in the romances is the idea that God gives, but that Fortune deprives. God may occasionally be associated with the tragedies devised by Fortune, but Fortune is never held responsible when things are going well⁽¹⁸⁾. If the courtly hero, aware of his good luck, wishes to give thanks for his wealth and success, those thanks are always offered to God⁽¹⁹⁾.

b) Lament at Physical Hardship.

Physical hardship is an aspect of poverty which is subordinated to the social disgrace of the poor hero. Nevertheless the victims of poverty do suffer from the lack of material comforts.

The heroine of the Comte d'Anjou predicted that someone of her situation would never endure poverty, and so left home with as much wealth as she could carry. Poverty is particularly hard for one who has known only wealth:

quer gent
 Qui n'a pas povreté aprise
 Est trop povre et trop entreprise
 Quant hors de son lieu est issue
 Et d'avoir se voit povre et nue,
 Quer trop est grant tele poverte.
 (ll. 648-53)

In spite of her precautions, she comes into contact with poverty. When

presented with a frugal meal, she launches into a long lament, comparing conditions at her father's house with those she has to suffer in her present position (ll. 1104-06). When her husband elects to embrace poverty himself in order to find her, his distress is very real. Hungry, unable to find shelter, he breaks down and begs God to help him:

De sez lermes sa face mueille;
 Dieu et sez sainz reclaime et prie
 Et la douce Virge Marie
 Que il li envoient secours.
 (ll. 5356-9)

Things get worse. He begins to realise his practical uselessness, and admits to a woman, who questions him, that he is incapable of performing any of the menial tasks by which he could earn a living: hoeing, crop-gathering, threshing, winnowing, dyeing, tanning:

"Ha! dist il, douce dame chiere,
 Se mon grant meschief saviéz
 Molt grant pitié en arTés
 Je ne sai houer ne fouïr,
 Pour tant me puet on enfoïr,
 Ne batre en grance, ne venner,
 Ne dras taindre, ne cuirs tenner,
 Ne nul autre vilain mestier,
 Quer jusques ci n'en oi mestier."
 (ll. 5484-92)

This breakdown is not typical of the reaction of the courtly hero in the face of adversity. The majority shrug off the material and physical discomfort, deeply regret the shame, and set about finding a means to remedy their situation.

c) Lament at Consequent Shame.

As was seen from the didactic comments on poverty, it is the shame of poverty which primarily affects the courtly hero. It is an awareness of his social degradation which upsets him most.

When Amadas recovers his reason and realises the level to which he has sunk, his reaction is one of profound shame (Amadas et Ydoine: ll. 3427-30).

Aelis confronts poverty with courage, but sadly remarks that it is

socially unbecoming to one of her high birth to be obliged to work for a living:

En plorant dist: "A moi que monte
De mon lignage? c'est du mains,
Quant il m'estuet a mes .ij. mains
Gaaignier dont je puisse vivre."
(L'Escoufle: ll. 5434-37)

Awareness of his shame drives Athis to despair and he momentarily regrets his kindness to Prophilias (Athis et Prophilias: ll. 1837-40). He is rescued by Prophilias, but even when living in comparative luxury as guest of his friend, he is obsessed by the thought that his rightful inheritance is in Athens, while he is in Rome. He does not want just the physical comforts of life which Prophilias can offer, but the immense wealth of his inherited social position and the attendant honour and prestige. Implicit is the feeling that it is dishonourable to live off Prophilias, while social glory will only be recovered with the possession of his rich estates, which someone else might claim in his absence:

"Mes granz palés, mes riches tors,
Mes granz terres, mes granz enors,
Deus! con porrai de duel morir,
S'estranges hom les vuelt tenir!
Ce qui mien est par heritage
S'autres i claimme seignorage,
Mielz voldroie estre el cors feruz."
(ll. 9063-9)

A merchant in Guillaume d'Angleterre presents poverty as a hideous affliction and regrets that Guillaume should suffer from it (ll. 1960-61). Until this moment, Guillaume has accepted his lot stoically, but now he apparently agrees with the merchant because he eagerly and gratefully accepts the opportunity which the merchant offers him to get rich.

Florimont is ashamed to parade his social humiliation in public, so he changes his name to "li Povres Perdus". Floquart does likewise, explaining why:

"Mon nom wel celer a la gent,
Car ju irai si povrement,
(Florimont: ll. 4731-2)

Richard le Beau discovers the shame that comes with poverty. When his clothes begin to fall apart, his earlier optimism fades, and he decides to go to court in order to earn some money. His experience has taught him that there is no honour in poverty. A poor man will be reviled wherever he goes. He is confident that once at court his fortune will change. (Richars li Biaus: ll. 1926-35). In order to present himself at court and to gain admittance, he has to borrow new clothes from an innkeeper.

The fears of the courtly hero that he would become an object of scorn were not unfounded. When he encounters misfortune, those around him make his fate infinitely worse. He is mocked and deprived.

Florimont, clad in poor apparel and armour, provokes the cruel insults of other knights. They are rebuked by senechal Tarquin (Florimont: line 4794).

In similar circumstances, Ille becomes the laughing stock of his fellow soldiers. In his borrowed armour he cuts a sorry figure and provokes general hilarity (Ille et Galeron: ll. 1405-10).

When Lancelot is wandering in search of adventure he disdains the humble fare offered by a poor man, much to the latter's distress and shame:

Et li preudon de pitié pleure.
 Por ço qu'il nel puet retenir,
 (Merveilles de Rigomer: ll. 2392-3)

Although he had little to offer, it would have brought him great joy to receive Lancelot:

Qui povres est de toute riens,
 Mout grans li samble i petis bien.
 Ausi le preudome sanbloit,
 Qui Lancelot promis avoit
 Son ostel et sa carité
 Et ço que Dex li ot douné.
 (ll. 2397-2401)

Lancelot's attitude, however, is one of contempt:

Lanselos prendre ne le daingne,
 (line 2403)

This is an attitude which he is to regret, because he receives no other offers of lodgings and soon feels very hungry (ll. 2403-07). Lancelot's

pride is further punished later, when it is he who is the object of scorn because of his poverty. After a long absence, he arrives at court in such an impoverished state that he is not recognised:

Il n'avoit plus de tous avoires,
Povres ert et lais et cincens.
(ll. 15584-5)

He receives rough treatment from Arthur's household. He has to endure insults and a shower of missiles: a surprising reaction from the knights of the Round Table, pledged to help the poor!

"En mainte guise l'ont gabé
Li vallet et li escuier,
Si en r'ient li chevalier,
Et li garçon apriés le huënt,
De torqellons d'erbe le ruënt;
(ll. 15630-34)

It is not only courtly society which mocks the poor. When exiled King Guillaume approaches some merchants he is taken for a vagrant (Guillaume d'Angleterre: ll. 573-5). Later, merchants hurl insults at him, treating him as a robber, thus showing the attitude that a poor man must be dishonest.

".... Tués, tués
Ce vif diable, ce larron!"
(ll. 956-57)

d) Poverty hinders Ambition.

Poverty frustrates many courtly ambitions. This aspect of poverty figures especially in the case of marriage aspirations, and will be examined in the following chapter. More generally, poverty stands in the way of a glorious career otherwise open to a courageous, liberal knight, since it precludes the practice of largess, the noble expenditure, by which the knight confirms and publicizes his prowess.

On a more modest scale, there is the plight of Lugein in Yder. His father was a knight, and in the normal course of events, he, too, would have been knighted. Poverty has, however, intervened, and Lugein's hopes of achieving knighthood and its honours have dimmed. The young man considers the injustice of his position. By rights he should be at court, cultivating

social relationships, learning courtly etiquette. Poverty has rendered this impossible. Lugein has the will to succeed, but not the means:

"Or deüsse estre a une cort
 Fur acointer les bones genz
 E oïr buens enseignemenz;
 Mielz me s'üsse contenir,
 Si ja meis p'üst avenir
 Ke jo fusse fait chevaliers;
 Mult m'e/n/ est sors granz desturbiers;
 Li tot me faut par povreté
 Fors sul la bone volenté.
 (ll. 703-11)

e) Lament at inability to give.

For some victims of poverty, their main regret is that they can no longer give. They may lament either the curtailment of courtly largess, which is never disinterested, or charity, which is not entirely disinterested.

To Richard le Beau it is this aspect of poverty, the impossibility of giving, which tries him most.

"n'a mais que donner, mout l'en poise."
 (Richars li Biaus: line 4201)

Florimont's reaction is contradictory. He blames Largesse for his poverty, since he has lost his wealth by being over-generous. Poor, he regrets not being able to spend and give gifts (Florimont: ll. 4168-70).

We have already encountered the reactions of poor hosts who bewail their poverty chiefly on the grounds that they can no longer offer the lavish hospitality due to the knight errant⁽²⁰⁾.

When Eracle and his mother have disposed of all their wealth, they find themselves poor and friendless. They accept the hardship and the social disgrace stoically, but bitterly regret that they have no means of continuing their charity in the service of God: Present also is the anticipation of the reward they expect from God:

"
 Et si n'ont rien qui lor anuit,
 Fors de çou qu'il n'ont que doner
 Pour amour Deu, quis doit sauver.
 Ne plaignent pas çou que rien n'ont,
 Fors que pour Deu nul bien ne font,"
 (Eracle: ll. 376-80)

f) Lament at inability to fulfil social duties.

Giving may be considered from the point of view of courtly society a moral and a social duty. Morally the rich and privileged member of the first estate has an obligation to help those not so fortunate. The social duty is to himself, in that by his rich gifts he can increase his own prestige and affirm his social superiority.

In only one work have I found regrets expressed which stem from other aspects of social obligation, that is Beroul's Tristan.

Tristan and Yseult endure their hardship in the woods stoically, even joyfully as long as they are sustained by their mutual love. When this wanes with the diminishing effect of the love-potion, they begin to have regrets. In the first place, Tristan misses the external trappings of wealth and the exercise of his skill at arms:

"Ha! Dex, fait il, tant ai travail!"
(line 2161)

Oublié ai chevalerie,
A seure cort et baronie;
Ge sui essilié du país.
Tot m'est falli, et vair et gris.
Ne sui a cort a chevaliers.
(ll. 2165-69)

He complains that he should be at court served by young squires whom he would train for knighthood. He should, too, be establishing his own reputation by glorious and lucrative exploits abroad: it is his duty to earn his living:

"Or deüsse estre a cort a roi
Et cent danzeaus avoques moi,
Qui servissent por armes prendre
Et a moi lor servise rendre.
Aler deüsse en autres terres
Soudoier et soudees querre.
(ll. 2173-78)

Tristan also has misgivings on the queen's account: by being with him, she has sacrificed her right to the finery and luxury of court-life.

"Et poise moi de la roïne
Qu' je doins loge por cortine;
En bois est et si peüst estre
En beles chappres o son estre,
Portendues de dras de soie.
Par moi a prise male voie."
(ll. 2179-84)

Yseult, too, has secret regrets: she should be performing her social role at court. She should be caring for the maidens in her service and arranging suitable marriages for them:

"Les damoiseles des anors,
 Les filles as frans vavassors,
 Deusse ensemble o moi tenir
 En mes chambres por moi servir,
 Et les deusse marier
 Et as seignors por bien doner."
 (11. 221-16)

g) Pride in Poverty.

Some courtly characters affect indifference to the social shame caused by their impecuniosity. They rise above the opinion of society, and retain a sense of personal dignity.

Enide's father is sorry that Enide is so poorly dressed, but points out that on many occasions she has had the opportunity to be wealthy by means of a rich marriage. Her father, however, is conscious of high birth and is determined that she should make a noble match (Erec et Enide: ll. 525-32). He claims that Enide is his only joy and represents a treasure for him. Material wealth is unimportant in comparison with his beautiful daughter (ll. 541-46). This claim is true on another level also, since Enide does in fact prove to be his source of wealth by her marriage to Erec.

While some courtly heroes are reduced to begging, others refuse to lose their dignity. Even when desperate for food and money, they prefer to suffer rather than invite the additional shame which comes from accepting gifts or charity.

Florimont is advised by one of Rysus' soldiers to ask the latter for money. He has remarked that Florimont looks as though he had need of a material gift (Florimont: ll. 4467-70). Florimont's reply indicates his attitude of pride and his dignity. He has not come to ask for money, but to earn the friendship of Rysus:

"Ne sui por son avoir venus.
 Se toz sui de povre pooir,
 Muelz ain s'amor que son avoir."
 (11. 4474-6)

The merchant who is abducting King Guillaume's wife, offers him money in order to relieve his distress, but also in order to bribe Guillaume to let him take the queen without a fuss:

"Biax dous amis, creés conseil:
Cinc besans de fin or vermel
Vos donrai, se vos remanés;
Car après nos por nient venés.
Prendés, amis, par ma priere,
Et les besans et l'aumosniere,
Car mestier vos porra avoir."
(Guillaume d'Angleterre, ll. 723-9)

To accept would be dishonourable on both accounts, to take charity and to accept the bribe, so Guillaume does not hesitate to voice a proud and indignant refusal:

"Sire, n'ai soing de vostre avoir,
Je n'ai cure de vo presant,
Vostre soient vostre besant;
Car jou nes prendroie a nul fuer,
(ll. 730-33)

His attitude is incomprehensible to the merchant who concludes that he is either over-arrogant or very stupid:

"Vassal, trop estes de grant cuer
U trop sos u trop desdigneus,
Quant d'avoir estes besoignex,
Ne ne daigniés cinc besans prendre."
(ll. 734-37)

To resume, poverty is a disaster for the courtly hero because it is a condition diametrically opposed to his habits and aspirations. When confronted with poverty, he has reason to complain.

The hero's laments cover all aspects of poverty. Evidently the physical hardship is difficult to endure, but this does not seem to worry him unduly, with the exception of the Count of St. Gilles in the Comte d'Anjou. This aspect is overshadowed by the social disgrace; which, encompassing loss of friends, acquaintances, servants and admirers, makes him an outcast from his natural social environment. He is an object of scorn not only to courtly society, but also outside the courts, to people of low birth, to whom wealth would also appear to be important.

We glimpse the contrast between two very different worlds in the closed, privileged world of courtly society to which the hero belongs, and the harsh, unfriendly world of the third estate in which the poor hero is exiled. He is a stranger in the latter milieu, he has no means of defence adapted to this society. The art of chivalry is of no use to him. Although not equipped for survival in poor society, in most cases the poor hero learns to adapt. (See next section II.D.)

The predominant attitude is the grief which is motivated by a sense of injustice. For a person of high birth, brought up to wealth and social acclaim, poverty is both tragic and incongruous. It is above all an undeserved affliction, since a nobleman is, by nature, upbringing and social order, destined for wealth and glory.

4. Temporary Solutions to Poverty.

Poverty is not of long duration for the courtly hero. By a change of circumstances or by his own efforts he is able speedily to recover his wealth and social position. This is achieved in many cases by the exercise of knightly skills and qualities.

In the romances, we note that there are various short-term remedies for poverty to which the hero has recourse when he needs money or equipment urgently. These temporary expedients do not usually enable him to acquire great wealth, but simply to survive.

a) Borrowing.

Loath though the courtly heroes are, in general, to receive, they are prepared, when desperate, to borrow.

Ille, on his arrival in Rome, decides to enlist as an ordinary soldier in the Emperor's army. Without arms, he cannot realise even that humble ambition. He asks the senechal to lend him modest arms and armour. He specifies that he wants old equipment so that, if he is killed, the loss

incurred by his benefactor should not be too great:

"Bials sire, car me pretissiés
 Unes armes povres et viés
 Et .i. escuier qui les port.
 I ronci ai, ne quier plus fort,
 Et se jø muir, sire, as passages,
 Cho nen iert preus ne grans damages."
 Li senescals fait que cortois:
 Unes viés armes a borjois,
 Qui molt erent enrumellie/s/.
 (Ille et Galeron: ll. 1390-8)

His modest request granted, this proves to be the turning point for Ille.

It breaches the gap between poverty and wealth. With his arms, rusty though they be, he has the instruments of his profession and he uses them to gain wealth. Prestige comes before possession of wealth, however, so when he captures horses in the ensuing battle, he immediately gives them away. Those who had mocked him earlier are impressed by his liberality in poverty. The senechal comments:

"Ricement s'est vengié de nos."
 (line 1473)

Florimont finds an original solution to poverty. Acting on the principle that wealth attracts wealth, he is determined to stage an outward show of wealth, even though he has no means of paying for it. He sends Floquart to the court of Philippe of Bulgaria, when they first arrive, to ask him for clothes and money for expenses (Florimont: ll. 4904-7). Florimont has faith in the largess of the king:

"A prince kerez a vestir;
 Il ne vos lairait pas faillir
 Et despance li demandez.
 (ll. 4913-5)

Next, Florimont intends to exploit the legendary generosity of courtly hosts. Floquart is to find the richest bourgeois of the capital, and to ask for lodgings in return for payment (ll. 4929-33). Florimont then proposes to embark upon an enormous bluff. Settled in his rich lodgings, he plans to practise noble expenditure on the most extravagant scale. His show of largess is to be widely publicised and all comers are to benefit:

"Chevaliers qui n'avrait hernois,
 S'avoir en welt, vignet a moi;
 Damoisiaus qui armes vodrait,
 C'il vient a moi, il les avrait.
 C'il i ait povre chevalier
 Qui nen ait armes ne destrier,
 Cheval, armes et palefroi
 Avrait, c'il welt venir a moi."
 (ll. 4953-60)

Florimont's motives for his bluff are not explicitly stated, but one may deduce from subsequent events that he was practising political largesse. He intends to distinguish himself in the wars in which King Philippe is involved. As a poor foreigner without a retinue of knights, he cannot achieve this aim. Hence the noble expenditure which attracts knights in large numbers, who, dazzled by his wealth and generosity, readily agree to serve him. The irony of the situation lies in the fact that, while promising rich armour, arms and horses to all his guest knights, Florimont does not yet possess any himself. He has to rely on the kindness of the bourgeois.

Once Florimont is properly equipped, loyally supported by military followers, he is confident of personal success in the forthcoming battle. By his prowess he is sure to gain sufficient wealth to pay his enormous debts:

"Se peoie les rens cerchier,
 Plus cuideroie gueaignier
 En un jor que en .C. despandre,
 Se je me puis as armes prandre."
 (ll. 4965-8)

Floquart faithfully carries out his instructions: he finds the richest man in town and promises him a generous reward for his services (ll. 5075-77). The bourgeois, Delphis, readily agrees to provide all that they need:

"Li ferai avoir sens anui
 Plus que il ne voront despandre,
 Car ju ai bien l'avoir ou prandre."
 (ll. 5100-2)

He makes the necessary preparations. However, when he discovers that his distinguished guest is called "Li Povres Perdus", he begins to worry, and fears that he has been tricked (ll. 5176-78). Floquart explains the situation, and insists that Florimont's poverty is temporary. A man of his character and courage cannot be poor for long, because he will not yield to poverty (ll. 5198-5208). Floquart succeeds in convincing Delphis of their good character and potential wealth, and the host agrees to go ahead with the arrangement.

Florimont next meets resistance from his fellow soldiers. They know him only as a poor knight who begged Rysus to retain him. When invited to share Florimont's rich lodgings they are sceptical. They eventually accept, but when they realise the extent of his extravagance, they begin to have serious doubts. They fear that they will be thrown into prison with Florimont when he is unable to pay his bill. Floquart reports these fears to Florimont (ll. 5757-9). With his borrowed assets, Florimont launches into systematic political largess. He creates new knights, equips others, also presenting gifts to their ladies. The trusting Delphis obligingly provides the gifts. Consequently, to Florimont is attributed a reputation for not only liberality, but also intelligence and military prowess, a reputation he has yet to prove.

Mout fist de cheveliers noviaus
 Et les armes et les destriers
 Donoit as atres cheveliers
 Et a ses dames del païs
 Donoit et le vair et le gris;
 Selui mout boen grei en savoit
 Que son avoir prendre veloit,
 Et Delfis, ses ostes, li rant
 Seu que il donet et despant.
 Tuit l'amoient por sa largesse,
 Por son sens et por sa proësce.
 (ll. 6444-54)

Florimont is now able to go into battle and further enhance his prestige. He has also achieved all this on credit.

b) Pawning.

The practice of pawning was apparently a common one at this period,

and the consequent debts were enormous and rarely paid⁽²¹⁾. In the romances, the hero sometimes finds it necessary to pawn his land or his equipment.

When Durmart is banished from his father's court, he has no source of wealth. He is not yet a knight, and cannot, therefore, earn his own living. He lives off his mistress, supplementing this income with what he could get by pawning his personal belongings:

Durmars engage les mantiaz,
Les chaintures et les joiaz,
Quar a despendre rien n'avoit,
Se la dame ne li donoit.
(Durmars: ll. 551-4)

Joufroi also has recourse to pawning in times of poverty. His extravagant way of life necessitates a constant supply of wealth which he and Robert gain by almost any available means. Pawning was a last resort:

Si mistrent en gage chevaus,
Haubers, joiaus et robes beles,
Palefrois /et/ roncins et seles,
Si que vaillant un sol denier
Ne lor remest a engachier.
(Joufroi: ll. 3394-8)

Tristan had done likewise with his equipment since he asks Yseult to redeem it for him (Beroul's Tristran: ll. 183-85).

When poverty first beset Enide's father, he borrowed money on his land. This, however, was only a temporary source of relief, and he finally had to sell the land (Erec et Enide: ll. 516-17).

Abandoned by Ille, Galeron decides to undertake a long journey in order to find him. To raise the necessary money, she mortgages her land:

.M. mars emprunte sor sa tiere
Et puis si vait son segnor quere
(Ille et Galeron: ll. 1286-8)

Richard le Beau uses this method to finance his liberality. However, he raises money on the estates of his father, without the latter's permission. This indicates his desperate need to give, since he is prepared to do what is tantamount to stealing:

Les castiaus engaga son pere,
 Four lui parfurnir ses despens.
 Ainc ses peres n'i prist assens,
 Ains engaga villez et bours,
 Castyaus et fremetez et tours.
 (Richars li Biaus: ll. 4182-6)

Pawning seems an unsatisfactory way of raising money and, in the romances, serves merely to delay, but not prevent, poverty.

c) Lowly and Menial Tasks.

We have already seen how the Count of St. Gilles was unable to survive poverty because he was unfitted for anything but chivalrous activities. This is not the case of all the courtly heroes when confronted by poverty. Some adapt to the circumstances in order to survive, and prove their versatility in the exercise of lowly tasks usually performed by members of the third estate.

Some remain within their own sphere of activity but accept a position well beneath that which is usual. Hence Ille and Florimont become ordinary paid soldiers, retained by a nobleman (see above pp. 690, 693)

Gautier d'Aupais sinks even lower on the social scale. He accepts the humble position of watchman or "gaitte". He is eager to serve well and for less than the usual wage (Gautier d'Aupais: ll. 184-5).

While searching for Aelis, Guillaume is obliged to earn his living. He has no horse or arms, so chivalry is out of the question. He finds employment with a bourgeois who keeps a hostelry to receive travellers (L'Escoufle: ll. 6188-93). Guillaume worked well, and when it was time for him to move on, he collected his hard-earned wages from his kind employer (ll. 6316-7). Guillaume travels on to St. Gilles, where he finds another job serving in a hostelry. He is paid fifty sous a year. Poverty teaches him to be careful with money, and out of his meagre wages and tips he manages to save in order to continue his quest. He learns the bourgeois virtue of parsimony. The poet comments that he was courageous and clever in a way that was foreign to him and his upbringing:

Mout est preus d'estrange maniere,
 Il set mout bien bouter ariere
 Ce don li done et ce qu'il a.
 Toute l'entencions qu'il a
 Si est d'esparnier et d'aquerre,
 K'il rira par tans, ce dist, querre
 La rien el mont qu'i/17 plus amot.
 (ll. 6605-11)

Guillaume d'Angleterre, once a king, also finds himself working for a bourgeois. He has to perform such menial tasks as fetching water from the well, skinning eels, grooming horses, preparing poultry, and generally looking after the household. His future employer first asks him if he can cope with all these tasks:

"Or me di, Gui, que ses tu faire?
 Saras tu l'eve del puc traire,
 Et mes anguilles escorcier?
 Saras tu mes cevax torcier?
 Saras tu mes oisiax larder?
 Saras tu ma maison garder?
 Se tu le sès bien faire nete
 Et tu ses mener me carète,
 Dont deserviras tu moult bien,
 Çou que jou te donrai del mien."
 (Guillaume d'Angleterre: ll. 999-1008)

Guillaume is very willing to stoop to this menial work:

En liu de garçon sert li rois
 Moult volentiers chiés le borgois.
 (ll. 1013-4)

He is obedient and hard-working. As a reward the bourgeois offers him the opportunity to get rich by trading. He will lend Guillaume sufficient capital to establish himself and when Guillaume has made his profits, he will recover only the original loan. He stresses that he will not demand any interest, and seems very conscious of his unusual generosity:

" Gui, se toi plaist,
 Jou te presterai volentiers
 Trois cenz livres de mes deniers;
 Si va gaaignier et aquerre
 En Flandres u en Engleterre,
 U en Provence u en Gasçoigne.
 Se tu ses faire ta besogne
 A Bar, a Provins u a Troies,
 Ne puet estre rices ne soies;
 Et jou n'i quierc ja part avoir, ← mais que jou raie mon avoir,
 Et tiens soit trestous li gaains
 De povreté est lais mehains,

Et tu en es moult mehaigniés,
 Se tu avoie gaaigniés
 Vaillant deus cenç mars de conquest,
 Ne prendroie jou nul aquest."
 (ll. 1960-76)

One notes the contrast between this offer and courtly liberality. The latter does not seek a return although the beneficiary has the moral obligation to return the gift or kindness. (See preceding chapter on "guerredon".) The merchant is motivated by generosity, but his is not extravagant liberality. What he is proposing is a commercial transaction whereby he will recoup the original loan and thus lose nothing.

Guillaume accepts the offer gratefully. He proves to be an excellent trader. He combines shrewdness with honesty. No-one can swindle him by bargaining, and he sells everything at its true value:

Moult le vent bien et moult le prise
 A ciax qui a lui bargaignent.
 De nule cose ne l'engaignent,
 Car bien set de cascun avoir
 Qu'il vaut et qu'il en puet avoir.
 (ll. 2062-6)

Guillaume adapted very well to his new life although he was brought up to a very different destiny. His sons, however, who have never known anything but trading, have scruples about following a commercial livelihood. The adoptive father of one of the boys advises him to learn a profitable trade so that he may be rich and respected. He points out that poverty will bring only shame:

"aprenés
 A gaaignier si com jou fis.
 Qui rices est moult troeÿe amis;
 Et si est moult vix qui nient n'a,
 Ja nus ne li apartenra,
 Ne ne l'aime ne ne le prise."
 (ll. 1572-7)

Instinctively the boy finds the trader's methods of getting rich repugnant, particularly the practice of usury:

De tout çou n'a li enfes cure;
 N'a soing de prester a usure,
 Que se mature li caloigne:
 (ll. 1589-91)

The poet claims that, although brought up in an uncourtly environment, the boys possess innate courtly virtues which cannot be modified by the influences of their upbringing. Nature triumphs over environment (ll. 1369-81). Both boys leave home, go to court, and are retained by King Catanasse. They are thus drawn by their courtly instincts to their natural social environment.

5. Women's solutions to Poverty.

When women are confronted by poverty, in the romances, they usually meet the challenge with courage. Exploiting their skills, they succeed in being self-sufficient. The courtly heroines thus reveal as much independence of spirit as their male counterparts.

This refusal of poverty is an illustration of the concern for wealth manifested by the ladies of the romances. Dependent, in normal circumstances, upon their father or husband, the lady of courtly society does not acquire wealth or spend lavishly. On occasions of noble expenditure she is very much a secondary character. Courtly ladies are more usually associated with charity than with liberality.

Nevertheless a preoccupation with wealth, a shrewdness and practical common sense characterise those heroines who play an important part in the narrative. They do not hesitate to seek champions to contest disinheritance. We shall see also, in the next chapter, that it is common for a rich lady to initially refuse marriage to a poor courtly hero on the grounds that she would be socially disgraced. Of course her attitude changes when Amors takes hold of her.

There is also the case of Yseult who when she orders Tristan to pose as a beggar, carries verisimilitude to the point where she insists that he bring to her the fruits of his collect. Her motive for this is not clear. Is it the avarice of which women are so often accused in the didactic works?⁽²²⁾ I think not, since everyone is accused of avarice and covetousness in these works. More likely it is the practical foresight which is displayed by

other heroines of the romances. When young lovers prepare to flee from home it is often the girl who remembers to take money and jewelry with her.

When Aelis and Guillaume are about to leave, the former advises him to bring plenty of riches with him for their journey:

"Aportés assés de l'avoir
Et de besans et de richoises
En boines besaces turcoises."
(Escoufle: ll. 3588-90)

When Blonde and Jehan elope, Blonde has remembered to bring with her a case of jewels which represents her trousseau:

Un forgier empli de joiaus,
N'en vaut porter autres torsiaus.
(Jehan et Blonde: ll. 2873-4)

Similarly the daughter of the Comte d'Anjou takes as much wealth as she can carry when she leaves home with her companion.

Lors accordent un propos tel
Que joiaux et or et argent
Porteront avec eulz,
(Comte d'Anjou: ll. 646-8)

They will be travelling on foot and so have to choose light objects. They therefore fill two jewel cases with as much transportable wealth as possible in the form of precious stones and gold ornaments:

En deus escrins lez ont enclosez
Qui ne sont mie molt pesans.
Si valoit plus de mil besans
L'or et lez joiaux et lez pierres
Precieusez, fines et chieres,
Que elles ont es escrins mises,
Dont il y ot de maintes guises:
Esmeraudes, saphirs, yagonces,
De grosses pelles bien quatre onces,
Dyamans, rubis et thopaces,
Qui sont chieres en toutes places,
Cercles d'or, corognes, affiches,
Aniaux et plusieurs joiaux riches,
(ll. 674-86)

This considerable wealth is destined not for show and extravagant spending, but for practical purposes. Whenever the courtly hero sets off on a journey, he, too, takes wealth with him, but mainly so that he will be seen to be rich, so that he can practise courtly liberality and secure his prestige.

