

Thomas Lodge

1558-1625

For a biography of Lodge, a discussion of his other works, and selections from his other poetry, see the print anthology, pp. 969-95.

EDITION: *Scillaes Metamorphosis*. London: Imprinted by Richard Jones, 1589. STC 16674; *The famous, true and historical life of Robert second Duke of Normandy, surnamed for his monstrous birth and behaviour, Robin the Divell*. London: [Imprinted by Thomas Orwin] for N[icholas] L[ing] and John Busby, 1591. STC 16657; *The life and death of william Long beard, the most famous and witty English traitor*. London: [Printed] by Richard Yardley and Peter Short, 1593. STC 16659.



from *Scylla's Metamorphosis*
Interlaced with the Unfortunate Love
of *Glaucus*.¹

The Most Pithy and Pleasant History
of Glaucus and Scylla.²

Walking alone, all only full of grief,
Within a thicket near to Isis' flood,
Weeping my wants and wailing scant relief,
Wringing mine arms as one with sorrow wood,³
5 The piteous streams, relenting at my moan,
Withdrew their tides and stayed to hear me groan.

From forth the channel, with a sorrowing cry,
The sea-god Glaucus, with his hallowed hears⁴

¹ The title continues as follows: "Whereunto is Annexed the Delectable Discourse of the Discontented Satyr; with Sundry Other Most Absolute Poems and Sonnets. Containing the Detestable Tyranny of Disdain, and Comical Triumph of Constancy: Very Fit for Young Courtiers to Peruse, and Coy Dames to Remember." It concludes with the Latin epigram, "O vital misero longa, foelici brevis" (O life! Long in wretchedness, brief in happiness). Lodge is identified on the title page as being "of Lincoln's Inn" and a "gentleman."

² *The Most ... Glaucus and Scylla* Glaucus was a fisherman of Boetia, son of Neptune and Nais. Urged by his eating of a magical plant to leap into the sea, he was subsequently transformed into a sea god by Oceanus and Tethys.

³ *wood* mad, crazed, insane.

⁴ *hears* i.e., hairs (rhymes with "appears").

10 Wet in the tears of his sad mother's dye,⁵
With piteous looks before my face appears,
For whom the nymphs a mossy coat did frame,
Embroidered with his Scylla's heavenly name,

15 And as I sat under a willow tree,
The lovely honour of fair Thetis' bower,⁶
Reposed his head upon my faintful knee;
And when my tears had ceased their stormy
shower,
He dried my cheeks and then bespoke him so
As when he wailed I straight forgot my woe.

20 "Unfortunate, why wand'reth thy content
From forth his scope as wearied of itself?
Thy books have schooled thee from this fond
repent,
And thou canst talk by proof of wavering pelf.⁷
Unto the world such is inconstancy,
As sap to tree, as apple⁸ to the eye.

25 Mark how the morn in roseate colour shines
And straight with clouds the sunny tract is clad;

⁵ *sad mother's dye* Glaucus' mother was Nais, one of the Oceanides, who were sea nymphs, daughters of Oceanus and the goddess Tethys; her "dye" is thus the ocean water that drips from the newly emerging Glaucus.

⁶ *Thetis* one of the Nereids, daughters of Nereus, an ancient sea-god. See p. 2, note 5; *bower* leafy arbour.

⁷ *pelf* wealth, riches.

⁸ *apple* the pupil.

Then see how pomp through wax and wane
declines

From high to low, from better to the bad.

Take moist from sea, take colour from his kind,
30 Before the world devoid of change thou find.”

[...]

Here gan he pause and shake his heavy head,
And fold his arms and then unfold them straight;

45 Fain¹ would he speak, but tongue was charmed
by dread,

Whilst I, that saw what woes did him aweight,²
Comparing his mishaps and moan with mine,
Gan smile for joy and dry his drooping ey'n.³

But lo, a wonder! From the channel's glide

50 A sweet, melodious noise of music rose,
That made the stream to dance a pleasant tide;
The weeds and sallows⁴ near the bank that grows
Gan sing, as when the calmest winds accord
To greet with balmy breath the fleeting ford.

55 Upon the silver bosom of the stream
First gan fair Themis⁵ shake her amber locks,
Whom all the nymphs that wait on Neptune's
realm

Attended from the hollow of the rocks.

In brief, while these rare paragons assemble,
60 The wat'ry world to touch their teats⁶ do tremble.

Footing it featly⁷ on the grassy ground
These damsels, circling with their brightsome
fairs

The love-sick god and I, about us wound
Like stars that Ariadne's crown repairs.⁸
65 Who once hath seen or pride of morn or day
Would deem all pomp within their cheeks did play.

[...]

[Overcome with the pangs of unrequited love,
Glaucus faints. The nymphs revive him, and they
finally prevail upon him to tell his tragic tale.
Glaucus begins by describing both his youthful
indifference to the beautiful nymphs that once
flocked around him, and his sudden, overwhelm-
ing desire for the lovely Scylla.]

“Her hair not trussed, but scattered on her brow,
Surpassing Hybla's⁹ honey for the view,
285 Or softened golden wires. I know not how
Love, with a radiant beauty, did pursue
My too judicial eyes in darting fire
That kindled straight in me my fond desire.

290 Within these snares first was my heart entrapped,
Till through those golden shrouds mine eyes did
see
An ivory-shadowed front wherein was wrapped

¹ *Fain* willingly.

² *aweight* weigh down, oppress.

³ *ey'n* eyes.

⁴ *sallow* the willow, traditionally a symbol of grief for unrequited love or the loss of a mate.

⁵ *Themis* Some of what Lodge says about Themis does not seem to be correct. Themis was the goddess that Deucalion and his wife—the virtuous couple who survive the flood that destroys all humankind—pray to when the waters have receded; she instructs them to cast stones behind them, out of which is born a new race of humans (*Metamorphoses*, pp. 37-40). She is the first god to whom humans raised temples, but there is no explicit association between her and the sea. Thetis (see p. 1, note 6) not Themis is perhaps meant here.

⁶ *teats* breasts.

⁷ *Footing it featly* dancing elegantly.

⁸ *Ariadne's crown repairs* After Ariadne helped Theseus destroy the Minotaur and flee its labyrinthine lair, he took her with him, only to betray and abandon her on the isle of Dia. Discovered by the god Dionysus (Bacchus), Ariadne became his wife and he gave her a crown of seven stars which became a constellation after her death.

⁹ *Hybla* a place in Sicily famous for its bees and honey (*Classical Dict.*).

Those pretty bow'rs where graces couched be;
 Next which her cheeks appeared like crimson silk,
 Or ruddy rose bespread on whitest milk;

295 Twixt which the nose in lovely tenor bends,
 (Too trait'rous pretty for a lover's view);
 Next which her lips like violets commends
 By true proportion that which doth ensue;
 Which, when they smile, present unto the eyes
 300 The ocean's pride and ivory paradise.

[...]

325 "The lovely breast, where all this beauty rested,
 Shrouded within a world of deep disdain,
 For where I thought my fancy should be feasted
 With kind affect, alas, unto my pain,
 When first I wooed, the wanton straight was
 flying,
 330 And gave repulse before we talked of trying.

How oft have I (too often have I done so)
 In silent night, when every eye was sleeping,
 Drawn near her cave in hope her love were won
 so,

Forcing the neighbouring waters through my
 weeping
 335 To wake the winds, who did afflict her dwelling
 Whilst I with tears my passion was a-telling.

When midst the Caspian Seas the wanton played,
 I drew whole wreaths of coral from the rocks,
 And in her lap my heavenly presents laid;
 340 But she, unkind, rewarded me with mocks.
 Such are the fruits that spring from ladies' coying,¹
 Who smile at tears and are entrapped with toying."

[...]

[Scylla rejects Glaucus, sending him into despair
 and prompting his fruitless wandering from place
 to place. Finally arriving in the beautiful western
 realm governed by the river goddess Isis, he takes
 up his hopeless abode. His only comfort comes
 from counselling those like himself who have
 fallen into the trap of unrequited love.]

The woeful Glaucus thus with woes attained,
 440 The pensive nymphs aggrieved to see his plight,
 The floods and fields with his laments acquainted,
 Myself amazed to see this heavy sight;
 On sudden Thetis² with her train approached,
 And gravely thus her amorous son reproached:

445 "My son," said she, "immortal have I made thee.
 Amidst my wat'ry realms who may compare
 Or match thy might? Why, then, should care
 invade thee
 That art so young, so lovely, fresh and fair?
 Alas, fond god, it merits great reprov'g
 450 In states of worth to dote on foolish loving.

Come, wend with me, and midst thy father's
 bow'r

Let us disport and frolic for a while
 In spite of Love: although he pout and low'r,³
 Good exercise will idle lusts beguile;
 455 Let wanton Scylla coy her where she will,
 Live thou, my son, by reason's level still."

Thus said the goddess, and although her words
 Gave signs of counsel, pomp, and majesty,
 Yet nathless her piteous eye affords
 460 Some pretty witness to the standers-by
 That in her thoughts, for all her outward show
 She mourned to see her son amated⁴ so.

[...]

¹ *coying* pretended shyness or reserve.

² *Thetis* She is not Glaucus' mother. See p. 1, note 2 and p. 1, notes 5-6; she is often confused with Tethys, her grandmother.

³ *low'r* frown.

⁴ *amated* dismayed, disheartened, overwhelmed.

[In response to the prayers of despairing Thetis, Venus, goddess of love, intervenes on Glaucus's behalf, getting her son Cupid to shoot a restorative arrow into the wound he has earlier made in Glaucus's breast, freeing him from his hopeless, obsessive love for Scylla.]

No more of love, no more of hate he spoke;
 No more he forced the sighs from out his breast;
 His sudden joy his pleasing smiles provoke,
 550 And all aloft he shakes his bushy crest,
 Greeting the gods and goddesses beside,
 And every nymph upon that happy tide.

Cupid and he together, hand in hand,
 Approach the place of this renowned train.
 555 "Ladies," said he, "released from amorous band,
 Receive my prisoner to your grace again."
 Glaucus gave thanks when Thetis, glad with bliss,
 Embraced his neck and his kind cheeks did kiss.

[...]

[While everyone is rejoicing over Glaucus's liberation from the bondage of unrequited love, the lovely Scylla appears. Thetis, set on revenge, begs Cupid to grant the following request.]

"Oh, if there dwell within thy breast, my boy,
 Or grace or pity or remorse," said she,
 590 "Now bend thy bow, abate yon wanton's joy,
 And let these nymphs thy rightful justice see."
 The god, soon won, gan shoot, and cleft her heart
 With such a shaft as caused her endless smart.

The tender nymph, attainted unawares,
 Fares like the Libyan lioness that flies
 The hunter's lance that wounds her in his snares;
 Now gins¹ she love, and straight on Glaucus cries,
 Whilst on the shore the goddesses rejoice,
 600 And all the nymphs afflict the air with noise.

¹ *gins* i.e., begins.

To shore she flits, and swift as Afric wind
 Her footing glides upon the yielding grass,
 And, wounded by affect, recure to find
 She suddenly with sighs approached the place
 605 Where Glaucus sat, and, weary with her harms,
 Gan clasp the sea-god in her amorous arms.

"Glaucus, my love," quoth she, "look on thy lover.
 Smile, gentle Glaucus, on the nymph that likes
 thee."
 But stark as stone sat he, and list not prove her.²
 610 (Ah, silly nymph, the selfsame god that strikes
 thee
 With fancy's dart, and hath thy freedom slain,
 Wounds Glaucus with the arrow of disdain.)

Oh, kiss no more, kind nymph. He likes no
 kindness;
 Love sleeps in him to flame within thy breast;
 615 Cleared are his eyes, where thine are clad with
 blindness;
 Freed be his thoughts, where thine must taste
 unrest.
 Yet nill she leave, for never love will leave her,
 But fruitless hopes and fatal haps³ deceive her.

Lord, how her lips do dwell upon his cheeks,
 620 And how she looks for babies in his eyes,⁴
 And how she sighs and swears she loves and
 leeks,⁵
 And how she vows, and he her vows envies.
 Trust me, the envious nymphs in looking on
 Were forced with tears for to assist her moan.

² *list not prove her* i.e., chose not to approve her.

³ *haps* chances, occurrences.

⁴ "Baby" refers to a small image of oneself reflected in the pupil of another's eye; hence, "to look babies."

⁵ *leeks* i.e., likes.

[...]

[Scylla flees “towards Sicilia,” and her flight intrigues the other characters—Venus, Thetis, the nymphs, Glaucus and the poet—who pursue her closely in order to see how she will deal with the ravages of unrequited love. When they come upon Scylla, they are just in time to see her attacked by the servants of Ate: Fury, Rage, Despair, Wanhope,¹ and Woe.]

735 These five at once the sorrowing nymph assail,
And captive lead her bound into the rocks,
Where, howling still, she strives for to prevail.
With no avail yet strives she, for her locks
Are changed with wonder into hideous sands,
And hard as flint become her snow-white hands.

740 The waters howl with fatal tunes about her,
The air doth scowl whenas she turns within them,
The winds and waves with puffs and billows
scout her;
Waves storm, air scowls, both wind and waves
begin them
To make the place this mournful nymph doth
weep in
A hapless haunt whereas no nymph may keep in.

745 The seaman, wand’ring by that famous isle,
Shuns all with fear despairing Scylla’s bow’r;
Nymphs, sea-gods, sirens, when they list to smile,
Forsake the haunt of Scylla in that stour.²
“Ah, nymphs,” thought I, “if every coy one felt
750 The like mishaps their flinty hearts would melt.”

Thetis rejoiced to see her foe depressed;³
Glaucus was glad since Scylla was enthralled;

¹ *Ate* Greek goddess of mischief and discord; source of rash and destructive deeds; *Wanhope* i.e., hopelessness.

² *stour* perhaps “occasion” or “place”; used by Spenser and his imitators to refer to a “time of turmoil and stress”; given the context, “storm” is also a possibility.

³ *depressed* brought low, oppressed.

The nymphs gan smile to boast their Glaucus’
rest;

755 Venus and Cupid, in their thrones installed,
At Thetis’ beck to Neptune’s bow’r repair,
Whereas they feast amidst his palace fair.

Of pure, immortal nectar is their drink,
And sweet ambrosia dainties do repast them;
The Tritons sing, Palemon⁴ smiles to think
760 Upon the chance, and all the nymphs do haste
them

To trick up mossy garlands where they won⁵
For lovely Venus and her conquering son.

765 From forth the fountains of his mother’s store,
Glaucus let fly a dainty crystal bain⁶
That washed the nymphs with labour tired before;
Cupid he trips among this lovely train.
Alonely I apart did write this story
With many a sigh and heart full sad and sorry.

770 Glaucus, when all the goddesses took rest,
Mounted upon a dolphin full of glee,
Conveyed me friendly from this honoured feast,
And, by the way, such sonnets sung to me
That all the dolphins neighbouring of his glide
Danced with delight his reverent course beside.