There is no sign of this attitude in the case of the courtly ladies. The heroine of the Comte d'Anjou, in spite of her wealth, chooses humble lodgings and later is content to work for her living. It is not need which motivates this, as she herself claims, but the desire not to be idle. She views idleness as a vice:

Et si feront des oeuvres telles
Comme se vent fere de soie;
Ne veulent pas que on lez voie
Oiseusez estre ne faintices,
Quer oiseusetéz atrait viches.
(ll. 1342-6)

Other heroines take up needlework out of necessity and live off the proceeds. This is the case of Aelis. The young peasant girl who is her companion offers to keep her by making and selling wimples. Aelis, however, decides to contribute to their resources. She will make luxury articles in silk and gold thread:

"Bien sachiés que jou referoie
Joiiaus de fil d'or et de soie,
K'il n'est feme ki tant en sache:
D'orfrois, de çainture, d'atache,
De ce faire ai je tot le pris."
(Escoufle: ll. 5457-61)

She is very successful. Her work sells well. A lot of her custom is initially attracted by her great beauty and charm. Her clients voluntarily paid high prices for her goods:

Il ne li donent pas a conte
Les deniers; mout croist et engraigne,
Por ses joiiaus et por s'ouvraigne,
Le loier sa grant gentelise."
(ll. 5492-95)

Fresne has equal success with her needlework. On the death of her guardian, she has to leave the abbey, where she was brought up, to escape the hostility of the abbess. By her needlework she is able to accumulate wealth. Consequently she attracts many marriage proposals. Her suitors vie for her favour by the traditional courtly methods - they spend lavishly and undertake tournaments for her love. (Galeran de Bretagne: ll. 4282-97).

Aelis and Fresne are not tempted by their suitors. They love Guillaume and Galeran respectively, and remain faithful to them. Guillaume d'Angleterre's wife, however, finds a means of accepting a profitable marriage without compromising her honour and remaining a loyal wife. The proposal is an attractive one. The knight offers her not only himself but is prepared to put his land in her name:

"Dame fait il, je vos otroi
Tote ma terre cuite et moi;
Ma terre ert vostre plus que moie.
(Guillaume d'Angleterre: ll. 1095-7)

The queen is tempted by the land as a means of remedying her poverty, but she does not want to be the wife of the knight:

La terre veut, de lui n'a cure
(line 1197)

Eventually she agrees to the marriage on condition that it is not consummated for one year so that she may complete three years' penance imposed, she claims, by the Pope. The knight agrees, they are married, but the knight conveniently dies within twelve months, leaving his land to his wife. This is an uncourtly course of action on the part of the queen, since courtly people do not marry for wealth in the romances. One cannot rule out covetousness in this case.

C. Chief Sources of Wealth of Courtly Hero.

When the courtly hero is a victim of poverty, his means of recovering wealth and social position are of relevance to the narrative, and are, therefore, fully explained. In those romances where poverty is not the lot of the hero, his source of wealth is not necessarily mentioned. Often the fabulous wealth of the romance heroes would appear to have no logical source. The knight gives extravagantly, but refuses every opportunity to replenish his riches. He gives the trophies of war to his soldiers, he waives ransoms, refuses gifts, disdains payment for his services, and marries for love not wealth. To seek to explain his wealth in view of his

use of it, is an impossible task. Besides it is of no importance in the courtly works. The poets usually do not attempt to balance income and expenditure. It is sufficient that the hero be rich and give generously.

One can nevertheless glean from the romances the possibilities open to the knight to get rich by activities peculiar to his society and considered honourable by it.

1. Warfare.

The booty available to the courtly hero from warfare is often limitless, and many poets describe at length the prizes won by the hero and his followers. Such descriptions abound in those works where interest centres on conflict between different countries, as in the Roman de Troie. After the first destruction of Troy, the Greeks were assured of lasting wealth from the riches they captured:

Onc puis povreté ne conurent:
 Riches asaz e manant furent;
 De Troie e de sa manantie
 Fu tote Grece replenie.
 (ll. 2821-4)

a) Booty: the soldier's reason for fighting.

Anticipation of rich booty is used by army commanders as an incitement to their soldiers to fight well. This is the aspect stressed by Auguise's rallying speech in support of Arthur's decision not to pay tribute to Rome and thus provoke war:

"Deus! queus avoirs, Deus! queus tresors,
 Se Deus garist de mal noz cors,
 Avront cil qui avoir voldront,
 Jamés cil povre ne seront.
 La verrons nos les biaux avoirs.
 La verrons nos les biaux menoires,
 La verrons nos les biaux chastiaus
 Et les chevaux forz et isniaus!"
 (Brut: ll. 2467-74)

The courtly hero fights for justice not for material gain, but when encouraging his men, he may use the prospect of potential wealth to spur

them on. He understands that their motives probably differ from his. They fight for their livelihood, and so the riches to be had assume more importance than the justness of the cause.

When Cristal rallies the Countess's troops against the invaders, he presents it as a point of honour to the soldiers that they should capture all the available booty:

"Segnors, ves la vos prous;
Or poront li prou gaaignier
Cevals et robes et denier."
(Cristal et Clarie: ll. 5348-50)

b) Fairness in gain and sharing of booty.

The courtly heroes are not motivated by covetousness when they take booty. It is also noticeable in the romances that the booty is legal and not the fruits of rapine. The hero is on the side of justice, and so triumphs over his enemies who are fighting for the worst motives, usually covetousness, and who, therefore, deserve to lose their wealth.

Arthur's policy on conduct in war springs from this sense of justice. His men are forbidden to plunder. The only thing taken from an occupied land should be necessary food and provisions, and those should be paid for at a fair price. This is put into practice during his conquest of Gaul:

Flandres et Boloigne conquist,
Viles seisi et chastiaus prist.
Sagemant fist sa gent conduire,
Ne volt pas la terre destruire,
Viles ardoir ne robes prandre;
Tot fist veher et tot desfandre
Fors viande et boivre et provande,
Et se l'an trueve qui la vande,
A bons deniers soit achatee,
Ne soit tolue ne robee.
(Brut: ll. 1353-62)

After a successful battle it was the custom for all booty to be assembled and presented to the commander-in-chief to dispose of as he saw fit. No soldier was allowed to appropriate booty before the general distribution. In Gilles de Chyn the penalty for doing so was severe - the guilty person would lose a hand, threatens the King of Jerusalem:

Li rois a fait a tous savoir
 Que nus d'aus n'i tenge a avoir
 Dusqu'en repair: le poing perdra
 Qui un tout seul point en prendra.
 (ll. 2490-3)

When Henry of England's army conquers Scotland, largely through the efforts of Joufroi and Robert, the two heroes present all the booty to Henry who promises them a rich reward:

andous les pris
 Rendent au roi en sa baillie,
 Et il forment les en mercie,
 Et grant biens lor promet a faire.
 (Joufroi: ll. 3186-9)

Thus warfare, in the romances, is conducted in an orderly and just fashion. All booty reverts to the commander, who is often the courtly hero. Its quantity and rich quality crowns the success of the victors and is tangible proof of the prowess of the courtly hero, who, of course, has captured most of it himself.

c) Booty and liberality.

Once in possession of the booty, the courtly hero has the opportunity to further increase his personal glory, by giving it all away. It is an opportunity which he does not miss. The less he keeps for himself, the more he is admired. This link with the theme of liberality is the most emphasised aspect of booty in the romances.

Cleomadès helps his father resist and conquer five invading kings. After the battles, the booty is assembled, and Cleomadès' father, King Marcadigas, distributes it to his soldiers. He does not even keep a small sum of money for himself, because he believes that those who have suffered on his behalf deserve it more. This was proof of his wisdom, generosity and prowess, says the poet. He even gives gifts from his personal resources:

Marcadigas si departi
 le gaaing qui fu fais iki
 K'ains n'en retint quatre besans;
 Se il en i eüst dis tans,
 Si l'eüst il trestout donné
 ceaus qui en avoient sué

ou hiaume et leur sanc expandu.
 Sages et larges et preus fu,
 dou sien propre tant leur donna
 que chascuns de lui se loia. (23)
 (Cleomadès: ll. 1355-64)

The soldiers go home happy and rich:

en leur pays sont repairié,
 riche d'avoir et de cuer lié.
 (ll. 1365-6)

Marcadigas is equally rich and happy, but his wealth lies chiefly in the joy he feels - presumably from his victory, the loyalty of his men, from the delight in being able to give and the prestige he gained from it.

Marcadigas est demorés
 de joie riches et comblés.
 (ll. 1369-70)

It is Florimont who distributes the booty after the successful war against the King of Hungary. Merit and losses incurred are taken into consideration. The soldiers were richly compensated:

Il com_andoit a seneschal
 Que l'eschac parset per engal:
 Selui qui a cheval perdu
 Por un l'en soient troi rendu:
 Selonc que chascuns puet valoir
 Ait del hernais et de l'avoir.
 (Florimont: ll. 10847-52)

When Prophilias has defeated King Bilas, he orders the booty to be amassed, so that sight of it will cheer those who are grieved by the death of a companion or relation:

Mes les armes et les espees,
 Broisnes, targes a or listees,
 Les palefroiz et les destriers
 Et muls et mules et somiers,
 Les riches trez, les pavellons,
 Le riche eschec que fet avons,
 Tot devant nos ferons mener,
 Por le duel feire r'atrenprer.
 (Athys et Prophilias: ll. 8415-22)

In the distribution, priority is given to those who lost a son in the battle, so that they would be amply compensated. Prophilias attributes to wealth the power to cure all ills. It will transform the grief caused by bereavement into joy!

"Car granz avoires grant duel oblie.
 En grant avoir a grant rehet;
 Tost change l'en un grant mesfet."
 (ll. 8432-34)

This is not a courtly attitude, and is never true in the case of the courtly hero himself. He will put love above wealth. He is probably assuming that such fine feelings are peculiar to high-born people. For the poor soldiers, wealth will suffice to eliminate such sorrow as these inferior people are capable of feeling. It is only a courtly attitude in as much as it reflects the contempt with which noblemen regarded the villeins, equating their poverty with frustrated covetousness.

Such distributions demonstrate the generosity of the courtly hero, but rarely is mention made of him benefiting himself from the fruits of war. An exception is Gilles de Chyn who, after the first conflict against the Turks, gives away his share, chiefly to the poor (Gilles de Chyn: ll. 2672-82). After the next battle, the king effects the distribution, and this time Gilles receives the largest share on merit, because he was chiefly responsible for the victory:

Car par lui fu li gaains fais;
 (line 3479)

d) Booty, honourable source of wealth for hero.

Heroes like Cristal and Florimont insist upon earning their wealth in war, taking from their conquered opponents, and not by receiving payment for their services. They refuse all gifts and "guerredons".

Cristal admits that he needs money and anticipates replenishing his wealth in the battle he has undertaken in defence of a countess:

"Et se je puis, tant li ferai
 Que sa guerre a fin li metrai.
 Volentiers serai soldoier,
 Grant mestier ai de gaaignier.
 N'en ruis ja riens del sien avoir,
 Se je nel pries de ceaus avoir,
 Que li font guere et damage."
 (Cristal et Clarie: ll. 5095-5101)

And yet, the war terminated, Cristal gives away all the booty and refuses all gifts from the countess. When she insists, he accepts, but the gifts are immediately passed on to his squires. In spite of his inconsistency, he does not appear to lack wealth. Later, he modifies his attitude. He offers to serve King Bruiant, Clarie's father. He does not categorically refuse payment, but affects indifference to any reward:

"Soldoiers sui d'estrange terre
E soldees sui venus querre.
Soldoiers serai sans soldees,
S'a force ne me sont donees."
(ll. 6563-6)

The king promises to pay him richly:

"Amis," fait il, "je vos retieng
Et asés vos donrai del mien.
Se vos estes en mes soldees,
Mout rices vos seront donees."
(ll. 6569-72)

Cristal raises no objection this time. Perhaps his earlier generosity had cost him too dear.

Florimont, too, will only keep what he has won by his skill at arms. He consistently refuses gifts, and at one point experiences poverty as a result of his largess. The poet approves of Florimont's conduct and attributes his refusal of payment to his prowess, wisdom and courtliness:

Sens avoir avoit grant richesce
Et de fin cuer et de proësce,
Onques avoir d'aïtrui ne prist,
Se a ses armes nel conquist,
Car prous fut et saige et cortois,
(Florimont: ll. 6125-29)

When King Philippe offers to retain him, Florimont refuses. He will earn his payment directly from the enemy in the forthcoming battle:

Et li rois li a mout proié
Qu'il prest de lui livreïson
Et il et tuit si compaignon.
Et il respont: n'en prendrait mie;
Livrer li doit li rois d'Ongrie.
A Calocast/r/o irons prendre
Seu que devons issi despendre."
(ll. 6420-26)

No mention is made of Florimont's personal gain from the battle. He must, however, have kept a great deal of his winnings if only in order to pay his huge debts to his host, Delphis. ⁽²⁴⁾

Thus war was a rich source of wealth for the courtly hero, but, in the romances, the wealth is no sooner acquired than it is passed on to others. Thus war becomes an occasion not for gain, but for enhancement of prestige, firstly by military prowess and later by a generous and showy disposal of what has been won.

e) Justice opposes personal gain.

The attitude of the courtly hero in war, his motives and conduct are in contrast to those of ordinary soldiers. One no longer went to war to serve one's lord, but for profit, says S. Painter ⁽²⁵⁾. I have found in the romances that this is reflected only by the anonymous knights, or ordinary soldiers, never by the courtly hero himself, whether he is a poor knight or rich lord.

There is criticism of soldiers who fight for pay, regardless of the justness of the cause, in the Comte d'Anjou. The countess of Chartres, who has plotted against the heroine, raises an army to defend her from the retribution which is promised. The soldiers willing to serve her are those who are inspired by covetousness. The countess exploits their greed by promising them double their wages, and by paying them in advance. The poet describes the mentality of these soldiers who care not whether they are risking their lives for a good or evil cause, but think only of the material profit they can gain:

Soudoiers mandent hors de France
 En maintes terres et contrees;
 Si leur donna doubles soldeez
 Et poia pour trois mois entiers,
 A celle fin que volentiers
 Et de cuer vieignent a la guerre;
 Car pour or et argent conquerre
 Met homme en peril cors et vie
 Ne ne garde, tel foiz est, mie
 Se l'uvre est juste ou torchonniere,
 Ainz ne li chaut, mes qu'il acquiere.

(ll. 7098-100)

King Nogart is able to use his great wealth to win greedy soldiers away from the service of the Queen of Ireland. Here, however, it is not the poor soldiers who yield to the bribery, but knights and barons who owe loyalty to their suzerain. The poet condemns this treason motivated by covetousness, he claims they will be dishonoured and despised. However, those obsessed with personal gain care little about the censure of others. They can see no further than their own material profits. They do not know the desire for prestige achieved by kind actions which motivates the true courtly hero, says the poet:

Mult doit on bien celui reprendre
 Qui se honist por avoir prendre,
 Car quant li avoires estalés,
 N'est pas li blasmes obliés.
 Mais de ce ne se gardent mie
 Cil qui la roïne ont trahie;
 Comme mavais li ont failli.
 (Durmart: ll. 10663-69)

2. Tournaments.

The riches to be gained from tournaments were not as unlimited as in battle, but nevertheless furnished the skilled knight with a source of revenue. However, as with war, the courtly hero does not appear to take part in tournaments for personal gain. Motive for participation in tournaments is in no way linked to a just cause as in the case of war. If the hero is not fighting for justice or money, once again it is the pursuit of prestige which he undertakes.

It is the courtly hero who wins the tournament, thus covering himself with glory. In doing so he also wins the greatest prizes, and with these he is able to indulge in noble expenditure for his further social advancement.

a) Ransoms and Poor Knights.

The usual procedure at tournaments is that captured knights present themselves to their captor after the fighting. A ransom would be arranged which was usually fixed at the loss of horse and armour, which could be

redeemed by a cash payment⁽²⁶⁾. Poor knights were thus protected since they could not lose more than they possessed. The captor of many knights could, however, gain considerable wealth.

Those knights who could not afford to redeem their arms might approach a rich patron. In Gilles de Chyn, a poor knight asks the countess to pay his ransom. Many other landless knights did likewise. The countess readily agrees:

Plains ert de mout grant vasselage
 Et s'estoit mout de grant savoir,
 Mais il n'ert pas ricez d'avoir:
 Au grant tornoi de Tré fu pris,
 De debte estoit mout entrepris.
 Venus estoit por demander,
 Si com maint povre bachelier
 Qui n'ont mie grans fiez de terre,
 Aloient lor rañçon querre.
 La contesse l'asseüra
 Que sa raençon paiera.

(ll. 1337-47)

After a tournament, Emperor Conrad performed a legendary act of generosity by compensating all losses and paying all ransoms. The poet claims that this was above all a brave gesture which cost him a great deal but that the consequent prestige was immeasurable. No other king would have had the courage to accept such an enormous expenditure:

Ses hauz cuers li fist la nuit fere
 Une honor et une vaillance
 Dont ses pris monta mout en France,
 Qu'il envoya ses seneschaus
 D'une part et d'autre as chevax
 Qui portent argent et avoir,
 Por fere les gages ravoir
 A trestoz ceuls qui voudrent prendre.
 (Guillaume de Dole: ll. 2842-49)

b) Tournaments a source of revenue for Courtly Hero.

Rarely is it explicit that tournaments are viewed by the courtly hero as a source of revenue. Richard le Beau is an exception. In order to subsidise his liberality he has to earn well. Hence his participation at all the tournaments he can find.

De l'avoir tant qu'il wet, conquiert,
Des tournois demande et enquierit,
(Richars li Biaus: ll. 1849-50)

His motive is not selfish gain, but the desire to continue his largess. We see from his behaviour at the conclusion of tournaments that personal gain does not enter into his actions, since he gives everything away to poor people and to his hosts:

Et Richars tournoy ne seust,
Que la ne fust ses confanons,
Conquiert avoir et prent prisons,
Et tout redoune a povres gens,
Donne a ses ostes biaus presens.
(ll. 3290-4)

c) Tournaments a source of revenue for others.

The attitude of the courtly hero does not coincide with that of all participants of tournaments. For some the financial reward is all important. Those who are attracted by the potential prizes are those who are not too proud to be associated with need - the anonymous poor knights. In Durmart, it is desire for gain, particularly the capture of horses, which spurs on the knights:

Grans est li cris et la hùee,
La desconfiture est levee;
Maintena/n/t vont haper as frains
Cil qui convoitent les gaains.
(ll. 7847-50)

At another bout, later, it is specified that those who are discontented with their financial status and covet the possessions of the richer knights launch into the fray determined to win what they can. This is not a courtly attitude but is not criticized, because it is shown by knights whose material need comes before concern for prestige⁽²⁷⁾:

Aprés commencent a chacier
Cil qui les gaains convoitoient;
Li un as altres les toloient.
Telz i convoita de l'autrui
Qui del sien ot mout grant ennui,
(ll. 8614-18)

The contrast in attitude between the courtly hero and the majority of

the competitors is illustrated in Ille et Galeron. Ille, although poor, and clad in borrowed armour, does not keep his trophies. He gives away the horses that he captures. The senechal remarks that Ille coveted success, but not acquisition. His largess forbids any greed for personal gain⁽²⁸⁾:

Del gaagnier fu convoitols,
Non por retenir a son oués:
Largece l'en delivra lués.
(ll. 1477-79)

d) Ransoms paid.

Conduct with regard to ransoms varies. Some courtly heroes demand the ransom and give the proceeds to their own men. Others waive the ransom and excuse their conquered opponents.

Galeron de Bretagne accepts the ransom from his victim, Guynart. It was paid by the Duke of Ramborc:

Li ducs de Ramborc chier rachate
L'ostage Guynant d'Osteriche:
Li Flamen sont de lui tuit riche,
Qui l'ont raiens, lui et sa gent,
Quatre cens mars ou plus d'argent.
(Galeron de Bretagne: ll. 6194-8)

At a tournament, Gui de Warewic unseats a duke and returns his horse for immediate payment of a ransom, here referred to as "gueredon".

"Sire, vostre cheval pernez,
Desore guerdon me devez!"
Fuis li rendi le gueredun
En grant bosoing cum barun.
(Gui de Warewic: ll. 861-4)

In Gilles de Chyn, two counts, who have been overcome by Gilles, have to pay rich ransoms: they also forfeit their harness.

Raiens se sont delivrement,
L. mars cascuns i rent
De raençon; sont delivré
Li doi conte par verité,
Fors le harnas cui riens ne monte.
(ll. 1023-27)

The courtly knight's sense of fair play is very much in evidence in tournaments. In the instances cited above, those who are held to their ransom are powerful noblemen who can afford to pay them without suffering

financial embarrassment. This would appear to be the main criterion of the courtly victor. The distinction between rich and poor prisoners is made in Rigomer. Gauvain has great success at a tournament and makes several prisoners, some of which were of rich landowners. He waived the ransoms, except in the case of kings, counts and dukes:

Mais tous çaus a quite rendus,
 Qui ne fu rois ne cuers ne dus.
 (ll. 13207-8)

e) Ransom waived.

Other courtly heroes decline ransoms irrespective of the wealth of their victims. Durmart's friend, Geogenant, has very distinguished prisoners after the tournament: Kay, Mordred and Tulas. He knows that he could demand heavy ransoms because they are all rich men. It is out of respect for King Arthur that he lets them off:

"Bien sai que je de vos aroie
 Grant raençon se je voloie;
 Vos estes riche home tot troi.
 Mais por vostre saignor le roi
 Qui tant aime la bone gent
 Vos clain je quite bonement,
 Si que ja riens n'i perderés."
 (Durmart: ll. 8355-61)

Guillaume de Dole has rich prisoners from a tournament. His hosts anticipate their share of the ransoms, unless, of course, the prisoners request that they be excused, in which case Guillaume would doubtless assent:

....., et si hoste
 Qui voient seoir a sa coste
 A cel souper .XV. prisons
 Dont il avront les raençons,
 S'il ne sont rendu par proiere.
 (Guillaume de Dole: ll. 2911-5)

Occasionally the courtly hero displays an even greater generosity. Not only does he free his prisoners without the customary ransom, he also gives presents to his conquered opponents. This is what Gliglois does. His companions receive the captured horses, he refuses all ransoms, and gives

gifts to prisoners and ex-crusaders. Consequently no one has cause to complain:

Tous les chevaus que gaaigna
 A departis ses compaignons,
 De tous ses chevaliers prisons
 Ne retient vaillant un ronchi,
 Ains dona tout et departi
 Et a prisons et a croisiés,
 Sy que cascuns s'en va^lliés.
 (Glinois: ll. 2672-8)

This generosity is shown even in war. The triumphant Florimont frees King Camdiobras and all prisoners. He does not ask for ransoms, but gives them clothes, armour, thus winning their love, an example of political largess.

Quant les ot delivrez li rois,
 Tant lor dona de bel hernois
 Que por ce qu'il lor fist d'onor
 L'amoient plus que lor signor.
 (Florimont: ll. 11511-4)

We see that, in general, whether in war or tournaments, the courtly hero's attitude does not change. Wealth is subordinated, as always, to "pris" which on these occasions is his sole aim. Pris or prestige resides not in his personal financial gain, but partly in the glorious way he is able to acquire it and primarily in the generous way he is willing to dispose of it. Since this winning and subsequent giving away of wealth is the normal pattern for the courtly heroes, we have to conclude that the rich knights have no tenable source of wealth.

3. "Pris Querre"

Actual possession of wealth is the preoccupation of the courtly hero when he is poor. In normal circumstances, what is important to him is the means of acquiring wealth, and the use of it, designed to achieve the greatest benefit for himself and others. In addition, there emerges from the romances the precept that wealth is shameful if it is not earned. This belief is closely linked with the refusal of gifts. The courtly hero must be seen to be worthy of his wealth, and he should therefore acquire it by

his skill at arms.

In numerous instances in the romances⁽²⁹⁾, the hero receives an inheritance on his marriage or on the death of his father. This windfall, however, never represents the primary source of his wealth. He has already enriched himself by his own efforts. His inheritance merely stabilises his wealth, confirms his social position and brings the narrative to a happy close. Unearned wealth is not approved of in the romances. Wealth and liberal disposal of it are not sufficient to assure a knight's reputation. Renown must arise out of chivalry. Hence the aim of the knight is to gain renown, 'pris querre', with all that is implied thereby.

a) "Pris": its import.

"Pris" covers various attributes. It is, in general, personal prestige, a glorious social reputation. It implies, too, the means of achieving these through the courtly qualities of "sens, "mesure", "prouesse", "largesse". "Sens" means the wisdom, and "savoir faire" of the nobleman. "Mesure" prevents him going to excesses, such as prodigality. By his prowess, he gains a reputation for skill at arms. All these are meaningless without "largesse" which encompasses not merely the giving of gifts, but the sense of justice that prompts the hero to perform acts of kindness, to rescue those in distress.

We have studied the aspects of skill at arms bringing success in war and at tournaments; also the largess of the courtly heroes, which is usually exteriorised at the conclusion of war and tournaments or at any other occasion for celebrations.

It is clear, also, that wealth was an essential asset to accompany the abstract qualities of "sens, mesure, prouesse" and "largesse". Poverty was inevitably abhorrent to the courtly hero. With the two main courtly attributes of prowess and largess, and sufficient wealth the hero was assured of personal and social success.

Not all courtly heroes have all three qualities, prowess, largesse and

wealth at the outset. Let us consider those who are rich. By their wealth they can show liberality. This is often sufficient to earn them a reputation for prowess, or it can buy the services of others to help one's military prowess. Once the prowess is exhibited in armed combat, this in turn provides a source of wealth, if the hero wishes to avail himself of it.

For the hero who is not rich, but well-born, versed in chivalry, his prowess is his point of departure. By his success at arms he can earn wealth and then practice largess. Thence his reputation for doughty deeds.

A person without either wealth or prowess is not a courtly hero.

Thus whether a fabulously rich king or an impecunious knight, the same nexus prevails. All three qualities, prowess, largess, wealth, are essential. The absence of one renders impossible the "pris" of a courtly hero. Without wealth, the hero cannot be generous, but his prowess will enable him to gain wealth. Without liberality, his wealth and prowess are to no avail. He will be hated for his avarice. Without prowess, his wealth cannot be replenished, and lack of success with arms can never make a knight's reputation. The courtly hero does not sit in his castle content merely to be giving gifts. This is demonstrated by Florimont who thought it was sufficient to give in order to have "pris". Consequently he is poor. Floquart explains that largess is useless if it is not supported by "sens" and "prouesce". Thus, in order to gain a reputation, he must certainly give, but he must know when to give and more important how to earn the wherewithall to give; as the poet remarks:

Et largesce selui essille
 Qui l'ait sens sens et sens proësce,
 Tost le met donor a povresce.
 Sens et proësce quiert sovent
 Tot seu que largesce despent.
 — (Florimont: ll. 4324-28)

Thus for rich and poor alike the chief aim is "pris querre", and "pris" subsumes the reconciliation of the three attributes of Wealth, Prowess and Largess.

b) Idleness condemned.

The task of seeking renown or "pris querre" takes the knight away from home. The courtly hero, whether his father is an emperor or a modest landowner, will set out alone to prove himself in the eyes of his society. The rich man has an advantage. He will take plenty of wealth and go independently in search of adventure. The poor man is more likely to go to the court of a powerful lord, offer his services, and eventually make his fame and fortune uniquely by his prowess. Whichever course he takes, the aim remains "pris querre", an ubiquitous phrase in the romances. This he can only achieve through his actions and efforts.

The romances betray a horror of idleness⁽³⁰⁾. It is in direct opposition to the quest of prestige. Extolled above all is personal effort and sacrifice.

When Durmart is wishing that he could find his lady, the poet comments that wishing will get him nowhere. The hero must be active. The same is true of poor men who wish they were rich. If lazy wicked poor men could be enriched by wishing, one would no longer be able to distinguish the good from the evil. Implicit is the attitude that rich men are rich because they deserve to be, likewise evil people are properly poor. The poet makes a clumsy association between wealth and virtue, and its converse, which is not typical in these works. Common, however, is the idea that a good, rich man deserves his wealth. In other words, virtue should bring wealth, but wealth does not necessarily imply virtue⁽³¹⁾:

Mais por sohaidier solement
 N'a om mie tot son talent,
 Ains s'en covient molt travellier;
 Car s'on avoit por sohaidier
 Trestos ses voloirs acomplis,
 Telz hom est povres et chaitis
 Et pereceuz et viez et nices
 Qui dont seroit manans et riches.
 Ne ja ne s'en travilleroit,
 Mais en gisant sohaideroit,
 Si aroit tot son desirier.
 Lors ne saroit on pas jugier
 Qui seroit bons ne qui mavais
 Se chascuns avoit ses sohaits.

(Durmart: ll. 10365-78)

Scorn for idleness is demonstrated in Les Merveilles de Rigomer. A maiden arrives at King Arthur's court and finds everyone strangely inactive. The distinguished knights are sitting around, staring aimlessly out of windows. The girl berates Arthur and his household for their laziness. She asks whether they are afraid to travel to foreign lands to test their prowess and win prestige:

"Avriés vos paour d'enraissier,
 Se vos aliés en autre terre,
 Porpris et por hounor conquerre?"
 (ll. 82-4)

Failing to rouse them from their torpor by the prospect of adventure, she rides off in disgust. Finally they bestir themselves, and so begins a series of adventures.

c) The Rich Knight's reputation.