775 At last he left me where at first he found me,
Willing me let the world and ladies know

⁴ *Tritons* mermen of Greek mythology; *Palemon* In Chaucer’s “The Knight’s Tale,” the cousins Palemon and Arcite both fall in love with the same woman, Emilia. Fighting against each other in a tournament to decide which of them shall be her husband, the cousins are supported by different gods: Palemon by Venus and Arcite by Mars, both of whom promise their respective suppliants victory. Saturn manages events so that although Arcite is declared the victor in the combat, Palemon is the one who finally wins Emilia, since Arcite’s “victory” is followed by his death.

⁵ *trick up* array, deck, display; *won* dwell.

⁶ *bain* water or other liquid placed in a suitable receptacle, in which one may bathe.

Of Scylla's pride; and then by oath he bound me
 To write no more of that whence shame doth
 grow,
 Or tie my pen to penny-knaves¹ delight,
 780 But live with fame, and so for fame to write.

L' Envoi²

Ladies, he left me, trust me I mis-say not;
 But so he left me as he willed me tell you:
 That nymphs must yield when faithful lovers
 stray not,
 Lest through contempt almighty Love compel you
 785 With Scylla in the rocks to make your biding,
 A cursed plague for women's proud backsliding.³

—1589

[from *Robin the Devil*]

The Famous, True, and Historical Life of Robert,
 Second Duke of Normandy, Surnamed for His
 Monstrous Birth and Behaviour,
 Robin the Devil.⁴

¹ *penny-knaves* probably a reference to Lodge's less than successful career writing for the stage, whose least economically and socially advantaged patrons were often caricatured as also those least able to appreciate work of substantial literary merit (cf. Hamlet's tirade against the so-called "groundlings" [3.2.8-12; 24-28], those who paid a penny to stand in the yard, the open space in front of the public stage, to watch performances); there may also be a reference to those individuals who buy the cheapest and thus least "literary" books and pamphlets available in the print market.

² *L'Envoi* French, "farewell." In French verse, the "l'envoi" is a concluding stanza, originally meant as a dedication to a patron, but more often functioning as a summary of the preceding work.

³ *backsliding* the falling away from an adopted course, especially of religious faith or practice; apostasy.

⁴ The title page continues: "Wherein is contained his dissolute life in his youth, his devout reconilement and virtues in his age: Interlaced with many strange and miraculous adventures. Wherein are both causes of profit, and many conceits of pleasure."

To the Worshipful and True Maecenas⁵ of
 Learning, Master Thomas Smith,⁶ T.L.G.
 Wisheth All Abundance of Worldly Fortunes
 in This Life, and the Benefits of Heavenly
 Felicity in the Life to Come.

Seeing in these our days men rather seek the
 increase of transitory wealth than the knowledge
 of divine wisdom, preferring stuffed bags before
 studious books, their pounds before precepts,
 5 losing the true riches of the mind to level at⁷ the
 transitory allurements of this world, feeding fools
 with figs, and philosophers with flouts;⁸ I have
 among the multitudes of these men made choice
 of Your Worship for my patron and Maecenas,
 10 who of a far more happy nature with Theodosius,
 honour Appian,⁹ and seeing learning almost sup-
 pressed with contempt or discountenanced with
 neglect have in this famous city (like a virtuous
 member of the same) begun to exile ignorance, to
 15 revive arts. [...] Which virtuous endeavour of
 yours (worthy both your name and fortune) shall
 in time to come more advance you than they who
 tooth and nail labour to purchase lands, which
 ordinarily perish through their heirs' lavishness. It
 20 is true fame which is gotten by virtue, and perfect
 virtue to maintain learning, which is so kind to
 those that seek after it that in all changes of
 fortune, in all miseries of this life and casualties

⁵ *Maecenas* Gaius Maecenas (c. 70-8 BCE), influential Roman aristocrat, statesman, and one of the emperor Augustus' most trusted friends; a patron of the arts, Maecenas supported the works of Virgil, Horace, and Propertius; he introduced Virgil to Augustus.

⁶ *Thomas Smith* Probably Sir Thomas Smith (c. 1556-1609), university orator (Oxford, 1582-94) and secretary to Robert Devereux, 2nd earl of Essex.

⁷ *level at* aim at.

⁸ *feeding fools with figs* i.e., giving fools a delicacy that they will be unable to appreciate (the equivalent of the proverbial expression, "Casting pearls before swine" [Matthew 7:6; Tilley P165]); *flouts* mocking speeches or actions; pieces of mockery; jeers or scoffs.

⁹ *Theodosius...Appian* Appian of Alexandria (fl. 2nd c. CE), Greek historian of Rome, who wrote the 24 book *History of Rome's Wars*; Theodosius is perhaps Theodosius II (401-50 CE), late Roman emperor, who founded a university at Constantinople and is responsible for the legal compilation named after him (the Theodosian Code).

25 whatsoever, it prepareth the mind and preventeth
 mishaps. And lest I among the poor *tirones* of
 learning,¹ who desire the increase thereof with the
 most though deserve therein with the least, should
 seem to forget this especially and ingrafted virtue
 30 so admirably bestowed upon Your Worship, I have
 thought good to present you with a rude and
 homely² written history, which if with like regard
 you shall accept as Alphonsus did the silly satires
 of Philelphus,³ I doubt not but in short time to
 35 publish that under your name which shall not only
 merit and deserve your acceptance, but also
 mightily profit all such as are studious in all sorts
 of learning. Till when, I most humbly commend
 me, desiring Your Worship most earnestly to pros-
 ecute your virtuous enterprises, beseeching God
 40 to prosper you in them and all other, to the
 advancement of letters.

From my chamber. 2. May. 1591.
 Your Worship's to command,
 T.L.G.

To the Courteous Reader Whatsoever.

45 Gentlemen, I have upon the earnest request of
 some my good friends drawn out of the old and
 ancient antiquaries⁴ the true life of Robert, second

¹ *tirones of learning* Latin, tiro, -onis, *m.*: literally, newly levied soldiers, recruits; thus, beginners, newly-initiated men.

² *rude* unpolished, deficient in literary merit; *homely* simply, unpretentiously; without adornment or polish.

³ *Philelphus* Francesco Filelfo (1398-1481), Italian humanist, professor and writer, composed in a number of genres, including satire (published, Venice, 1502); there also seems to be another Filelfo, a Renaissance writer and "pagan," who was rewarded by Nicholas V for his satires (these may, indeed, be the same person). See his *Satyrarum becatostichon septimus decas, becatosticha quinta* (satires published, Milan, 1476 by Christoph Valdarfer).

⁴ *antiquaries* An antiquary is an official custodian or recorder of antiquities; here, Lodge uses the word to refer to the written records such official historians produce. However, the source of *Robert* is not an historical chronicle, and neither Robert, Aubert, nor Editha have convincing historical counterparts. Instead, the romance resembles the legend of Sir Gowther, versions of which exist in a number of European literatures. N.B. Paradise speculates that Robert's character and the tale's setting in Normandy exploited "the fear [...] inspired by

duke of Normandy (surnamed for his youthful
 imperfections, Robin the Devil), wherein I stand
 50 not so much on the terms as the truth, publishing
 as much as I have read and not so much as they
 have written. The lodestars⁵ that directed me in
 my course, if they have colours and no counter-
 feit, do me right to say they set down colours
 55 without counterfeit; yet many things have hap-
 pened in times past incredible in our age, and in
 our age such things have fallen out as had our
 fathers known they had marvelled. It only
 behooveth⁶ us to apply all things that tend to good
 60 to their end, which is virtue, and esteem them; to
 intend all things that are bad to their end, which is
 vice, and eschew them. So shall we in reading reap
 that fruit, that impossible things shall be referred
 to God and possible ordered to our amends.

65 Farewell.
 T.L.G.

The Famous, True, and Historical Life of
 Robert, Second Duke of Normandy.

[Chapter 1]

In the populous and plentiful dukedom of Nor-
 mandy (in times past called Neustria), at such time
 as Pepin, the father of the great King Charle-
 70 magne, governed the flourishing kingdom of
 France,⁷ Aubert, the first duke of that country, by
 some supposed to be Ron of Denmark, began to
 signorize⁸ in the same about the year of our Lord
 75 750; a prince by nature affable, in nurture fortu-
 nate, as glorious for his conquests as gracious in

the medieval Norman warriors and by Robert Guiscard in particular" (p. 93). Lodge may have used Wynkyn de Worde's 1510 English version of this tale (*Thomas Lodge: The History of an Elizabethan* [Yale UP, 1970], pp. 93-95).

⁵ *lodestars* stars that direct travellers, such as the pole star; thus, 'the guiding stars' or principles of one's life and actions.

⁶ *behooveth* profits, benefits.

⁷ *Pepin ...France* Pepin III, also known as Pepin the Short (c. 714-68), first Carolingian king of the Franks (751-68).

⁸ *signorize* rule, reign.

his courtesies, enterprising his attempts with Metellus's constancy, and finishing the same with Alexander's¹ fortune; who being in years youthful, in person comely, in discourse pleasant, in riches mighty was sought unto by divers princes, who intended by inserting him into their lineage the better to assure themselves in their livelihoods.² Among the rest, the worthy Duke of Burgundy wrought so earnestly and persuaded so effectually that Aubert at last accepted his fair sister Ynda or Editha for his wife, a princess in whom nature planted as much excellence as amiableness, tempering the gifts of fortune and the mind with such equability that her goods seemed great in respect of her goodness, and her goodness more great in that she had goods. For as the mighty inundations of Nilus make the river more famous, so ability united with bounty, and a liberal hand with a merciful heart, do greatly assist in causes of honour. These two princely couples [were] ordained by destiny to high disasters; though their affluence of riches promised them felicity, yet the influence of the heavens intimated their adversity: for having great signories³ to bequeath, they had no heirs to enjoy, accompting this for their only cross,⁴ that they were without children. Many were their vows, but to no avail; many their prayers, but to little purpose. If physic⁵ might have made fruitful, Editha had been a mother; if great sums could have purchased young sons, Aubert had been a father. Seven years and more lived they in this sort, the

¹ *Metellus* perhaps, Quintus Caecilius Metellus (d. c. 63 BCE), surnamed "Pius" because of his famed devotion to his father, who had been exiled, and his continued opposition to his father's foes; *Alexander* Alexander III, surnamed the "Great," of Macedon (356-323 BCE), famed general who conquered much of the ancient world, including Greece and Egypt; just before his death, he had conquered India and invaded Scythia, from which he returned to Babylon with fabulous riches.

² *livelihoods* estates, landed or inherited property; thus, more generally, patrimony.

³ *signories* domains, territories.

⁴ *accompting ... cross* i.e., accounting or reckoning this their only trial, affliction, trouble.

⁵ *physic* medicine, medical knowledge, and practice.

one careless of love's delight,⁶ the other comfortless in that she was barren, till on a prefixed Saturday—when nature had poured all her treasures on the earth, Flora powdered all the meadows with flowers, when the lovesick Zephyrus⁷ softly breathed and the tender leaves sweetly bowed, when the sun played with the wave and the wave dallied with the sun, both enjoying an equal sympathy of solace—Duke Aubert (who from his youth upward was marvellously delighted in the chase) accompanied with his fair Duchess departed out of his capital city of Rouen⁸ to take his pastance⁹ in the forest. Editha (by divine ordinance) was that day attired as if she intended to woo Lucina¹⁰ to grant a son and win the Norman duke to get¹¹ a son. Her hair, instead of gold to grace it, was golden exceeding gold, more finer than the thread wherewith Arachne¹² wrought her loom, more softer than the bed of roses wherein the Morning played with Cephalus.¹³ Bound it was after a careless manner as if disdainful that so rare beauties should be imprisoned, but plaited in such sort as if nature should make a labyrinth for love. Love could not wish a sweeter labyrinth. Midst

⁶ *careless of love's delight* The meaning here is somewhat unclear. The narrator suggests either that Aubert is free from anxiety (he is "careless") concerning sex ("love's delight"), or that he is negligent in engaging in sex.

⁷ *Flora ... Zephyrus* Flora was the Roman goddess of flowers and gardens. Some ancient writers say that she married Zephyrus, one of the winds, son of Atreus and Aurora, goddess of the dawn; Zephyrus' very breath had the power to generate fruits and flowers.

⁸ *Rouen* a city in France on the Seine (85 miles NW of Paris); capital of the dukes of Normandy (*Topographical Dict.*, p. 441).

⁹ *pastance* recreation, pastime.

¹⁰ *Lucina* goddess of childbirth.

¹¹ *get* i.e., beget.

¹² *Arachne* In classical mythology, a mortal woman famed as a weaver. Having challenged the goddess Pallas Athena (Minerva) to a contest to see which of them was the better artist, she was struck by the goddess, who was enraged at the perfection of Arachne's tapestry which showed the vices of the gods. Arachne hung herself in response and Pallas in pity transformed her into a spider (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, pp. 134-38).

¹³ *Morning ... Cephalus* Aurora (goddess of the dawn or the morning) fell in love with and kidnapped Cephalus, king of Thessaly, whose only desire was to return to his beloved wife, Procris. For the story of Cephalus and Aurora, see Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, pp. 174-75.

every plait were certain spheres of pearls and diamonds, which, with the excellency of their pureness, gave no little grace to her hair's perfection; her brows not so hard as ivory, but more whiter, intermeddled with some delicate vermilion; her eyes in purity like the carbuncle,¹ lightning the darkest thoughts, in effect like the lodestone,² drawing the most indurate³ hearts, concluding all passions in themselves in that they were the roots of passions; her cheeks like two orbs of rubies participating⁴ the whiteness of the lily; her lips resembling the roses, being limits of more wonder than either tongue can express or eye behold. Oh, how may men that surfeit in conceit⁵ express in pen? Suppose the attire answerable to the person, the person exceeding report, and in a word imagine Aubert's happiness, who might behold so fair, and enjoy so fair and looking on the outward perfections boldly aver⁶ this:

*Quae latent meliora puto*⁷

In this sort both these princes rode together, till such time as their train had roused a mighty hart and uncoupled⁸ their hounds, when each one intently followed the game, enforcing himself either to show his good horsemanship or woodmanship; the rocks resounded with the cries, the woods echoed at their clamours. In this sort spent they the morning, till about noonstead, when the sun was in the south at that time shining in his

¹ *carbuncle* precious stone, red or fiery in colour; in the Middle Ages and later, often a name for the ruby, but especially applied to a mythic gem said to glow in the dark.

² *lodestone* a stone which functions like a magnet drawing metal to it.

³ *indurate* hard, impervious.

⁴ *participating* showing.

⁵ *surfeit in conceit* i.e., be overwhelmed in imagination or conception.

⁶ *aver* assert the truth of [a statement].

⁷ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 1.502 ["si qua latent, meliora putat"]: "and what is hid, he deems still lovelier" (2 vols., trans. E.J. Miller, Cambridge, MA, 1921, vol. 1). This comment concludes the sun-god Apollo's survey of the nymph Daphne's beautiful body. She flees from him, and (in response to her prayer for rescue from the amorous god's advances) her father, the river god Peneus, turns her into a laurel tree.

⁸ *uncoupled* set free [for the chase].

greatest mightiness, Aubert being attained with heat entered the thickest of the wood, hoping to obtain some cold shelter, where he might rest himself for awhile and rid himself of his weariness. But the further he walked the more was his wonder, for on every side nature had been so prodigal of her power that the eye could not behold too much, nor the thought imagine so much. Here saw he a fair delicious brook, recording music in his course, being crystal in clearness, environed with fair cedars so orderly arranged as art could not in more excellence exemplify the effects of perfection. On that side a closed arbour beautified with roses, paved with violets, on the top whereof the birds with melodious music animated the flowers, and the flowers assisted by the Western cool winds seemed to dance for delight and to flourish. Here within, for the selfsame occasion of refection,⁹ Editha had withdrawn herself, who in her solitariness—bethinking herself of her fortunes, her decaying beauty, her detested barrenness, the lost labour of her husband, the last limit of her happiness, her imperfection the period¹⁰ of his pleasure, his pensiveness the only fruit of her imperfection—in these terms bitterly bemoaned herself; whilst Aubert, little suspecting her presence yet willing to hear the sequel of her feminine complaint, closely shrouded himself near the arbour, whilst in this sort she desperately complained:

"O Nature, too natural unto some but too negligent on my behalf, who, yielding the basest tree his blossom, the tallest pine his apple,¹¹ the weakest stalk his flower, the wasted field his spring, hast bequeathed increase to all things and bereaved me of increase. Thou hast made me fair but unfortunate, a princess but impregnant,¹² making me in desire as rich as any, in defect as wretched as the most. Oh, hadst thou been as

⁹ *refection* recreation or refreshment caused by some sensuous or physical cause.

¹⁰ *period* end, conclusion, outcome.

¹¹ *apple* in the Renaissance, the fruit or seed of any tree.

¹² *impregnant* sterile (*OED* notes 1659 as the earliest such use of this word).

200 favourable to me as to the lioness in bequeathing
me one princely son, I might then have exclaimed
on destiny if I had lost him, and not have dis-
claimed delight in that I ever lack him. But thou
art like the veruen,¹ Nature: poison one ways, and
205 pleasure another, feeding me with grapes in show
like to Darius's vine,² but not in substance like
those of Vermandois.³ Thou art a partial⁴ mis-
tress, pleased in thy secrecy, peremptory in thy
severity. But why blame I Nature and accuse not
210 Fortune? She is the mistress of time and the min-
ister of tyranny, supplanting Nature in some
things and desert in all things. But why blame I
Fortune, who is only active in mutabilities of
estate not in hidden causes of Nature? You are
215 they, O Destinies, whom neither tears may attain,
prayers persuade, vows prevent, or sighs provoke!
You have made Nature a stepdame, ordained
Fortune my foe, and by your secret influence have
prevented my desired favours! Alas, poor unhappy
220 lady, born to neglect, bewitched with necessities!
Why live I to be a byword⁵ of the world for my
barrenness? O my soul, were death as partial as
thou impatient, he could not be so forward to
destroy as thou to die.”

225 In this sort with many bitter sighs, she abruptly
finished, washing her lovely visage with lukewarm
tears, beating her amiable breasts with bitter
strokes, till finally she burst out into this final
outrage: “Well, you heavens, since you neglect me,
230 I respect you not. If God vouchsafe me no son,
the Devil send me one, so, though my womb be
wretched in bearing, yet haply⁶ I shall escape the
scandal of unfruitfulness.”

¹ *veruen* perhaps “verven” = “vervain,” which is a medicinal plant. Culpeper notes its usefulness to treat disorders of the womb, jaundice, snake bites, and a variety of other problems. He does not mention that it is also a poisonous plant (*Culpeper's Complete Herbal and English Physician* [London, 1814], p. 187).

² *Darius's vine* Darius I (d. 486 BCE), king of Persia. His vine was made of gold, with leaves of emeralds, and grapes of carbuncles (precious red stones). See Herodotus, *Histories*, trans. R. Waterfield (Oxford, 1998), 7.27-29; Xenophon, *Hellenica*, 7.1.38.

³ *Vermandois* a region in northern France.

⁴ *partial* biased, unfair.

⁵ *byword* an object of scorn or contempt.

⁶ *haply* by chance; perhaps, maybe.

235 Aubert, not able to endure any longer to hear
her lament, broke off her impious discourse by his
unexpected presence, where beholding his
beloved Editha bathed in tears, subdued with
sighs, and blushing for that she was bewrayed⁷ he
thus began to comfort her:

240 “Ah, my Editha, the creature must not war with
the creator, nor expostulate unkindness with God,
who bestoweth mercies for good deserts and mis-
eries for neglect of duty. He is not tied to our will,
but we ordered by his power, sooner favouring
245 those by whom he is feared than such who would
force destiny, which will not be defrauded. What,
though, my princess, thou art childless, yet art
thou not comfortless. What, though as yet dispos-
sessed of a son, yet not disappointed of thy hope.
250 The trees that are longest in growth are fastest⁸ in
root, whereas flowers have but their morning's
flourish and their evening's funeral. Thou art yet
young and meet for increase,⁹ fair and fit for
fancy,¹⁰ ordained before thou be a matron to
255 become a mother. Frolic, Editha! Methinks I see a
babe sucking at these breasts, an infant dallying in
this bosom, and a son who shall pay thee with as
many smiles as thou hast been pained with mil-
lions of sighs.”

260 So saying, he sweetly embraced her, and,
finding a fit opportunity wherein both he and she
might communicate their fancies, he dried up the
tears from her eyes with his kisses, and, folding his
arms about her neck, left such a pledge with her of
265 her most desired pleasure that, as the most histo-
riographers aver, he in that place begot her with
child. After many their delicious encounteries¹¹
and interchange of affections, they both of them
arose and went to horse, and were no sooner
270 issued from the thicket but they met with their
whole train, who presented the Duke and Duchess
with the prey they had taken, which kind couple in
returning homewards with privy smiles discovered

⁷ *benrayed* discovered, exposed.

⁸ *fastest* most firmly fixed in place.

⁹ *meet for increase* fit for reproduction.

¹⁰ *fancy* love.

¹¹ *encounteries* encounters (a rare usage according to *OED*).

275 their pleasant pastimes; the Duke rejoicing to see
his princess merry, Editha joyful in that she hoped
to be a mother.

How Aubert by the Commandment of
Pepin, King of France, Was upon His Return
Sent to War in the Aid of the Lorraines
against the Vermandois,¹ and How at His
Return from the War, Robert His Son Was
Born, Who for His Villainies Was Surnamed
the Devil. [Chapter 2].

[...] Editha, during the absence of her husband,
was so fortunate and fruitful after their last inter-
course that she increased daily, and at last the
280 quickening babe in her womb deprived her of all
her wonted suspect.² But at such time as the Duke
was returned and the appointed time of her deliv-
ery expected, the heavens intimating some prodig-
ious sequel were afflicted with continual thunders;
285 the earth shook as if amazed at nature; the
lightnings flashed with great fury, and midst all
these commotions Editha was brought abed of a
son, who by his father's ordinance was in great
pomp carried to the Church of St. Owens
290 Rouen and christened by the name of Robert.
This infant in his swathing-clouds³ gave certain
testimony of his future outrages, for being born
beyond the custom of nature with all his teeth,
according to the opinion of the historiographers,
295 was enchanted; for instead of drawing nutriment
from his nurse, he bit off her nipples, and being
kissed in the cradle by the Lady of Sancerne, he
bit off her nose. In his food he was ravenous; in
his fashions and behaviour rigorous; instead of his
300 infantly cries, used severe smiles—planting in his
parents more occasion of suspicion than cause of
hope.

¹ *Lorraines against the Vermandois* i.e., the inhabitants of Lorraine, a region in France, against the inhabitants of Vermandois.

² *the quickening babe* In the stage in pregnancy known as “quickening,” the child would show signs of life (kicking, etc.); *wonted suspect* accustomed suspicion [that she could not be pregnant].

³ *swathing-clouds* swaddling-clouds or swaddling-clothes.

At seven years of age his mother, diligently
intending his amends, sought out a man of good
305 life and great learning, who might instruct him in
the fear of God and resolve him in the secrets of
arts. She accompanied him with his equals in birth,
his companions in study, leaving no means
unsought to reclaim him, nor persuasions unap-
plied to reform him. But as the oak sooner
310 breaketh than boweth, and the *sallow*⁴ being
bowed in the twig is crooked in the tree, so Robert
by nature inclined to vice could in no wise⁵ be
induced by advice.⁶ He was in wit pregnant, but
applied the same to looseness,⁷ rejoicing as much
315 at devilishness as other in their doctrine. In
reading the poets he despised the precepts of
worth and delighted in the poems of wantonness.
He was eloquent but in impiety; diligent but in
mischief, having nothing in more estimate than
320 murder, flying nothing more earnestly than
modesty. And in regard of this his intemperance,
it was by some supposed that his mother at such
time as he was begotten was enchanted. Each one
325 seeing his inclination fled him as a serpent; his
equals he banished from him with buffetings,⁸ his
elders with revilings, having neither fear of God
nor regard of godliness. If his mother wept to see
his wretchedness, he became more wicked; if
330 Aubert sought to reconcile him with good coun-
sels, he laboured the more to defile himself with
larcenies and cruelties. Yea, such and so many
were his mischiefs that it was wondered at that the
earth did not sink under him in respect of his
335 ungraciousness. No one of his fellows escaped
from him unwounded. Hearing his tutor one day

⁴ *sallow* willow.

⁵ *wise way*.

⁶ *But as the oak ... by advice* This sentence is based in a number of proverbs: “Oaks may fall when reeds stand the storm” (*Tilley* O3) and “It will sooner break than bow” (B636). Many proverbs about child-rearing and education advise parents to shape a child in its youth or it will prove to be warped in its maturity: “Best to bend while it is a twig” (T632) and “Thraw [twist] the wand while it is green” (W27).

⁷ *looseness* licentiousness, lewdness, or general immorality [in conduct, speech or thought].

⁸ *buffetings* beatings.

discoursing upon the nature of *cicuta*,¹ he gave diligent attention to his doctrine, and, finding out the simple,² he prepared the same according as he was instructed and presented it to his master's son, a child of rare towardness,³ who no sooner tasted thereof but with vehement and bitter agonies gave up the ghost. The father wonderfully astonished at this action and inquiring the cause of him with many pitiful bemoanings, he received this answer: "Master," said he, "I have but put in practice that which you have taught me in precept, and since I find you a man of such credit, I will boldly write under your lesson *probatum est*."⁴ He was naturally inclined to intort⁵ all good principles of philosophy and to apply the earnest secrets of antiquity to notable insolency. He dissembled most holiness when he was irreligious, supposing it virtue to invent sin and shame to be ignorant in sin. His provident tutor knowing (as the proverb runneth) the tree by his fruit, the lion by his nail, and the crocodile by his tear;⁶ knowing by daily experience that too much impunity is the cause of too much impiety; that it is easier to stop the river in the spring than withstand it in the stream;⁷ that the lion restrained being a whelp is tractable in his greatest years; that custom was a mean,⁸ if not to subdue, yet to alter nature,⁹ thought good by cruelty to correct that which by lenity he could not confound.¹⁰ For which cause, seeing that gentle admonition prevailed nothing,

¹ *cicuta* another name for the common hemlock, an acutely poisonous plant.

² *simple* a plant or herb employed for medicinal purposes.

³ *towardness* promise; natural aptitude in learning.

⁴ Latin, "it has been proved."

⁵ *intort* twist, pervert.

⁶ Proverbs, "Such as the tree is such is the fruit" (*Tilley* T494) and "Crocodile Tears" (C831). Traditionally, crocodiles were thought to weep tears either in order to allure men into their jaws or to "grieve" while devouring them; thus, the crocodile's tears mark it as the type of hypocrisy.

⁷ A variant on the proverb, "It is hard (folly, in vain) to strive against the stream" (*Tilley* S927).

⁸ *mean* way.

⁹ Cf. the proverb, "Custom (use) is another (a second) nature" (*Tilley* C932).

¹⁰ *confound* defeat.

he exchanged his strict persuasions to stern looks, his sound rudiments to sharp rigor, hoping to recover that by displing which he could not reform by discipline.¹¹ But as their labour is frustrate who seek to bring Caucasus into a plain, to bereave India of gems, Candia of oils, Cochim of pepper, or Hybla¹² of honey, so where the unreformable work of nature is grounded in peremp-tory wickedness, it is impossible either to destroy or disannul¹³ the effects thereof, according to the opinion of the poet:

*Naturam expellas furca licet usque recurrit.*¹⁴

For, giving him ordinary correction at one time for an erroneus¹⁵ offence which he had committed, instead of submission and acknowledgment of his misdeeds he intently employed himself to murder, and, finding his master one day asleep, he privily¹⁶ took his penknife and cut his throat, smilingly concluding his impiety in this sort:

*Ille mihi feriendus aper.*¹⁷

¹¹ *displing* subjecting to discipline as bodily correction, penance, or punishment; *discipline* teaching, education, or instruction aimed at forming the pupil in proper conduct and action through mental and moral training.

¹² *Caucasus* an extremely high range of mountains running from the Black Sea to the Caspian (*Topographical Dict.*, p. 107); *Candia* or Candy, otherwise known as the isle of Crete, famous in the period as a source of "currants, muscadells, and oils" (*Topographical Dict.*, p. 96); *Cochim* Cochim, in the East Indies, a source of many spices in the period; *Hybla* a town in Sicily; Latin poets celebrated its honey (*Topographical Dict.*, p. 259).

¹³ *disannul* cancel, abolish, annul.

¹⁴ Latin, "Even if you drive out nature with a pitchfork, yet she will always return" (Horace, *Epistles*, 1.10.24). This became a popular proverb in the period: "Though you cast out nature with a fork it will still return" (*Tilley* N50).

¹⁵ *erroneus* morally faulty; criminal.

¹⁶ *privily* secretly.

¹⁷ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 3.715: "Now must I rend him [i.e., that wild boar]" (trans. F.J. Miller). So cries Agave, the mother of Pentheus, king of Thebes, before she and her fellow Bacchae (i.e., followers of the Bacchus, the god of wine) tear her son to pieces in a divinely-inspired frenzy, a punishment for Pentheus for denying Bacchus' divinity and spying on the god's sacred rites, as well as a punishment for Agave for also denying Bacchus' divinity. Agave and the others,

But as they that paint the image of Venus
 shadow her excellence by depicting¹ her back
 parts, pretending either a secret insinuation of
 390 their own admiration or her mightiness; so in
 laying these loose colours of Robin's misgover-
 nance,² I rather enforce³ wonder in myself to
 write them than credit with those that shall read
 them, who conversing and daily reading the
 395 Norman antiquaries shall find far more of his
 youthly insolence than is here set down, every way
 beyond belief, yet no way differing from the truth.

How Duke Aubert and Editha Called Robert
 Their Son to the Court, Where by His
 Mother's Persuasion He Was Admitted to the
 Order of Knighthood. [Chapter 3].