Arthur and his knights are presumably rich men and do not need to go chasing after gain, but in the romances, they have a moral obligation to do so. They cannot rest on their laurels, consuming acquired wealth. Their reputations must be constantly renewed. This idea is expressed in Cligès.

Cligès wants to leave home in search of a reputation for chivalry. He tells his father that many men are dishonoured by their idleness. The rich man who does not stir from home cannot achieve "los" or prestige. He is the servant of his wealth, a type often associated with the miser in the didactic works. Cligès wants therefore to work towards his prestige. His wealth will not suffice.

"Ne s'accordent pas bien ansanble
 Repos et los, si com moi sanble,
 Car de nule rien ne s'alose
 Riches hom qui toz jorz repose,
 Ensi sont contraire et divers.
 Et cil est a son avoir sers
 Qui toz jorz l'amasse et acroist.
 Biau pere, tant com il me loist
 Los conquerre, se je tant vail,
 I vuel metre poinne et travail."
 (ll. 155-64)

The truth of Cligès' words is mirrored in Erec. When he abandons knightly prowess for love he is accused of "recreantise". He no longer has the respect of his followers (Erec et Enide: ll. 2459-63).

For the same reason, Gauvain urges Yvain not to renounce the exercise of arms after his marriage. He will lose his prestige and his wife's love (Yvain: ll. 2498-2501). Yvain has already achieved his reputation, but he must not be satisfied and must continue to increase his prestige. Thus after "pris querre" comes "pris croistre" (line 2501).

The idea that wealth is not sufficient for the true courtly hero is considered in Joufroi. Joufroi and Robert are both knights, but Joufroi is rich, while Robert is poor. Robert claims that Joufroi's wealth serves to hide many of his faults. He is acclaimed by society largely on this account. Robert claims that he is as good a knight as Joufroi, if not better, but he will never have such a glorious reputation as Joufroi so long as he remains poor. Joufroi's initial reaction is one of anger. Then, in order to refute Robert's claim with conviction he proposes to put it to the test. Joufroi will take from his resources a sum of money and a selection of equipment which he and his friend will share equally. They will then go away for a year to a land where they are not known, and see how they manage. It is up to each man to prove his skills, earning capacity, and prestige, starting on an equal basis. Joufroi promises not to cheat and send home for money:

"Ne voil mais en cestui torner,
 Ne ja mais en ma terre entrer,
 Tant che nos sachons bien lo voir
 Li quaus puet d'armes mielz valoir,
 Ou ge o vos, que dit m'avez
 Qu'autretant come je valez,
 S'avïez si grant manantie.
 — Ce ne poëz mes dire mie,
 Si raison i voliez entendre,
 Qu'autre tant n'aiez a despendre
 Come ge, luing en autre terre,
 Qu'ariers n'envoierai riens querre,

Si ge nel preng, o nel gaagne,
 Et sol vaillant une chastaigne
 Ne menerai ge plus de vos;
 Si savrons bien tot a estros
 Quel savra plus de bel chevir
 Et a grant honor maintenir,
 Ou ge o vo, la o irons,
 De tant d'avoir com nos poirons."
 (ll. 2711-30)

Thus for a rich man, it is not need which inspires him, but desire for "pris" or "los". Wealth alone will not give him that desire, nor will largess, although they certainly contribute to this end in the eyes of society.

d) The Poor Knight's reputation.

In the case of the poor knight who has not great wealth to help his prestige, the undertaking of "pris querre" is not only a moral obligation and a social duty, it is a practical necessity.

Philippe de Beaumanoir studies this question at length in Jehan et Blonde. He first cites the example of men who are so lazy that they are ready to live in discomfort rather than act in order to remedy their situation:

De ce retraire me souvient
 Por aucune gent si preceuse
 Qu'au mont ne sevent fors d'oiseuse
 Ne ne beent a monter point
 N'aus alever de povre point.
 Tex hom demeure a son hostel
 Qui a grant paines a du sel
 (ll. 4-10)

His suffering could easily be dispelled if he were go to abroad in order to make his name and acquire wealth:

Que, s'il aloit en autre tere,
 Il savroit assés pour aquerre
 Honneur et amis et richece.
 (ll. 11-13)

Idleness and apathy deserve public scorn. The lazy man should be shunned by others (ll. 14-16). Philippe de Beaumanoir can feel no pity for poor knights. If they are poor, it is their own fault. The poet knows many men who have left home and have profited by it, not only materially, but by

deepening their experience of life. He also asserts, without explanation, that a man can establish himself more easily abroad than he can in his own land:

Vous avés maint homme vell,
S'il ne se fuissent esmeü
Hors de leur lieu, que ja ne fussent
Si honoré ne tant n'eüssent
De sens, de richesse, d'avoir;
(ll. 17-21)

The penalties should be severe for those who deliberately miss the chance to travel and earn prestige and wealth!

Quand povres jentiex hom demeure
En son païs une seule heure,
On li devoit les iex crever;
(ll. 25-27)

Jehan proves Philippe de Beaumanoir's theories. Seeing his father squandering his inheritance, he leaves home determined to rely upon his own skills and character. He goes to England, introduces himself to the Count of Oxford, and asks to be retained at his court, as a poor gentleman (ll. 139-45).

In his epilogue, Philippe reiterates his ideas on the knightly calling. His romance is an example to all those who wish to better themselves and gain the respect of courtly society. To do this a person will have to work hard. He must above all practise only those activities suited to someone of high birth. A knight should never consider usury as a means of getting rich. He should acquire wisdom and use it and his skills in the service of others and for his own honour.

Entendés bien en quel maniere.
J'entens que cascuns honeur quiere;
Je n'entench pas par usurer,
Mais par son sens amesurer
Et servir deboinairement.
(ll. 6187-91)

This is the philosophy common to the romances in general. The courtly heroes travel far afield and become rich and honoured⁽³²⁾. The sense of

duty is illustrated by Tristan's lament at being unable to travel abroad as a mercenary:

"Aler deüse en autres terres
Soudoier et soudees querre,"
(Beroul's Tristran: ll. 2177-8)

Cristal also leaves home to earn his living in the service of powerful rulers. He tells his father of his plans:

"Que metre se velt a la voie
En alcun lieu por gaaignier.
Des or(e) velt estre soldoier
Et servir rois, contes et dus."
(Cristal et Clarie: ll. 484-7)

Ydoine attaches a great deal of importance to Amadas's "pris". She refuses to consider marriage until he has proved himself abroad: She advises him to travel from county to country to seek a reputation by his prowess and liberality:

"Puis si errés de terre en terre
Vostre pris pourcâquier et querre.
Large soiiés et frans et prous:
Li vostressoit dounés a tous."
(Amadas et Ydoine: ll. 1249-52)

This he did, like most courtly heroes, and with great success.

Tant a erré de tere en tere
La ou il seut tournoi ne guerre,
Trois ans entirs cerke son pris
Noblement par pluseurs país.
(ll. 1431-34)

"Pris querre", the search for renown, was therefore the aim of the courtly hero. He achieved it through his prowess, whereby he earned wealth and reputation, and he used his wealth generously, in order to crown his prestige.

Throughout my study of poverty and of wealth gathering, one notices that there emerges an ambivalence of attitude in the characters of romance. This arises largely from the differences of rank or circumstance existing between those who hold divergent attitudes. On the one hand there are the

attitudes of the perfect courtly hero, on the other the attitudes of society in general, whether courtly or not.

In the case of poverty we have seen that all ranks of society consider this state to be shameful and sometimes associate it with a lack of other qualities as well. We have encountered instances of this censorious attitude in servants, merchants, knights and kings. When the courtly hero is the victim of poverty he, too, is made to feel this censure since he is a target for it. However, when the courtly hero, himself rich, meets courtly victims of poverty, his is not the attitude of society as a whole. He considers not the shame, but the injustice. Far from showing contempt, he fights to help the victim and so redress the wrong.

When the courtly personage is a victim of poverty not through injustice or exceptional circumstances, such as banishment or flight, but through his own idleness, only then does he rightly incur the contempt of society, thinks the courtly hero. It is then incumbent upon the knight himself to remedy the situation. Failure to do so does not occur in the romances.

In the case of the poor of the third estate, the attitude of society is that it is part of the established social order that they should be so. The plight of the poor is usually irrelevant to the preoccupations of the courtly hero. In some cases we have found that the poverty of the third estate was deliberately maintained so that the privileges of courtly society are not threatened. However, when the perfect courtly hero encounters a poor villein on a personal basis, the social difference does not provoke in him an attitude of contempt. The knight will prove charitable and generous, helping to ease the other's situation.

As regards the means of acquiring wealth, courtly society differs from all other parts of society. For the knight the only just and proper means of becoming rich is through the exercise of chivalry in wars and tournaments. Usury and trading are dishonourable, although the latter and other humble

ways of earning money are acceptable in exceptional circumstances of poverty.

Within courtly society also, there is a divergence of views concerning the means of acquiring wealth. Knights, like ordinary soldiers, may fight for gain. This is their means of livelihood. The perfect courtly hero, however, rises above this. The motive of gain is overshadowed by the sense of justice. He fights primarily for a worthy cause, secondly to increase his "pris". He will usually therefore refuse payment, rewards and gifts. If he wins prizes in war or tournaments, it is the means of acquiring such wealth, and the disposal of such gains which contribute to his prestige, not mere possession.

Finally, there is wealth itself. Society in general may attribute to the generous and wealthy man other qualities and virtues, including wisdom and prowess. The perfect courtly hero knows, however, that this is an illusion. He must prove his prowess by his actions and skill at arms. He cannot rely on his wealth to merely create the impression of prowess. The true courtly hero abhors idleness as he does avarice. He must therefore unceasingly renew his reputation by his efforts and never allow himself to bask in the glory which derives from his wealth and liberality.

Thus the courtly hero's attitudes differ not only from those of uncourtly society, but bring an added refinement to the attitudes of his own society in general.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Love, Marriage and WealthIntroductory Remarks

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CHAPTER EIGHT

Love, Marriage and WealthIntroductory Remarks.

This study has so far attempted to show that one of the main goals of the courtly hero was his social prestige, his "pris". This depended on his success in all the aspects of "courtoisie": skill at arms linked with a duty to be the guardian of the wronged, the representative of justice; liberality and charity; a general refinement of manners. Together these personal, social and moral attributes made up the perfect hero with the addition of one important factor. Inseparable from "pris" was love, undoubtedly the supreme goal of the courtly hero. The two aims of "pris" and love are closely allied in the verse romances. The one reinforced the other: A knight without "pris" was unworthy of love, whereas a knight who loved and was loved had an important motive for establishing and increasing his "pris"⁽¹⁾. Just as a knight had to be seen to be worthy of his wealth⁽²⁾, so, too, he had to prove his claim to love. His "pris" must be evident not only to his lady, but also to courtly society in general. Thus a personal aspiration becomes also a social one. The perfect courtly hero is synonymous with the perfect courtly lover.

Much has been written on courtly love, "l'amour courtois"⁽³⁾, and I do not propose to enter the arena of the heated debates on its multifarious aspects and manifestations, since it is my task to consider the role of wealth in relation to love and marriage in the verse romances. It is, however, important to this study to make the distinction between the courtly love of the provençal literature as promulgated by the troubadours, and for which Jean Frappier⁽⁴⁾ rightly prefers the term "fin' amor", and the

other courtly love to be found in the majority of the verse romances I have studied.

"Fin' amour" as portrayed in the Provençal love lyrics was by nature adulterous: the lady was "la mal mariée"; the lover, a knight dedicated to the service of the adored lady from whom he may hope to merit the "guerredon" of love for his efforts and devotion⁽⁵⁾.

The Northern French poets, while retaining certain aspects of the cult, tended to neglect the adulterous nature of courtly love. They turned their attention more to the courtly love which aimed at, and culminated in, marriage. Their attitudes seem, therefore, at first glance, to be more in line with the standards of feudal society, as Jean Frappier points out⁽⁶⁾. Hence the narrative interest of the verse romances centres on the series of obstacles confronting, and surmounted by, the hero and heroine in order to achieve their aim - a marriage based on love.

I would, therefore, take issue with C.S. Lewis⁽⁷⁾ who describes "the unattached knight as we meet him in the romances" as the "predestined lover of other men's wives". This is not the fate of the majority of the courtly heroes I have encountered in these works. Evidently, it is the image of courtly love often associated with the romance genre simply by virtue of the fact that two of the best known couples in these works, Tristan and Yseult, Lancelot and Guinevere, were adulterous. The nature of the love between these two couples is itself different⁽⁸⁾ and both differ from the love situations characteristic of the verse romances.

To prove the predominance of courtly love which aims at marriage I have chosen thirty romances where the love interest forms the central theme or at least plays an important role in the narrative⁽⁹⁾. These thirty romances contain thirty-four love matches, twenty-eight of which end in a marriage. Of the six remaining examples, those of Tristan and Yseult, and Lancelot and Guinevere (La Charrete) require no comment. In

Le Bel Inconnu, Guinglains loves two ladies, and has to choose one to marry. In Gilles de Chyn, we do not know whether the countess was married or not, but if Gilles entertained the hope of making her his wife, his ambition was to be thwarted by the untimely death of the lady. The Chastelain de Coucy⁽¹⁰⁾ is based on adulterous love, "fin' amor", and marriage does not enter into the aspirations of the lover. Finally there is Joufroi whose hero is an amoral courtly personage for whom love and marriage are not connected. He marries twice, once for money, the second time as a political manoeuvre, while those ladies whom he claims to love remain the "amies" of "fin' amor".

Moshé Lazar claims that "...la mal mariée va devenir le principal personnage de la littérature amoureuse"⁽¹¹⁾. This is certainly not true of the verse romances, where the principal characters are the courtly lover and the lady he loves, who struggle against a society that favours profitable, but loveless matches. The heroine does not become "la mal mariée", but the opponent of those who would make her so. She and the courtly hero find themselves involved in a series of dramatic events, beset by obstacles, thrown in their path by family and society, and which temporarily prevent them marrying for love. The difficulties they encounter rarely include the husband of the lady, because the heroines of these romances are usually unmarried.

It is not, however, the distinction between courtly love and "fin' amor" that is relevant to my study, but rather the differences between the criteria for marriage imposed by feudal society and those accepted by courtly lovers aiming at marriage. It is in relation to the conflict between these two attitudes to wealth and social rank play an important role.

In the romances there are two concurrent themes concerning marriage: firstly the love and eventual marriage of the courtly lover and his lady; secondly a less important theme which deals with the marriages of the rest of courtly society. The latter theme reflects the reality of feudal society

when marriage was chiefly the amalgamation of two estates, arranged by the parents of the couple according to financial gain. The couple were usually strangers to each other, and love was by no means a deciding factor in the match⁽¹²⁾.

The major marriage theme in the romances takes love as its point of departure. The courtly hero marries for love, not material gain. I have found that conflicts thus arise between love and wealth, the hero and heroine representing love, the parents or the feudal lord and society in general representing wealth.

Although the northern writers conformed to the social habits of the time in that they rejected adulterous love in favour of marriage, we shall nevertheless see that courtly love was at odds with marriage as decided in feudal society. In the romances, the two themes of love and marriage usually converge in the early stages of the narrative, provoking conflict between love and an arranged marriage. However, by a change in circumstances and the efforts of the courtly hero the themes are able to unite at the end of the romance in perfect harmony, that is in a marriage inspired by love and which at the same time meets the requirements of a feudal marriage.

One notes in the romances a divergence of attitude between the perfect courtly hero and the rest of courtly society. For the courtly hero the ideal is perfect love which leads to marriage. For the rest of society it is marriage which leads to wealth. As we shall see, however, the conflicting attitudes either remain separate in the romances, or they are able to be reconciled after an initial conflict.

All aspects of love appear in the romances, "fin' amor", courtly love, also the two types of marriage - marriage of profit and marriage of love. It is upon the process of reconciliation between the personal goal of the courtly hero and the criteria of his society that the narrative often hinges. These conflicts of interest provoke dramatic situations ending usually with the union of love and marriage to everyone's satisfaction.

Often the three major aspects: that is Fin' Amor, courtly love with marriage in view and feudal marriages of interest, are linked. The pro-marriage, anti-adultery attitude of the romances clearly exhibits itself in the suffering endured by the hero in order that he may make the woman he loves his wife. The attitude and aims of courtly love are subsumed in Durmart. The poet says that one should love only a lady whom one can marry. The lady thus becomes a secure possession and there is not the risk attached to a woman who is merely "borrowed":

Car fins amans doit plus amer
 La joie qui li est donée
 Que cel^e qui li est prestée.
 Cil est en perilleuz dangier
 Qui s'amie n'a a moillier,
 Car uns autres li puet tolir
 Et devant lui prendre et saisir
 Et esposer devant ses iex.
 (Durmart: ll. 15002-9)

The poet thus speaks out against adulterous love, but his attitude is evidently influenced by the prevailing attitude of feudal society. It is not courtly love that he is advocating but the possession of the woman so that no other may claim her. This attitude towards woman as a transferable possession belonging first to her father, then to her husband is feudal rather than courtly. The poet stresses this idea when he continues by making an analogy with wealth. Any wise man would prefer a gift to a loan. A gift cannot be retracted, so a wife can never be taken away. A loan can be reclaimed, so a mistress is at the mercy of an unwelcome marriage elsewhere:

Tot li sage ameroient miex
 C'uns beaz avoires lor fust donés
 Qu'^l lor fuist par dangier prestés.
 Qui s'amie prent a moillier
 Il ne le vuet pas eslongier
 Ains le prent por avoir todis,
 Et si en vuet estre saisis
 Et sa joie si affermer
 Qu'altre n'i puist nul droit clamer.
 (ll. 15010-18)

The poet finally confirms his attitude by his choice of vocabulary when he

states that a lover should covet the possession of the woman he loves, that is, he should aim to marry her:

Dont doit fins amans convoitier
 Qu'il ait s'amie quitelement
 En sa baillie fermement.
 (ll. 15024-26)

The poet thus equates the courtly lover with the jealous husband whose wife will be kept firmly in his power. The use of the feudal term "baillie" suggests the attitude to woman as part of a lord's assets. Usually such use of feudal vocabulary is associated with adulterous love, when it is the lady who has the lover in her power, and who effects a "sesine"⁽¹³⁾.

The poet thus reverses the situation of "fin' amor". His conception of the "fins' amors" is that of a husband owning the woman he loves. This is not a true view of courtly love, where so often the lady is socially superior to her suitor who treats her with the respect her rank demands. However, it is rare that courtly marriages are pursued beyond the wedding in the romances, so the fate of the lady is unknown to us.

The hint of covetousness and desire for possession is only a step away from the pleasure derived from hoarded treasure, that is the locked up wives of courtly literature. These ladies appear rarely in the verse romances. This "mal mariée" type figures chiefly in the Lais of Marie de France, and also in Joufroi. In the latter, Agnès is a locked-up wife whom Joufroi is determined to seduce. Joufroi, however, does not blame the husband for his attitude or action. He condones the practice of keeping a wife out of society, and claims that he would do likewise:

"Il n'a pas tort,
 Ne nuls hom ne l'en doit blasmer,
 S'il velt si bel tresor garder
 Cum cil est, qu'autretel feroie,
 Si m'aït Deus, si ge l'avoie."
 (Joufroi: ll. 822-26)

This is an uncourtly attitude expressed by an uncourtly hero. It approaches avarice, so abhorred by better-versed courtly people.

It is ironical that the poet of Durmart while attacking adulterous

love and supporting marriage, unwittingly creates a situation in which "fin' amor" may flourish. The wives who are treated as mere possessions, often locked away, are those who qualify as "mal mariées" and it is precisely these wives who would welcome the attentions of a devoted lover.

Both the poets of Durmart and Joufroi represent the prevailing attitude found in the romances of wives as possessions. Woman as represented in the romances, however, has a dual aspect. On the one hand she is the feudal lady, owned by her father who will give her in marriage for his own material and social benefit. The girl has no power to contest her father's decision but must meekly obey. On the other hand the same girl is proud and aloof, and will at first disdain the love of a socially inferior suitor, or insist that he goes away to prove his worth before she will accord her love. This is a situation analogous with the haughty lady of fin amors, but the difference lies in the fact that in "fin amor", we may suppose the proud lady has been a dutiful daughter, has been given away in a marriage of profit, and in her role as a "mal mariée" is seeking the love and service of a gallant knight. In the courtly romances, the girl is not yet married, and when her father decides to marry her off to someone she does not love, she and her courtly lover take steps to avoid the arranged marriage and strive for a marriage of love. In the Old French romances love is ideally the right of the courtly heroine and she fights to preserve that right. The heroes and heroines of the romances avoid the arranged feudal marriage of interest and aim at a marriage based chiefly on perfect love.

A. Feudal Marriages as seen in the Romances.

1. Duty of Feudal Lord to arrange Unions.

When courtly love is not a factor, marriage in the romances follows the pattern of marriage in feudal society. Only the courtly hero can aspire to love and choice, the other courtly personages submit to the decision of their suzerain. Only the courtly hero disputes the arranged marriages,

secondary characters accept them gratefully.

In the romances the arranging of marriages for his vassals is one of the social duties of the lord⁽¹⁴⁾. The lord is often the courtly hero himself. While for him love is the deciding factor, in the case of the marriage of others, his chief criterion is material gain. Hence Durmart organised matches between his subjects. He was, nevertheless, inspired by a sense of justice. He aimed to relieve poor people, so married poor knights to rich ladies, poor girls to rich knights:

Les povres chevaliers marie
As dames qui grans terre ont:
Les puceles qui povres sont
Fait prendre as riches amassés
Ki terre et avoir ont assés.
(Durmart: ll. 15506-10)

Priority goes to poor women in Jehan et Blonde. After their own marriage, Jehan and Blonde assume the responsibilities of feudal landowners. Marrying off poor women was evidently regarded as an act of charity and is linked with the help they offered poor nuns:

Les povres nonains releverent,
Les povres femes marièrent.
(ll. 6151-2)

Whereas Jehan and Blonde share the duty of arranging marriages, in La Manekine, it falls to the Queen to organise matrimonial alliances. Joie gave generously to poor people, and married off poor ladies of good birth:

Anchois en donoit largement
Meismement la povre gent.
Povres gentils femmes marie.
(ll. 2431-3)

Once again, providing for the poor whether by gifts or marriage is represented as a charitable gesture.

Yseult stresses the duty aspect more when she regrets court life and all that it involved. She is banished with Tristan, and beginning to miss her former life. She should be in the company of ladies of high birth whom she would give to lords for their mutual benefit:

Les demoiseles des anors,
 Les filles as frans vavasors,
 Deüsse ensemble o moi tenir
 En mes chañbres por moi servir,
 Et les deüsse marier
 Et as seignors por bien doner.
 (Beroul's Tristan: ll. 221-16)

Count Richard acted solely in the interests of his knights when he arranged marriages. His poor vassals were given either gifts or rich women, and thus became rich and powerful:

Maint chevalier fist de noient
 Riche et manant en son eage
 Par biax dons et par mariage.
 (L'Escoufle: ll. 80-2)

Here we move from charity to courtly largesse that is probably politically motivated.

Women are disposed of as gifts just as casually in the works of Marie de France, where one might expect a more sympathetic attitude to woman's condition. In Lanval, women are lumped together with the gifts which King Arthur generously distributes:

Femmes e teres departi,
 (line 17)

2. Attitudes to Women: Courtly heroine given.

We have seen from the above examples that when a feudal lord arranged a marriage, everyone acquiesced, both the rich knight presented with a poor wife and the rich woman bestowed upon a poor knight. We have so far dealt with secondary characters, social inferiors who are in no position to contest the decision of the suzerain. In the case of women, social rank is of little avail. They usually have to be given, and are indeed often referred to as a "don"⁽¹⁵⁾. They may be given to a knight for material advantage or social advancement. They may be the reward presented to a valiant knight as thanks for his services. They are given usually by their fathers, sometimes by a brother, or by a seigneur. To be given in a marriage of profit is often the fate which threatens the courtly heroine.

There are occasions when an arranged marriage is welcome to the courtly hero and to the lady because they already love each other. In such cases the couple, the family and society are in accord. Often, however, there is a conflict. The lady about to be given loves someone else, and this is usually the cue for flight from home⁽¹⁶⁾ in an elopement with the courtly hero.

Let us first consider some of the circumstances in which women are given in the romances. We have already met instances when a grateful ruler will offer rich gifts to a courtly hero, including the hand of his daughter. These gifts are usually refused and will be studied more fully in a subsequent section⁽¹⁷⁾.

In Guillaume de Palerne, Amphons solicits the guerredon for the services he had rendered the runaway couple Guillaume and Melior.

"Del guerredon me fai l'otroi."
(line 8278)

He asks to be allowed to marry Florence, Guillaume's sister. His request is readily granted, and with her goes a rich dowry. *In the words of*

Guillaume: "Liés et joians la vos otroi,
Et la moitié de m'onor
Vos doins avecques ma seror
En mariage."

(ll. 8304-7)

Florence does not know Amphons, but accepts the situation demurely. This is in marked contrast to her brother who eloped with Melior so that she might escape just such an arranged marriage.

In Athis et Prophiliias, we have again the instance of a girl given by her brother. Prophiliias gives his sister Gafte to his friend Athis. They are both pleased with the arrangement since they are in love. Gafte, however, has already been promised by her father to a neighbouring king. The love match is therefore in conflict with the arranged marriage and results in a full-scale war.

When Prophiliias gives Gafte to Athis he uses feudal terminology:

"N'en cremez pas, de la meschine
 Vos feré je don et seisine."
 (ll. 4549-50)

Earlier in this romance, a similar situation occurred when Prophilius fell in love with Cardiones, wife of Athis. Out of friendship Athis hands over his wife to Prophilius:

"Or la te doing de bon talent,"
 (line 1493)

Prophilius' delighted response holds a hint of the mercenary. He refers to the gift of Cardiones as a rich gain:

"Mout ai hui fet riches gheinz;"
 (line 1512)

Cardiones' reaction is one of horror and indignation:

"As me tu a putage prise?"
 (line 1612)

Her protests are in vain. She is duly married to Prophilius and learns to love her second husband, as she had learned to love the first to whom she had been given without being consulted.

In other cases, the gift of the woman to the courtly hero is what the couple have been aiming at and their marriage crowns the success of their endeavours. Thus Florimont and Romadanaple, secretly in love, are officially united when Romadanaple is presented by her father to Florimont in lieu of payment for his help in the recent war with Hungary. King Philip is an exception. He was not aiming particularly at a rich son-in-law, but one who was not covetous⁽¹⁸⁾. He is therefore won over not only by Florimont's chivalry and courage, but by his consistent refusals to accept payment or gifts. King Philip recognises his noble qualities and is pleased to make Florimont his heir by giving his daughter to him:

"Ains ne prist de moi livreson.
 Or l'en wel rendre gueredon:
 De lui ferai et fil et oir;
 (Florimont: ll. 11251-53)

Similarly Felice is given to Gui de Warewic which is what they both

wanted. Felice has unusual rights - she is allowed to choose her husband, providing that her choice conforms to the feudal ideals of a good future ruler, since Felice's husband will be the Count's heir. Felice's choice is inspired by love, but Gui's world-wide reputation for chivalry makes him acceptable to the Count who is pleased to bestow his daughter upon him along with his territorial possessions:

"Jo la vus doins, si la pernez,
De toute ma tere sire seez,
De chastels e de citez,
Vostre plaisir de tot facez."
(Gui de Warewic: ll. 7505-8)

One notes in Ydoine's case also, a certain relaxation in the rigid feudal rules governing a marriage. Ydoine's husband is to be chosen by the vassals, the choice sanctioned by her father, but Ydoine is accorded the right of veto. The final choice is therefore hers:

"Or m'a li dus acreanté
Que il outre ma volenté
Ne me donra, ce dist par foi.
De mari prendre est or sur moi."
(Amadas et Ydoine: ll. 7551-4)

Ydoine has paid dearly for this concession. Her previous marriage, arranged by her father, had such dramatic consequences that one may assume the Count does not wish to provoke further distress. In the event, Ydoine does not need to exercise her right of veto. The barons choose Amadas, for selfish and pragmatic reasons: they would like him to be their lord:

Tuit le couvoitent a signor,
(line 7609)

Unaware of the love between Amadas and Ydoine, they fear that Amadas will not deign to accept Ydoine as his wife. He is rich and his "pris" is renowned and unparalleled:

Ichou, ains doutent d'Amadas
Qu'il ait le corage si fier
Qu'il ne la daint prendre a mollier;
N'est mie couvoiteus de terre;
Tant est en grans de pris conquerre,
Si jovenes, si volentels,
Et d'armes a si tres grant pris
Qu'il n'est parole de nului
Envers la prouece de lui;
S'est riches hom de grant baillie
Et de tere a grant signourie,
(ll. 7614-24)

There has been accomplished a complete reversal of situation. Earlier it was Ydoine who had proudly scorned the marriage aspirations of Amadas because he was socially inferior. However Amadas now immediately proves the barons' fears to be unfounded by joyfully accepting the gift of Ydoine. His wealth and reputation had, after all, been acquired for love of her.

Lyriopé is another of the privileged few who are not disposed of by their fathers without their assent. She showed no inclination to marry and dismissed all suitors:

En sa beauté tant se fia
 Que toz chevaliers mesprisa.
 Por ce remest a marier,
 Que ne la vot mie doner
 Li peres sanz sa volonte.
 (Floris et Lyriopé: ll. 301-5)

As a queen, and in the apparent absence of a father, Fenise is able to choose her husband. She loves Durmart, but that would not appear to be sufficient reason for her to marry him. Fenise is conscious of her social responsibilities in choosing a future king. She first considers Durmart's lineage before consenting to become his wife. Fenise combines the attitude of the woman in love with that of the self-interested parent and also that of a wise feudal suzerain:

"Vos estes fiex de riche roi,
 Et je sui par verité fine
 Fille de roi et de roïne,
 Se m'est avis, se bel vos semble,
 Que nos avenons bien ensemble."
 (Durmart: ll. 14870-74)

Such freedom to choose is exceptional even in the case of queens. In Yder, a queen asks Arthur to give her to a suitable husband. She stipulates that she places valour above considerations of birth and good looks:

"Mes jo ne prendroie nule home
 Sanz vostre assens, ço en est la some.
 Ne tienc pas feme por bien sage,
 Que por bealté ne por lignage
 Prent hom,))

(ll. 6504-8)

Bien choisist que prent por valor."
 (line 6512)

The queen loves Yder and wants Arthur to choose him as her future king. She does not, however, state a preference, but fortunately for her, from all the valiant knights at court Arthur does choose Yder. The barons support his choice and shout their approval:

"Li criz est granz de s/es/ barons:
 "Reis, donez (la) li, nos le volons."
 (ll. 6546-7)

In le Bel Inconnu, Queen Blonde Esmérée asks Arthur to arrange her marriage to Guinglains. There is a subtle difference in her request. Guinglains is the gift and is to be given to the queen. The queen claims to be speaking on behalf of her barons as well as herself:

"Or vos pri, rois de france orine,
 Que vos a mari me donnés
 Guinglains, si ert rois coronnés.
 Je le vos quier et mi baron:
 Sire, ne me veés cest don."
 (ll. 5216-20)

The more conventional view of marriage alliance is seen when King Arthur holds a council to consider Blonde Esmérée's request. Armargons speaks out in favour of the match, justifying his approval by an appreciation of her great wealth which he has experienced at first hand when, made prisoner at a tournament in her kingdom, he was freed without a ransom. He refers to the queen being given to Guinglains and not vice versa:

"Et si vos lo bien de la dame
 Que vos lor li donnés a fame,
 Car molt est ses roiaumes grans;
 Molt par pora estre poissans.
 Car j'ai esté en cel païs
 A un tornoi, u je fui pris;
 Gringas m'acuita sans avoir. "
 (ll. 5281-87)

The higher the social rank of the woman, the more far-reaching the social consequences of her marriage, particularly if she is sole heiress to a kingdom. The marriage was not therefore to be decided lightly. It had to suit everyone on a material basis. Hence the important role played by the barons in such a decision. The father alone cannot assume the responsibility

of a major alliance. In L'Escoufle, the Emperor of Rome cannot dispose of his daughter as he would like. He must bow to the opinion of the barons who consider only the material gain to be made from a royal marriage⁽¹⁹⁾. Their advice to the Emperor is to give his daughter to someone whose rank will be an honourable asset to the land and its subjects:

"Donés le a tel dont grant honors
Viengne a vo terre et a vos gens."
(ll. 2728-29)

One may conclude from this that the social importance of the marriage of a ruler is one of the reasons why even queens ask for marriages to be arranged for them, by Arthur in particular, so that the chosen person may be worthy of the duties and titles he will have to assume. Another possible reason is the attitude adopted by women themselves. So conditioned is a woman by the attitude of society which regards her as the inferior, even the possession of man, be he father, husband, brother or suzerain, that she, too, adopts this attitude. Thus, in general, women in the romances are passive creatures, given and expecting to be given. When they fall in love, they want to be given, like the girl in Protheselâus who loves Melander and declares that she will never be happy until she is given to him:

"Ja mais haite/e ne serreie,
Se j'a lui donee n'esteie."
(ll. 8864-65)

Exceptions are the spirited courtly heroines who, urged on by love, take measures to be given to those they want to marry. Moreover, although they may succeed in marrying the man they love, they are nevertheless given to him. Even the proud ladies of "fin' amor", the revered married lady adored by the humble knight considers herself a gift, albeit freely given⁽²⁰⁾. In return for the devoted service of the lover she gives herself to him, treating herself as a possession, while at the same time remaining very much the possession of her husband.

Thus woman in the romances, as in reality, is but a pawn in the feudal

game of land transactions, her personal happiness, controlled by father, brother or lord, and sacrificed for their material gain and social advancement.

3. Marriages of Profit in the Romances.

Marriages of profit are commonplace in the romances. They are usually arranged for secondary characters, who, unlike the courtly heroes, have no right to aspire to marriages of love. There are occasions when the courtly hero will marry for financial and territorial gain, but more often such marriages are imposed upon the courtly heroine, when she and her courtly lover do all in their power to avoid them.

The poet of Cleomadès regrets the importance attached to wealth in the arranging of a marriage. He evokes with nostalgia, in the manner of the "laudatores temporis acti" of the didactic works⁽²¹⁾, a time when kings and counts took wives who were not necessarily rich, but simply beautiful and of good birth:

Car adont tel coustume avoient
li grant seignor qu'il ne chaçoient
terre ne tresor ne avoir,
mais que il peüssent avoir
bele pucele et bien taillie,
estraite de bonne lignie,
(ll. 7121-26)

Then a king gained honour by marrying a virtuous person. Society applauded his choice. Nowadays, however, considerations of wealth dominate and the personal fortune of a potential wife counts for more than her character and appearance:

Mais or n'en veut on nule avoir
bele ne bonne a pou d'avoir.
A grant honnour atournoit on
roi ou conte, duc ou baron,
quant en tel point se marioit;
tous li mondes l'en gracioit.
Mais au jour d'ui passe richece
bonté, biauté et gentillece,
si que en maint lieu est parant,
(ll. 7131-39)

One notices that the poet makes no mention of love. He contrasts not

love with wealth as motives for marriage, but rather moral qualities and beauty with wealth. The honour which accrued to the king came not from his putting love above riches, but seems to derive from his generosity, even his charity, in marrying a girl without wealth. He was performing a kind, unselfish act, whence the approbations of a society which, claims the poet, put virtue above financial gain. The antithesis is therefore not between a marriage of love and one of profit, but assumes a symbolic nature by opposing charity and covetousness. In the romances it is love versus wealth which is the focal point in questions of marriage, although one may remark somewhat cynically that, in choosing love, neither the hero nor the heroine suffers in the end from lack of wealth. Awareness of generosity in marrying a poor person is not entirely absent in such works, but is subordinated to the love-wealth conflict.

a) Marriages of Profit between secondary characters as reward.

The poet of Cleomadès may claim to condemn the practice of putting wealth above other qualities as a criterion for marriage, but he certainly does not condemn arranged marriages. Moreover his disregard for love as an important motive for marriage is clearly demonstrated in his work: When Cleomadès and Clarmondine are eventually married - a marriage of love - Cleomadès ensures that his family and friends are similarly rewarded. He, however, imposes marriage upon them. He marries off his three sisters, his wife's three female companions, the sister of Meniadus, even disposing of his mother to his father-in-law. Love played some little part in the last two marriages, since the couples did know and like each other. The other six marriages, however, can only be described as marriages of interest. The sisters were given to rich kings and the three ladies-in-waiting to wealthy barons. Cleomadès' attitude is shown by his remark as he presents his youngest sister to King Meniadus, where he states that Marine would be sure of a worthy husband in Meniadus:

"en vous est mout bien emploiee
 ma suer et je la vous otr_{ie}."
 (Cleomadès: ll. 17653-4)

The poet's attitude is evidently inconsistent.

Marriage is often a means of rewarding people in the romances, as in the above cases, where the three ladies-in-waiting had long ago been promised rich marriages for their help in the reuniting of Cleomadès and Clarmondine:

"Car sachiez, quant la vous avrai,
 hautement vous mari_{er}ai,
 a chascune donrai baron,
 duc ou conte ou tres haut baron."
 (ll. 5107-10)

Although women are usually given, yet when it is a woman who is to be rewarded, then the wealthy baron is presented to her - a reflection of the power of the feudal suzerain over the lives of his vassals whom he could give in marriage to whomsoever he pleased.

It is a characteristic of the romances that, when all misfortunes are overcome and the courtly hero at the height of his personal happiness and social glory, this is the moment for the courtly hero or heroine to settle past debts, to reward those who have helped them in times of trouble, a practice consistent with the courtly horror of being obliged to anyone, whether by a gift or a service. The "guerredon" to those he wishes to thank often involves marriage.

This is how King Guillaume rewards the young man who had sold him his hunting-horn in order to give money to the poor. In appreciation of his charity, Guillaume gives him a very rich wife:

"Les deniers, que por le cor ot,
 Departi as povres por s'ame; (22)
 Si li dona moult rice fame,
 Car de rente mil mars i prist."
 (Guillaume d'Angleterre: ll. 3300-3)

When Joie/Manekine was in exile, she was cared for by a Roman senator. Once she is reunited with her husband and reinstated as queen, she marries his daughters to rich counts. The mercenary aspect of these marriages is

heavily stressed:

"Et ele bien les maria,
 Cascune a tel s'igneur donna
 Que de grant richece et d'avoir
 Furent tant com volrent avoïr.
 Cascune d'eles fu contesse
 Et de deus ducées duchesse.
 (Manekine: ll. 7865-70)

Jehan et Blonde concludes with several arranged marriages of interest.

Jehan gives his two sisters to rich noblemen: the Count of St. Pol and his brother. To commoners, Robin his loyal servant, and the sailor who had helped the hero and heroine to elope, he gave two rich bourgeois. The last two, although not of noble birth, possessed courtly qualities, but were evidently selected for their great wealth rather than for their other attributes:

"A Dantmartin eut deus bourgeois,
 Qui furent rices et courtoises;
 N'estoient pas de cuer vilaines,
 Disnes sont d'estre castelaines.
 Suers germaines andeus estoient,
 Mout grant tere et grant meuble avoient.
 De ces deus fist le mariage:
 De l'ainee a Robin le Sage,
 Et la mainee au maronnier.
 (ll. 6119-27)

When King Adraste decides to give his daughters to Polynice and Thideus, it is not primarily to gain wealth, but to avoid spending his own wealth. The king knows that they are rich and of high birth, and considers their arrival in his land as a godsend. He will give them his daughters, thus achieving two excellent matches and also sparing himself the expense of going in search of suitable husbands elsewhere. There is a hint of covetousness in his reasoning:

a soi meismes se conseille
 que ses filles mariera,
 a ces deus princes les dorra.
 Il fu cointes si se porpense,
 marier les puet sanz despense.
 Ne lor veüt aillors mariz querre
 quant ceus a trouvez en sa terre.
 D'eus couvoite le mariage,
 Car mout par sont de haut parage.
 (Roman de Thèbes: ll. 1006-14)

King Adraste cannot, however, go ahead with his plan without first consulting his barons. They approve the matches, so the marriages take place:

Par leur los donne as chevaliers
li rois ses filles a moulliers.
(ll. 1071-2)

A rich marriage may be intended as a compensation or form of consolation. When Fresne and Guiron are able to marry as they had for so long wished, Fresne's sister who was originally intended as Guiron's bride but was ousted at the last moment is dismissed from the narrative with a hasty but rich marriage. Her reaction is not recorded:

Mut richement en lur cuntree
Fu puis la meschine donee.
(Fresne, Marie de France: ll. 513-4)

When Joufroi abandons his bourgeoisie wife he asks King Henry of England that she should be given in marriage to another nobleman as compensation for the loss of her first husband. Having become a lady of courtly society in marrying Joufroi, the latter is sufficiently generous to wish that she should remain one. The profit to be gained from such a marriage was not wealth - she was extremely rich, which was why Joufroi married her - but social position:

"Et pri ancor par grant merci,
Qu'a ma feme doniez mari
Et haut ome de grant afaire,
Car mout me vendroit a contraire
Se vilains lo prendroit a feme;
Ainz voil que soit toz jorn mais dame,
Quar mult par est preuz et senee,"
(Joufroi: ll. 3743-49)

King Henry married her to a count who was doubtless consoled by her immense fortune for the fact that she was of low birth.

To marry for money or social rank was an uncourtly practice and as a rule frowned upon by the courtly hero. This attitude is demonstrated throughout the romances by his refusals to accept rich women whom he does not love. The attitude is also implicit in the remark made about a person who achieved his social glory by this means. In Athis and Prophilias,

the Duke Thelamon is the enemy of the heroes; and the description of him is, not surprisingly, unflattering. He is not even a duke by birth, but acquired the title through his marriage, thus using this expedient to climb the social scale:

Mout se hauça par mariage,
Car femme prist de haut parage,
(ll. 10831-2)

b) Marriage of Profit accepted by Courtly Hero.

Feudal attitudes very occasionally triumph over courtly attitudes in the case of the courtly hero and his marriage. As I pointed out earlier, the marriages of the courtly heroes were in effect nearly always marriages of profit, but since they were primarily motivated by love, the material aspect is represented as merely incidental. There are exceptions.

The first part of Escoufle is devoted to the exploits of Guillaume's father, Count Richard. As a reward for his great services to the Emperor of Rome he is offered a rich wife.

Et qu'il li velt terre douner
Plus qu'il n'en a en sa conté;
Et ce qu'il li a creanté
Qu'il li donra la riche dame
Et qu'il n'a si bele ou roïame,
Li fait otroïier et voloir.
(Escoufle: ll. 1678-83)

Although this is typical of the conditional gift made by grateful rulers in order to induce the hero to stay, and which is usually graciously declined, Count Richard accepts willingly. The lady of Gênes is pleased to be Richard's wife. She knows him by repute, has heard only good of him, and is therefore not averse to the marriage, despite her having no choice in the matter. The marriage was a royal decree.

Galeron is given to Ille in similar circumstances. He has been of service, in his role of senechal, to Duke Conan. The Duke wishes to reward him, and so gives Ille his sister. Galeron has already been attracted by Ille, but this does not become a love match until after the marriage.

Li dus Conains a Ylle vient:
 "Senescal," dist il, "biax amis,
 En grant pais avés mon cors mis,
 Or vos sera gueredoné."
 - Sire, vos m'avés molt doné!
 - Encor(e) vos ferai plus d'anor,
 Car jo vos donrai ma seror,"
 (Ille et Galeron: ll. 880-86)

The marriage between Guinglains and Blonde Esmérée is presented as essentially a marriage of profit. It is the lady who takes the initiative by asking to be given to Guinglains. She also proposes to him, stressing the material advantages of her offer:

"Molt par est cil roiaumes grans,
 Molt est rices, molt est vaillans.
 Mais prier vos vel par francisse,
 Quant vos m'avés del tot conquise,
 Que vos a feme me prendés;
 Rices rois serés coronnés."
 (Le Bel Inconnu: ll. 3393-98)

This is very uncourtly procedure. In love matches in the romances, the lady never offers herself and all her wealth in advance of a mutual declaration of love. This is not courtly love where the lady has to be won. Blonde Esmérée belongs thus to the category of women whose proposals are usually rejected⁽²³⁾, but in this one instance the offer is accepted. Pressure is brought to bear on Guinglains, firstly by the Queen's barons, for whom a duke is the spokesman. He promises Guinglains the loyalty of all the vassals of the kingdom. They will serve him humbly and faithfully. He will possess great wealth and will gain great honour (ll. 3556-67). He continues with his persuasive tactics. He lists the material assets, the territorial wealth: forests, meadows, rivers, fine clothes, falcons, and other hunting-birds, excellent horses (ll. 3570-76). He says also that Guinglains will be so rich that he will be able to give generously to his vassals and so win their affection. Thus in battle or in tournaments, Guinglains would have a loyal following ready to fight bravely for him. In other words the duke is presenting the possibility to practice public largesse as one of the trappings and privileges of great wealth:

S'ayrés asés or et argent
 Por departir a vostre gent,
 A cels qui vos devront amer:
 Asés lor en porés doner.
 Et quant vaurés armes porter
 Et au tournoïement aler,
 A vostre voloir les arois
 Et molt aysiés en serrois
 Et molt grant gent mener porés
 Par tot u vos aler vaurés;
 Tot sellr porés tornoier,
 C'or vostre homme vos aront cier."

(ll. 3577-88)

Guinglains' men urge him to accept such a magnificent offer. Later King Arthur also speaks in favour of the match. Finally Guinglains and Queen Blonde Esmérée are married. Blonde Esmérée has triumphed over La Pucele aux Blanches Mains whom Guinglains loves. Feudal marriage has triumphed over courtly marriage. Wealth has triumphed over love.

The poet himself, however, is aware that this is an unsatisfactory conclusion to his story. It is his way of wreaking a private vengeance on the lady he loves. If the lady will accord him her love, he will continue his narrative so that Guinglains may be reunited with the lady he really loves (ll. 6255-57). If the poet's lady refuses to accord her favours, then he will punish her by keeping Guinglains eternally separated from La Pucele aux Blanches Mains (ll. 6259-66). Thus courtly love yields to an uncourtly feudal marriage for a most unusual reason.

There is also the extremely uncourtly marriage of Joufroi to a rich bourgeoisie, a marriage contracted solely for money. Joufroi and Robert want to continue their extravagant noble expenditure, and when their resources fail, drastic measures have to be taken. Hence Joufroi's marriage. He receives a dowry of a thousand silver marks and promises his wife's father that he will cultivate the bourgeois virtue of parsimony, and will cease to spend recklessly. Joufroi claims that poverty has taught him a lesson. Only the rich are respected, the poor are scorned (Joufroi: ll. 3469-74). Of course he does not mean a word of what he says. The

marriage is treated as a joke by Robert and himself. They share the dowry and quickly spend it with displays of largesse (ll. 3553-6). Predictably, Joufroi's father-in-law is not pleased, and bitterly criticises Joufroi's way of life and the waste of money. Joufroi retorts that he will never stop giving, and yet he will always manage to be rich:

"Beaus peres, bien sachiez san gas
 Qu'a ma vie toz jorn donrai,
 Et toz jorn riches reserai."
 (ll. 3576-8)

This marriage, which was later dissolved, is uncourtly on two counts. Firstly, marriage without love was not worthy of a courtly hero, although Joufroi, it must be admitted, is no conventional courtly hero⁽²⁴⁾. Secondly, the means of acquiring wealth available to the perfect courtly knight do not, in theory at least, include a marriage of profit. Riches must derive from loyal service and skill at arms exercised in a just and noble cause.

A similar marriage of profit occurs in Guillaume d'Angleterre, where Queen Gracienne, poor and exiled, is offered a rich marriage. She seizes the opportunity as a means of remedying her poverty, but manages to reconcile her desire for wealth with the conjugal love she owes her real husband by accepting a union which remains a marriage in name only.

Marriages of profit undertaken by the courtly hero are not entirely successful. With the sole exception of Count Richard and the Lady of Gênes (L'Escoufle), the other marriages are doomed to failure. Ille and Galeron divorce, as do Joufroi and his bourgeoisie wife. For Queen Gracienne, the marriage of profit was merely a temporary expedient - the knight soon dies, and she is eventually reunited with her rightful husband, King Guillaume. As for Guinglains and La Blonde Esmérée, the poet himself, as we have seen, is uneasy about the conclusion and appears to feel that he is falling short of the ideals of courtly love.

c) Marriage as a Social Duty of Lord.

In some cases, marriage is presented to a lord as his social duty. The motive may not be purely mercenary, but necessary for the security of his land. Marriage was not a personal matter, but a social one, and it often fell to the barons of the land to urge a marriage and arrange it⁽²⁵⁾. In Robert le Diable, Robert's father's marriage was entirely taken in hand by his barons. They suggested the alliance, chose the future wife according to social, material and moral criteria, and the marriage was then effected: (ll. 9-20).

Alix, too, is forced into marriage by his barons, although he had promised his brother never to marry so that Cligès might inherit his empire. He yields to the insistence of his barons and a marriage is contracted with Fenice, daughter of an Emperor, who is pleased by the equal match:

Car il de neant ne s'aville,
Ne de rien s'enor n'apetise.
(Cligès: ll. 2632-3)

Felice is ordered to marry by her father and his barons, so that there would be a male heir to the land. She must, of course, marry someone worthy to inherit the estate: (Gui de Warewic: ll. 7455-56).

In La Manekine, an heir by marriage is not regarded by the barons as satisfactory. Rather than accept the future husband of Joie as ruler, or Joie herself, the barons urge Joie's father to remarry after the death of his first wife so that he might produce a male heir to whom the kingdom would pass by natural inheritance. Should the inheritance pass onto Joie, they estimate that the fate of the country in a woman's hands would be disastrous:

" Et non pourquant en briquetoize
Ert li roialmes de Hongrie,
Se feme l'avoit en baillie
Pour c'est il bon que nous alons
Au roi, et de cuer li prions
Qu'il pregne feme a nostre los. "

(La Manekine: ll. 212-17)

Such are the elements of feudal marriage as portrayed in the romances:

above all alliances based on considerations of material gain, social equality or advancement, the woman usually playing a minor part being the transferable object in the transactions effected by her male protectors. We shall now attempt to analyse the place held by courtly love against this background of material interests, how it is, at once, in conflict and in harmony with the conditions imposed by feudal society.

B. Courtly Love.

1. Adulterous Courtly Love, "Fine Amour".

Adulterous love is not a major theme in the courtly romances. When it occurs it is the direct result of a marriage contracted by feudal conditions. "La mal mariée" is the heroine, who, trapped in a loveless marriage, seeks solace elsewhere. Ironically the terminology associated with the cult of "fin' amors" is a reflection of feudal society, but with the roles reversed⁽²⁶⁾. The married woman remains a gift, but a gift of a more symbolic nature which she gives freely unconstrained by any external social factors. Since marriage is out of the question, wealth plays no important role in the choice of lovers, although the exchange of gifts, material and symbolic, is a characteristic element of the relationship between the lover and his lady⁽²⁷⁾.

In Le Chevalier de la Charrete, Lancelot incarnates the perfect example of a knight dedicated to the service of his lady. His attitude is one of humility, and he meekly obeys all commands issued by the queen, intended to test his complete devotion, to the point where he is prepared to compromise his knightly reputation and to sacrifice his social "pris" in the eyes of courtly society,

It is "fin' amors" which exists between Joufroi and Queen Alice of England. He swears to be her liegeman and to execute all her commands:

"Liges et sers tote ma vie
M'otroi en vostre seignorie,
De cuer leial senz repantir,
Por faire tot vostre plaisir."
(Joufroi: ll. 3971-74)

The declaration of love is expressed in similar terms in Troie, when Jason and Medea fall in love:

"Ma dame sereiz e m'amie,
De mei avreiz la seignorie:"
(ll. 1435-6)

Likewise in Tristan, the love-pact is sealed with a kiss, symbolising the voluntary submittal of Tristan to the power of Yseult as his sovereign lady:

Tristan en bese la roïne
Et ele lui, par la saisine.
(Beroul's Tristan: ll. 272-2)

The customary exchange of rings also assumes a symbolic significance as is shown in Equitan:

Par lur anels s'entresaisirent,
(line 181)

In this case the "saisine" is reciprocal, neither apparently, having supremacy.

The story of le Chastelain de Coucy is based on "fin' amors". The chatelains persistent advances eventually meet with success and the Lady of Fayel deigns to accord him her love. His tactics have included the traditional service of the lady, and another mark in his favour is the large sums of money he has spent in order to win the lady's heart. The companion of the Lady of Fayel lists the sacrifices the knight has made in order to court her favour:

"Lonc tans a mis coer et talent
Pour vostre corps siervir a gré;
Mout a de travail endurée
Et de painne, sans bien avoir;
Et s'a mout despendu d'avoir."
(ll. 3074-78)

In Athis et Prophilias, "fin' amors" takes on the form of a refined social game. Gafte and Cardiones, both happily married, are then wooed by love-sick knights. The ladies eventually agree to accept the conventional gifts and to acknowledge the devotion of the knights. They refuse, however, to compromise their honour and their loyalty to their husbands. Their participation goes no further than the presentation of love-tokens, and a

declaration of affection rather than love. Gaite explains the conditions of the arrangement to her knight, Pirithous:

"Mes mes avoires et mes jöeus,
 Mes ceintures et mes aneaus
 Et quan que vos porrai doner,
 Senz mon seignor desenorer,
 Vos otroi je mout bonement,
 Et s'en tenez comencement
 Cest anel d'or, si vueil mout bien
 Que vostre cuers penst vers le mien,
 Car plus vos aim que nul qu'en voie,
 De cui baillie je ne soie."

(ll. 14793-802)

Gaite's reference to being a possession of her husband (line 14802) is inconsistent with her former attitude. The marriage between herself and Athis had been a love-match, and the marriage itself had been secured in the face of great difficulties. While loving her husband, she appears to be aware of her status as a possession. This reconciliation of married love and "fin' amors" is extremely unusual and I have found no other such example.

The link between liberality and love, noted in le Chastelain de Coucy, had appeared also in Eracles. Love-inspired generosity is not limited to material gifts. The empress, after much heart-searching, decides to reciprocate the love of the knight, Paridès: She will be generous with her love, according to the tenets of "fin' amors".

"or amerai, si serai large,
 car amours fine le me charge."
 (ll. 3732-3)

Ironically, the empress had been carefully selected by Eracles as a suitable wife for the Emperor precisely on account of her generosity. This, however, was no casual affair, and the Emperor, upon discovering the situation, shows equal generosity by surrendering his wife to his rival.

Social rank would appear to be ^{of} secondary importance between lovers of the "fine amor" tradition. Such love matches were usually secret, evidently anti-social, and did not, therefore, seek the approbation of feudal or courtly society. Whatever their respective ranks the lady is treated as the superior.

When Equitan, the son of a king, falls in love with the wife of a senechal, she has misgivings about their association on account of their disparity of rank. Equitan explains to her that love is not bound by the rules of society. He is the servant, she, the lady:

"Ma chiere dame, a vus m'ustrei:
Ne me tenez mie pur rei,
M^{es} pur vostre humme et vostre ami.
(Equitan: ll. 169-71)

Vus seiez dame e jeo servanz,
Vus orguilluse e jeo preianz."
(ll. 175-6)

The argument between Equitan and the senechal's wife opposes marriage and "fin' amors". Elements of both points of view are to be found in the concept of courtly love which aims at marriage.

The senechal's wife argues that as she is the vassal of Equitan, there can be no love between them. Love can only exist between equals:

Amurs n'est pruz se n'est egals.
(line 137)

Speaking for her own case, she says it would be better to love a poor man with moral qualities of loyalty, sense and valour, than to aspire to the love of a king who might not be constant in his love:

Mieuz vaut uns povres hum leals,
Si en sei ad sen e valur,
E greinur joie est de s'amur
Qu'il n'est de princè u de rei,
Quant il n'ad lèauté en sei.
(ll. 138-42)

When a person loves above his or her station, the result is a constant fear, presumably of being cast aside at any moment. The rich man who loves a poor woman is confident that his wealth and power will keep her securely in his possession:

"S'aukuns aime plus hautement
Qu'a sa richesse nen apent,
Cil se dute de tute rien!
Li riches hum requide bien
Que nuls ne li toille s'amie
Qu'il voelt amer par seigneurie!"
(ll. 143-48)

The senechal's wife, therefore, disapproves of misalliances. For the poor woman, there is the risk that she will be rejected by the rich, powerful man when he tires of her. Whereas the rich man could develop an exaggerated sense of ownership when he deigns to associate with his inferior. Thus such unequal matches are doomed to failure. One notes also, that the lady attaches a degree of importance to moral qualities, and is certainly not motivated by covetousness.

Equitan scoffs at her reasoning. He accuses her of a bourgeois attitude which is primarily concerned with the matching of fortunes. This, he claims, is not how courtly lovers think:

"Cil ne sunt mie fin curteis,
Ainz est bargaine de burgeis,
Ki pur aveir ne pur grant fieu
Mettent lur peine en malveis liu.
(ll. 151-4)

He maintains that a poor woman provided that she has certain qualities - courtesy, honesty, constancy, is worthy of the love of a great nobleman. Moreover it is the duty of the rich, powerful man to prove himself worthy of the lady, whatever her station or financial circumstances:

"Suz ciel n'ad dame s'ele est sage,
Curteise e franche de curage,
Pur quei d'amer se tienge chiere,
Qu'el ne seit mie noveliere,
S'el n'elust for sul sun mantel,
Qu'uns riches princes de chastel
Ne se delust pur li pener
E lealment e bien amer.
(ll. 155-62)

No mention is made of marriage. These are the conditions for love. They can, however, be applied to marriage in the context of the verse romances, where courtly love aims at marriage. The senechal's wife's insistence upon social equality is reflected in the criteria imposed by feudal society, courtly society, the courtly hero and heroine's parents, and also sometimes by one of the two people destined to fall in love when marriage is contemplated.

Equitan's scorn for considerations of wealth and rank in love, coincide with the sentiments of all the courtly lovers who affect to disdain financial gain from marriage, and sometimes prove their words by their actions.

Equitan and the lady agree on the importance of character in the matter of worthiness to be loved, and this is also an important aspect in the courtly works as far as the basis for marriage is concerned.

I propose next to examine how the varying attitudes of these two characters are manifested within the context of courtly love and marriage in the romances.

2. Courtly Love leading to Marriage.

a) Importance of Social Rank.

Durmart's father concurs with the senechal's wife. He believes that love between equals is the only acceptable love. He stresses the necessity for equality of social rank in the love-matches of royalty, but concedes that people of lesser rank may have more latitude of choice since they may love above or below their station. Durmart's situation is that of Equitan. He loves the wife of his father's senechal, an association severely condemned by the king:

"N'est pas amors de fil a roi
Vers la feme d'un vavassor.
Filz de roi doit avoir amor
A haute pucelle roial
Ou a roïne emperial.
Mais vavassor et bachelor
Cil doivent haut et bas amer,
De fil a roi n'est pas ensi."
(Durmart: ll. 860-67)

Durmart eventually realises the wisdom of his father's words. The next object of his love is a queen, whom he marries.

The love match between Parthonopeus and Antigone in Thèbes, cannot culminate in marriage until Parthonopeus' lineage has been checked and approved. As the daughter of a king, Antigone declares herself bound by social duty not to love unwisely:

"Pucele sui, fille de roi,
legierement amer ne doi."¹
(ll. 4165-6)

Antigone has no intention of flouting social conventions. She will love if the social conditions are fulfilled. Her marriage, too, will be decided according to the social acceptability of her suitor. If he meets the approval of her mother or brother, then the marriage will be arranged:

"Pour ce ne di celer nel quier,
ne vos eusse forment chier
S'estiez de si haut linage
que vous fussiez de mon parage
et ce fust chose destinee
qu'a fame vous fusse donnee."
(ll. 4175-80)

Parthonopeus is pronounced socially acceptable by Antigone's mother, and the marriage is approved (ll. 4195-96).