The rumour of the young prince's outrages were no
 sooner spread throughout the court but Aubert,
 400 heavily aggrieved at his son's misdeeds, and Editha,
 becoming well nigh desperate of his amends, with
 heavy hearts called the young man to their presence,
 where the old man, showing the severity of a prince
 in his looks but the sincerity of a father in his
 405 laments, began in this manner to school his son,
 whilst Editha was wholly given over to sorrow:

“Ungracious and ungodly young man,” said he,
 “who in thy cradle portendest thy future indiscre-
 tion and in the ripeness of thine age showest the
 410 rashness of thy nature, that makest my title of
 signory thy privilege of sin, and my law the occa-
 sion of thy looseness! Is this thy reward for thy
 mother's care, thy care for thy father's comfort, to
 exempt thyself of all grace, to exemplify in me all

however, unlike Robert, are so possessed by the god that they do not know what they have done in their ecstasy. In Euripides' *The Bacchae*, Agave appears in Thebes triumphant, believing she has the head of a lion cub impaled on her staff, while it is really the head of her son. She and the other Bacchae are banished from Thebes by Bacchus himself for the murder.

¹ *shadow* portray, paint; but also means conceal; *depicting* depicting, painting.

² *in laying these loose colours of Robin's misgovernance* The image is also taken from painting; *to lay* to put upon a surface in layers; to arrange (colours, a picture) on canvas; *loose* immoral.

³ *enforce* intensify, strengthen.

415 grief? Alas, hapless prince that I am, reduced to all
 extremes, should I punish thee according to thy sin
 I should deprive myself of mine only solace, and
 in not punishing thy murders I am as it were agent
 in thy massacres. Oh, vain youth, if thy studies
 420 were answerable to thy estate and thy wisdom
 equal to thy wit, thou mightst perceive that thy dis-
 aster is the desolation of this estate, and the more
 my people hope of succession so much they fear
 thy fatal confusion.⁴ The cockatrice killed in the
 425 shell quelleth⁵ not being a serpent; the tiger tamed
 being a whelp teareth not being grown great; and
 were there hope to restrain thee being young, there
 were some better hope of regard in thine age. But
 as Semyramis's⁶ miraculous birth showed her mar-
 vellous burial, so thy unreverent behaviours in
 430 these years are very oracles of thy tyrannies in time
 to come, so that reason counsellmeth me rather to
 cut thee off in the twig than endure thee in the
 tree. O cursed youth, I see by thy careless smiles
 435 the contempt of my counsels, and woe be to the
 time that I begat thee, since wilful ignorance doth
 so much beguile thee. But stay thy hand or lose thy
 head. Trouble me no more with such complaints,
 lest I cut thee short in thy complots.⁷ And since
 440 thou art negligent of my rudiments,⁸ assure thyself
 I will be unnatural in my revenge.”

After he had expostulated with him in this
 manner, he suddenly departed and entered his
 privy closet,⁹ whereas he sat so amazed with grief
 445 and amated¹⁰ at his ungraciousness, as had not

⁴ *confusion* ruin, destruction, perdition.

⁵ *cockatrice* Proverb, “Crush (kill) the cockatrice in the egg” (*Tilley* C496). A cockatrice is a serpent identified with the mythic creature, the basilisk, said to be able to kill with a look and to be hatched out of a cock's egg; *quelleth* slays, kills, destroys.

⁶ *Semyramis* Sammu-ramat, queen of Assyria (fl. 800 BCE); this refers perhaps to the story that she was abandoned in the desert as a baby and survived for a year being fed by a flock of doves before being found and raised by a local shepherd; at her death, it was reported that she was changed into a dove.

⁷ *complots* conspiracies, plots.

⁸ *And since ... rudiments* And since you ignore the basic principles [that I have been trying to instil in you].

⁹ *privy closet* a small private room; here, the private apartment of a monarch.

¹⁰ *amated* dismayed, daunted, disheartened.

Editha followed him and with amiable persuasions
 animated him with hope, he had surely in that
 ecstasy¹ miserably ended his old years. But Robert,
 instead of repenting his offences, began to renew
 450 his follies, quarrelling with his father's guard in
 such manner that every man, knowing his natural
 inclination, fled his company as being a monster
 among men. If any grave old man came near him
 attempting to counsel him, after he pretended
 455 some diligent attention for a while, he suddenly
 took out his knife and cut off his beard, satisfying
 the party wronged with this ironical reason:

*Quae superflua sunt, abscindenda sunt.*²

Whilst in this manner he misgoverned himself
 460 among the courtiers, Editha was not unbusied in
 the closet, but so laboured her husband by
 entreaties and tears that (since Robert her son was
 about 21 years of age and able to bear arms) he at
 last consented to grant him the Order of Knight-
 465 hood, alleging these reasons: that honours are the
 spurs of virtue, and natures that are forward in
 wickedness by conversing with the virtuous are
 reformed. Nought left she unsought that might
 insinuate, nothing unreported that could persuade.
 470 To be brief, the prefixed day of his knighthood
 was appointed, and his arms were delivered him;
 the nobles of the country were assembled; the
 ladies were orderly invited. Neither did Aubert
 spare any cost to show his magnificence or Editha
 475 any counsels to reform Robert's mind, but, calling
 him apart into her privy chamber, she began in
 this manner to advise him:

“If my secret complaints, thou sinful young
 man, had not more effect to mitigate the heavens
 480 than to move thee, I would dry them up and defy
 thee. But since they are piteous and respect
 prayers, I will weep for thee to win them to thee,
 in hope they will be as favourable in mercy as I am
 forward in moan. Oh, more obstinate than the

¹ *ecstasy* the state of being “beside oneself”; here, thrown into a stupor with anxiety, fear or passion.

² Latin, “Those things which are superfluous [or superabundant], have been cut off.”

northern wind, more indurate³ than the hard
 marble, more cruel than the Libyan lioness, more
 perverse than the Lydian tyrant!⁴ Thou hast open
 ears to conceive mischief, but a dull heart to con-
 sider of modesty. I see thy repining⁵ looks, thy
 490 reprovable lewdness. Thou despisest to hear my
 prayers or harbour my precepts. Ah, Robin, hath
 the care of obedience no force, the credit of a
 mother no favour, or art thou proud to see me
 woeful or pleased to seek out my wretchedness?
 495 Thou knowest that by nature thou art near me,
 that thy folly is my fall, thy vain deeds my very
 undoing. If then thou have care of my life, yield
 some respect unto my lessons. Thou art now stept
 in years⁶ and hast judgement to discern errors.
 500 Now call thyself home and record thine old
 wickedness. Amend thy life; meditate on thy loose-
 ness; cast a rein on thy nature; conceit⁷ the reason
 of nurture. Better is a mean life in virtue than a
 high estate in vice. Hast thou offended in thy
 505 youth? The misdeed is ordinary. Wilt thou amend
 in age? Oh, the action is honourable! I conjure
 thee, my son, by these devout tears, by these
 devout entreaties, by the name of thy mother, by
 the necessity of obedience to exchange thy excess
 to mediocrity,⁸ thy murder to modesty, thy unto-
 wardness to staidness,⁹ and prepare thyself to
 accept the Order of Knighthood which thy father
 will bestow on thee on tomorrow day, being the
 feast of the nativity of St. John Baptist. For arms
 510 I will furnish thee; for attendants I will send them
 thee. Only, prepare thyself presently to watch¹⁰ in
 the Abbey of St. Peter's (at this day called St.
 Owen's in Rouen), and bethink thee so to behave

³ *indurate* callous, unfeeling, hardened.

⁴ *Lydian tyrant* Gyges, (c. 680-645 BCE) king of Lydia. He is the first ruler whom the Greeks labelled “tyrant,” presumably for murdering King Candaules of Lydia, usurping the throne, and marrying his predecessor's widow.

⁵ *repining* discontented, dissatisfied; rebellious.

⁶ *stept in years* advanced in years; grown-up.

⁷ *conceit* understand.

⁸ *mediocrity* the mean or “middle ground” between extremes.

⁹ *staidness* sobriety of character, manner, conduct.

¹⁰ *to watch* remain awake [usually all night] for purposes of devotion; to keep a religious vigil.

520 thyself that thy father may have comfort and I content.”

Robert, by some natural instinct being attainted¹ by these feminine complaints and friendly persuasions, seemed in some sort to relent and suffered² his mother to arm him, and with some attendants departed to the abbey to perform his vigil. But when all were departed, and he left alone, and Lucina,³ clearly smiling on the candles of the night, ’gan beautify with her sparkling brightness the diffused darkness of the centre, Robert, more vigilant in villainy than valiant in virtue, suddenly issued out of the church, and, secretly stealing into the suburbs, travelled a whole league into the fields, seeking some subject whereon to execute his pretended injury. At last he arrived at a nunnery distant one league from Rouen, at this day called *Le salle de damoiselles*,⁴ where he entered, and, calling the lady Abbess before him, he commanded and conjured her in such sort by threatenings that she brought all her young nuns before him, and those that were bedridden he made them be brought. Then, immodestly stripping them naked, he made choice of the fairest, a virgin of mighty constancy, who, being wholly addicted to chastity and seeing his natural churlishness, by all means possible sought to divert that by humble suit which he had contrived to effect in horrible secrecy. But he, whose heart was rather hardened than mollified by persuasions, instead of tendering her complaints tore off her attire and dragged her by the hair of the head into a shady wood near adjoining. It would have made a flinty heart to flow with tears to see the miserable maiden, her comely locks shadowing her naked limbs, how—lifting up her delicate hands to the heavens and pouring forth delicious tears on her beating bosom—she implored help, she complained her harms; how she resisted even

¹ *attainted* here, touched by or affected by.

² *suffered* allowed, permitted.

³ *Lucina* the moon (so-named after the Roman goddess of the moon).

⁴ French, more properly, “*la salle de demoiselles*” (the room or hall of the maidens).

560 in conquest, and seemed loath to suffer that she must needly suffer. But the cruel caitiff,⁵ careless of God, forgetful of goodness, given over to sin, made subject to shame, neither moved by entreaties nor allured to truce, wretchedly deflowered⁶ her, and, hearing how incessantly she called for mercy at his hands and expostulated for revenge with the heavens, he cut off both her paps,⁷ through the agony whereof the gentle religious lady gave up the ghost.

The bloodsucking wretch, having in this sort satisfied his lewd lust, imbrued in the purple drops of the murdered lady, hastily returned to the city, employing all his labours and study how to invent new lamentable stratagems. No sooner did the morning’s roseate coach beautify the east with vermilion redness, and the fair breathing steeds of the sun mount above the bosom of Oceanus,⁸ but each noble peer apparelled in rich attire, his horse trapped with costly caparisons,⁹ attended before the palace gate till the Duke should issue to service. Great was the solemnity that day throughout the city. The ladies were glorious in their attires; the lovers gorgeous in their train; there wanted nothing that might delight the eye or content the ear. Among the rest, Robert by his mother’s appointment was armed and richly apparelled anew, and, after his father with the rest of his nobility had heard mass in the minster,¹⁰ by general appointment he was sent for by the best nobles of the land, who certifying him of his father’s pleasure and how he attended his coming, he answered that he was ahungry¹¹ and wanted his breakfast, and that he would not lose the same for ten of the best knighthoods in all Normandy.

⁵ *caitiff* a term of contempt and moral disgust: a base, despicable wretch; a villain.

⁶ *deflowered* deprived [her] of [her] virginity.

⁷ *paps* breasts.

⁸ *Oceanus* the god of the ocean; thus, the ocean or sea itself.

⁹ *trapped with costly caparisons* adorned with ornaments such as finely decorated saddle-cloths, saddles, bridles, etc.

¹⁰ *minster* here, the church of the abbey in which Robert has been left to complete his preparatory vigil.

¹¹ *ahungry* originally, an emphatic use: ravenous.

Long travail¹ and much persuasion used these princely nobles to persuade him thence, till at last bringing him into the presence of his father he had with all solemnity the accolade,² and was commanded to kneel down to receive the Order of Knighthood. At such time as his father lifted up the sword to perform the rest of the ceremony, he joyfully rose up and drew his weapons, and had not some more advised stayed his hand he had assuredly slain his father. A certain nobleman offering the spur,³ he answered him ridiculously in this sort:

605 *Non sum tantus cessator ut calcaribus indigeam.*⁴

In these indecent⁵ and disorderly demeanours this unhappy young man spent the flourishing time of his years, having neither regard of person nor respect of place. At the triumph⁶ his desire was rather to drive his horse into the throng, whereby he might tread men down, than break his lance against his adversary in the open lists.⁷ Such is the corruption of man's nature without the especial assistance of the Almighty. But lest through tediousness I detain you in reporting his father's persuasions, his mother's precepts, the nobles' counsels, the ladies' courtesies, I will here leave off to speak of the triumphs, returning to speak of his manner of life after he had received the honour of knighthood.

¹ *travail* labour, effort.

² *accolade* the formal salutation marking the bestowal of knighthood.

³ *offering the spur* the offering of this emblem of knighthood is part of the traditional ceremony.

⁴ Latin, "I am not so great an idler that I stand in need of spurs."

⁵ *indecent* improper, unfitting; offensive to propriety.

⁶ *the triumph* a public spectacle or pageant; especially, a tournament.

⁷ *lists* the enclosed spaces in which tilting matches or jousts were held.

How Robert the Devil Took the Strong Castle of Turnigue⁸ Which His Father Had Buildd in Defence of His Estate, and of Certain of His Riots He Made against Some of the Inhabitants of the Country.
[Chapter 4].

The strong castle of Tornide—that very Turnigue that flourisheth at this day not only for the serenity of the air and the amenity of the country among all the especial holds⁹ of Normandy is held in most accompt,¹⁰ but also is best defenced—this strong castle and fort was first built by Aubert against the invasions of the Britons, where he reposed his greatest warlike provisions and the most part of his treasury, and was afterward seized upon by this unhappy Robert, his son, who, gathering together the most part of all the dissolute persons of the country, kept this strong place for many years, spoiling¹¹ the inhabitants round about, burning their houses, ravishing their wives, and committing such murders as it was imagined that nature had ordained him and his wicked crew for the only monsters of his time. And as a little brook assisted by land waters, and low grounded, extendeth itself at last to a huge river, so this riotous company at the first exceeding not the number of thirty grew at last to a multitude of murderers, thieves, patricides, and fratricides; so that he who had committed any capital offence in the country inserted himself into the number of Robert's followers, who becoming about 4,000 strong made all the neighbours round about them amazed at their mischiefs.¹² Neither had they regard of age or religion, or respect of nation or alliance, but what so best pleased their appetite or most appeased their avarice, all that was sacred in their censure and lawful in their lewdness. Many were the cries of hapless mothers, whose babes

⁸ *Turnigue* probably Tournebu (Canton of Thury-Harcourt, Calvados), a Norman keep (c. 13th century CE).

⁹ *holds* forts; fortresses.

¹⁰ *accompt* account.

¹¹ *spoiling* robbing, plundering, ravaging.