We note that with Antigone, it is not only marriage which is governed by awareness of social conventions and her own duty as daughter of a king; for her, love is not a spontaneous emotion, but one which she can control and channel in an advantageous direction. She is not alone in this respect. Many of the courtly heroines refuse to love a social inferior, and, of course, consider marriage to be out of the question. We shall see, however, that for most courtly heroines the initial attitude of pride and awareness of social differences undergo radical changes. However social rank is often at some point an obstacle to love and marriage.

b) Ladies initially refuse love on social grounds.

In all cases of married misalliance, it is important to make clear that I am speaking of the social differences that exist within the ranks of courtly society. There is no question here of misalliance between nobles and villeins⁽²⁸⁾. Any social inequalities are relative within one social estate. The differences may therefore be resumed as dependent on comparative titles, land and wealth.

I refer back to the list of works (note 9) where I noted that out of

thirty-four love matches, twenty-eight ended in marriage. Of these twenty-eight marriages, twenty-one were apparent misalliances from society's point of view. In sixteen cases it is the lady who is socially superior, in only five, the man. Among these sixteen ladies, there are some who refuse to consider marriage with the courtly hero, viewing the social inequality as an unsurmountable obstacle.

The situation of the proud lady loved in vain by the humble knight obviously bears a close resemblance to the Provençal love lyric situation, with the obvious difference that in the Northern romances, the knight wants to marry the lady.

Who are then the proud ladies of the courtly romances? There is, for example, Clarie, daughter of King Bruiant. She is loved by Cristal who has wooed her for a long time. When he eventually finds her, he suddenly realises that his ambition to marry Clarie will be achieved with difficulty, because he is the son of a lesser nobleman. He curses his stupidity in thinking that Clarie would even consider him as a worthy suitor:

"Amee l'as mout folement,
 Ele fera plus sagement.
 Se tu es fols, ele est sage;
 Ne fera honte a son lignage."
 (Cristal et Clarie: ll. 7225-8)

His fears are confirmed by Clarie who claims to have turned down the marriage proposals of kings, counts, and dukes. Having disdained their suits, she is certainly not going to be tempted by a person of Cristal's modest station:

"Ne onques m'otroiai amor
 N'a roi n'a duc n'anpereor,
 Ne a vos ne voeil otroier."
 (ll. 7423-25)

Clarie would appear to have a degree of independence since she has been able to refuse all former suitors. In Cristal's case, her refusal to accord her love to any man now wavers, but his social inferiority prevents her yielding to the dictates of her heart; she is unwilling to invite the shame which would result from such a match:

"J'ai refusé maint roi, maint conte,
 Se lui amasse, ci fust honte.
 Ne sai qu'il est, fors par son dit...."
 (ll. 7573-5)

In Jehan et Blonde, Jehan is convinced that he loves in vain. He is the son of a poor vassal, Blonde, the daughter of the Count of Oxford. Like Cristal, Jehan regrets his folly in loving above his station. Blonde is worthy to be the wife of the King of England. She is immensely rich, but even without her wealth, she would be beyond his reach:

"S'li rois n'avoit point de fame,
 Il penroit volentiers ma dame,
 Car contesse iert d'Osenefort.
 Je n'avrai pas vaillant tant fort
 Comme ele avra de deniers d'or.
 Et s'ele n'avoit nul tresor
 Fors que sans plus sa grant biauté,
 Si seroit une roiauté
 A son aferant trop petite."
 (Jehan et Blonde: ll. 565-73)

Jehan's passion causes him to become ill. Blonde, knowing the reason for his suffering promises him her love so that his life will be saved. When Jehan is restored to health, she reverts to her former attitude of pride. She explains to Jehan that, were she to love him, she would degrade herself socially:

"Mais or ne pensés plus pour riens
 Que je m'amour donner vous doie;
 Trop durement m'abaisseroie."
 (ll. 894-96)

Beauté is just as unrelenting in her attitude of scorn towards Gliglois. Beauté is a rich lady, Gliglois, the son of a German chatelain, not yet knighted. His suit is further hampered by a distinguished rival, Gauvain. When Gliglois declares his love to Beauté, she is outraged. Like Clarie she has refused many noble suitors. To love Gliglois would be madness on her part:

"C'est folie que vous m'amés,
 Car maint haut homme ay refusé
 N'onques n'i poi ma volenté
 Vers eus traire que l'ag'maisse.
 Cuidiés vous dont que j'outriaisse
 A vous m'amour? C'estoit folie."
 (Gliglois: ll. 1506-11)

Guillaume de Palerne's social position has apparently little to recommend him to Melior, the daughter of an emperor. Although, in reality, the son of a king, his background is unknown to all, himself included. He was brought up by a herdsman and later taken to serve at the court of Melior's father. In spite of his humble background, Melior falls in love with him, which causes her no joy. She is only too conscious of the social abasement which she will bring upon herself. She rails against fortune for having thus manipulated her downfall and sorrow (Guillaume de Palerne: ll.899-907). Guillaume is unaware that his love is reciprocated. He assumes that his is a lost cause. No man in the whole of the empire, however great his wealth, could aspire to the hand of the Emperor's daughter. Only a foreign king or emperor would have equal social rank and therefore be considered an eligible suitor:

"C'est pas garce ne vilaine,
 Mais la ou nus de cest empire
 Por chose que il peust dire,
 Tant par i soit de grant pooir,
 Riches de terre ne d'avoir,
 N'en porroit ja a nul chief traire,
 Por nule riens qu'il peust faire,
 Tant ne s'en saroit entremetre,"
 (ll. 1212-19)

Meanwhile Melior is still struggling with her conscience. She realises that by making her love public she would be creating a shameful precedent and would justly incur the hatred of society. To reject the honour of a marriage with a king or emperor in favour of this foundling would be tantamount to a social crime (ll. 1574-86).

When Gui de Warewic, the son of a senechal, falls in love with Felice, the daughter of a count, he has no illusions about his fate were his love to be discovered by Felice's father. He would be either burned, decapitated, hanged, or drowned as punishment for lèse majesté in daring to love one to whom he owed only subservient respect (Gui de Warewic: ll. 257-62).

Felice's reaction to his courageous declaration is the commonplace one:

to accept Gui after refusing so many superior suitors would be humiliating:

"Desparagee trop serreie."
(line 359)

Ydoine is another lady determined to keep her love well under control until the social conditions for marriage are ideal. She fears the reprobation of society if she, a Duke's daughter, were to stoop to loving Amadas, son of a mere senechal (Amadas et Ydoine: ll. 532-37).

When Florimont, son of the Duke of Albania, but poor and incognito, declares his love to Romadanaple, daughter of the King of Greece, she curtly dismisses his pretensions, advising him to serve her parents in the hope of material reward. From her, he can hope for nothing:

"Servez le roi et la rbyne.
D'ous avrez tost un riche don;
De moi n'av(e)riés gueredon" (29)
(Florimont: ll. 7376-78)

She is nevertheless moved by Florimont's love which prompts a long internal debate, her commonsense telling her that as the daughter of a king she can not lower herself to love a poor man: (30)

"De povre ne me puet chaloir;
C'il est perdu, nel quier avoir,
Puels que je sui fille de roi,
Ne doi ameir plus baix de moi.
Mon cuer tendroie por legier,
(ll. 7501-05)

We see thus that often when it is the lady who is socially superior to the courtly hero, courtly love is unilateral. The hero loves, but apparently in vain. The proud lady's attitude reflects that of feudal society. She initially puts rank and wealth before love. She subordinates her personal inclinations, if she allows them to be felt, to her duty to her family and society. Thus at this stage in the association of the courtly lover and his lady, there is a conflict between courtly attitudes towards love and material attitudes towards marriage, a conflict which temporarily results in the hero's love being unrequited. We shall see later how the courtly hero manages to achieve his aims.

c) Marriage between rich man and poor woman.

When a rich nobleman decides to marry a poor girl of unknown origin, there is no conflict on a personal level. The courtly hero would appear to be more spontaneously generous in his attitude, and more inclined to follow the dictates of his heart rather than the values of feudal society. There is also the implication that when a rich girl marries a poor knight, she is humiliating herself, whereas the rich nobleman who marries his inferior does not sacrifice his honour, but elevates his wife to his social rank. For some, however, such a misalliance is not effected without difficulty, as will be shown later.

This is not the case of Erec and Enide. When Erec decides to marry Enide, he is not deterred by differences of rank and wealth. He is the son of a king, she the daughter of an impoverished "vavassor". This is not however, a case of courtly love triumphing over social criteria. Erec and Enide have only just met, and Enide is not consulted about the marriage, although the poet assures his reader that she was delighted - partly because she can discern the hero's courtly qualities and partly because the marriage will make her a queen, a not entirely disinterested attitude!:

et la pucele ert tote coie,
mes molt estoit joianz et liee
qu'ele li estoit otroiee,
por ce que preuz ert et cortois,
et bien savoit qu'il seroit rois
et ele meisme enoree,
riche reine coronee."

(Erec et Enide: ll. 684-90)

Love comes later after the marriage. Erec's motive for marrying Enide is generosity. He has been impressed by her beauty and courtliness, but she represents especially to him the means by which he can thank her father for the services he has rendered - his hospitality, the providing of arms, and the permission for Enide to accompany Erec to the Sparrow-hawk contest. By marrying Enide and making her a queen, he is rendering the "guerredon" owed to her father:

"mes je vos promet et otroi,
 se vos armes m'aparelliez
 et vostre fille me bailliez
 demain a l'esprevier conquerre,
 que je l'an manrai an ma terre,
 Se Dex la victoire m'an done;
 la li ferai porter corone,
 s'iert reïne de dis citez."
 (ll. 658-665)

Generosity, not love was, therefore, the explicit motivation for this marriage.⁽³¹⁾

Galeran de Bretagne and Fresne love each other, but whereas Galeran is a rich landowner, Fresne is a foundling, brought up by Galeran's aunt, and not a suitable wife for Galeran.

When Fresne speaks of the man she wants to marry, her godfather assumes that he must be someone of less elevated social standing:

"Sergens, varlez, ou escuiers?"
 (Galeran de Bretagne: ll. 1575)

Fresne's reaction is one of indignation. A foundling she may be, but she seems to know instinctively that she is of high birth. She would not deign to love someone of base origins (ll. 1576-81). Galeran also recognizes her personal qualities and vows to marry her whatever her social rank. He would refuse the daughter of the King of England and all the land and wealth from such a marriage for the sake of Fresne, whom he loves:

"S'a femme me vouloit donner
 Sa fille le roy d'Angleterre
 Et acquitter toute la terre
 Qu'il tient, et quanque en ont si homme,
 Ne qu'il a de cy jusque a Romme,
 Ne laouldroie prendre mie
 Pour faire eschange de m'amie,
 Qu'elle vault mieulx que fille a roy."
 (ll. 1740-47)

Fresne's earlier confidence in her right to aspire to marriage with Galeran wavers when she considers her position more fully. She tells Galeran that his wealth and nobility, his social reputation will prevent their union, because she cannot match his social advantages. She claims that she has been carried away by her love and has overlooked the social aspects of such a misalliance. Love has blinded her to the reality of her position:

"Ce que l'en vous tient tant a riche
 Et extrait de si hault lignage
 A si prisié et a tant sage
 Vous fera de moy departir.
 Ne me doy a vous aatir,
 Pour ce que je sui povre et basse."
 (ll. 2190-95)

Galeran is undeterred, and eventually manages to fulfil his vow to marry
 Fresne in spite of ^{all} opposition.

Floire and Blancheflor fall in love. They have been brought up together, and are still very young when they decide that they want to get married, and seem totally unaware of the social differences that exist between them. Floire is the son of a pagan king, Blancheflor the daughter of a French count, killed by Floire's father. Her mother was presented to Floire's mother as a companion. Blancheflor is therefore a Christian captive but Floire is nevertheless determined to make her his future queen, and eventually succeeds.

When Joie/Manekine is poor and in exile, she is rescued by a king who falls in love with her and asks her to marry him. Joie, in reality the daughter of a king, but unable to divulge her secret, sees the proposed marriage as degrading for the king:

"Sire, ce n'est mie avenant
 Que vous si vostre cuer plaissiés
 Que dusk'a moi vous abaissiés,
 Car je n'afier a vous de riens."
 (La Manekine: ll. 1958-61)

Love triumphs and they are married, although the fact is not made public immediately.

The daughter of the Comte d'Anjou finds herself in an identical situation. The Count of St. Gilles falls in love with her. He puts love above all else, dismissing wealth and land acquisition as motives for marriage. He wants a woman with whom he can be happy. He also makes the point that, by marrying her, he will remedy the social shame of her present position:

"Je ne demande pas richeces,
 Terres, chastiaus ne fortteresces,
 Mes, sanz plus, fame qui me plaise
 Je ne seré ja mes a aise
 Tant que je l'aurai espousee:
 Si ne sera pas vergondee;
 Ne m'en porroie plus tenir."
 (Comte d'Anjou: ll. 2721-27)

He convinces the lady, and they marry.

In Cleomadès, King Meniadus loves Clarmondine, and decides to marry her although she has told him that she is the widow of a minstrel. His love is not, however, reciprocated, because Clarmondine, in reality the daughter of a king, loves Cleomadès. Meniadus, sincere in his love, is thus prepared to ignore the social gulf between them. That she should be poor is irrelevant:

"et bien avoit ja en pensé
 que il a femme la prendroit
 ne pour nului ne le lairoit,
 quel qu'ele fust, ou povre ou riche.
 (ll. 7112-15)

Clarmondine simulates folly to avoid this marriage which, however well-intentioned, is repugnant to her.

In Guillaume de Dole, Emperor Conrad wants to marry Guillaume's sister Lienor. When Conrad tells the senechal that he intends to be married, the senechal's reaction is to inquire about the material and political advantages of the alliance. The emperor's reply implies that true wealth lies in a woman who is good, wise, beautiful and well-born:

"Prendrez vos i terre, ou avoir,
 Ou amis? Icë i prent on."
 - Bien prent terre et avoir li hom
 Qui la prent bone et sage et belle,
 Et de bon lignage et pucele."
 (ll. 3518-22)

Undoubtedly the most daring disregard for social conventions occurs in Guillaume d'Angleterre. A knight loves Queen Gracienne and wants to marry her. The queen is incognito, but, nevertheless, remembers that she is a queen and would be degraded by such a marriage:

Membre li qu'ele fu roïne,
 Or seroit feme a un baron:
 Trop aroit avillié son non.
 (ll. 1108-10)

To discourage him, the queen claims to be of lowly birth:

"Et mes peres fu uns vilains"
(line 1130)

Moreover she tells him that she is a nun turned prostitute (ll. 1136-41).

Unbelievably the elderly knight is not discouraged by her base origins. He attaches no importance to lineage. It is the character which counts. People of good character can be lowly, while noblemen can be evil:

"On ne puet pas connoistre al oir,
Maintes fois, qui li peres fu.
Maint mauvais sont de bons issu,
Et des mauvais rissent li boen."
(ll. 1166-69)

This is an exceptional case, since courtly love usually has a worthy object. The person loved may be poor and of low rank within courtly society, but he or she is never of low birth and always has compensating moral qualities. The queen's fictitious portrait would disqualify her from courtly love on both counts.

The above examples show that when it is the man who is socially or materially superior, he does not consider these an obstacle to marriage. There is no instance of a rich man refusing to marry a poor girl on social grounds, unlike the proud ladies we met in the preceding section. The courtly knights are portrayed by the poets as being generous in all respects. We note, however, that of the six misalliances we have just considered and which do end in marriage, four of the wives turn out to be noble when their real identity is revealed - Joie, Fresne, Countess of St. Gilles, and Queen Gracienne. In the last case, however, the knight died still believing that his wife was a reformed prostitute, not the queen of England.

When a rich nobleman decides to marry a poor woman, there is in the romances, no conflict between the two if they love each other. The generous hero ignores the mercenary attitudes of his society and puts love above all else. The woman who loves and is socially inferior can have no objections to make. Society, represented by the family and barons of the noblemen,

does, however, protest, and so the marriages are not contracted without much opposition.

d) Attitude of Society to Misalliance.

Those who oppose a marriage of love in favour of one of interest do not hesitate to criticise the conduct of the rich nobleman, and often try to prevent the union.

Galeran de Bretagne meets opposition from his aunt, the abbess who had brought up Fresne. She shows a strange reversal of attitude. Earlier she had told Galeran that she suspected Fresne was of noble birth, and that her personal qualities would make her a worthy wife for any man. She claims to put courtly qualities before lineage and wealth. No man would be dishonoured by marrying Fresne:

"Mais femme sage, c'est li voirs,
Vaut mieulx que parage n'avoirs;
Moult fait proudom belle gaaigne
Qui belle et sage a a compaignie.
Dont ne se puet cil aviller
S'il a ma fillole a moullier,
(Galeran de Bretagne: ll. 1913-18)

She goes so far as to say that Fresne would not disgrace the King of Rome, is worthy of all the wealth of Constantinople, possesses a character as noble as that of the Queen of France or the Duchess of Bourgoigne (ll. 1919-36).

The abbess expresses the ideals of courtly love by advocating marriage based on love which recognises personal qualities. However she is being hypocritical, as her subsequent conduct proves. When she learns that her own nephew, Galeran, loves and intends to marry Fresne, she makes a surprising volte-face. If Galeran were to marry a poor, unknown girl, his subjects, family and friends would suffer from the consequent dishonour:

"Ce puet nostre païs grever
Et ses parens et ses amys,
Quant il a si tout son cuer mis
En une garce povre estrange."
(ll. 2932-35)

Her only objection is that Fresne is not of high birth, as she tells Galeran:

"Ne vous blamasse pas, par m'ame,
S'amissiez une haulte dame."
(ll. 3015-16)

So violently opposed is she to the alliance, that, taking advantage of Galeran's absence, she banishes Fresne, and it is some years before they are reunited and finally married.

Floire meets opposition from his father who complains to his wife that Floire will bring dishonour upon them by his intention to marry Blanchflor. He proposes to remedy the situation by having Blancheflor beheaded, and Floire married off to the daughter of a king or emir (Floire et Blancheflor: ll. 295-300). He modifies his intentions and sells Blancheflor to some merchants. Floire's despair and attempted suicide provokes a radical change of attitude in his father who henceforth does all in his power to enable Floire to find Blancheflor. No further objections are raised to the marriage.

In La Manekine, when the king marries Joie, they are at first obliged to keep the matter a secret from fear of social reprobation. The king's mother has endeavoured to prevent the marriage. Having failed, she tries to have Joie killed, but succeeds only in forcing her into exile. The couple are later reunited.

When the Count of St. Gilles is contemplating marriage with the daughter of the count of Anjou, the chatelain who was caring for the lady tries earnestly to dissuade him. The chatelain recognizes the lady's qualities and declares that she is probably of noble birth, but so long as there remains an element of doubt, it would be madness on the count's part to marry her. The count is well-connected; he is cousin to the king of France and nephew of the Duke of Brittany, so he could and should make an excellent marriage in accordance with his social situation (Comte d'Anjou: ll. 2696-2710). This too, is the opinion of the count's vassals, who condemn him for putting love before the interests of his land and subjects. He could have contracted an alliance which would have brought land and political allies (ll. 3034-38).

When Conrad announces his intention of marrying Lienor, even her own brother, Guillaume, is shocked. He says that the barons are sure to protest and advises the Emperor to marry the daughter of the King of France, and to abandon all thoughts of marrying his impoverished sister. (Guillaume de Dole: ll. 3039-43).

The knight who wishes to marry Queen Gracienne, also meets the opposition of his vassals.

"Qui li a en conseil doné
Que il presist ceste chetive?"
(Guillaume d'Angleterre: ll. 1276-77)

They predict that once raised to riches and power, she will become proud and contemptuous, thus making their lord miserable and driving him to an early death. The knight does indeed die quite soon, but the cause is not given, and no reference is made to any radical change in the behaviour of Gracienne.

The Emperor of Rome is severely censured by his barons when he declares his resolve to marry his daughter to Guillaume, son of Count Richard. Such a misalliance, they regard as impossible and refuse their consent:

Ains dient tuit de grant outrage
Vient lor signor et de folie,
Quant il a si bas home alie
Par mariage la pucele .
(L'Escoufle: ll. 2294-97)

If Guillaume were to inherit the title of Emperor, the whole land and its barons would lose their prestige and honour:

"Trop kerroit ja de roiste tertre
Vostre grant terre et vostre empire
Se Guilliaumes en estoit sire,
Et nos honi et damagié."
(ll. 2740-3)

The Empress sides with the barons and the Emperor has to yield to the opposition.

d) Unwelcome arranged marriages conflict with courtly love.

When unions are arranged for secondary characters, their reaction, as we have seen, was always one of polite gratitude. The courtly hero and

heroine, however, will show more spirit and will endeavour to escape a marriage which is in opposition to courtly love and which has been arranged by fathers or barons.

Blonde loves Jehan, but is to be wed to the count of Gloucester. The advantages of her forthcoming marriage are evident even to her. She hesitates, asks herself whether she should abandon her lover for the wealth offered her:

"Se cis chi a plus de monnoie,
Plus de rikece et plus de terre
Que cil qui venir me doit querre,
Lairai ge dont pour sa rikece
Morir mon ami par destrece?"
(Jehan et Blonde: ll. 2272-77)

She does not hesitate for long: "Certes nenil!" (line 2278). In the event, she and Jehan elope.

Guillaume de Palerne, of unknown origin, loves Melior, daughter of an emperor, who is to be given to the son of the Emperor of Greece. The advantages of this marriage are manifest. A messenger from Greece tells Melior's father how she will benefit from the alliance, the great wealth she will gain:

"Por lui ta fille te requiert,
Se li dones, mien essient,
Plus avra or que tu argent,
Et plus cités, bors et chastiaus,
Que tu viletes ne masiaus.
En seurquetot bien sés de voir
C'onques ne fu por nul avoir
Feme plus riche ne plus noble
Que dame de Constantinoble."
(Guillaume de Palerne: ll. 2626-34)

Melior tries protesting, but in vain. Her companion, Alexandrine, also attempts to reason with the Emperor. She claims that the promise of wealth and honour is illusory. Melior would merely be one of many wives in a harem (ll. 3591-97). The wealth would therefore be hers in name only. She would be for ever disgraced:

"Mult puet, ce dist, hair la terre,
La richoise, la region
De coi on n'a fors que le non.
N'avra fors non d'emperreis;
Il ne li puet avenir pis:
Ensi vivra, mais comme pors."
(ll. 3598-3603)

The emperor is not impressed by her argument, so Guillaume and Melior flee from court.

Aelis and Guillaume are another couple who are forced to leave home in order to avoid an arranged marriage. The emperor, Aelis' father, has been persuaded, against his will, to arrange a profitable match for his daughter.

"Donés le a tel dont grans honors
Viengne a vo terre et a vos gens."
(Escoufle: ll. 2728-29)

Aelis and Guillaume make their escape, intending to go to Normandy where Guillaume is count, but they are accidentally separated. Reunited much later, they get married, and the barons of Rome, presented with a "fait accompli", accept the situation with a good grace. Guillaume is crowned Emperor of Rome on the death of Aelis' father. Having rejected wealth for love, the hero and heroine finally possess both, which is the usual pattern in the romances.

Flight is not the solution for Athis and Gaite. Gaite has been promised to the King of Bilas, a marriage with many advantages which are obvious even to Gaite herself. She realises that such a union is becoming to her social position:

"France^h dame es de haute gent,
Seignor avras a ton talent,
Dame seras de granz afeires."
(Athis et Prophilius: ll. 3837-39)

She considers the material gain and honour to be obtained from the match to which she is destined, and is tempted to accept the situation without protest as her sense of duty commands:

"Tote sui fie et bien certene
D'avoir grant chose en mon demene,
Pieça que sui asçuree
D'estre reine coronee;
Atandré moi a mon seignor
Qui m'est promis a grant enor,
Li rois de Bile."
(ll. 3917-23)

But her love for Athis is stronger than her desire for wealth and honour.

They are not forced to flee because they find an ally in Gafte's father, who, when he learns of their love, attempts to cancel the marriage contract promised to King Bile. The latter refuses to surrender his claim to Gafte and to free Gafte's father from his promise. On the instigation of Prophilius, who is determined to protect his friend's interests, a full-scale war ensues, in which the defenders of love triumph over those who are motivated by mercenary considerations. Althis and Gafte are, therefore, wed.

Some unwelcome arranged unions are not avoided. Ydoine, who loves Amadas, is powerless, in his absence, to prevent her wedding the Count of Nevers. Likewise, the young Cligès cannot oppose the marriage of Felise to his uncle, Alix, the Emperor. In order that courtly love may still triumph over these arranged matches, the poets of Amadas et Ydoine and of Cligès introduce an element of magic, in the form of potions, whereby these hateful unions are never consummated. This is the first step in their campaign against the marriages. Next comes the expedient of "simulated death"⁽³²⁾, which eventually enables the lovers to be reunited. In both cases, the truth is finally discovered, but both couples are able to wed. The Count of Nevers renounces his claim to Ydoine, and Alix dies, leaving Felise free to marry Cligès.

f) Women refuse rich marriage.

In the examples reviewed in the preceding section, it was always the lady who sacrificed great wealth by eventually marrying for love the courtly hero, himself not as wealthy or as powerful as the would-be husband of the arranged marriage. In these cases the lady cannot oppose the marriage imposed upon her, and so must have recourse to emergency measures, often flight from home, which sometimes involved the trial of extreme poverty. On other occasions the independent heroine, no longer under the tutelage of her father, still refuses the tempting offers of rich marriages made to her by wealthy suitors.

Euriant, who loves Gerart, refuses the proposal of marriage from a duke (Roman de la Violette: ll. 1198-1205). Fresne, who has become rich by her own efforts, receives many offers, all of which she declines, out of love for Galeran:

"Hault homme aroit a sa devise
S'elle vouloit baron avoir."
(Galeran de Bretagne: ll. 4294-95)

Aelis is in the same situation, alone and earning her living by her needlework. She has sworn never to marry anyone but Guillaume:

"Je n'en penroie pas mil livres
De besans, qui les me donroit,
Por autre prendre."
(Escoufle: ll. 3232-34)

She enlists the help of the Lady of Montpellier in order to resist any advances made by suitors, whether their intentions are honourable or not (ll. 5715-21). Evidently, a woman unprotected by a father or husband, is prey to the evil designs of those more powerful than she. Not least of these dangers is marriage. Should a knight decide that he wanted to marry Aelis, there would be little she could do to thwart his plan⁽³³⁾. Hence the request for protection from the Lady of Montpellier and her vassals. The fate feared by Aelis, befalls Enide, when Erec is wounded and believed dead. She is abducted by the Count of Limors who, in spite of her protests, marries her (Erec et Enide: ll. 4732-35). Enide's grief at Erec's "death" is not assuaged by the riches that the count offers her:

"Dame, fet il, il vos estuet
cest duel lessier et oblfer:
molt vos poez an moi fier
d'enor et de richesce avoir."
(ll. 4754-57)

Erec's timely resuscitation rescues her from the duke's brutality in the face of her obstinate resistance.

g) The Courtly Hero refuses a rich marriage.

i. Girl given by her father.

It is not only the courtly heroine who, putting love above wealth,

has the opportunity of refusing rich marriages. The courtly hero, too, is often offered wealth if he will marry someone he does not love. He invariably refuses the wealth to be gained from a loveless union, and remains loyal to the lady he loves, who is often even wealthier, but that is presented in the romances as of secondary importance.

Lancelot loves Guinevere, so refuses all proposals made to him. When he defends a viscount from a robber-knight, he is offered as a reward the viscount's daughter (Merveilles de Rigomer: ll. 1056-58). Later, he rescues a girl about to be ravished. She turns out to be the kidnapped daughter of King Dessemomme. The king had promised that any man who could recover his daughter would become her husband and would receive half the kingdom:

"Par la terre et par la contree,
Et avoit fait son ban crier:
Celui qui porroit ramener,
Donroit la moitié de sa terre
En pais quitement et sans guerre,
Et si avroit sa fille a feme."
(ll. 4214-19)

The honour falls to Lancelot, who refuses the marriage, giving as his reason that he had an important mission to accomplish at Rigomer, a mission that no amount of wealth would tempt him to abandon. One assumes that his secret love for Guinevere was the real reason for his refusal:

"Or ne argent
N'avrai jou ne feme ne terre,
Ançois irai Rigomer querre."
(ll. 4628-30)

It is in the guise of a reward that ^{the} emperor of Constantinople's daughter is offered to Gui de Warewic:

"Ma fille vus doins, si la pernez,
Demi ma terre ensemble od lui,
Ço vus ottrei, Sire Gui,
(Gui de Warewic: ll. 4216-18)

Gui is momentarily tempted to accept, but his love for Felice makes him refuse. He regrets his shameful hesitation:

"Ore sai ben que mesfait ai,
Quant pur richesce altre amai,
Ore m'en repent, si m'en doil,"
(ll. 4233-5)

On occasions the courtly hero refuses the reward of a rich wife for more practical reasons. Ille, although attracted to Ganor, is obliged to decline her father's generous offer because he is already married to Galeron. His refusal causes a scandal at the court of the Emperor of Rome, Ganor's father.

The Emperor: "Tel offre ne fist ainc mais nus,
Ne ne refusa cuens ne dus."
(Ille et Galeron: ll. 2792-93)

Even the Pope (!) urges him to accept the great wealth and the attendant honour (ll. 2750-55)⁽³⁴⁾. Ille persists in his refusal. Only years later, when Galeron decides to take the veil, Ille is able to return to Rome and marry Ganor.