¹² *mischiefs* evil or destructive actions.

were murdered in their bosoms; many the tears of
 655 tender damsels, enforced in their flower of youth;
 many the poor, whose small possessions were rav-
 ished by the injuries of the mighty, whilst Robert,
 sitting aloft as the head of confusion, surfeiting in
 660 his excess, accompted riot¹ for righteousness, his
 drunkards for his divines,² his murderers for his
 mates, his blasphemers for his board compan-
 ions.³ Oh, the horror and confusion of those
 times, where iniquity was held for equity, and dev-
 ilishness accompted desert! In religious houses
 665 this devil of a man, and devilish man, instead of
 reverencing the learned, rid them of their lives; for
 at Ambois he entered a monastery of Minorites,⁴
 and cutting off the fattest friars' heads, he pitched
 them upon poles, causing the veriest knave to
 670 carry the cross, and the rest appavelled in copes to
 tune a devilish dirge of impiety.⁵ From others he
 took away by violence their riches, saying, as Julian
 the Apostata⁶ did after him, that riches did hinder
 them from the entrance into the kingdom of
 675 Heaven. Those of his train⁷ who were most tyrannous
 he most highly rewarded, and such as did swear
 most might spend most. Great were the clamours
 of the poor, the cries of the oppressed, the complaints
 of the fatherless, the weepings of the widows,
 680 the father for his child, the child for his father,
 the mother for her son, the son for his mother.

¹ *riot* wanton, loose, or wasteful living.

² *divines* priests, chaplains.

³ *board companions* the men with whom he would eat and drink.

⁴ *Minorites* another name for the Franciscans (also known as Friars Minors or Grey Friars). Originally a mendicant order founded by Francis of Assisi in 1209, the Franciscans were released by Pope John XXII from the injunction against owning property (such as abbeys and monasteries) at the beginning of the fourteenth century.

⁵ Robert organizes here a parodic religious procession; *cofes* long cloaks or capes worn as an outer garment; here, the special attire of a friar or monk; given the nature of the parody, "cope" may refer to those particularly ornate ecclesiastical garments that would be worn on such special occasions.

⁶ *Julian the Apostata* Flavius Claudius Julianus (332-63 CE), Roman emperor (360-63 CE), surnamed the "Apostate" because he renounced his Christian faith in favour of embracing and promoting a renewed paganism.

⁷ *train* band of retainers or followers; retinue.

*Nec quicquam nisi vulnus erat, cruor undique manat.*⁸

In an abbey near to Lisseux he entered and slew
 685 all the monks, in that they would not show their
 treasures, and finding four pilgrims kneeling at a
 cross he cut off their heads, saying they could never
 die in better minds. Meeting with the bishop of Caen
 richly mounted upon a moil,⁹ attired in his richest
 690 furniture, he dismounted him, saying he reserved
 that beast to a better use than that a beast should
 bestride it. Such and so many were his unworthy
 attempts, without all expectation of amendment.

[Aubert, hearing news of Robert's increasingly serious crimes, sends ambassadors to Turinge to call him home. Robert's answer indicates his intent to usurp Aubert's crown. With wounded citizens arriving daily at his palace and the threat of imminent civil war, Aubert condemns his son to death, announcing that anyone who brings him Robert's head will be both pardoned and rewarded. With a loyalty approved of by the narrator, however, Aubert's people refuse to do so. Robert continues murdering and pillaging with his violent followers until he makes the mistake of cruelly murdering the son of the Duke of Constances, sending the mangled head of the son to the father.]

The Bloody and Cruel Battle Fought
 between the Duke of Constances and Robert
 the Devil and His Train, and What there-
 upon Ensued. [Chapter 7].

It was now about eventide, and the Prince's
 695 soldiers were either all of them sore wasted¹⁰ or
 wounded when the Duke by main strength dis-

⁸ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 6.388. *Clamanti cutis est summos direpta per artus, nec quicquam nisi vulnus erat: cruor undique manat*: "As he screams his skin is stripped off the surface of his body, and he is all one wound: blood flows down on every side." This is the punishment inflicted by Apollo on the satyr Marsyas. Marsyas had proudly challenged Apollo, the god of music, to a contest on the pipes; Marsyas lost and was subsequently punished by the god for his presumption.

⁹ *moil* mule.

¹⁰ *sore wasted* greatly or terribly, exhausted or spent.

mounted Robert and gave him a great and deep
 gash in the thigh. The caitiffs that followed him,
 seeing their master distressed, desperately sought
 700 his rescue, and were every one of them put to the
 sword; only Robert of himself recovered a horse,
 and so valiantly continued in his defence till the
 dark night parted the combatants and he found
 convenient means to avoid the danger. The Duke
 705 of Constances seeing the enemy was hotly over-
 come and that it was impossible to follow the
 Prince, being most expert in the secret ways of the
 wood, sounded the retreat, causing the dead
 bodies of his soldiers to be buried and sending
 710 Aubert word of the bloody victory attained
 against his son.

Thus in triumph leave we him—rejoicing
 mightily in his revenge and resorting with solace
 unto his castle—and return to Robert, who, sore
 715 travailed¹ with his wounds and having his horse
 tired, posted² with all speed he could possible now
 this way now that way, searching for some place of
 security where he might hide himself from the
 enemy. But evil fortune pursuing him every way,
 720 his horse at last tired under him, so that he was
 constrained to forsake his arms, and, trusting only
 to his sword, to walk through the forest on foot.
 Many were his sighs and bitter curses, many his
 exclamations and complaints, whilst desolate
 725 Echo,³ the faithful companion of such as be sor-
 rowful, vouchsafed some pitiful reply in his pen-
 siveness. But the great expense of blood, the long
 and weary course of travel, the cruel and danger-
 ous pursuit of his foes did not sufficiently amaze⁴
 730 him but, to the more increase of his grief, a

¹ *travailed* harassed, wearied, troubled.

² *posted* rode.

³ *Echo* a nymph punished by Hera for talkativeness by being deprived of the power of intelligible speak, being left only with the ability to repeat the last words that someone else has spoken. Echo fell in love with the beautiful and disdainful youth, Narcissus, and subsequently pined away from unrequited love. See Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, pp. 83-84; p. 87.

⁴ *amaze* drive him to his wit's end; bewilder, perplex; perhaps more specifically, overcame (him) with sudden fear or panic; filled (him) with consternation; terrified, alarmed.

hidden affliction of the mind began with such
 horror to attain him that he every way grew des-
 perate. Oftentimes did he prepare himself to com-
 plain, but knew scarcely how to complain; he felt
 735 himself mortal and that he was a man; he exam-
 ined the changes of fortune and bethought him
 on the causes of his fall, neither knowing how to
 amend them, they were so infinite, nor reconcile
 himself, he had been so dissolute. And lifting up
 740 his eyes to heaven, he beheld the moon perform-
 ing her courses, the stars ministering their duties,
 and by their celestial beauty began with himself to
 imagine the beauty of their maker; then called he
 to remembrance the old rudiments of his master
 745 as touching the essence and power of God, the
 wonderful workmanship of the heavens, the beau-
 tiful order of the spheres,⁵ the strange creation of
 man, the influence of the celestial bodies in these
 inferior parts,⁶ and considered that all things were
 750 made by a determinate and inviolable law limited
 by prescript of nature, and that if in the earthly
 compact of man the imperfection and grief of
 one member afflicted the whole compact, much
 more a contrariety⁷ in the powers both of soul and
 755 body threatened a confusion. Then called he to
 mind that since there was a mover which disposed
 and ordered all things, so in due ordinance of gov-
 ernment it was requisite too as he prescribed
 rewards for good deserts, so he should also ordain
 760 punishments for vice. Hereupon began he to med-
 itate on the nature of sin, the causes of sin, and
 the effects of sin, and him thought that a voice
 sounded in his ear: "The reward of sin is death."⁸
 Oh, how great was the horror and confusion of
 765 his soul at this time, his burden heavier than

⁵ *spheres* referring to the Ptolemaic notion of the universe as a series of concentric spheres, set one inside of the other with the earth at its centre; these spheres, in their motion, created a harmonious and divine music ("the music of the spheres").

⁶ *celestial . . . parts* refers to the general belief that celestial bodies like stars and planets influenced the course of events on earth, both in terms of individuals and nations.

⁷ *contrariety* disagreement, discordance; serious and antagonistic opposition between.

⁸ Romans 6:23.

Aetna,¹ his affliction more fiercer than may be imagined, and suddenly a shower of tears burst from his eyes; his heart was inflamed, his thoughts troubled, and the eye of reason long time
 770 obscured at last began to break forth with ines- 805
 timable brightness, so that, falling down on his knees and thumping his wounded breast, he at last in bitter terms entered into this ecstasy:²

“I wonder, thou maker of heaven, at thy work-
 775 manship, and thy worthiness is known by thy 810
 works. I see that thou art just in dealings, and I desperate through my delays. I have had a portion with the chiefest creatures, but have employed it worse than brute beasts. Oh, how my soul
 780 groaneth within me, and my inward bowels are 815
 grieved in my body! Lord, thou hast made me, but I have martyred me; thou hast saved me, I have shamed thee; thou hast elected me, I have rejected thee. Mine impenitence hath wrought thy impa-
 785 tience. Oh, enter not into the fullness of my sin, 820
 lest I adventure the fury of thy sword! The vale of heaviness overcladdeth³ me, the hope of heaven-
 liness is clouded from me! Oh, that the hills would fall upon me or that the depth might devour me!⁴ Oh, that I had never been born or
 790 had ever been better! Lord, it is justice: I merit condemnation. I deserve affliction and no favour, damnation and no preservation, commination⁵
 795 from thee, not combination with thee. O my soul, groan for my sins, grieve at my shames! Oh, happy were my soul if grief could suffice! O my soul, rent at thy unrighteousness, melt at thy murder; or happy were my soul if remorse would suffice. But my portion is in the grave, not among
 800 the just; among the defiled ones, and not the rec-

onciled ones.⁶ I am heavy, my God! But why call I him mine whom I have blasphemed? I am sorry, my God—as if sorrow would satisfy the excess of sin! Oh no, I am unworthy to behold heaven, to conceive hope, to entreat mercy, to promise amends. But damnation, oh the bitter wound of damnation that threateneth me, that killeth me!”

In these desperate and sorrowing terms spent he the most part of the night, neither receiving sustenance nor enjoying sleep. His clear complexion became pale, his strong limbs grew lither,⁷ and he that before time thought himself more worthy than the King of Heaven, now thought himself unworthy to tread upon the earth. By this time the memory of his sins assailed him anew, and a hidden working from above dispersed the cloudy passions of his thought in such manner as we see a fair and pleasant breath of wind, which during the extreme heat of the sun tempereth the fury of the same, in which manner I leave him till the morning.

[While Robert encounters a holy hermit in the wood who persuades him that God’s mercy and forgiveness are both available to him, and encourages him to undertake a penitential pilgrimage, Aubert hears of his son’s defeat at the hands of the Duke of Constances. Although in grief, Aubert forbids any retaliation against the Duke and promises to remit the reward he has earlier offered for the death of his son. The hermit arrives, reveals Robert’s penitence, and his present penitential voyage to Rome. The narrative continues with a brief account of Robert’s penitential journey to Rome, his many prayers and temptations—including an encounter with a seductive woman accompanied by satyrs and nymphs in *le bois du temptation* (the wood of temptation). On the way he performs many acts of penance and corporal mercy, helping the weak, sick, and indigent with both physical aid and spiritual comfort. Arriving in Rome, Robert encounters the Pope,

¹ *Aetna* an active volcano in Sicily, the site of many terrible eruptions, which various classical writers describe in terms of the almost incalculable devastation of the surrounding land and the wholesale destruction of people, buildings and livestock.

² *ecstasy* impassioned outburst.

³ *overcladdeth* overclothes; to cover over as with clothes (this sentence is the only example noted in *OED*).

⁴ See Hosea 10:8; Luke 23:30; Revelation 6:16.

⁵ *commination* threat of divine judgement or punishment; hence, in effect, separation from God.

⁶ *But my portion ... ones* perhaps echoing Psalms 88:3-18; Job 20 and 27:13-23.

⁷ *lither* withered, weak, impotent.

whom he begs for absolution from his many sins. The Pope, marvelling at Robert's reformation, sends the penitent young man to "a holy and devout recluse [...] commanding Robert to be ordered by him." The holy hermit sets Robert a serious set of penitential tasks, aimed at punishing his pride: he must eat no meat except that which he receives from a dog; he must take a vow of silence for seven years; he must dress himself in a fool's habit for those seven years. Returning to Rome, Robert does as he is instructed, suffers much physical and verbal abuse from the citizens and finally finds a place in the Emperor's household, becoming his favourite fool.]

How Behenzar Arrived at Rome, and of His Repulse and Dispatch. The Valiant Courage of Robert Hearing the Name of Christ Blaphemed. The Love of Emine towards Him; and the Assembly of the Christian Princes in the Aid of the Emperor. [Chapter 13].

825 The rumour¹ was no sooner spread throughout the dominions of the empire, but all contributory princes assembled together in the city of Rome to do the Emperor service and make his estate more pompous;² and after letters of safe conduit³ presented to the ambassador, Behenzar—mounted on a brave Barbarian⁴ horse, trapped in tissue and pearl,⁵ himself attired after the Barbarian fashion, 830 with his Algozin⁶ of cloth of gold embroidered

with rubies—being led between two kings was in all solemnity conducted unto the Emperor's palace, who in his great hall set⁷ among an innumerable troupe of courtiers as Phoebus⁸ amidst the lesser stars, whom Behenzar after small or no salutation attempted⁹ thus:

835 "Emperor of Rome, amongst all the blessings thy God hath bestowed on thee, among all thy fortunes that have befallen thee from thy youth hitherto, the only good is this: that our Soldan¹⁰ of Babylon, the terror of the world for arms, the lord of conquerors for actions, deigneth to salute thee, who hearing of the beauty of thy daughter, the young Princess Emine, and vouchsafing to grace thee with his alliance craveth her as his wife in marriage, which bounty of his if thou neglect know that thou fosterest the shadow of thine own ruin. Thy kingdoms shall be spoiled, thy princes slain, thy crown trodden at his feet, and thy ruins shall be so grievous that thy royalties were never so great. If thou entertain his demands, hold, take these presents" (whereupon he caused twenty Moors to discharge their carriages of gold and silver, and lay it at his feet), "if not, he lendeth thee it as a pledge of his revenge, till he redeem it with the sword."

845 Great was the murmur throughout the hall at the insolence of the pagan, and among the rest Emine was exceedingly moved, who sitting at her mother's feet by her tears began to testify her cause of terror. The Emperor being a prince of a 860

¹ The Soldan of Babylon, having fallen in love with a picture of the Emperor's only daughter and heir, the extraordinarily beautiful Emine, sends Behenzar as his ambassador to the Emperor, hoping to gain Emine for his wife.

² *pompous* characterized by pomp or stately show; magnificent; splendid.

³ *letters of safe conduit* letters of safe-conduct, documents that guarantee the bearer's safety from assault or imprisonment while in hostile territory.