Yvain is also offered the reward of a rich marriage if he can overthrow two sons of the devil who hold in their power a chastelain. The latter offers the reward:

"Mon chastel et ma fille a per
doit avoir, et tote ma terre,
cil qui porra en champ conquerre
çaus qui vos vanront asaillir."
(Yvain: ll. 5482-85)

Yvain does defeat his opponents, motivated not by covetousness for the land and the girl, but as a point of honour, an act of courage, justice and generosity. He refuses the promised reward, which he is in no position to accept anyway, since he is already married. He explains to the chatelain that he does not scorn his daughter, but cannot marry her (ll. 5697-5701). The chatelain is extremely angry at this refusal, and stresses the material advantages:

"ja mes si riche mariage
n'avroiz, se vos cestui n'avez."
(ll. 5712-13)

He argues in vain.

When Protheselâus and Melander become friends, the latter offers him his sister. Protheselâus is desperately trying to recover his just inheritance

at present in the hands of Pentalis. By marrying Melander's sister, heiress to Pentalis, Protheselau's would be able to reclaim his land without engaging in a war (Protheselau's: ll. 2508-15). The solution seems ideal but is unacceptable to the courtly hero on two accounts. Firstly he loves Medea, and so cannot betray her by marrying another. Secondly marriage with land acquisition as its sole aim is essentially uncourtly. Protheselau's therefore refuses.

ii. Independent proposals from women.

The courtly hero often receives proposals of marriage directly from women. These women are a particular category in the romances. Like the maidens given by their fathers, they reflect the reality of feudal society. These ladies are in charge of a fief, which they find difficult to manage without the aid of a male protector. When a courtly knight helps such a lady out of her difficulties, her natural reaction is to retain him at all costs. In order to do this, she stresses the wealth of the land which would be his if he were to marry her.

From the eleventh century onwards, feudal society allowed the succession of a fief to pass to a female heir. However, her position was extremely insecure as long as she had no male protector who would assure the military defence of the land. Normally, therefore, the seigneur would impose marriage upon a woman who had inherited a fief or who had been widowed⁽³⁵⁾.

Thus a woman may inherit a fief, but could never be said to own it. That privilege was accorded to her husband by the supreme land-owner, the suzerain. Like the fief, the woman is a possession of the seigneur. She forms part of the goods awaiting transfer to a male successor. She is at once the possession of her husband and of her suzerain.

The necessity of having a husband to govern the fief was therefore one of the motives for proposals of marriage made by the ladies of the romances. They are in effect anticipating the action of the suzerain. They attempt

to secure a husband of their choice before the lord can impose a stranger upon them. The courtly heroes, displaying all the qualities desirable in a husband, are obviously ideal choices. Their personal qualities make them lovable, for love is not always absent from the proposals made by these solitary ladies. Their valour and skill at arms make them desirable as the holder and defender of the fief.

We have already met examples of women asking to be given. Queen Blonde Esmeree loves Guinglains, and asks Arthur to arrange their marriage. She has made her choice, and wants it sanctioned by the supreme suzerain (my page 748).

Need for a male protector curtails Laudine's grief over her husband's death and makes her ready to accept Yvain, as his immediate successor. Initially, she has no good reason to love Yvain, for it was he who killed her husband. It is the pressing need of someone to defend the magic fountain which eventually decides her. Referring to the rapid remarriage of Laudine, in Yvain, Jean Frappier attributes it in part to concern for the security of her estate, and responsibilities with which a woman was considered unable to cope⁽³⁶⁾.

This motive for marriage is analysed in Thèbes. When Parthonoepus is fatally wounded, his last words are intended for his mother. He asks that she should be told that he would advise her to take a husband as soon as possible. She has extensive lands and without a male protector, a role thus far taken by Parthonoepus himself, she would be an easy prey to invaders and robbers. He therefore recommends that she take a prince or count as husband:

"a ma mere di
que ele praigne tost mari;
ele a grant terre et grant anor,
gasteront la lui robeor;
li hoberel l'en feront guerre,
gasteront lui sovent sa terre,
Di li que tost praigne seingnor,
riche prince ou riche contor."
(ll. 8793-8800)

Whether motivated by love or practical need, or both, the unattached ladies of the romances, who throw themselves at the feet of the courtly heroes, offering themselves and their wealth, meet with little success. The courtly hero is often in love with another to whom he remains loyal.

Gerart loves Euriant and so does not yield to the advances of the ladies he meets and who propose to him. Aigline is a disinherited lady whom Gerart has restored to her rightful position. In return she offers him her land, wealth and herself as wife or mistress:

"Ma terre et trestout mon avoir
Et quanque j'ai vous abandon,
De moi meisme vous faich don,
Volés a femme ou a amie."
(Roman de la Violette: ll.2185-88)

Gerart refuses to abandon his quest for Euriant for all the wealth of King Constantine of Rome:

"Dame, dist Gerars, pour l'avoir
C'ot Constantins, li rois de Romme,
Ne lairoie, chou est la somme,
La voie que jou ai emprise."
(ll. 2197-2200)

Later Aiglente and her lady-in-waiting, Florentine, fall in love with him. Aiglente is confident that her great wealth will attract Gerart. She discounts Florentine's aspirations, since the latter is not rich (ll. 3011-18) (see my pages 471-72). Gerart, still looking for Euriant, wants neither lady.

Cristal, too, is on a quest for the lady he loves, and whom he has only seen in a dream. As he travels around in search of this mysterious lady, he encounters many adventures. On one occasion he spends the night at a castle where a lady immediately falls in love with him and offers herself and her future kingdom (Cristal et Clarie: ll. 1358-60). She is not, however, the lady Cristal is seeking, and he declines her offer, saying that his heart is already committed to another.

Later Cristal comes to the aid of a countess who is being besieged by invaders. She, too, wants to marry Cristal. She abandons her dignity and

offers herself and her wealth to him. Her love for Cristal deprives her of her reason:

"Et la contesse s'abandone,
Que devant aus trestos li done
Son cuer, son cor et son avoir.
Cristal li tolt sens et savoir
Par les valors qu'il a en lui."
(ll. 5313-17)

It is Gauvain who finally triumphs in the adventures at Rigomer. He thus wins the throne of Ireland and the hand of Queen Dionise. He is with his "amie", the fay, Lorie, and does not want to marry Queen Dionise. He suggests an alternative: within the space of a year he will find a husband for the queen, the son of a king, who would meet the approval of her barons, and who would be almost as worthy a person as Gauvain himself (Merveilles de Rigomer: ll. 14753-60). Dionise seems perfectly satisfied with this arrangement.

Not all ladies receive the courtly hero's refusal to wed them with such good grace. Protheselaüs is trapped by a lady who is determined to make him her husband. She tells him that he will be a duke, a wealthy land-owner, able to indulge in extravagant spending (Protheselaüs: ll. 6600-12) (see my page 577).

Protheselaüs loves Medea and refuses this generous, but imperious, offer. The indignant lady has him thrown into prison.

A similar fate threatens Florimont if he does not marry the Lady of Carthage. He has been of service to the lady, and she presents him with herself and her wealth:

Se li mostra l'ergent et l'or,
La soie, le vair et le gris.
"Sire," fet ele, "Clavegris
Avrois et moi, se vos volez."
(Florimont: ll. 13004-7)

The lady does not appreciate his refusal, but Florimont, although faced with the prospect of imprisonment, cannot and will not change his mind. He loves, and is married to, Romadanaple.

It is not courtly love, but filial love which had earlier driven Florimont to turn down the proposal of the girl he has saved. She is a queen, and wants to take him away, to her distant land and make him a king.

"Tu serais rois de ma contree,"
(Florimont: line 2491)

Florimont is attracted to the girl, but is also aware of his duty to his parents. He is reluctant to suddenly abandon them. The conflict is between love for the girl and pity for his parents. He compromises. The girl consents to a love affair, providing that their association is kept a secret. After some time, all is discovered, and the girl mysteriously disappears.

Guinglains, although he loves la Pucele aux Blanches Mains, has to refuse her proposal of marriage:

"Ma terre vos doins et m'amour,
A mari, sire, vos prendrai."
(Le Bel Inconnu: ll. 2274-5)

He is on a mission and is morally obliged to accomplish it before he can stay and be married. He returns later, but again leaves to attend a tournament at the court of King Arthur. There he finds Blonde Esmérée who has arranged that she should be given to him as his wife. Since Arthur himself supports the alliance, Guinglains is in no position to refuse. Thus Guinglains' temporary refusal of the proposal of La Pucele aux Blanches Mains, inspired by a sense of duty and honour, loses him the lady he loves.

Love is a minor factor in the proposals of marriage cited above. The ladies want above all a brave protector, not the courtly hero himself for his personal qualities although these contribute to his eligibility as ruler of the proffered fief. The ladies all attach great importance to wealth and titles. Their apparent generosity is not inspired by benevolence, but is presented as a bait to tempt the knight. A true courtly hero is never duped by this. He puts love above wealth.

There is also the point that the offered wealth does not in reality belong to the lady. It will invariably pass, as will she, to a suitable husband according to the will of her suzerain. The lady is merely trying to exercise what little autonomy she has by herself choosing the person to whom she and her land will pass.

It is ironical that, in the romances, when the courtly hero aspires to marriage above his station, the whole of society, including initially the lady herself, rise against him. When, however, he is loved or, at least, wanted in marriage by his social superior, circumstances are such that he refuses. The essential governing factor is love, courtly love which ignores rank and wealth.

h) Social Differences Exploited to Escape Unwelcome Match.

The disparity in rank and wealth which so often thwarts the ambition of the courtly hero to wed a social superior is sometimes used as a justification for refusal when a courtly hero or heroine is attempting to avoid an unwelcome marriage.

When Gerart wishes to discourage Aiglente who has asked him to marry her, he gives her a fictitious account of his past. He says he has been a thief, a rapist, and he is extremely poor (ll. 3274-88). Far from being deterred, Aiglente is delighted. If, as he says, his poverty distresses him, then he will seize the opportunity to marry her and benefit from her great wealth:

Quant le pucele l'ot parler,
 K'il se demente k'il est povres,
 Bien le cuide par ses biaux offres
 Atraire a s'amour et avoir,
 Puis k'il est convoiteus d'avoir,
 (Roman de la Violette: ll. 3289-93)

One wonders why Aiglente persists in her love of Gerart when, on his own admission, he has no good personal qualities, and nor is he wealthy or titled. Aiglente is evidently an uncourtly lady. In spite of the failure of his plan, Gerart escapes the lady⁽³⁷⁾.

Gui de Warewic refuses the hand of the daughter of the Emperor, because he loves Fenice. He claims that the alliance would be dishonourable because he is socially inferior and not worthy to inherit an empire. The Greeks would never accept him as their ruler. The emperor's daughter would be disgraced (Gui de Warewic: ll. 4466-76). It would, therefore, be wrong of Gui to accept such great wealth and honour, which would result in dishonour:

"Mielz voil un poi a honur
Que granz richesces a deshonor"
(ll. 4477-79)

The Emperor is not convinced, but cannot prevent Gui from leaving his court.

Ille uses the same tactics when he is obliged to refuse Ganor, daughter of the Emperor of Rome. He says that he is not of royal birth, and unworthy to be her husband. Everyone, however, is in favour of the match, the Emperor, his barons, and Ganor herself, who does not care about his background. She says:

"Oïstes me vos ainc requerre,
Se vostre pere ot rice terre
U s'il ert besogneus d'avoir?"
(Ille et Galeron: ll. 3794-96)

The device is used twice by Clarmondine: once to avoid marriage with King Meniadus, and earlier to escape the designs of King Crompart. Although the daughter of a king, she tells Crompart that she is a poor orphan of humble origin, and thus unfit to become a queen:

"Je suis une povre meschine,
de pere et de mere orpheline,
et sui, n'enmentirai noient,
venue de mout povre gent."
(Cleomadès: ll. 6345-48)

She has no more success than the others who tried the same escape route. Crompart, who has abducted her, is resolved to marry her. He claims to love her so much that he will ignore her background and make her a queen. He promises her that he will make her family rich and noble:

"Vostre lignage franchirai
et de vous royne ferai;
por vous les vorrai porveoir
si que bien le porront vouloir.
Vous dites que povre gent sont,
Mais sachiez que riche seront."
(ll. 6391-96)

Crompart is no courtly lover. His claim to love Clarmondine is suspect since earlier he had been just as determined to marry Cleomadès' sister, Marine. Moreover a courtly knight does not marry a lady by force. His apparent generosity is meaningless since his gifts would be imposed, not given.

We see that, paradoxically, when a courtly hero or heroine wants to marry the person he or she loves social disparity is invoked as an insurmountable obstacle to their union. Yet when difference in social rank and wealth is used in the hope of avoiding an unwelcome alliance, suddenly it is no longer an obstacle, everyone being prepared to overlook the base origins, the abject poverty, the lack of moral qualities in the person who would be married against his or her will.

C. Marriage and Courtly Love Reconciled.

1. How Obstacles are Overcome.

So far we have studied marriage from the feudal aspect which may conflict with courtly love. We have seen proud ladies disdain an inferior courtly hero, helpless girls threatened with rich loveless marriages, generous lords who by marrying an inferior or wishing to, incur the scorn and censure of society. How then does courtly love manage to achieve its aim and pacify the opinion of society, family and barons? Either external circumstances change - for example, the poor knight is found to be a rich king - or more often a change of attitude occurs, which sweeps aside the social prejudices and values only courtly qualities. The solution may be even simpler. In certain cases the marriage is made possible by a devious use of the "don contraignant"⁽³⁸⁾.

a) "Le Don Contraignant" or rash boon.

The use of the "don contraignant" has mixed results in the matter of marriage. It is the method to which the Emperor of Rome has recourse when

he wants to marry Guillaume and Aelis. Since Guillaume is of modest social standing compared with his daughter, he rightly anticipates opposition from his barons, and even from Guillaume's father, Count Richard. He first asks a boon of Richard without specifying its nature. Richard of course, promises to grant whatever is asked of him:

"Quens," fait il, "je vos pri .j. don
 Que je voel que vos me doigniés.
 - Sire," fait il, "et vos l'ajés,
 Que ja n'en quier prendre conseil,
 Car por vo grant anui abatre."
 (Escoufle: ll. 2136-40)

Since the Emperor is Richard's suzerain, to ask his permission to give Aelis to Richard's son is not other than a gesture of politeness, since it could be arranged without his approval. In fact Richard does not give his approval. He says that it is madness on the Emperor's part to make such a misalliance. The Emperor counters that Richard deserves the honour for services he has rendered the empire. He also claims to be able to give Aelis to whomsoever he pleases (ll. 2168-72). This is not true. He still has to tackle the problem of the barons. He unfolds his plan to Richard: He will assemble the highest barons of the empire. He will tell them that for their mutual benefit he requires a boon from them, a boon which will not in any way hurt them to grant. Confident in the loyalty of his barons and in their faith in him, he is sure that they will agree to his request, thereby sanctioning the marriage of Guillaume and Aelis (ll. 2181-91). The boon is granted and the barons are furious to find themselves tricked into approving such a shameful marriage. Bound by their word, they can only grudgingly accept the situation. Later, however, after the death of Count Richard, the barons revoke the agreement and this is when Guillaume and Aelis have to flee from home. They marry without the consent of the barons, but are later reconciled with the count of Rome when Guillaume has become a count and a courtly knight of great reputation.

The situation is similar in Guillaume de Dole. Emperor Conrad realizes that his barons would never agree to his marriage with Lienor. He intends, therefore, to exploit their trust in him by asking for a "boon". He knows that his past generosity has won their love and they will not refuse his request. Once granted, he would reveal his intentions, and they would be morally obliged to keep their promise (ll. 3082-95). His plan is entirely successful, and having overcome difficulties of another nature, they are married, with the good will of the barons.

In Cleomadès, the granting of the "don contraignant" has unfortunate results. Three African kings, Melocardis, Baldigans and Crompart want to marry the three daughters of King Marcadigas. Crompart suggests that they each give an original gift to the king and then ask for a "don" in exchange⁽³⁹⁾. Crompart has great faith in the generosity of King Marcadigas:

"et il n'a pas le cuer aver,
ains l'a si large que sans faille
nous donra le don, quoi qu'il vaille."
(ll. 1558-60)

The "don" is, of course, to involve permission to marry the three girls. The king grants the boon, but is dismayed when he learns its exact nature. Two of the kings are accepted by the daughters, but the third, Crompart, is so hideous that Maribéis is horrified at the prospect of being his wife. King Marcadigas had assumed that the "don" requested would have been of a material nature. He asks for the boon to be cancelled:

"viles, chastiaus, tresors ou terre
cuidai que avoir vous vissiez,
dont j'estoie joians et liez,
Si vous pri, se vous tant m'amés,
que de ce don me deportés."
(ll. 1992-96)

Crompart, however, refuses to relinquish his claim to Marine. In despair, King Marcadigas swears that he will never again grant a rash boon (ll. 2055-58).

d) "Amors" leads to a change of attitude.

The courtly lover who loves above his station meets opposition not only

from society in general and more particularly from his lady's parents, he is often rejected by the lady herself, as we have seen. The disdainful ladies, who refused to accord their love for social and material reasons, soon change their mind. The persistence and suffering of the courtly hero have their effect. She hesitates, and then is struck by the full force of love. "Amors" tends to be regarded as an external force which attacks the lady, causing her actual physical suffering. Many a lady takes to her bed suffering from some dramatic but unknown illness, until she realises that she is firmly in the grip of "Amors" and can only remedy her situation by giving her heart freely and joyfully to the knight who has so patiently served her. Once in the power of Love, the lady undergoes a complete change of character and attitudes. Forgotten are the notions of duty and social rank. Priority goes to personal moral qualities of courtesy, largess, prowess, and complete devotion to the lady herself.

There is often a transitional period between the proud rejection of the lover, and surrender to love and appreciation of courtly qualities. In these romances a change of heart is described in detail. The poet presents the psychological dilemma in which the lady finds herself, tracing the passage from one extreme to the other. He exteriorises the inner conflict by a dramatic monologue, where the opposing inclinations of the lady are translated into a debate between love and reason; Amors and Sens, in which the former always wins.

So it is with Melior. Reason tells her to accept the arranged marriage to the Emperor of Greece, bringing, as it will, wealth and great honour. Love disputes this, and following the dictates of love, Melior rejects all considerations of titles, birth and social honour. She values only the qualities of liberality, honesty, prowess, wisdom, and valour, courtesy, disdaining the avarice of rich kings and barons:

"S'aim mix les larges et les frans,
 Les prex, les sages, les vaillans,
 Les bien apris et les cortois
 Que tos ces princes et ces rois
 Ne ces contes avers mauvais."

(Guillaume de Palerne: ll. 1595-99)

The social obstacle is overcome as far as Melior is concerned, but society has not undergone such a dramatic transformation. Its requirements are met, however, by the later discovery that Guillaume is the King of Sicily.

Romadanaple's conversion to courtly love follows the same pattern. She first refuses Florimont on account of his poverty, then succumbs to love, and decides that Florimont's "pris" is more to be valued than great wealth. She henceforth considers his quest for courtly prestige rather than worldly assets a great virtue, particularly in one who is poor. She recalls having read in books on love that poverty should present no obstacle to those who love:

"Se il est de petit paraige,
 Povres de terre et d'avoir,
 Por ce doit grinor los avoir;
 Car a riche cuer et por pris
 En est venus en cest païs.
 Por povretei nel doi laissier,
 Se de lui me puis acoentier.
 Es livres ai d'amor trové
 Que riens n'i pert per povreté,"
 (Florimont: ll. 7530-38)

Love persuades her that those who marry for wealth and rank are motivated by covetousness and avarice:

"Ce font cil que sont en justisse
 De quevotisse et d'avarisce;
 Car avarisce les semont
 De monter adés contrement.
 Quevoitisse les fait eslire;"
 (ll. 8965-69)

A marriage based on material and social advancement will inevitably end in misery:

"Telz welt amer selonc paraige
 Qui quiert son duel et son damaige."
 (ll. 8973-74)

Thus the intervention of "Amors" converts Romadanaple, and she accords her

love to Florimont. The courtly hero has cleared the first hurdle. His next opponents are the parents of Romadanaple. They are reconciled to the marriage quite easily, chiefly because Romadanaple's father is not the conventional father of the romances. He does not seek a marriage of interest for his daughter. He is a faithful believer in courtly love and knows that such love is not guided by the rules of society. Love is not chosen, it is spontaneous. When love is deliberately channelled towards material profit, then it is not true love, but hypocrisy. The resultant marriage is merely a commercial transaction:

"Atresi tost selonc amor
 Ameroit un bas vavasor
 Com un prince ou com un roi,
 Et si vos dirai bien por coi:
 Amor/s/ n'aît de paraige cure,
 Non fait mies tot per droiture;
 Car asi com li livres dist
 N'aimmet pas bien cil qui eslist.
 Non est amor/s/, mai truandisse,
 Fauce amor/s/ de marcheandise,
 Que seit que doner et que prent
 De fine amor ne seit noient."
 (ll. 1067-78)

King Philippe's main concern is that Romadanaple will fall in love with someone who is not worthy to become her husband - someone who would be unworthy not on a social level, but on a moral basis. He aims, therefore, to protect his daughter from the ignoble aims of greedy suitors who would seek her as a wife simply because she is the daughter of a rich king. He devises a plan whereby all suitors are to serve at his court for a period of three years before being allowed to see his daughter. During the three years the knights will be generously paid for their services. King Philippe's choice falls upon Florimont, partly because of his prowess which saved Philippe's kingdom from an enemy nation, but especially because he adamantly refused all form of payment or reward for his services. This for Philippe is the deciding factor. Florimont is evidently quite free from covetousness. He is judged to be the ideal husband for Romadanaple.

One may presume that society in general did not share Philippe's ideas of the perfect heir to the kingdom. However, Florimont, although masquerading under the false name of "Li Povres Perdus" is socially acceptable: He is the son of the Duke of Albania. He satisfies the desires of all: he inspires love in Romadanaple, he is respected for his generosity and disinterest by her father, and his noble birth makes him socially eligible to assume the responsibilities of heir to the kingdom.

In Athis et Prophilias, Gaïte struggles vainly against the onslaught of Amors. Gradually "sens" gives ground, and she finally has to admit that she loves Athis. She is no longer repelled by his poverty. She knows that his poverty is the result of a noble gesture accomplished for love of her brother. Until he had given his wife to Prophilias, thus incurring the scorn and hatred of his family and country, he had been rich and powerful. He had been willing to sacrifice all this for love. She, therefore, will do likewise, putting love before wealth:

Nobles hom est an son país,
Riches d'avoir et forz d'amis.
Por ton frere a tot deguerpi
(ll. 3867-69)

Meanwhile Athis, unaware that his love is now requited, is pining away. Prophilias eventually diagnoses the cause of his "illness", but wonders whom he loves. Love is never predictable, and ignores social conventions. A rich man may love a poor woman, and vice versa. A powerful king, married to a beautiful noble woman may well fall in love with a mere chastelaine. Likewise a queen may give her heart to a knight who owns nothing in the world except his arms and horse. Love is illogical and senseless. When love commands, one is powerless to resist:

"Ice avient asez sovant
Que riche home aimment povremant,
Et povres hom qui auques vaut
R'atorne bien s'amor en haut.
Uns riches rois de grant valor
Qui a fame de grant enor,
Autresi bele com Eleinne,
Aimme une povre chastelaine,

Une reine un chevalier
 Qui n'a fors armes et destrier.
 N'esgarde Amors nule reison
 Ne nule rien se son boin non.
 Cil qui aime pas ne choisist;
 Amors comande, il obeïst."
 (ll. 4459-72)

One notes that love does not venture beyond the bounds of courtly society. For all its disdain of social rank and wealth, Amors is not so blind as to decree misalliances between noble and commoner. The lowest level to which love sinks is a knight in the case of a man, a "chatelaine" for a woman.

Athis and Gaite declare their love. Gaite, however, has already been promised to King Bile, by her father Evas. In Prophilias, the lovers have a strong ally, and Evas readily agrees to prevent the arranged marriage, on his son's insistence. He tries to reason with King Bile, offering him compensatory wealth, but to no avail. War decides the issue, and Athis and Gaite are married. Subsequently, Athis is able to return to Athens, reclaim his land and recover his social glory. Thus, once again, a social misalliance, prompted by love, becomes an equal match which is in line with the standards of feudal society.

The proud Blonde is also touched by the devotion and suffering of poor Jehan. She falls in love with him, and regrets her initial attitude. She now recognizes Jehan's generosity and nobility of heart. She admits that, were their positions reversed, Jehan as a rich king would not hesitate to love a poor girl and make her his queen in spite of social censure:

"Certes, je li ai fait grant tort,
 Car je voi bien que, s'il ert rois
 De deus roïames ou detrois,
 Et je fuisse aussi povre fame
 Comme nule de ce roïame,
 Je croi qu'il me feroit roïne;"
 (Jehan et Blonde: ll. 1118-23)

Her change of attitude does not, however, make their desired marriage any easier to achieve. They are forced to elope, hotly pursued by the Count of Oxford to whom Blonde was originally to be married. Blonde's father

does not enter the fray. He appreciates Jehan's qualities, but at the same time desires a suitable match for his daughter. Learning of the elopement and the consequent dramas, he accepts the situation philosophically. His attitude is: Let the best man win: "qui l'ait, si l'ait." (line 3349). Safely arrived at Jehan's home in France, they are married. Jehan's subsequent social success when made a count by King Louis in Paris reconciles the couple with Blonde's family and society in general.

c) "Pris" eventually recognized.

Not all the proud ladies are so completely converted by the onset of love. There are those who still insist that the courtly lover should prove his worth to courtly society. They set aside prejudices of social rank, but demand that his "pris" should be generally recognized.

Beauté is one of these ladies. She falls in love with Gliglois long before she is willing to admit it to him. She first obliges him to endure considerable physical hardship and humiliation for her sake. She then gives him the opportunity to show his skill as a knight. She arranges for him to be dubbed by her sister, so that he may participate in a tournament. Gliglois acquits himself well in armed combat, and crowns his glory by his display of courtly largess during the festivities afterwards. Beauté is now certain of his worthiness to become her husband.

The disparity in their respective wealth is ended when King Arthur and his Queen present Gliglois with a fief. It is the queen who offers the land to Gliglois, which he is expected to return to the queen as a gesture of homage. The fief will be restored to him on his wedding day:

"Et j'ou vous donrai bone rente
Et fief et terre e iretage
Mais Gliglois m'en fera hommage,
Et mes sires vos redonra,
Al jour c'on vous espousera."
(Gliglois: ll. 2818-22)

The queen considers the material aspect of their union. Gliglois will receive an inheritance from his father, Beauté is in charge of extensive

land. With the addition of the gift of the fief from Arthur, she pronounces them rich and obviously considers it an equal match which is mutually beneficial:

" Gliglois atent de par son pere
 Grant hiretage et de sa mere,
 Et vos ravés grant terre assés.
 Par foi, riche gens en serés.
 Bien estes amsamblé vous doy. "

(ll. 2823-27)

The poet comments that Gliglois has been well rewarded by love for all that he had suffered:

'Amors li a gueredonné
 Tout le grant mal qu'il a souffert.
 (ll. 2906-07)

Felice is eventually prepared to accord her love to Gui, but imposes certain conditions. He must first prove that he possesses all the courtly qualities of courtesy, prowess, courage and skill at arms (Gui de Warewic: ll. 621-28). She cannot grant him her love openly until he is knighted and his renown generally acknowledged. Her nascent love has effected shift of emphasis in her priorities. She now puts courtly qualities above social rank and wealth, but she is not completely in the power of love. She remains exacting, and demands the service of love, so characteristic of the southern literary cult.

Gui accordingly embarks on a glorious career of chivalry. In the course of his adventures he declines an empire and an emperor's daughter. His "pris" is universally recognized. On his return Felice is pleased to become his wife.

Like Felice, Ydoine insists that Amadas should establish his "pris" before he can justifiably aspire to be her husband. She, too, shows a courtly attitude in valuing personal qualities above material wealth. She particularly recommends liberality to him as the mark of a true courtly hero:

"Puis si errés de terre en terre
 Vostre pris pourchacier et querre.
 Large soiiés et frans et prous:
 Li vostres soit dounés a tous."
 (Amadas et Ydoine: ll. 1249-52)

Amadas obeys her instructions, gains a glorious knightly reputation, and Ydoine allows herself to love him. The romance concludes with the presentation of fiefs to Amadas for his prowess, and also the permission to marry Ydoine. He thus combines courtly qualities with material assets, and is considered an excellent match for Ydoine.

A convenient accession to high social rank also occurs in Yder. The lady whom Yder loves, has not rejected his love but has been reluctant to openly commit herself. Love inspires Yder to perform acts of great valour, which endear him further to his lady. When his noble origin is discovered, she congratulates herself on her instinct which had convinced her that Yder was worthy of her love. This love was not, however, conditional upon his social rank. She had braved the censure of society, but is nevertheless relieved to learn that she will not be making a misalliance:

"Ne m(e) serai pas desparagiee,
 S'il m'ad; e cil en mesdisoient,
 Qui par envie le ha(i)eient;
 Mes bien savoie en mon corage
 Qu'e il estoit de haut parage."
 (Yder: ll. 5040-44)

In certain cases, social rank may present an obstacle to the union of the courtly lovers, as we have noted in the preceding sections. Women, in particular, attach importance to the station of their suitors. They then modify their attitude when it is "Amors" which takes hold of them, thus making them appreciate the courtly qualities of the suitor, rather than his rank in society. In no case does the amelioration of the courtly hero's material position precede this change of attitude. It is love which removes the attitude that social disparity is an obstacle. Love having been established, then external circumstances intervene, permitting the hero to accede to social honour and wealth, and ensuring universal approbation of the ensuing marriage.