⁴ *Barbarian* Barbary (i.e., Arabian).

⁵ *trapped in tissue and pearl* adorned with elaborate trappings, such as ornate bridles, saddles, saddle cloths, etc.; *tissue* a rich cloth often interwoven with gold or silver.

⁶ *Algozin* not in the *OED*, although clearly some article of clothing, probably a cloak or robe. In Renaissance England, cloth of gold (a tissue consisting of threads, wires, or strips of gold, generally interwoven with silk or wool; also applied to gilded cloth) was restricted for the use of royalty.

⁷ *set* seated.

⁸ *Phoebus* the sun.

⁹ *attempted* meant figuratively, tried to master or place in a subordinate, submissive position; attempted to convince or influence.

¹⁰ *Soldan* i.e., Sultan: supreme ruler of one or other of the great Muslim powers or countries of the Middle Ages; at the time when Lodge was writing "Robin the Devil," however, the absolute ruler of the Ottoman Empire (also known as the "Grand Turk") was Amurath III, also known as Murad III (reigned 1574-95). The Sultan and the Ottoman Empire were generally feared and perceived as a threat to Christian Europe; the Ottoman Turks had scored some decisive military victories against the Holy Roman Empire, beginning with the taking of Constantinople in 1453; Vienna was besieged in 1529 and Cyprus in 1571 (D.J. Vitkus, Introduction, *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England* [New York, 2000], p. 7).

haught¹ heart, disdainful to be outfaced by the bravest warrior in the world, having long since determined never to marry his daughter out of Christendom, returned Behenzar this magnificent answer:²

865 “It is not our custom in Europe, proud Babylonian, to persuade with peremptory threats but to woo with gentle entreaties, and as our natures are mollified by mildness so are they indurate by menaces. If the Soldan salute me as his equal, he erreth, for the Emperor of Christendom deigns no so base companion as a soldan; if as his superior, I thus answer him: the distance of his country, the difference of his custom, the abjectness³ of his riches, the barbarism of his religion, these disable him to be an emperor’s son. As for my daughter, she must be ruled by her father, and her father will not admit thy master, who, if he attempt me with injuries, I will temper him for his injustice. As for his presents, I bestow them on thee, for gold (Barbarian) amongst us is of small accompt⁴ in respect of virtue. Go, let thy vassals take it up, and carry thou that home as a gift meeter⁵ for a messenger of the Soldan’s than a master of the Soldan. For his invasions, I fear them not, since my Christ is my protector, under whose safe conduct both these and I little fear him, and so be thou answered.”

880 Behenzar, mad with rage seeing the Emperor’s small regard, stamped with his foot and swore thus: “By Mahound,⁶ Christian, thy carpenter’s

son, that Christ, your God, shall not save thy hands nor thy heads from the sword of the meanest prince about the Soldan, but this city shall be razed⁷ in despite of thy protector and thy power.”

895 Behenzar had so said and in his fury was flinging out of the palace, when Robin the Devil, having all this while solemnly attended at the foot of the Emperor, all on the sudden arose, and, not enduring to hear the name of his Saviour blasphemed, he flung the pagan to the ground and stamped him under his feet, which done he made show of a foolish triumph, and, bumming⁸ the proud Babylonian with his bauble,⁹ he had well nigh killed him had not the princes drawn him off, who safely conducted blaspheming Behenzar to his ships and smilingly laughed at the insolence of the idiot.

900 The fair Emine seeing the forwardness of her champion was marvellously delighting, showing unto her father by signs that he was no fool but some man of high spirit. Every day dressed she¹⁰ means to recover his wits, using prescripts of physic and the counsel of the learned, who secretly informed her that he was a man of rare expectation. These suppositions marvellously inflamed her, and love began to show himself in act in all her outward parts, inflaming her eyes, changing her colour, which lest it should be perceived she with humble reverence forsook the assembly, leaving her father with the other princes in great consultation, who, resolving to prevent all inconveniences, departed each one to his country, swearing by solemn oath each one to gather his greatest power and to come and assist the Emperor the next year in the suspected, or rather certainly pretended,¹¹ wars of the Soldan. In which minds I leave them intentive on their forces,

¹ *haught* high-minded, noble; also, in a more negative sense, haughty, proud.

² *magnificent answer* i.e., an answer befitting his imperial position. Interestingly, Lodge also employs both “magnificent” and “haughty” to describe the Soldan and his army generally, where “magnificent” comes to mean “proud, arrogantly ambitious.”

³ *abjectness* degraded nature; the description is derived from one of the dominant Western stereotypes of Muslim nations: that they were fabulously wealthy but were typically enriched through voracious plundering of neighbour (and especially Christian) states (D.J. Vitkus, Introduction, *Three Turk Plays*, pp. 10-11).

⁴ *account* account; value.

⁵ *meeter* fitter, more appropriate.

⁶ *Mahound* Muhammad, the prophet and founder of the Islamic faith. According to Vitkus, Western Renaissance texts and observers typically misrepresented the relationship between Muhammad and the Islamic adherent as that of false god and worshipper (Introduction, *Three Turk Plays*, p. 9).

⁷ *razed* utterly or completely destroyed; levelled.

⁸ *bumming* striking, beating, thumping.

⁹ *bauble* a baton or stick, surmounted by a fantastically carved head with asses’ ears, carried by a court fool or jester as a mock symbol of office.

¹⁰ *dressed she* i.e., she applied herself or turned her attention to.

¹¹ *pretended* intended.

930 Robert devout in his follies, Emine detained with
fancies, Behenzar sailing to Babylon, who with
such expedition followed his business that with a
prosperous wind he arrived in Assyria, and so
hastily posted to Bagdet.¹ What there ensued the
chapter following shall declare.

[In the next chapter, the Soldan arrives in Italy
with a huge army and, after having burned and
sacked many Italian towns and cities, besieges
Rome. Although the Emperor heads a force made
up of brave princes from a number of Christian
countries, he is soundly defeated by the Soldan,
losing 1,700 men.]

Of the Great Moan that Was Made
Throughout Rome for the Loss of the Chris-
tians, and How Emine the Next Day of
Battle Gave Robert the Devil a Rich White
Armour and Shield, with a White Horse,
Who Rescued the Emperor, and Did Won-
derful Deeds of Arms. [Chapter 15].

935 Great was the moan through all Rome for the
Christians' ruin, many the tears of the mothers
bemoaning their sons, many the sighs of the
daughters weeping for their fathers. There was no
house in the city which solemnized not some
funeral, and happy was he in his misfortune whose
son had been most forward.² But among all the
mestfull³ families, the Emperor's court was most
unfortunate, where instead of rich spoils the
imperial chambers were replenished with dead and
wounded bodies, and confusion, seeming to have
elected her habitation in that place, began to infect
every particular person with his poison. The
Empress, bathed in tears, had her eyes almost
choked up with weeping, and Emine, the flower of
950 beauty, seemed like the rose overwashed with
overlirant shows; her crimson stains became pale

and bleak colors; so much doth sorrow alter both
the inward and outward abilities.

955 Robert, aggrieved in heart to see these discon-
tents, groaned in mind though he dissembled⁴
mirth, practicing all means possible to delight the
Emperor, to move laughter to the Empress, to
content Emine. Fain⁵ would he have enterprised
arms, but he durst not, fearing it was prejudicial to
960 his vow, and so much courage wrought in his heart
that espying his confessor one day, who by reason
of these wars had withdrawn himself into the city,
he by signs showed his desires to do the Emperor
service. The good old man falling on his neck
965 blessed him, and confidently persuaded him there-
unto (so his desire were not for vainglory sake, but
for the honour and in the name of Christ). Robert
resolved herein became more frolic, moving great
pleasure in the princes by kissing their swords and
970 playing with their arms.

Many battles were there fought, wherein he
would fain have been present. One day among the
rest, at such time as the princes issued out to
battle, Emine called Robert up into the top of a
975 high turret, from whence they might behold all the
manner of the conflict. But, alas, the day was fatal
to the Christians, and the cries of them that fled
pierced the very heavens. Robert, not able to
endure these massacres, wept bitter tears for
980 anger, and seeing Emine discontent made signs
unto her for armour. She, by divine instinct some-
what ascertained of his intent, secretly with her
own hands armed him in a rich, white armour of
her father's (which he used in his youth), giving
985 him a fair sword and shield, and, shutting his
beaver,⁶ close⁷ commanded that a horse should be
given him. The grooms of the Emperor's stable
gave him a fierce and stout steed of self-like
colour as his arms were of, on which speedily
990 mounting he issued forth of the gates, gathering
together the scattered troops, and entered the
thickest of the Saracens with such fury that before

¹ *Bagdet* Baghdad, then the capital of Assyria (encompassed by
much of present-day Iraq).

² *forward* courageous.

³ *mestfull* mestive: mournful.

⁴ *dissembled* feigned, pretended.

⁵ *Fain* willingly, eagerly.

⁶ *beaver* the visor of a war helmet.

⁷ *close* secretly, covertly.

his lance was broken he dismounted thirty of the
 995 best pagans. Then, taking in hand his well-tem-
 pered sword, he performed such chivalry¹ as all
 the beholders were amazed. His sword lighted in
 no place where it cleaved not a limb; neither was
 their helmets of that temper that could withstand
 his stroke. He slew Behenzar hand to hand, and
 1000 had well nigh taken the Soldan prisoner had not a
 band of strong Tartarians² rescued him.

Emine, from her solitary turret beholding his
 prowess, was surprised with marvellous solace.
 1005 Now wished she that she could speak, whereby
 she might move her love; now desired she that he
 were as noble as he was valiant, and as witty as he
 was worthy. But the Emperor among the rest was
 wholly revived with the sight, and, yielding God
 1010 most humble thanks, animated his soldiers to
 pursue the victory. Many and valiant were the men
 that fell that day by Robert's sword, and had not
 the night by speedy approach departed³ both the
 armies the Soldan had that day suffered an
 1015 undoubted overthrow. Whereupon both the
 armies sounded the retreat, and Robert with all
 expedition privily entered the city, where encounter-
 ing the recluse, his confessor, he left his armour
 with him and hid his horse in a monastery where
 1020 the good man was resiant,⁴ returning to the court
 in his fool's habit. By which time the Emperor
 with his attendants was entered the city, and being
 disarmed sat him down in great content, discours-
 ing with his princes and emperors upon the affairs
 1025 of that day's service. Great was the noise through-
 out the city of the white knight's valour, and in
 court was no other talk but of the strange knight
 that behaved himself so valiantly. The Emperor
 made great inquisition after him, but by no means
 1065 could understand thereof.

¹ *chivalry* feats of knightly valour; gallant deeds, exploits.

² *Tartarians* Tartars, natives of Tartary, a somewhat vague geo-
 graphic area in the 16th century referring to Asia north of the Cau-
 casus and the Himalayas (*Topographical Dict.*, p. 501). The Tartars were
 best known as the rapacious followers of Genghis Khan.

³ *departed* separated, parted.

⁴ *resiant* resident, dwelling.

By this time Robert and his hound (as was his
 custom) entered the dining chamber, playing many
 pleasant tricks before the Emperor, who took
 thereat wonderful delight. Emine's eye was contin-
 ually fixed on him, and whilst the kings talked of
 1035 the valiant warrior she purposely pointed at him.
 It fortun'd in this encountry⁵ that Robert had a
 little scratch over his right eye, which being but
 freshly wounded bled a little. The Emperor, that
 loved him dearly, examined who had harmed him.
 1040 Great noise was there about the palace of this
 injury, and no man would be known of it; only one
 knight, kneeling before the Emperor, certified his
 Grace that the knight who had deserved so much
 in his service that day was wounded in the same
 1045 place, and that he suspected it was he. Robert
 fearing lest he should be discovered began much
 more to play the idiot, putting his cockscomb⁶
 upon the knight's head and laughing, which caused
 all the princes to take great delight. But Emine still
 pointed at him, and if the liberty of her tongue
 1050 had granted her means to discover the secrecy of
 her thought, Robert assuredly had at that time
 been known.

The Emperor, notwithstanding, began to
 gather on these allegations, and, desirous to know
 the certain truth, privately appointed certain
 knights against⁷ the next day (to the number of
 thirty) to attend the said champion and by some
 means to cause his discovery. In this manner
 1055 passed they the evening in delight till it was
 bedtime, whenas the Emperor and Empress (after
 order was given for the safety of the city) betook
 them to their rest, and the other several lords and
 princes to their lodging. At which time Robert and
 his hound entered their homely cabin,⁸ wherein
 meditating without closing his eyes, the salt tears
 streamed down his cheeks in remembrance of his

⁵ *encountry* encounter: battle, skirmish.

⁶ *cockscomb* cap worn by a professional fool or jester, like a cock's-
 comb in shape and colour.

⁷ *against* in preparation for, in anticipation of.

⁸ *cabin* We learn earlier that Robert has refused a fine chamber in
 the emperor's palace, preferring a rough, uncomfortable straw pallet
 under the stairs; "cabin" = generally, "poor lodging."

sins, in thought of his father, in consideration of his country. And now came there to his mind how
 1070 for six years and more he had lived an abject life,
 unworthy his estate, the thought whereof so much
 abashed him that it is impossible to reckon up his
 perplexities. Then called he to mind the kind
 affections of Emine, and his soul bemoaned that
 1075 so perfect a person should have so palpable an
 imperfection. Now applied he the cause thereof to
 the Emperor's sin,¹ accompting the virgin happy,
 that by her want of speech escaped from many
 occasions of offence. Then recorded he the effu-
 1080 sion of Christian blood, and of mere compassion
 in midst of that thought he wept most bitterly,
 when the poor kind beast licked up his tears. In
 this sort spent he the night in consideration of
 many things, and in conclusion of the adventure²
 1085 of his life for the safety of Christendom.

[During the second day of the battle, Robert (in his disguise as the white knight) is praised for his valour by the Emperor. Fleeing from the thirty knights the Emperor has appointed to uncover his true identity, Robert is wounded in the thigh by one of them who believes that the wounded man's agony will give him away later at court. Robert, however, conceals his pain and successfully resumes his role as the Emperor's fool. He deceives everyone except the faithful Emine. Hearing that the Emperor has promised the hand of Emine to the man who proves himself the white knight, the Soldan, availing himself of magical aid, arrives at court on an exact duplicate of Robert's horse, wearing an exact duplicate of Robert's armour. After being baptized by the Pope, the Soldan's marriage to Emine is planned for the next day. Although Emine weeps and tries to get her father to understand that Robert is the kingdom's true saviour, she finally agrees (out of filial love and duty) to wed the Soldan. His oath still binding him, Robert finds himself helpless to

¹ *to the Emperor's sin* In sixteenth-century England, a child's physical handicaps (such as deafness, blindness, lameness, etc.) were often believed to be a punishment for the sins of its parent(s).

² *adventure* adventuring; hazard, risk.

intervene as the wedding party approaches the altar.]

How the Soldan Entered the City of Rome
 in His Disguise and Made His Claim to
 Emine, Who Should Have Been Betrothed
 unto Him, and What Miraculous Chance
 Did thereupon Ensue. [Chapter 17].

Robert among the rest, in a new fool's attire, was a special attendant, and oftentimes his heart earned³ and his soul sighed to see that another should enjoy his title. Fain⁴ would he have spoken, but religious zeal closed his lips. In brief, when the solemn service was accomplished, the Pope in all solemnity presented himself in his *pontificalibus*⁵ to couple these two magnificent princes together. Emine was brought forth, the Soldan addressed, the ceremonies were begun, and the soothfastness was to be plighted,⁶ when (lo, the wondrous works of almighty God!) Emine at such time as their hands should have been joined violently drew hers backward, and inspired by divine providence (after she had been dumb from her infancy thitherto⁷) she began thus:

“Unhallowed pagan, who to perform thy lust counterfeitest religion and to attain my love hast coined a lie! Know thou that thou canst dissemble with the world, thou canst not be hidden from God. With what face, false Soldan, canst thou claim another's right? Or entitle thyself to that honour which thy betters have deserved? It lies not in that weak hand to contain such hardness, in that faint breast to enact such forwardness, neither, wert thou able in firmness, couldst thou reach to that honour wanting⁸ faith. It was not man, ye princes; it was no human power, dread

³ *earned* yearned, longed for.

⁴ *Fain* willingly, with pleasure.

⁵ *pontificalibus* the dress and accoutrements appropriate to his position as pope (Latin, “pontificalibus, -e,” adjective).

⁶ *soothfastness was to be plighted* the pledging of one's truth and faith in marriage; the marriage vows were about to be made.

⁷ *thitherto* i.e., up until this point.

⁸ *wanting* lacking

1115 father, but the divine working of God by the
means of this supposed idiot that gave us con-
quest. This Robert, surnamed (for his wicked life
in times past) the Devil, who hath turned his
1120 damned deeds to devotion, is he that rescued the
Emperor, was armed by me, was horsed by my
command, and if he be searched is the very man
who was wounded by your knights. This Soldan's
armour is magical, his steed infernal, himself per-
fidious. Why permit you, princes, that he who hath
1125 soiled his hands in your bloods should be served
like a prince of high bounty? Lay hands on him,
inflict bonds on him, slay the viper ere he sting,
and the crocodile ere he can devour."

These words were uttered with a confident and
bold spirit, and all the assembly was abashed at
1130 this wonder. The Soldan stood as a man that had
lost his senses, and the best Romans began to
flock about Robert. During these miraculous
events, whilst each man's tongue was kept mute
with marvel, the holy recluse entered the presence
1135 (ordained as it is thought by divine ordinance). In
his hands bore he the true armour, and about his
neck the girdle and sword, having a religious
novice at his heels who led the white steed ... he
discovered Robert's thigh and presented all the
1140 titles of his claim, and, craving private conference
with him, was permitted to converse with him
alone in a hidden chamber. Meanwhile the palace
was in an uproar, and some swords were drawn to
assail the Soldan who, abashed and ashamed at his
1145 discovery, seemed rather a dead than a lives¹ man.
But the Emperor, who saw in his looks the tenor
of his looseness, being a gracious and benign
prince, withstood the assailants, and, after thanks
given to the Heavens and kind embrace to Emine,
1150 he spoke in this manner to the Soldan:

"Pagan, though it be in my power to cut thee
off, it is not my pleasure to use discourtesy. I see it
was fancy² that made thee feign, and folly that
hath procured thy fall. I know thy estate is desper-
1155 ate, thy soldiers spent, thy Mussulmans discom-
forted; and in that I disdain to combat with these

who are well nigh conquered, I pity thee, and
pitying thee grant thy peace. If, therefore, thou
wilt presently depart my court, dislodge thy camp,
1160 and leave Christendom, thou and thine shall enjoy
both life and liberty, and that for Emine's sake. If
not, resolve thyself to die, to see thy nobles
destroyed, and the memory of thy name entirely
exterminate and extinguished."

The Soldan, pondering with himself his per-
ilous estate, seeing his love recureless, and his
liberty reckless³ except he accepted the opportu-
nity, answered the Emperor in this sort: "If my
fancies have made me foolish, bear with me,
1165 Emperor; more mighty than I have fallen. For the
attainment of Emine if I have feigned, I must now
only repent it, bearing a deep wound in my thigh
but more woe in my heart. For my life, I respect it
not, were it not I regard my subjects; for thy
1170 bounty, I accept it, and will depart Christendom,
and so relying on thy word I take my leave, sur-
rendering thee thy Christianity, since thou hast
bereft me of mine Emine."

This said, reviling and exclaiming on destiny,
1180 the pagans departed, and trussing up their
baggage shipped themselves, leaving both the
siege and Christendom, which was mightily com-
forted by their departure.

How Aubert Hearing No News of His Son,
after the Term of Seven Years Died, Leaving
the Possession of His Dukedom in the
Hands of Editha and the Lord Villiers, with
the Lamentable Treasons That thereupon
Ensued. [Chapter 18].

[Seven years after Robert's departure, Aubert dies
in despair over what has become of his son. He
leaves the dukedom, until the return of his son, in
the hands of his wife Editha and the nobleman
Villiers. The latter, noting that Editha is willing to
leave the day-to-day governing of the state in his
hands, decides to take possession of it entirely.
Corrupting two false witnesses, he has Editha

¹ *lives* living.

² *fancy* love.

³ *reckless* disregarded (and thus doomed to destruction).

imprisoned on the charge of having poisoned her late husband. The courts command Editha within a year to find a champion to defend her innocence in a trial by combat or to be burned at the stake as a murderer. Editha, helpless, laments her state:]

1185 [...] One day looking out of her prison window
(from whence she might behold the thick forests
and pleasant meads¹), she bethought herself how
wretchedly she had cursed her womb and the
unhappy fruits of her tempting God; for which
cause, humbling herself on her knees, and shed-
ding tears of compassion, she spoke thus:

1190 "O my God, thou art just, but I injurious. I
tempted thee by unlawful curses, thou chastisest
me with deserved cruelty. I imputed my barren-
ness to thy wrath not to my wickedness, and
1195 sought help from the fiend in hope to be fruitful.
This my tempting of thy majesty exempteth me
from thy mercy, and my lewd² desires are the cause
of my lamentable destruction. O mothers, learn
by me! Let him that made all things moderate all
1200 things; let him that granteth increase prefix the
time of increase. Except not against his glory, lest
he exempt you of his goodness. His delays are no
dalliance, his decrees are divine. Since, therefore,
he doth dispose of us, let us not oppose ourselves
1205 against him. O father of mercy, pardon my
impiety! Let mine innocency have rescous,³ as
thou art the God of the righteous! Thou that
savedst Susanna, succour me; thou that relievedst
Daniel,⁴ deliver me!"

1210 In this sort and with these sighs full often and
many times did this poor princess bemoan her

¹ *meads* meadows.

² *lewd* wicked, immoral.

³ *rescous* rescue, aid, assistance.

⁴ *Susanna* In the apocryphal Book of Susanna, the titular heroine is a virtuous Jewish wife who is charged with adultery by two lustful elders whose sexual advances she has earlier declined. Condemned to death, she cries out to God, who gives the young Daniel the ability to ferret out the truth; *Daniel* See Daniel, ch. 6, where the apocalyptic prophet and visionary is miraculously preserved from certain death, after being sealed in a den full of lions on the false witness of jealous officials. In both stories, those who bear false witness are put to death in precisely the manner they have planned for the innocent.

mischief,⁵ exclaiming on the impiety of her accusers, whilst suspicious Villiers thought every hour an age and every day a year till her days were determined. Yet in outward show he bemoaned her, visiting her oftentimes, presenting her with many delicates, enterprising with all possible industry to rid himself of suspicion and abuse her simplicity. Divers of the princes privily murmured, seeing his ambition by his behaviour and his craft cloaked under courtesy, but as times have their revolutions so truths are discovered, which shall manifestly appear by the sequel that ensueth, wherein it is evidently proved that God never faileth those who put their trust in his mercy.

How Robert after He Was Invested in the
Empire, Heard of His Father's Death, and
Departed to Take upon Him his Dukedom,
Accompanied with Emine His Empress, and
Pepin of France, with Other Princes.
[Chapter 19].

[Arriving home and being informed of his mother Editha's impending execution on the false charge of murder, Robert volunteers to be his mother's champion, unbeknownst to her.]

1230 [...] Well, the summons was sounded according to
order, and brave Robert of Normandy boldly
entered the lists, offering to adventure his life in
the behalf of Editha. Great was the joy of all the
ladies to see so goodly a knight enterprise the
Duchess' right, and Editha in thought seemed to
claim some part of him. But leaving tedious cir-
cumlocutions, this in brief was the effect of the
matter: the champions were sworn, and the judges
appointed, and after sound of trumpet and
1235 proclamation, the combat was commenced. Great
was the courage of the accuser, but greater the
constancy of the defendant: the one fought for
money, the other fought for his mother; the one
trusted to his force, the other to his faith; the one
fought with fear, the other with confidence; in

⁵ *mischief* calamity, distress, trouble.

brief, the one no less animated by amity than the
 other emboldened by equity. After their lances
 were broken, they betook them to their swords,
 1245 where (after some small resist) Robert lent his
 adversary such a stroke that he cut off his right
 arm and killed his horse, and nimbly buckling
 himself unto his enemy, who prepared to fly, rent
 1250 off his helmet from his head, and, rudely casting
 him on the earth, commanded him either to dis-
 cover the truth or he was but dead. It is wonderful
 to see the affection of faithful commons¹ to their
 natural princess, for no sooner was the appealant²
 1255 overthrown but they all with common voice cried
 out, "God save Editha, our true princess and
 innocent!"

Villiers was abashed and descending from the
 judgement seat sought means very politically to
 1260 make away³ the vanquished before the villainy
 were discovered. But Robert prevented the same,
 for menacing him that was in his danger with
 present death, he in open assembly discovered the
 treason, the complot of Villiers for the dukedom,
 leaving nothing untouched that might manifest the
 1265 Duchess' innocency. This his confession so
 moved Robert that taking Villiers by the hair of
 the head he drew him to the judgement seat,
 causing the eschevins⁴ of Rouen to lay hold on
 him, when mounting up the scaffold where the
 1270 princess sat he took her by the hand and con-
 ducted her to the chiefest seat of judgement, and,
 opening his beaver, he humbling himself on his
 knee, spoke thus:

1275 "Though my unworthiness before times (most
 gracious Duchess and courteous mother) deserve
 not the sight of so reverent a person, yet acknowl-
 edging my faults and beseeching your favour,
 behold your son Robert (for his wickedness before
 times surnamed the Devil) now humbly prostrate

¹ *commons* common people.

² *appealant* appellant: one who "appeals" (accuses) another of
 treason or felony; hence, one who challenges another to single
 combat.

³ *politically to make away* expediently and cunningly spirit away.

⁴ *eschevins* principal functionaries in French and Belgian towns (like
 English aldermen).

1280 before you in all duty. Though I have been a cor-
 rosive to you in your youth, behold, God hath left
 me to be a comfort to you in your age. Rejoice,
 madam, and, as appertaineth to you, punish this
 traitor according to his demerits. And you, unnat-
 1285 ural Normans, that neglecting duty have affected
 doubleness, grow ashamed at your follies and
 confess your faults, who have countenanced a
 traitor and contemned⁵ your sovereign."

Editha, devoured in joy, instead of reply fell
 1290 upon his neck in a sound,⁶ and with such entire
 affection embraced him that it was thought that
 both their bodies were united together with a
 mutual sympathy of affections. And after she was
 revived a little, stealing a long kiss from his lips,
 she began thus: "And art thou yet living, my son,
 or are mine eyes deceived? Yea, thou livest, my
 son, for nature tells me so, planting such a joy in
 my heart to see thee as I never had so great will to
 sigh for thee. Oh, the fruit of my womb and the
 1295 comfort of thy father had Aubert lived to behold
 thee, my son, to have seen thy wild dalliance
 exchanged to wise discourse, thy fond behaviour
 to affable benignity, thy devilishness to discretion!
 Oh, the joy! Oh, the solace! But he from Heaven
 beholdeth thee, and I on earth embrace thee!"

The peers and ladies cut off her further dis-
 course, each one presenting him homage and
 humble salute. Whereupon, taking Editha with
 him and placing her on the right hand, he with
 great gravity ascended the judgement seat and
 1300 spoke thus to all the assembly: "Were I as insolent
 as I have been accustomed, my countrymen,
 neither would I ascend the place of judgement nor
 condescend to administer justice. But since God
 hath humbled my heart, and altered my affects,⁷
 1315 and made you happy in calling me home, hearken
 to me, my subjects, and consider on my sayings. If
 absence alter not heritage, as it cannot, and for-
 getfulness change not duties, as it should not, you
 ought, ye Normans, to accompt me for your lord,
 and accompany my care for you with your love

⁵ *contemned* despised; condemned.

⁶ *sound* swoon, faint.

⁷ *affects* disposition, temper, natural tendencies.

towards me. And for this love and duty you
 employ on me, I must level out¹ and devise means
 to preserve you, which can no better be adminis-
 1325 tered but by justice, which ordereth all things with
 so determined judgement that the good are main-
 tained for their goodness and the bad punished
 for their injustice. Since, therefore, in the entrance
 of my government I find cockle² that hath choked
 1330 the corn, weeds that have overgrown the herbs,
 and perverse men who have inverted policy, I will
 take the sword in hand like a commander and root
 out this cockle from the corn, these weeds from
 the herbs, these rebels from the righteous, that the
 1335 good may better flourish and the bad stand in
 more fear. For which cause, ye Normans, since it
 is confessed and approved that Villiers with his
 competitors³ have conspired against the lady
 Duchess, my mother, our will is that they perish in
 1340 the same fire they provided for the faultless, and
 suffer the same punishment they ordained for the
 innocent.”

All the whole people applauded his righteous
 judgement, and justice was orderly executed,
 1345 whilst each one marvelled at his excellency and
 wisdom.

After then that he had received homage of the
 peers and was invested in the dukedom, at such
 time as he was entering Rouen with his lady
 mother, the king Pepin with fair Emine richly
 1350 accompanied presented themselves. Great was the
 gratulations⁴ twixt Pepin and Editha, who courted
 her in this manner: “Madam, though your son
 Robert departed from you a rebel, he is returned
 1355 in royalty, being not only Prince of Normandy but
 Emperor of Rome, this his lady and wife, these his
 followers and well-wishers. So is your sorrow paid
 home⁵ at last with great solace, and the grief you
 have endured requited with gladness.”

¹ *level out* contrive.

² *cockle* a weed particularly endemic to cornfields.

³ *competitors* associates, partners.

⁴ *gratulations* manifestation or expressions of joy; rejoicings.

⁵ *paid home* repaid completely or thoroughly.