2. No Obstacles to Marriage when Courtly Attitudes Prevail.

In some instances courtly attitudes dominate from the outset. No objections are made to the union of a couple because of their differing social

positions. Feudal criteria for marriage are ignored; emphasis is laid on the courtly values which make a knight worthy of love and marriage.

a) Rank and wealth ignored.

Ganor, the daughter of an emperor, is not worried that Ille is merely the son of a senechal. She would love him uniquely for his courtliness even if his father were a villein. His qualities are such that he is in her eyes superior to any king:

"N'est nus qui vive comme rois
Ne valle toi; soiés cortois
Et vostre pere soit vilains,
Ja por ice ne valrés mains."
(Ille et Galeron: ll. 3786-89)

Ille is obliged to leave her, because he is married to Galeron. Ganor translates her sorrow at his departure into monetary terms. The loss of Ille is like the loss of a fortune: a thousand marks. She is left with a single coin: "uns denier", which represents her empty life without Ille. The "denier" is no consolation for the disappearance of the great wealth, and she might just as well throw it after the fortune. She would thus appear to be contemplating suicide:

"Poi valt de m. mars uns denier;
Molt i a povre remanant
Et que le vaut par avenant
Le denier jete avuec les mars.
Car uns deniers tot a escars
Que poroit faire a si grant perte?
Trop par est parans et aperte
Iceste perte que je fas."
(ll. 3847-54)

Ganor values courtliness in general. Yder's lady specifies that it is valour which should inspire love:

"Bien choisist, que prent por valor."
(Yder: line 6512)

In other instances, liberality dominates in the picture of the ideal courtly lover. When Gauvain wishes to win the love of Beauté, Queen Guinevere advises him to be generous as well as valiant:

"Si soiéz largez et donnés,
Et si pour s'amour vous penéz
D'armez et de cevalerie.
Ensy puet on conquere amie."
(Gliglois: ll. 305-08)

Yet it is Gliglois' humble devotion rather than Gauvain's extravagance which wins her heart. She is not impressed by Gauvain's wealth. She is, however, sensible to liberal use of wealth and later admires Gliglois' noble expenditure of the money given to him by her sister. Generous disposal of his wealth promotes the cause of the Chatelain de Coucy. The lady of Fayel's companion points to it as a good reason for according her love:

"E s'a mout despendu d'avoir".
(Castelain de Coucy: ll. 307-08)

Generosity is also an important attribute in a woman. When Eracle has to choose a wife for the emperor he eliminates those in the grip of avarice, the worst of all vices:

"Si n'a en feme piëur vice
Ne piëur teche qu'avarice."
(Eracle: ll. 2234-35)

The lady he eventually chooses promises that she will not let great wealth corrupt her:

"Ja ne serai trop esbahie,
Ne troppour richece avouglee"
(ll. 2787-8)

The Empress carried out her duties well, giving generously to those in need, until the day she decided to be generous with her love to a knight⁽⁴⁰⁾.

Whether preference is stated for prowess or liberality, both are necessary to the courtly hero if he is to be worthy of love. They are both essential aspects of his "pris", and it is finally his "pris" which wins the lady's respect and love. This is summed up in Galeran de Bretagne:
The knight who wishes to love must display prowess, honour and largess:

Haulx homs joyeux qui veult amer
Se doit atourner a proesce
N'eschever hounour. ne largesce,
Qu'assez povez partout donner.
(ll. 3082-85)

b) Love and "pris".

In the romances, love and "pris" have a two-way relationship. We have already analysed⁽⁴¹⁾ the inter-relation of liberality, prowess and wealth

which, together, make up the "pris" of the courtly hero, although wealth was not an essential element. When love becomes a factor in the life of the courtly hero, the same interdependence operates.

"Pris" or worth inspires love in the lady. She admires the courtly hero for his valour and generosity. When a knight falls in love he is motivated to establish his "pris" or to further enhance it. For love of the lady, he will undertake all dangerous missions, and will demonstrate his liberality by his rich gifts and extravagant spending, thereby creating his social renown and honour: his "pris". Thus whatever is the point of departure, the true courtly knight cannot be without any of the attributes of "courtoisie" which includes love.

If he is generous, this may be sufficient to inspire love, and may occasionally gain him a reputation for prowess, which in turn inspires love.

If he is brave and skilled at arms, he can by this prowess, earn love, and also the wealth needed to show his liberality and so seal his claim to social "pris" and to love.

If he is in love, then he has to show himself to be worthy of the lady. He demonstrates his prowess, acquiring wealth which is disposed of in a show of courtly liberality.

In this way love and "pris" are inseparable in courtly terms, the one nourishing the other. The unstable factor in the nexus is that of wealth.

D. Attitude of Courtly Lover to Wealth.

1. Love is more Important than Wealth.

The role of wealth in courtly love is ambiguous. To be liberal, the courtly hero must be rich. He must also be rich to be respected and to gain political allies. In the eyes of society, he must be rich to aspire to marriage with a rich lady. And yet as we have seen the courtly hero is often not rich; he is usually materially and socially inferior to the lady.

Moreover it is while he remains her inferior, that she accords him her love. Wealth may be important to society in general, but to the lady in love it is of little consequence. The hero may be generous with the little he has, it may not be the extravagant largess which wins military followers, but it is sufficient to win the lady's heart. Once in the power of love, the lady can see the generosity of heart which would be exteriorized by largess, had her suitor the means.

When the courtly hero loves, he performs acts of valour to increase his "pris". His aim in so doing is not to acquire wealth which will impress the lady, but simply to demonstrate his prowess. He is not striving to equal her wealth. He is rather putting ideal values above material concern as his goal. The fact that the courtly hero invariably ends up rich and titled is incidental in the romances. It would appear to be a mechanical means whereby society is appeased, the couple rewarded for putting love above wealth, by eventually having both, and it brings the story to a happy conclusion to everyone's satisfaction. It is indeed the acquisition of wealth that permits the final reconciliation between the lovers and their family or subjects.

a) Lovers or husband and wife share poverty.

Far from seeking wealth, the courtly hero of the romances affects to disdain it. This has already been proved by the voluntary acceptance of poverty and exile rather than submission to an unwelcome arranged marriage of profit. We have seen that love enables the courtly lovers to endure poverty bravely: Guillaume and Aelis (L'Escoufle); Guillaume and Melior (Guillaume de Palerne); Tristan and Yseult (Beroul's Tristan); Galeron (Ille et Galeron); the Count of St. Gilles (Le Comte d'Anjou).

In Guillaume d'Angleterre, Queen Gracienne refuses to allow her husband, the king, to endure poverty and exile alone. She insists upon accompanying him. She has shared happiness and wealth with him, now she will share misery and poverty:

"
 Nous avons moult eñ ensamble
 Joie, rikice, honor et aise;
 Doel, povrete, honte, mesaise
 Devons nos ensamble endurer."
 (Guillaume d'Angleterre: ll. 286-89)

Also Fenice to Cligès.

"
 Ne ja mes ne serai d'empire
 Dame, se vos n'en estes sire.
 Uns povres leus, obscurs et pales,
 M'iert plus clers que totes ces sales."
 (Cligès: ll. 5293-96)

b) Stated disdain of Wealth.

When faced with a choice, the courtly hero always claims to put love before wealth and often proves it.

Tristran prefers to be destitute in the forest with Yseult than a rich king without her:

"Miex aim o li estes mendis
 Et vivre d'herbes et de glan
 Qu'avoir le reigne au roi Otran."
 (Beroul's Tristan: ll. 1404-06)

This is a sentiment echoed by Prophilias who would rather be landless with Cardiones, than rich without her. He resolves therefore to remain in Athens instead of returning to Rome where he is to receive his rich inheritance from his dying father. He would die of grief without Cardiones, and wealth would be of no consolation to him. Land is worthless compared to love:

"L'enors de Rome
 Ne me vaudroit pas une pome!
 Car einz que fusse an Rome antrez,
 Seroie morz et deviez:
 Quant moi manbreroit de m'amie,
 Chetis, je n'en verroie mie!
 Que me vaudroit terre n'anor?
 Mes cuers partiroit de dolors.
 Miaulz voel estre sanz terre ici,
 Si parleré sovant a li,
 Que sanz amie fusse aillors.
 N'bauz vaut terre que amors."
 (Athis and Prophilias: ll. 1391-1402)

Cleomadès would not accept all the riches in the world if it meant that he could no longer have Clarmondine and her love:

"Car sachiez ne vorroie pas
 que tous li mons et haut et bas,

terre, aigues douces et mer
 et kanc'on i porroit trouver,
 fust mien a faire mon vouloir
 et ne deüssse reveoir
 cele a cui j'ai mon cuer donné,"
 (Cleomadès: ll. 4177-83)

Such declarations are commonplace in the romances: "Not for all the money in the world...."(42)

c) Disinterest in wealth proved.

We have already met a number of instances where the courtly hero or heroine has the opportunity to prove his or her disdain for wealth when it is in conflict with love. Witness the rich marriages avoided by the courtly heroine, the advantageous proposals declined by the hero.

When Gui de Warewic turns down the daughter of the Emperor of Germany, he says he would prefer Felice without any wealth than a rich woman he did not love. (ll. 4235-42: Gui de Warewic). When at last the count presents Felice to him, he repeats his words, referring back to the offer he had earlier refused:

"Vostre fille mielz voildreie
 Sul od sun cors, que jo ne freie
 La fille l'empereur d'Alemaigne
 Od toté la tere si k'en Espagne."
 (ll. 7511-14)

Gui's lack of interest in material wealth is sincere. Shortly afterwards, he abandons the land he has inherited upon his marriage and becomes a pilgrim dedicated to the service of God.

When Guillaume's arranged marriage to Aelis is cancelled by the Emperor on the insistence of his barons, Guillaume claims that he does not regret the loss of the empire. He can gain sufficient wealth by his own efforts. He is upset only by the loss of Aelis herself:

"Certes, moi ne chaut por les biens
 Ne por l'onor ne por la terre,
 K'encor en puis assés conquerre,
 Se je retrai a mon bon pere
 Ki me mist en l'onor ou g'ere,
 Dont li vostres me ra mis hors.
 Avoirs, richece ne tresors

Ne me porroit faire avoir joie.
 Comment cuidiés vos je m'esjoie
 Qui ai perdu si grant honor
 Que tot mon cuer, tote m'amor
 Ai mis en vos sans traire arriere?"
 (Escoufle: ll. 3402-13)

Others prove their sincerity and disinterest by refusing the dowry which accompanies the girl they love. When a rich man marries a poor girl, there is no question of a dowry, as in the case of the king who marries Joie (La Manekine), the Count of St. Gilles when he marries (Comte d'Anjou), Floire (Floire et Blancheflor), Conrad (Guillaume de Dole) and Erec, who instead gives wealth to Enide's father (Erec et Enide).

When Galeran de Bretagne and Fresne are able to be married, her father, Brundoré, offers Galeran a forest, a thousand marks and three castles. Galeran, who wanted to marry Fresne even when he thought her a poor foundling, refuses this dowry. He accuses Brundoré of selling his daughter. He will marry Fresne because he loves her not because she is rich. He therefore disdains the riches offered and suggests that Brundoré use it to dispose of his other daughter, and even offers half his own land to Fresne's sister:

"Certes trop chier vous voulez vendre,"
 Dist Galeran, "cesto alliance;
 Or soiez de ce a ffance
 Que se j'aing, c'est sans decevoir.
 N'ayme mie qui pour avoir
 Refuse ce qu'il ame ou prent:
 Amours m'enseigne, si m'aprent
 Que par amours preigne m'amie.
 De vostre avoir ne weil je mie.
 L'autre en mariez, jel vous doinz;
 Toute ma part vous en pardoinz;
 N'en ay, quant j'avray li, que faire;
 La moitié li dons en douaire
 De quanque je tiens en Bretagne."
 (Galeran de Bretagne: ll. 7664-77)

In Guillaume de Palerne, there is another refusal of a dowry, but for a very different reason. Amphons, son of the King of Spain, asks to marry Florence, Guillaume's sister. They do not love each other since they have only just met, and Florence, of course, is not consulted in the matter. Guillaume readily agrees to the match. Amphons had rendered him great

service when he and Melior were poor, and this is the "guerredon" solicited by Amphons. Guillaume promises to give him half his land as well as his sister. Amphons refuses. He has extensive lands of his own. He does not need Guillaume's gift. He only wants the girl:

"Ne place au roi de tot le mont
 Que ja del vostre riens en preigne.
 Assés avons terre en Espagne;
 Assés avons viles et bors,
 Chastiax, cités, donjons et tors,
 Terre merveille riche et bele.
 Ne voel fors que la demoisele:
 Ne voel chastel, vile, donjon,
 Se la bele seulement non."

(Guillaume de Palerne: ll. 8308-16)

Courtly love has no part to play here. It is a feudal marriage arranged for the girl. Amphons' refusal of the dowry is evidently motivated by pride, as his glowing description of his own wealth indicates. Florence would be a suitable wife, because she is the daughter of a king. The wealth is unimportant. This corresponds exactly with the attitude of pride and the horror of being associated with need which characterise the many refusals of gifts by the courtly heroes of the romances.

d) Unhappy course of love provokes indifference to Wealth.

Paradoxically, it is not only when the courtly hero is in love that he affects to disdain wealth. When he is happy he puts love before all else. A similar change occurs when he loses his love. He loses interest in everything, riches included. I have already cited instances when the hero becomes poor as a result of his despair at a lost love: Florimont, Guinglains, Amadas, Ille, Athis⁽⁴³⁾.

Similarly with Cligès. He can see no way of making Fenice his wife. He sinks into a state of apathy and refuses all the money and possessions that his uncle offers him. He is obsessed with the thought of Fenice:

Car ses oncles li abandone
 Tot quanqu'il a, fors la corone;
 Bien viait qu'il praingne a son pleisir
 Quanqu'il voldra por lui servir,
 Ou soit d'argent, ou de tresor;

Mes il n'a soing d'argent ne d'or,
 Quant son panser descouvrir n'ose
 A celi por cui ne repose.
 (Cligès: ll. 5083-90)

e) Wealth cursed as an obstacle to love.

It would be understandable for the courtly hero to curse his poverty if it prevented him concluding marriage with the girl he loved. In Jehan et Blonde, it is the contrary. Jehan does not bewail his poverty. It is Blonde who curses her wealth. Her riches have made her proud and so she has rejected Jehan. When she eventually falls in love with him, she blames her fortune for having made her so cruel:

"Mauvaise richesse muable,
 Sur toute riens vous doi hair!
 Vous m'avés aidie a traïr;
 Car se ma richesse ne fust,
 Mes cuers si orgueilleus ne fust.
 Que le secours n'eüst ell.
 Ma richesse li a neü
 Et moi, car li orguex m'en vint."
 (Jehan et Blonde: ll. 1080-87)

She decides to abandon her wealth, valuing kisses more than purses of money:

"Fi de richece! fi d'avoir!
 Miex valent d'amours deus baisiers
 Que plaine bourse de deniers.
 Assés avrons pour nostre vivre."
 (ll. 2304-07)

This dismissal of wealth on the part of a courtly heroine has been shown to be characteristic of the attitude towards wealth of all courtly lovers. While courtly society as a whole is portrayed as favouring profitable matches, the courtly hero puts love before all else, including material assets, when choosing a wife. Although he and his beloved are prepared to endure hardship and poverty in order to achieve the desired union, we note that the couples of the romances always find happiness and great wealth in the end.

Conclusion to Part Two

Critical assessment of attitudes to wealth in versè romance has shown that wide divergence between individual works is rare. Thus recurring attitudes, explicit and implicit, permit an analysis of general trends and the formulation of conclusions which apply to the vast majority of courtly romances.

My study has shown that the use of wealth preoccupied the courtly poets. Avarice, an occasional theme within the narrative, was deplored as an anti-social vice which precludes the attainment of the courtly goals of honour, glory and love. Some poets offered didactic comment on avarice in the manner of the moralists but were probably inspired by hope of a generous reaction from their audience. Avarice is overshadowed by the more positive theme of liberality, which represented the good use of wealth in courtly literature and was accordingly elevated to the level of a primary virtue of the true courtly hero, essential for the winning of knightly renown.

My analysis of courtly liberality has brought to light some ambiguities. Standing for justice and generosity, the courtly hero is usually the giver, rarely the receiver. However the largesse by which he exteriorised his generous spirit is not purely altruistic. The chief beneficiary is the giver himself to whom accrue honour, prestige, loyalty and love. His liberality is indiscriminate, rarely bestowed according to merit, and, therefore, having little to do with justice. The deserving poor are ignored while the courtly benefactor indulged in displays of noble expenditure to assert his own power and superior endowment, albeit in a spirit of goodwill. We note that such interested motives for disposing generously of one's wealth are explicit in the romances. Part of the courtly social code, they are evidently considered praiseworthy. The

romance writers are not concerned with philosophical analysis of true benevolence. The modern reader may dismiss such calculated generosity as naive, but cannot accuse the courtly heroes of hypocrisy when their aims are stated with such disarming honesty. Clearly the courtly hero must possess great wealth to maintain his rank but must make careless use of this wealth by noble expenditure for the sake of his social prestige. This is an aristocratic attitude to wealth which persists into modern society.

The courtly code raises need and ostentation to the level of mutual benefit. Everything centres on honour, a state of social acclaim but transformed into a virtue in romance. Honour comes to the donor from giving, and in giving to others he is doing them an honour. We have noted the Old French use of "honorier" to mean "to give gifts". This courtly generosity pleases everyone, but the greatest glory goes to the courtly hero.

From a detailed study of the gift theme in the romances we may judge that a refusal or an acceptance of a gift was full of symbolic meaning and that personal relationships and social rivalry determined whether or not gifts should be given or received. Thus, on an impersonal level, the courtly hero gives, but is wary of receiving lest his prestige suffer. Friendship will persuade him to tentatively accept small token gifts or receive gifts only to pass them on immediately to others. Thereby the hero denies the donor the chance to gain prestige at his expense, and dissociates himself from need, refusing thus to acknowledge the donor's superiority, while at the same time making some small concession. We see to what extent attitudes to wealth governed social intercourse for courtly characters. Love alone has the power to sweep aside the reluctance to benefit from another's wealth by accepting gifts. The courtly hero welcomes gifts from his beloved as a token of her love.

Instances of poverty and didactic comment on this topic in the romances lead us to conclude that poverty is viewed as an injustice when it befalls a courtly person. Wealth is the status marker of the noble estate, so poverty is the negation of the courtly way of life. Significant is the courtly custom of blaming poverty on cruel Fortune, while a return to riches is marked by thanksgiving to God, the supreme dispenser of justice.

The various means of acquiring wealth open to a knight figure in the romances. Essential to the courtly code is the tenet that one should actively remedy poverty and gain riches. The courtly hero does not generally acquire wealth by rich marriages, legacies or by imposing levies on his subordinates. The critical eye of the modern reader will perceive an anomaly in courtly acquisition of wealth. The practice of liberality necessitated much wealth, constantly replenished. However the knight rarely avails himself of the approved means of acquiring riches with the precise purpose of personal gain. He refuses to fight for pay, declines rewards or personal gifts, and immediately disposes of the hard-won trophies of war and tournament in order to display largesse. One may therefore conclude that the great wealth necessary to a courtly hero, and spent by him, does not come from an identifiable source, since there is no realistic balance between income and expenditure. Indeed the immense wealth of the courtly heroes is an element of romantic fantasy.

Aristocratic attitudes to wealth are highlighted in some romances by comparison with the attitudes of non-courtly characters: We see mocking portraits of greedy, profit-hungry merchants. However the mild disdain for the trader does not approach the open contempt for the peasant, and the belief that wealth should never fall into his hands. This we noted as occasional. More often the courtly hero's casual relations with the third estate were amicable, the latter seeking to

render service, and usually richly rewarded.

It becomes clear that there are two sets of double standards in the romances. We find the opposition between the attitudes of courtly society and those of non-courtly society. There is besides a difference of attitude between the courtly hero and the rest of courtly society. For instance, the hero does not fight for pay; other knights do. The courtly hero refuses gifts and rewards; others accept, often from the courtly hero himself. The hero marries for love, but marriages of profit suffice for others, and, indeed, are often arranged by the courtly hero himself. Thus we see that courtly society in general is more openly attached to wealth than the courtly hero himself. Others do not possess his refinement of manners and attitude.

We know that wealth was, on a practical level, of great concern to a knight. He needed it not only to purchase the costly accessories of chivalry, but chiefly to practice largesse. However the courtly hero's attitude to his wealth demonstrates his affective detachment from it. Wealth may be said to have for a true knight low priority. More important are justice, love and renown. Wealth may be instrumental through liberality in the securing of "pris" or renown, but is useless when unallied with other qualities. Similarly, considerations of wealth and rank come after personal and moral fitness for love and marriage. Wealth is indeed important to courtly society which sneers at the poor and which arranges marriages for profit. The courtly hero affects to disdain wealth, acquiring it only to give it away.

In short, wealth was to the courtly hero the means of procuring the equipment necessary for the exercise of prowess; it was a means of pursuing worldly pleasures, associated with the aristocratic way of life. A hedonistic use of wealth was encouraged in the romances by the lavish, admiring descriptions of fine clothes, food, jewels and so on. Wealth

was the means to gain prestige and loyalty through liberality; it also relieved the poverty of his dependent knights. Wealth was never, however, an end in itself, for that would be shunned as avarice.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

General Conclusions

Contrasts between the didactic and courtly works abound. My examination of both genres has, to a certain extent, confirmed the traditional dichotomy of attitudes relating to the topic of wealth. The oppositions emerge clearly: while the sermon preaches scorn of the world, the romance encourages love of the world. Throughout this thesis I have pointed out not only the contrasts, but also the similarities, and have shown that these two apparently opposed literary forms, the didactic and the courtly, the sombre sermon and the light entertainment, admit comparisons regarding the topic of wealth.

One area of common ground lies in the topic of avarice. A major theme in the didactic works, it figures less prominently in the courtly romances. In both genres it is condemned outright for various reasons, but in like manner. The courtly poets deplore avarice as a social vice, in opposition to the courtly virtue of liberality, a virtue which also benefited them directly. The didactic poets condemn avarice as a deadly sin since it implies love of money to the exclusion of love of God. They counter it with charitable almsgiving. Avarice is always against justice. However the moral bias is greater in the didactic poems, while the social implications of avarice take precedence in the courtly.

Attitudes to the correct use of wealth seem at first to be irreconcilable. Altruistic Christian charity contrasts with selfish courtly liberality. However, in the moralists' exhortations to give alms, promised rewards await the benefactor. So here too, the gain goes to the giver. Selfish motives for giving wealth are not reprehensible in medieval eyes. Mutual benefit enhances the act of giving. That both parties should ideally gain from generosity reflects medieval pragmatism. Thus we see that the right use of wealth was a basic tenet

of both genres. The differences lie in the interpretation of "good use", but even here charity and largesse agree in part. Moreover liberality does not oust charity in the romances since it admits good works and almsgiving as duties even when overshadowed by more worldly giving.

Other uses of wealth occasion sharp differences of opinion. Didactic poets rarely look beyond almsgiving, and unanimously dismiss the worldly pleasures of the noble estate. Only Guiot de Provins, with one foot in both camps, explicitly approved the rich man's comforts and is joined by Hugues de Berzé for a brief, nostalgic moment.

Opposition is evident with regard to specific means of acquiring wealth. The courtly hero's main source of income, warfare and tournaments, were unequivocally and formally condemned by the Church and hence the didactic poets, but were glorified in the romances. However on a more general level, both genres concur somewhat on the topic. Didactic and courtly works share the belief that wealth must be earned by personal effort. Idleness was repugnant to both and St. Paul's tenet applies to both genres. The moralists uphold social interdependence according to the traditional tripartite division of society. The romances consider mainly the noble estate, concluding that the knight should profit from prowess. Frowned upon is the easy gain from marriages of profit, rich gifts, inheritances or levy of taxes. When practice of chivalry is impossible, then humble, menial employment is more dignified than unearned wealth. Even scorned poverty is better than unjust wealth.

The differing social circumstances of the poets explain divergent attitudes to wealth. In general the poets of the romances, professional "jongleurs", seem alert to their own interests in their condemnation of avarice, praise of liberality, and enjoyment of scenes of noble expenditure. Only one romance writer (Durmart) voices criticism of

contemporary "jongleurs" whom he accuses of demanding higher payment for inferior achievement. Self-justification is to be expected from professional poets. Their need for generosity from patrons would inevitably colour their attitudes to the liberal disposal of wealth. The glorification of largesse also pleased the noble audience who might wish to emulate the joyful, careless use of wealth practised by the romance heroes. To hear of prestigious displays of wealth would perhaps give impoverished nobles a vicarious pleasure.

The majority of the didactic poets were not professional "jongleurs" and so their motives are different. Men of the Church, they echoed Christian teaching on wealth. They could also have been using their sermons to call for alms. Above all, their works seem primarily intended as genuine protests against contemporary acquisitiveness in favour of spiritual well-being.

A feature common to both didactic and courtly works is a discontent with the present and a nostalgia for the past. The didactic poets resent contemporary preoccupation with material wealth and the neglect of spiritual ideals. The past they evoke is characterised by detachment from material riches, often an unreal, remote time when all resources were communally owned. Courtly poets also bewail the greed of the present age, but they yearn for a bygone age when wealth was plentiful and generously shared. It is this imagined age that they recreate in the romances. One notes that the generous disposal of wealth for universal benefit characteristic of the courtly past is not far removed from the communal possession of wealth evoked by the moralists. The concept of private property enjoyed selfishly was condemned by both kinds of poets. This leads me to suggest that, in their different ways, both didactic and courtly poets were protesting against the materialism of the age, one by direct criticism of the evil present, the other by

escaping into an idealised fantasy world where wealth brought joy.

The criteria for judging a rich man good or evil coincide in the two literary genres. He was evil if he hoarded his riches or if he loved his wealth. The two genres disagree only on the acceptability of indulgence in worldly pleasures. The similarity is not, however, immediately apparent because different aspects are stressed and each genre presents its own side of the picture.

Further resemblances emerge when one studies the aims of the true courtly hero and of the true Christian. The personal goal of the courtly knight is requited love, his source of life-long happiness. The attainment of this goal depends on humble loyal service, love, good use of wealth and the maintenance of justice. This pattern is analogous to the Christian's aims in life: love of God and the eternal happiness which is spiritual salvation, also achieved by love, devotion, proper use of wealth and the pursuit of justice. Thus parallel situations occur, although they exist on different planes: personal and worldly in the romances, personal and spiritual in the sermons.

Nevertheless it would be wrong to dismiss attitudes to wealth in the romances as being entirely based on social values. As in the didactic works, social activities are linked with moral issues. Presented as a courtly code the moral teaching in the romances rarely conflicts with the Christian code. Courtly hero and Christian, the knight is the enemy of injustice in all forms. In practice, injustice in the romances often involves wealth.

Fundamental in didactic and courtly attitudes is the implicit notion that wealth should be a mere tool of man, never an end in itself. Both literary genres portray wealth as a mere accessory of life, important on a practical level, but having no proper place in the heart of man.

Courtly and didactic poets aim at showing the greater importance of other values. Details differ, but essentially both genres counsel honest acquisition of wealth, good, generous use of acquired riches and indifference to the possession of material wealth.

NOTES TO CHAPTERS FIVE - EIGHT

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

1. Eracle by Gautier d'Arras, ed. E. Løseth, Oeuvres de Gautier d'Arras, 2 vols., Paris, 1890. Date: late twelfth century.
2. Guillaume d'Angleterre, ed. M. Wilmotte, Paris, 1927. C.F.M.A. 55. Date: twelfth century.
3. Richard le Beau, ed. W. Foerster, Vienna, 1874. Date: thirteenth century.
4. Gui de Warewic, ed. A. Ewert, Paris, 1933. Date: 1232-42.
5. Florimont by Aimon de Varennes, ed. A. Hilka, Göttingen, 1932, Gesellschaft für romanische Literatur, Bd. 48. Date: c.1180.
6. Luke 12:15-23.
7. I Timothy 6:7-8, see my Chapter Two, A, 7, b, ii.
8. Durmart le Gallois, ed. J. Gildea, The Villanove Press, Pennsylvania, 1965. Date: thirteenth century.
9. Le Donnei des Amants, ed. G. Paris, Romania 25, 1896, pp. 497-541.
10. Version of Alexandre de Paris. Date: c.1180.
11. See my Chapter Four, section C, 1, 3 for the Church's attitude towards "jongleurs".
12. Roman de Thèbes, ed. G. Raynaud de Lage, Paris, 1966, C.F.M.A. 94. Date: 1150.
13. Roman de Troie, ed. L. Constans, Paris, 1904, 6 vols., S.A.T.F. 55. Date: 1155-60.
14. See my page 531 for observations on the influence of courtly literature on courtly society.
15. Le Livre de Philosophie et de Moralité by Alard de Cambrai, ed. J.C. Payen, Paris, 1970. He describes it as "un traité de morale pratique destiné à la noblesse." (p. 33).
16. Les Moralités des Philosophes, ed. Holmberg, Upsal, 1929.
17. Horace: Epistle I, 1, 19.
18. L'Enseignement des Princes by Robert de Blois, ed. J.H. Fox, Paris, 1950. Date: mid-thirteenth century.
19. Yder, ed. H. Gelzer, Dresden, 1913, Gesellschaft für romanische Literatur, Bd. 31. Date: 1210-1220.
20. Jehan et Blonde by Philippe de Beaumanoir, ed. H. Suchier, 2 vols., Paris, 1884, S.A.T.F. 18. Date: 1270-1280.
21. Le Chastelain de Couci by Jakemes, ed. J.E. Matzke and M. Delbouille, Paris, 1936, S.A.T.F. 86. Date: probably end of thirteenth century.

Notes to Chapter Five contd.

22. This incident is used as an exemplum by Robert de Blois in L'Enseignement des Princes; my page 458.
23. See also my pp. 507-515 for a consideration of such political largess.
24. Le Chastoiement des Dames by Robert de Blois, ed. J.H. Fox. Date: mid thirteenth century.
25. See also Partonopeus de Blois, line 6267, where the poet refers to chastity as a "chose avere".
26. Eneas, critical text by J. Salverda de Grave, Halle, 1891. Bibliotheca Normannica, H. Suchier. Date: between 1183-1190.
27. Le Roman de la Violette ou de Gerart de Nevers by Gerbert de Montreuil, ed. D. Labaree Buffum, Paris, 1928. Date: 1227-29.
28. Protheselaüs by Hue de Rotelande, ed. F.Kluckow, Göttingen, 1924. Date: between 1174 and 1191.
29. Robert le Diable, ed. E. Löseth, Paris, 1903, S.A.T.F. 50. Date: end of twelfth century.
30. Athis et Prophilias by Alexandre de Bernay, ed. A. Hilka, Halle, 1912, Gesellschaft für romanische Literatur, 29, 40. Date: first half of thirteenth century.
31. See also ll. 6181-88: Ysmaine takes the veil and asks her brother, Etioclès, to endow a nunnery.
32. Le Comte d'Anjou by Jean Maillart, ed. M. Roques, Paris, 1931, C.F.M.A.67. Date 1316.
33. Ille et Galeron by Gautier d'Arras, ed. F.A.G. Cowper, Paris, 1952, S.A.T.F. 92. Date: 1167-70.
34. La Manekine by Philippe de Beaumanoir, ed. H. Suchier, Paris, 1884, S.A.T.F. 18, 2 vols. Date: 1270-80.
35. Joufroi, ed. P.B. Fay and J.L. Grigsby, Geneva and Paris, 1972, Textes Littéraires Français 183. Date: thirteenth century.
36. L'Escoufle, ed. H. Michelant and P. Meyer, Paris, 1894, S.A.T.F. 35. Date: before 1204.
37. Among the poor folk who shelter the impoverished courtly hero are: Isabelle and her mother in L'Escoufle (ll. 4923-5344); the destitute old lady who lodges the heroine of the Comte d'Anjou (ll. 1228-41); the kindly herdsman who finds and brings up Guillaume and who preaches generosity and humility, Guillaume de Palerne (ll. 564-66).
38. Cléomadès by Adenet le Roi, ed. A. Henry, Les Oeuvres d'Adenet le Roi, Tome V, Brussels, 1971. Date: towards the end of the thirteenth century.
39. Partonopeus de Blois, ed. J. Gildea, Villanova, Pennsylvania, 1967. Date: twelfth century.
40. Floire et Blancheflor, ed. M.M. Pelan, Paris, 1956. Date: 1155-73.

Notes to Chapter Five contd.

41. See also Perceval (ll. 51-53) where Chrétien de Troyes sings the praises of Philip of Flanders: Le Conte du Graal by Chrétien de Troyes, ed. F. Lecoy, Paris, 1972, C.F.M.A. 100; see also Hue de Rotelande at the conclusion of Prothelais where he extols the generosity of his lord, Gilbert (ll. 12,724-41).
42. Cristal et Clarie, ed. Hermann Breuer, Dresden, 1915, Gesellschaft für romanische Literatur, Bd.36. Date: thirteenth century.
43. Cligès by Chrétien de Troyes, ed. Alexandre Micha, Paris, 1959, C.F.M.A. 84. Date: 1176.
44. Amadas et Ydoine, ed. J. Reinhard, Paris, 1926, C.F.M.A. 51. Date: between 1190-1220.
45. See also L'Enseignement des Princes (ll. 1145-66) where largesse is described as queen of all other virtues, the sun which dispels the darkness of vice; it engenders other virtues, ends wars and wins the love even of God.
46. Gilles de Chyn by Gautier de Tournay, ed. E.B. Place, Northwestern University, Evanston and Chicago, 1941. Date: 1230-40.
47. P. Meyer, Alexandre le Grand dans la Littérature du Moyen Age, 2 vols., Paris, 1886, Vol. 2, page 374.
48. Henri Dupin, La Courtoisie du Moyen Age, Paris, 1931, page 71.
49. Seneca text: De Beneficiis, II, xvi, commented by George Cary, The Medieval Alexander (ed. D.J.A. Ross, Cambridge, 1956), pp. 86-90.
50. Le Roman de Brut, by Wace, ed. I.D.O. Arnold, Paris, 1938, S.A.T.F. Edition used: La Partie Arthurienne du Roman de Brut, ed. I.D.O. Arnold and M.M. Pelan, Paris, 1962.
51. Wace's source, Historia Regum Britanniae by Geoffrey of Monmouth also stressed Arthur's liberality. See pp. 213, 222-3, 228, 230 of translation by Lewis Thorpe, The History of the Kings of Britain, Penguin Books, 1966.
52. Tristan by Beroul, ed. A. Ewert, Oxford, 1939. Date: twelfth century.
53. Erec et Enide by Chrétien de Troyes, pub. M. Roques, Paris, 1966, C.F.M.A. 80. Date: 1165.
54. Le Roman de la Rose ou de Guillaume de Dole by Jean Renart, ed. F. Lecoy, Paris, 1962, C.F.M.A. 91. Date: 1212-13.
55. Le Lai de l'Ombre by Jean Renart, ed. J. Bédier, Paris, 1913, S.A.T.F. 68. Date: c.1200.
56. eg. Dido in Roman d'Eneas, ll. 621-27; Aelis in L'Escoufle, ll. 8562-66; Medea in Protheselais, ll. 2941-43.
57. Galeran de Bretagne by Jean Renart, ed. L. Foulet, Paris, 1925, C.F.M.A.37. Date: 1195-1225.
58. See Gui de Warewic: ll. 158-9:
 Lor dona il mult volenters,
 Chascun solunc ço qu'il esteit,
 and Roman de la Rose ou de Guillaume de Dole: ll. 101-04:

Notes to Chapter Five contd.

- 58 (contd.) (Conrad) Il ne lessoit bon chevalier
En son païs, por qu'il errast,
Qu'il ne retenist ou donast,
Selonc son pris, terre ou chastiax.
also ll. 5517-24 (according to their length of service).
59. Cary, The Medieval Alexander, pp. 88-89.
60. Ibidem, page 88, note 1, for reference: William de Conches, Liber Moraliū Dogmatis Philosophorum, P.L. CLXXI, col. 1015.
61. See also Branch III, ll. 19-26: more advice from Aristotle on the giving of gifts to the noblemen as a form of assurance for their help in emergencies.
62. De Officiis, II, 15, 53 ff. Ref. given by Cary, The Medieval Alexander, pp. 87-88.
63. Philip's letter is quoted by Alard de Cambrai in his Livre de Philosophie et de Moralité (ll. 5245-5304) to illustrate a thesis attributed to Diogenes: the best reward comes from the heart not from the purse: "Dyogenes dit que graindres guerredons vient dou cuer que de la borse." (from Cicero, De Officiis, II, 15, 52).
64. C.B. West, Courtoisie in Anglo-Norman Literature, Medium Aevum Monographs, No. 3, 1938, pp. 73-74.
65. Floire et Blancheflor, ed. M. Edelstand du Ménil, Paris, 1856. (Version B used here.)
66. cf. Meraugis de Portlesguez by Raoul de Houdenc (ed. M. Friedwagner. Date: c.1200), ll. 4024-31.
67. Merveilles de Rigomer by Jehan, ed. W. Foerster, Dresden, 1908, Gesellschaft für romanische Literatur Bd. 19. Date: thirteenth century.
68. It is more usual in the romances for largesse to be the source of other virtues rather than the result of them. See relevant texts from Cligès and Gilles de Chyn, my pp. 491-92.
69. Version d'Alexandre de Paris.
70. Cary, Medieval Alexander, page 90.
71. See also Alard de Cambrai, Livre de Philosophie et de Moralité (ll. 693-764) where this incident is recorded, to the honour of Alexander and the shame of the knight.
72. Thorstein Veblen, The Theory of the Leisure Class, London, 1924, p. 36.
73. M. Mauss (The Gift, trans. I. Cunnison, London, 1954) notes that noble expenditure is a social custom among many primitive races, eg. the pygmies of Andaman (p. 18), North American Indians (p. 35). He also cites examples he has seen in the civilised society of modern France when aristocratic French families risk financial ruin to put on a good show for a wedding (pp. 63-64).
74. E. Auerbach, Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature, Princeton, N.Jersey, 1971, pp. 130-3.

Notes to Chapter Five contd.

75. Henri Dupin, La Courtoisie au Moyen Age, Paris, 1931, pp. 123-4.
(Henri de Champagne was the husband of Marie de Champagne, protectress of Chrétien de Troyes).
76. S. Painter, French Chivalry, Baltimore, 1940, p. 43.
77. Register of Edward, the Black Prince, Rolls Series, IV, 66-77. Dates: 1330-1376.
78. Achille Luchaire, La Société Française au Temps de Philippe-Auguste, Paris, 1909, pp. 351-54.
79. Ibid., pp. 356-7.
80. M. Bloch, La Société Féodale, Vol. 2, 1940, page 44.
81. Geoffroi de Vigeois, l, 69 in Labbe, Bibliotheca II, p. 322.
82. Guillaume de Palerne, pub. H. Michelant, Paris, 1876. Date: end of twelfth or beginning of thirteenth century.
83. This is the usual meaning of "honor" in the romances.
84. Gliglois, ed. C.H. Livingstone, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1932. Harvard Studies in Romance Languages, Vol. VIII. Date: 1220-25.
85. Cligès predates Gliglois.
86. Cary, The Medieval Alexander, page 90.
87. S. Painter, French Chivalry, page 32.
88. Marie de France, Les Lais, ed. Jean Rychner, Paris, 1966. C.F.M.A. 93. Date: c.1160.
89. Lanval: ll. 21-23; Yonec: ll. 462-64; Laustic: ll. 21-22; Milun: ll. 325-40; Chaitivel: line 38; Eliduc: ll. 137-44; ll. 271-72; Guigemar: ll. 49-50.

NOTES TO CHAPTER SIX

1. cf. Arthur's coronation in the Brut (ll. 2041-72), my page 533, and also Erec's coronation in Erec et Enide (ll. 6596-6635), my page 534.
2. See my pp. 630-632.
3. See my Chapter 8, Section A, 2.
4. Jean Frappier, "Le Motif du 'don contraignant' dans la littérature du Moyen Age", Travaux de Linguistique et de Littérature, Strasbourg, VII, 2, 1969, pp. 7-46: "c'est une coutume assez étrange, une déconcertante contrainte psychologique, et, dans certains cas, une forme presque aberrante de la générosité." (p.8)
5. L'Atre Périlleux, ed. B. Woledge, Paris, 1936, C.F.M.A. 76. Date: middle of thirteenth century.
6. Le Bel Inconnu by Renaut de Beaujeu, ed. G. Perrie Williams, Paris, 1929. Date: end of twelfth or beginning of thirteenth century.
7. For the remote origins of this custom see H. Hubert, "Le Système des Prestations Totales dans les Littératures Celtiques", Revue Celtique, 1925, pp. 330-335.
8. Le Chevalier de la Charrete by Chrétien de Troyes, pub. M. Roques, Paris, 1958, C.F.M.A. 86. Date: 1177-1181.
9. Later in this work, when a girl craves a boon of Lancelot, the latter is wary and demands to know the nature of the boon before he grants it. (ll. 2804-07).
10. For rash boons associated with marriage, see Chapter Eight, Section C, 1, a): L'Escoufle: ll. 2136 sqq.; Guillaume de Dole: ll. 3082 sqq.; Cléomadès, ll. 1558 sqq. Other rash boons: Durmart: Durmart reluctantly surrenders a dog to a mysterious lady to prove his love for the queen of Ireland, ll. 1985 sqq.; Kay asks Arthur to attack a castle (ll. 12949 sqq.); Thèbes: Adrastus secures from King Ligurges, the pardon of a negligent nursemaid, ll. 2493 sqq.; Cligès: Alexandre thus secures permission to join the knights of King Arthur (ll. 84 sqq.); La Manekine: the promise elicited by the queen from the king on her deathbed, ll. 119 sqq.
11. Lancelot is the victim of a similar dilemma in Le Chevalier de la Charrete: In single combat, his defeated opponent asks for his life to be spared, while a lady asks for a "don" which she reveals to be the head of the knight. Lancelot's qualities of "largesse" and "pitié" are thus in conflict (ll. 2838-47). He eventually solves the problem by restaging the fight. The knight again loses and so dies. Lancelot has thus satisfied the demands of mercy and courtly largesse.
12. One notes that the giving of rich gifts to "jongleurs" shows a flagrant disregard for the contemporary Church condemnation of such acts. See my Chapter Four, section C.
13. cf. also the wedding in Athis et Prophilius, ll. 8957-64, also the celebrations in L'Atre Périlleux, ll. 6653-60.
14. See also my pp. 541-543.

Notes to Chapter Six contd.

15. "The Chivalric Bath in the Roman d'Alexandre and in Chrétien's Cligès", F. Lyons, Mélanges de Langue et de Littérature du Moyen Age offerts à Teruo Sato, Cahiers d'Etudes Médiévales, numéro spécial, Centre d'Etudes Médiévales et Romanes, Nagoya, 1973.
16. For attitudes of serfs see my Chapter Five, section A, 4, c); also Cligès (ll. 5427-35) when the hero promises to free a serf in return for a service.
17. Once again we note the close association between doing honour to a person and the presenting of gifts. See also my pp.535-36.
18. A rare course of action for a courtly hero who is more usually associated with the refusal of such reward gifts. See my pp. 574-585.
19. See also Ille et Galeron (ll. 264-65) where the King gives the departing Ille a thousand gold marks; Gui de Warewic, where the hero receives money from his father (ll. 711-13); Joufroï (ll. 118-21): the hero is presented with a thousand silver marks and five hundred gold marks by his father; Gliglois (ll. 24-28): the hero is supplied with money from his father; Jehan et Blonde: Jehan's lord, the Count, gives him two horses laden with "estrelins blans" (line 1992); Cleomadès: the hero's father put his wealth and servants at his son's disposal (ll. 8068-71).
20. See my page 567: Count Richard in L'Escoufle is an exception.
21. The soliciting of gifts was, however, extremely rare on the part of the courtly hero. It was apparently considered humiliating and degrading. See Alard de Cambrai's Livre de Philosophie et de Moralité, ll. 3538-3549.
22. In the Ruodlieb, a "chanson de geste, (line 158) there is a more extreme example of such a situation. Before the defeated king can present his gifts, Rex Maior lectures his own knights and orders them to accept nothing: "so that it does not look as if you need his riches." See Peter Dronke, Poetic Individuality in the Middle Ages: New Departures in Poetry 1000-1150, Oxford, 1970, page 43, note 2.
23. For the dishonour of poverty see my chapter Seven, A, 2, a), b).
24. Jean Frappier explains the etymology and semantic shift of the word "guerredon": "Etymologiquement, ... guerdon (guerredon) représente une forme 'widerdonum' issue par croisement du francique 'widarlon' (récompense en retour) et du latin 'donum'. Au sens propre, le guerdon est donc la récompense d'un don, un 'contre-don'. Mais assez tôt le mot a perdu sa valeur première et a signifié 'requête' que l'on présente à quelqu'un pour en obtenir un service. Il a fini par devenir un synonyme de 'récompense' et de 'don'." "Le Motif du don contraignant dans la littérature du Moyen Age", (Travaux de Linguistique et de Littérature, VII, 2, 1969, Strasbourg, pp. 7-46), p. 9, note 4.
25. Firth, Raymond, Human Types, London, 1970, page 66.
26. Firth, Raymond, Themes in Economic Anthropology, London, 1967, A.S.A. Monographs 6: categories of gift exchange, page 10; obligation to repay gift, page 14.
27. Finley, Moses, The World of Odysseus, London, 1964 (revised edition), pp. 68-70.

Notes to Chapter Six contd.

28. Mauss, M., The Gift, trans. Ian Cunnison, London, 1954. The author begins by posing the questions: "In primitive or archaic types of society what is the principle whereby the gift received has to be repaid? What force is there in the thing given which compels the recipient to make a return?" (page 1)
29. cf. Alard de Cambrai, Livre de Philosophie...., ll. 3559-64, my page 604.
30. cf. Dupin, Henri, La Courtoisie au Moyen Age, Paris, 1931, page 26, where he says that hospitality was one of the traditions of humanity especially in ancient times when the need was all the greater because of the dangers of travelling abroad. Hospitality, he adds, was one of the greatest virtues of the Middle Ages.
31. The only instance of poor hospitality I have encountered is in Le Comte d'Anjou. A woman gives shelter to the exiled Countess, but her merchant husband accuses her of wasting his money, and the lady has to leave (ll. 4510-14). This reluctant host is not a courtly character.
32. See also lines 9175-80 where "mal gueredun" has the same meaning as in line 1435.
33. For advice on lovers' gifts, see Andreas Capellanus, De Amore who suggests gifts of a modest nature eg. a handkerchief, a mirror, a purse, a comb, gloves, little dishes. (See Parry's edition, page 176, Trojel, p.293) Book II, chap. VII, xxi.
34. See also Le Bel Inconnu, ll. 5600-06, where knights wear sleeves at the tournament.
35. Tristan, as a very minor character, does likewise in Le Bel Inconnu, ll. 5583-88.
36. See also Amadas et Ydoine: Ydoine sends a sleeve and a belt to Amadas (ll. 1355-59) "par druerie" (line 1355); in Thèbes, a sleeve is the love token which Ysmaine gives to Athis (ll. 4089-92).
37. See Moshé Lazar, Amour Courtois et "Fin' Amors", Paris, 1964, page 120: "L'anneau, c'est à la fois un gage de fidélité, l'acceptation de l'amant, le témoin muet d'un secret d'amour....
Ce don de l'anneau, c'est bien l'abandon de soi. La dame, en se mariant, avait reçu un anneau de son époux. Mais il n'y a pas d'amour dans le mariage, pas d'amour authentique et courtois entre époux. En offrant un anneau à son soupirant, la dame contracte une nouvelle union dans laquelle c'est l'homme qui se soumet à elle. Par le truchement des conventions amoureuses la dame prend une revanche sur la vie."
38. J.C. Payen comments on the significance of this scene: "Yseut donne un baiser à Tristan 'par la saisine': démarche qui s'inscrit dans toute un comportement courtois. Par la 'saisine', la dame accepte que l'amant devienne son homme-lige.... A la fatalité du philtre se substitue une relation plus conforme à l'idéologie courtoise; Yseut redevient la dame de Tristan, d'où son rôle plus actif dans cette partie du poème; et l'échange des présents ou 'drueries' accompagne souvent l'hommage: le don de l'anneau est une faveur que requierent volontiers les poètes courtois, ou dont ils se vantent s'ils ont eu la joie de l'obtenir." Tristan et Yseut, Note 98, page 336.

Notes to Chapter Six contd.

39. See R. Dragonetti who cites texts that show that "guerredon" was the goal of the courtly lover. It was the prize for faithful service to the lady. La Technique Poétique des Trouvères dans la Chanson Courtoise, Bruges, 1960, pp. 77-81.
40. See instances of this in Chapter Seven, section B, 2, d.
41. Brut, ll. 2053-68, my page 562.
42. Matthew 19: 29.

NOTES TO CHAPTER SEVEN

1. See my Chapter Five, B.
2. Chapter Two, B.
3. These works will be studied in greater detail in section B, 2, e).
4. See my page 671.
5. See my page 717.
6. Section C, pp. 707, 721.
7. S. Painter, French Chivalry, page 15.
8. For the historical reasons, see Chapter Three, B, 3, c, ii.
9. See above, Chapter Six, C, 1 and D, 2.
10. See also Jean Frappier, Le Roman Breton, Des Origines à Chrétien de Troyes, C.D.U., Paris, 1951, pp. 89-90.
11. See Chapter Three, B, 1.
12. cf. Perceval, ll. 531-36; Cristal et Clarie, ll. 5795-99.
13. Matthew 19: 29.
14. The Lays of Desire, Graelent and Melion, ed. E.M. Grimes, New York, 1928, Publications of the Institute of French Studies.
15. Le Roman de la Violette ou de Gerart de Nevers, ll. 261-271, ll. 980-985.
16. Gautier d'Aupais, ed. E. Faral, Paris, 1919.
17. See also ll. 728-31, 1336-37.
18. There is an exception in le Comte d'Anjou. At the end of the work the poet comments that Fortune's Wheel has now come full circle, ll. 8081-20.
19. cf. Jehan et Blonde, ll. 1629-35; ll. 5125-26.
20. pp. 667-68.
21. A. Luchaire, La Société Française au Temps de Philippe-Auguste, page 349: "La plupart s'en remettent sur leurs héritiers et successeurs du soin de payer leurs dettes."
22. See also Eracle, ll. 2227-68.
23. Such unselfish distributions also occur in Cristal et Clarie, ll. 5385-91, where Cristal gives everything away; l'Escoufle, ll. 1001-5; ll. 1290-99; Floire et Blancheflor, ll. 3462-70.
24. See pp. 691-693.
25. S. Painter, French Chivalry, pp. 35-36.
26. Ibid., p. 49.

Notes to Chapter Seven contd.

27. See also Le Bel Inconnu, ll. 5858-60.
28. See also Charrete, ll. 5982-3, where Lancelot gives away his gains; Amadas et Ydoine, ll. 4559-69: Amadas gives rich gifts and holds a banquet after a tournament; Erec et Enide, ll. 2207-14 for noble expenditure after the tournament of Tenebroc.
29. Erec, Durmart, Ille, Guillaume de Palerne, Guillaume (L'Escoufle), Athis Floire, Cligès, Guinglains, Yder, Florimont, Gliglois, Cleomadès, Amadas, Cristal, Galeran de Bretagne.
30. See le Comte d'Anjou, line 1346: "Quer oiseusetéz atrait yiches,". This is doubtless based on the Christian teaching (2 Thessalonians, 3: 7-8) which lauded the labour of the honest man.
31. cf. the association between poverty and other defects, section A, 2, b, above.
32. See also Gliglois, ll. 1931-33; Ille et Galeron, ll. 136-40; Gui de Warewic, ll. 621-28; Gilles de Chyn, ll. 552-54; Joufroi, ll. 2711-30; Yder, ll. 761-3; Guillaume de Dole, ll. 763-72; Galeran de Bretagne, ll. 3278-89.

NOTES TO CHAPTER EIGHT

1. "...il doit être amoureux. Sans amour, il est vain de prétendre à la perfection courtoise," J. Frappier, Chrétien de Troyes, l'Homme et l'Œuvre, Paris, 1957, page 14.
2. My pages 488-92.
3. A term first used by Gaston Paris in Romania XII, 1883, page 488.
4. "Vues sur les Conceptions Courtoises dans les Littératures d'Oc et d'Oïl au XII^e siècle," Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale, II, 1959, pp. 135-156, particularly page 137.
5. See my chapter Six, pp. 630-32.
6. "Vues sur les Conceptions Courtoises...." see note 4; also Amour Courtois et Table Ronde, Geneva, 1973, pp. 13-14.
7. C.S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love, New York, 1958, page 12.
8. See Myrrha Lot-Borodine, De l'Amour Profane à l'Amour Sacré, Paris, 1961, page 49, for different kinds of love in medieval literature.
9.

<u>Amadas et Ydoine:</u>	Amadas and Ydoine
<u>Athis et Prophilias:</u>	Athis and Gafte
<u>Bel Inconnu:</u>	Prophilias and Cardiones
	Guinglains and La Blonde Esmérée
	Guinglains and La Pucele aux Blanchés Mains
<u>Chastelain de Coucy:</u>	the Chatelain and la Dame de Fayel
<u>Chevalier de la Charrete:</u>	Lancelot and Guinevere
<u>Cleomadès:</u>	Cleomadès and Clarmondine
<u>Cligès:</u>	Alexandre and Soredamor
	Cligès and Fenice
<u>Comte d'Anjou:</u>	Daughter of the Comte d'Anjou and
	the Comte de St. Gilles
<u>Cristal et Clarie:</u>	Cristal and Clarie
<u>Durmart:</u>	Durmart and Queen Fenise
<u>Erec et Enide:</u>	Erec and Enide
<u>Escoufle:</u>	Guillaume and Aelis
<u>Floire et Blancheflor:</u>	Floire and Blancheflor
<u>Florimont:</u>	Florimont and Romadanaple
<u>Floris et Lyriopé:</u>	Floris and Lyriope
<u>Galeran de Bretagne:</u>	Galeran and Fresne
<u>Gautier d'Aupais:</u>	Gautier and the knight's daughter
<u>Gilles de Chyn:</u>	Gilles and the Countess
<u>Gliglois:</u>	Gliglois and Beauté
<u>Gui de Warewic:</u>	Gui and Felice
<u>Guillaume de Dole:</u>	Conrad and Lienor
<u>Guillaume de Falerne:</u>	Guillaume and Melior
<u>Ille et Galeron:</u>	Ille and Galeron
	Ille and Ganor
<u>Jehan et Blonde:</u>	Jehan and Blonde
<u>Joufroi:</u>	Joufroi and Agnes
	Joufroi and Alice of England
<u>Manekine:</u>	Joie and the King
<u>Roman de la Violette:</u>	Gerart and Euriout
<u>Tristan:</u>	Tristan and Yseult
<u>Yder:</u>	Yder and Queen Guenloie
<u>Yvain:</u>	Yvain and Laudine

Notes to Chapter Eight contd.

10. Le Roman du Castelain de Couci et de la Dame de Fayel par Jakemes, pub. J.E. Matzke, M. Delbouille, Paris, 1936, S.A.T.F. 86. Date: 1240-1310, but probably the end of the thirteenth century.
11. Moshé Lazar, Amour Courtois et "Fin' Amors", Paris, 1964, page 12.
12. "Les mariages princiers et seigneuriaux se contractaient ordinairement pour des raisons d'intérêt plus que de sentiment. L'idéal courtois ambitionne au contraire d'assurer dans le mariage tous les droits en privilèges de l'amour," J. Frappier, Amour Courtois et Table Ronde, page 14.
13. "baillie": power, domination, usually over land.
"sesine": the taking over of a fief.
See my Chapter Six, note 38.
14. J. Coppin, Amour et Mariage dans la Littérature Française du Nord au Moyen Age, Paris, 1961, page 11: "Ce privilège de marier leurs vassals est un de ceux auxquels les suzerains tiennent le plus. Ils donnent en même temps, un fief et une femme, excellent moyen de se faire des partisans."
15. cf. Erec speaking of Enide to her uncle:
"Et qu'an dite vos, sire, dons?
Dons n'est biax et riches cist don?"
(Erec et Enide: ll. 1267-68)
16. See Chapter Seven, B, 2.
17. See my pp. 774-777.
18. See my page 789.
19. See also Guillaume de Dole where Emperor Conrad has difficulty in marrying a lady not approved by his barons, my page 786.
20. See my Chapter Five, pp. 630-34.
21. See Chapter One, C, 5.
22. The stated motive for charity is here concern for the salvation of his soul and not pure benevolence. This is a commonplace in the didactic works. See my Chapter Two, section A, 8, c.
23. See pp. 777-782.
24. C.V. Langlois refers to him as "un don Juan du temps de Philippe-Auguste", La Vie au Moyen Age, I, page 107.
25. See also Fresne (Marie de France) where Guiron reluctantly agrees to marry Fresne's sister on the advice of his vassals (ll. 328-29).
26. cf. my pages 731-732.
27. See my Chapter Six, pp. 619-634.
28. Except Joufroi who marries a bourgeoise.

Notes to Chapter Eight contd.

29. The term "guerredon" is often used to mean the reciprocating of love, especially in "fin' amor". See my pages 630-32.
30. See also Athis et Prophilias, ll. 3803-4: Gaite is reluctant to accept Athis's love because he is poor and in exile; Floris et Lyriopé, line 593: Floris despairs of making his "dame" his "amie"; Roman de Troie, ll. 17,937-42: Priam refuses to give Polyxène to Achille, not because he is an enemy, but because he is socially inferior:
line 17,940: "Trop beissereie mon lignage:"
31. For the similar attitude of the poet of Cleomadès see my pages 742-43.
32. Faith Lyons, "La Fausse Mort dans le Cligès de Chrétien de Troyes", Mélanges M. Roques, I, 1950, pp. 167-177.
33. cf. Clarmondine who, to avoid marriage with Meriadus, simulates folly (my pp. 783-84).
34. Such a mercenary attitude attributed here to the pope could well be a sly satirical dig in the manner of an "Etats du Monde" poet at the covetousness and worldliness of contemporary Rome. See my Chapter Five, section A, 4, a).
35. J. Frappier refers to this duty of a feudal lord: "le devoir du roi et du seigneur féodal était de veiller au prompt remariage des veuves incapables de 'tenir' la terre dont elles gardaient la jouissance après la mort de leur mari." in Amour Courtois et Table Ronde, page 2, note 4.
36. "'L'enor' (l'honneur), c'est-à-dire la possession d'une terre et la responsabilité qui en découle, implique soucis matériels, charge d'âmes..." Chrétien de Troyes, l'Homme et l'Oeuvre, page 159.
37. See also the story made up by Queen Gracienne in Guillaume d'Angleterre, my pages 766-67.
38. See also my Chapter Six, pp. 553-57.
39. Here the "don" is also the "guerredon" or return for a gift.
40. See my Chapter Five, pp. 470-71.
41. See my pages 715-716.
42. Floire et Blancheflor, ll. 1449-51: All the gold in the world would not bring Floire joy without Blancheflor; Cligès, ll. 793-800: Alexandre compares Soredamors to a treasure, and says he would not sacrifice her love for all the riches of Antioch; l'Escoufle, ll. 3970-73: when Aelis joins Guillaume as they are about to elope, he declares himself happier than if all the gold and silver in the world rained down on him; Glinois, ll. 784-85: the hero values Beaute above all wealth.
43. Chapter Seven, pp. 672-73.

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