Editha when she heard these tidings was rav-
 ished with joy, humbly entertaining⁶ Emine, and
 honouring her son. Great was the triumph in Nor-
 mandy for the liberty of the Duchess, the return
 of the Duke, and, after long and festival solace,
 1365 Pepin received homage and fealty for the duchy
 and returned to Paris in great pomp. Robert,
 Emine, and Editha remained in Rouen, till after-
 wards being called to Rome upon the decease of
 the Emperor, he became of an irreligious person
 1370 the only royal paragon of the world.

Epilogus.

Gentlemen, I have given colours to a rare conceit
 as full of wonder as worth, as full of perfection as
 pleasure, in which I have satisfied humours⁷ and
 performed history, observing with Apelles⁸ the
 proportion of lines as Protogenes⁹ did the dispo-
 sition of lineaments, keeping such method in my
 humours as the spheres in the heavens:¹⁰ where
 Venus is placed near Mars to correct his malice,¹¹
 and mirth is planted in this discourse to detect the
 imperfections of melancholy. If Prosperus¹² seek
 for contemplation, he shall find it; if Quintillian¹³
 for invention, he may meet it. Yet are all things
 tempered with that equability that we contemplate
 no more than we may avow, nor invent no more
 than we can verify. Here may the despairing father

⁶ *entertaining* receiving; acting as a host to.

⁷ *humours* the dominant dispositions [of the work's varied readers].

⁸ *Apelles* (fl. 4th c. BCE), Greek painter in the time of Alexander the Great, who specialized in historical and mythological subjects, and who is generally acknowledged by classical writers as perhaps the greatest painter who ever lived, particularly for the stunningly life-like quality of his works.

⁹ *Protogenes* (fl. late 4th c. BCE), painter, sculptor, and friendly rival of Apelles.

¹⁰ *spheres in the heavens* See p. 18, note 5.

¹¹ In ancient astrological lore, the position of one planet relative to another could qualify, intensify, or negate the influence of said planet on a person's life and fortune.

¹² *Prosperus* perhaps St Prosper of Aquitaine (c. 390-c. 463), father of the early Church.

¹³ *Quintillian* Marcus Fabius Quintilianus (c. 35-c. 100 CE), famed Roman writer and rhetorician, author of *Institutio Oratoria* (*Education of an Orator*).

find hope in his son's untowardness, and the unto-
ward son take example to please his despairing
father. Here is ebon,¹ though black in colour yet
abiding trial. Let those that make no idol of their
1390 wits be masters of this work; for the rest, they
shall, if they read, find a thorn where they seek a
thistle, and a reason to condemn themselves,
though they commend not this sequel. And so,
courteous gentlemen, relying on your favours, I
1395 bid you farewell.

Finis.

—1591

The Life and Death of William Longbeard

Thomas Lodge's account of the tragic career of William Longbeard is based on the brief life contained in Holinshed's *Chronicles*. From this source, Lodge constructed the plot of his narrative, following its outline very closely, and even copying wholesale the speech that William makes to the people (see below, lines 502-41). However, his representation of William's character and motivations is somewhat ambivalent in contrast to Holinshed's resolutely damning portrait. Like Holinshed, Lodge vilifies William as an amoral demagogue, a hypocritical supporter of the poor and oppressed, a danger to national stability, and a disrupter of "right order" in civic and professional life; unlike Holinshed, Lodge also celebrates William as a brave and resolute citizen of London, as well as an eloquent orator and accomplished poet.

According to his *DNB* biographer, Derek Keene, William Longbeard was born William fitz Osbert (d. 1196), and although his London family was neither particularly wealthy nor prominent—his father was a clerk—he rose to become a significant force in municipal and national politics. Returning from an abortive trip to Jerusalem as part of the Third Crusade, fitz Osbert became a catalyst for the dissatisfaction of the London citizenry with the inequitable apportioning of

taxation: the mayor, aldermen, and other powerful individuals were constantly forcing the middle ranks and the poor to bear the brunt of such taxation in order to ease the burden on themselves. In 1194, after William charged his brother and other individuals with treasonable words, he became perceived as the champion of London's over-taxed citizenry, quickly gathering the support of large numbers of householders; moreover, as Holinshed notes, William's assertions that the King was losing out on vast tax revenues on account of the wealthy's constant "tax evasion" gained him, initially at least, royal favour. However, as also reported in Holinshed, William's growing power led to retaliation by the government, headed in Richard I's absence on the Continent, by Hubert Walter, archbishop of Canterbury; after a failed attempt to arrest him publicly—William arrived as ordered to speak with Walter, but he brought with him a huge mob—Walter resorted to less obvious methods; he set his men to watch William and arrest him when he was relatively unaccompanied by followers. Approaching William in the street, two were killed, and William fled to the Church of St Mary-le-Bow where he was later arrested, after having been 'smoked out,' just as Holinshed and Lodge report. Lodge's account adopts many other details from Holinshed: that William was condemned for treason along with nine of his confederates, that he was venerated as a martyr after his execution, that a priest declared the chain used to hang William up had wrought miraculous cures, that people gathered his blood as relics and to use for such cures, and that Hubert Walter had the people driven away by troops from the site of William's execution to prevent further "idolatry."

However, Lodge does not include two incidents that Holinshed offers in order to blacken William's character: Holinshed says that William acknowledged that he had violated the sacred space of St Mary-le-Bow Church by having sex there with his concubine during the siege; and that he had murdered a man. Holinshed says that both these actions only came to light after William's death. In Holinshed, William's murder of Arthur Brown serves as one of the revelations that leads the people gradually to mitigate their high opinion of William: "In fine, the opinion which the people had thus fondly conceived of his virtue and innocency, was by little and little removed out of their heads when

¹ *ebon* ebony.

[these] acts were more certainly published” (2.260). In contrast, Lodge gives William a gallows’ speech where he admits the murder of Arthur Brown, noting that for this crime, if for no other, he deserves his death. The incident of the “pollution” of St Mary-le-Bow’s Church is never specifically mentioned in Lodge, although he refers more vaguely to the church’s desecration: “That church which was sacred to prayer was now made a den of rebels; those places which were reserved to holy uses were now soiled with dishonest abuses; where before Our Lady was prayed to, lewdness was played withal” (p. 39). The verse scattered throughout Lodge’s history/romance also complicates the portrait of William, and are entirely of Lodge’s invention, based on Holinshed’s simple statement that “he was somewhat learned and very eloquent: he had also a very good wit but applied it rather to set dissention betwixt the high estates and the low, than to any other good purpose” (2.258).¹

from *The Life and Death of William Longbeard, the Most Famous and Witty English Traitor, Born in the City of London.*²

To the Right Worshipful Sir William Web Knight, Tho[mas] Lodge Wisheth Increase of Worship in this Life, and Eternal Blessing in the Life to Come.

The general care which you have had in the fatherly government of the city and the worthy forwardness in establishing all virtuous counsels for common good have made me presumptuous beyond my custom, in the behalf of my countrymen to present your Worship with this short model of histories, wherein you may both find matter worthy the reading and circumstances of deep consideration. I make you patron of these

¹ For further information, see D. Keene, “William fitz Osbert (d. 1196),” *DNB online*; and Holinshed, *Chronicles* 2.258-60.

² The title continues: “Accompanied with many other most pleasant and pretty histories.” On the title page “TL.” is identified as being “of Lincoln’s Inn” and a “gentleman.”

10 rare things, who are the very pattern and true Maecenas³ of virtue, seeking by your wisdom to establish the estate of poor citizens’ sons decayed, and renew that by your care which they have lost through unadvisedness. Accept, I beseech you, my
15 poor talent or my widow’s mite,⁴ with as great devotion as the heart can imagine or opinion conceit, and command me who during life am your Worship’s most bounden.

Thom[as] Lodge.

To the Gentlemen Readers.

20 The world is grown to that excellency nowadays, gentlemen, that no conceits are held worthy commendations, but such as have copy of new-coined words, and matter beyond all marvel. For which cause what shall I expect? who have neither the
25 style to indight⁵ so high, neither the ability to please curious ears? Truly my expectation shall be answerable to my skill, so that I will expect no more than I deserve, and desire no more than the curious will afford. Tailors and writers nowadays
30 are in like estimate, if they want new fashions they are not fancied, and if the style be not of the new stamp, tut the author is a fool. In old time, men studied to illustrate matter with words, now we strive for words beside matter. Since, therefore,
35 the time is such and judgements are so singular, since the manners are altered with men and are in thralldom⁶ to their fashionate manners, I will with the dyer prepare myself to wash out the spots as soon as they are spied, and borrow some cunning
40 of the drawer to colour an imperfection so well as I can, till such time I have cunning to cut my garment out of the whole cloth. And so resolved

³ *Maecenas* Gaius Maecenas (c. 70-8 BC), influential Roman aristocrat, statesman and one of the emperor Augustus’ most trusted friends; a patron of the arts, Maecenas supported the works of Virgil, Horace, and Propertius; he introduced Virgil to Augustus; he became an emblem in the Renaissance of the perfect patron.

⁴ *widow’s mite* Jesus observes a poor widow making a temple offering that consists of a small coin; this “mite” represents all her wealth, however, and Jesus praises her for her selflessness and faith.

⁵ *indight* write, compose.

⁶ *thralldom* enslavement; bondage.

to thank those that accept, and to shake off each
reproof of the envious as lightly as it is lent me, I
45 take my leave.

Yours in all friendship,

T.L.

The Life and Death of William Longbeard.

How William Longbeard Betrayed His Elder
Brother unto His Death, of His Falling in
Acquaintance with the Abbot of Cadonence
in Normandy, and How Cunningly and
Colourably They Got Authority from the
King to Accomplish Their Ambitious
Pretences. [Chapter 1].

Whilst all the world was in uproar and schisms
reigned in the Church, when God by prodigious
50 signs, threatened pestilent plagues: at such time as
two suns appeared in our horizon in England, and
three moons were discovered in the west in Italy,
William with the long beard was born in the
famous city of London, of greater mind than of
55 high parentage, a graft of mighty hope at the first,
though (as it afterwards proved) his parents spent
too much hope on so little virtue. This free citizen
born, tenderly fostered in his infancy, was after-
wards trained up in good letters, wherein he prof-
60 ited so suddenly, that most men wondered at his
capacity, and the wisest were afraid of the conclu-
sion;¹ and for that the age wherein he was bred
(being the third year of Henry the Second²) was
full of troubles, this young man's rare gifts were
65 raked up in the embers, little regarded because not
yet ripened. But at last, as years increased, the
mind ordained for mighty things began to mount,
the rather because ambition sealed his eyes, which
made him with the dove soar so high, till his own
70 cunning and labour made him be overturned. For
when he perceived his father's foot already pre-
pared for the grave, his mother seized by age, and

¹ *conclusion* outcome, result.

² *being the third year of Henry the Second* Henry II reigned 1154-89, dating Longbeard's birth to 1156-57.

more besotted with affection, himself at man's
estate and without maintenance, he thus began the
75 first fruits of his impiety, the sequel whereof
exceedeth all conceit, and testifieth his devilish
and damnable nature. He had a brother, elder than
himself in years but younger in policy, who
(having by his own frugality gotten wealth) was
80 called to be a burgess of the city, a man beloved of
all men for his upright dealing, and lamented of all
men for his untimely death. For William little
regarding the benefits he had received of him in
his youth, the brotherly kindness, the bountiful
85 courtesies, sought all means possible to betray him
who had trained him up, to suck his heart blood
who had sought his heart's rest, and to that intent
seeing the opportunity fitted him, in the reign of
Richard the first,³ that noble prince of famous
90 memory, he suborned certain lewd and sinister
confederates of his to accuse him of treason; for
which cause [the] poor innocent man being sud-
denly apprehended, his goods were confiscate, his
body imprisoned, his wife and children left suc-
95 courless,⁴ whilst wicked William being both com-
plotter, informer, and witness wrought so cun-
ningly with the King's Council⁵ that the goods
were his, which his brother with his long labour
had gotten and the poor innocent man brought
100 out before the judges with weeping eyes, beheld
his younger brother both revelling in his riches
and rejoicing at his ruin. Many were his obstes-
tations⁶ before God and protestations to the judges,
many his exhortations to his brother, and detesta-
105 tions of his perjury. But William, whose heart was
the very harbour of all impiety, ceased not in his
own person to solicit, and by his companions to
incense, the judges in such sort that his brother
was at last by them condemned and a-judged to
110 death, as some writers suppose for coining. And

³ *in the reign of Richard the first* Richard I (the "Lionheart") reigned 1189-99.

⁴ *succourless* without aid or comfort; destitute.

⁵ *the King's Council* the Privy Council, the government's executive body comprised of the monarch's ministers of state.

⁶ *obtestation* the action of calling upon God (Heaven) to witness [the truth of one's statement]; oath.

being led forth to his execution like an harmless innocent, the people mustering about the place, the cursed brother the occasion and compactor of confusion accompany him, with these or such like words he finished his life:

115 “Thou God that knowest the cause of my untimely death, canst in justice punish my unjust accusers. Meanwhile take mercy on my poor soul, who am forsaken of my private friends. Be thou a safeguard unto me, who am left without succours,¹ and help the desolate widow with her distressed children.” This said, after some private conference by permission between his brother and him, he suffered torment. [...]

[...]

How William with the Long Beard Behaved Himself to the Courtiers, and of His Love to His Fair Leman Maudeline. [Chapter 3].

125 William—having by this means insinuated himself into the favour of the King, and by that reason brought citizens in fear of him—² like the unto-ward child who having an inch stealeth an ell,³ began to presume above the latchet⁴ (as the proverb is), setting light by all men, animating the baser sort against the better; so that the nobility put up much injury at his hands, the clergy were badly used of him, and the officers of the city highly offended. The Earl of Durham, then chan-

¹ *succours* supporters, those who aid.

² Previously, William has exposed Robert Besant's attempt to defraud a poor widow of her dead husband's fortune (40 marks); the dead man had entrusted this sum with Besant, which Besant had agreed to invest with an eye to providing for the poor man's wife and children. William exposes Besant not out of any altruism, but in order to curry favour with the citizens as their “champion,” and with the King and council (William ensures that Besant ends up paying a huge fine to the King).

³ *having an inch . . . ell* Proverb, “Give an inch and he will take an ell” (Tilley 149), obviously an early modern version of “Give him an inch and he'll take a mile” (said of those who abuse a person's generosity).

⁴ *presume above the latchet* Proverb, “to go above or beyond one's latchet,” meaning to interfere in matters that are none of a person's business.

135 cellor and bishop, taking the part of a chapleine⁵ of his, who was injured by a mean and mechanical townsman, was braved by him in Cheapside,⁶ beaten of his horse, and had not the bailiffs of the city rescued him, the common speeches went, he should never have courted it more.

140 A gentleman in court at another time, upbraiding William of his base estate and birth, told him that the worst hair in his beard was a better gentleman than he was, for which cause William, mightily aggrieved and watching opportunity of revenge, at last encountered him bravely, mounted on his footcloth⁷ in Friday Street, where taking him forcibly from his horse, he carried him into a barber's shop, and caused both his beard and head to be shaved close, pleasantly gibing at him in this sort:

150 “Gallant, now have I cut off the whole train of the best gentlemen, you durst compare with me the last day, and if hereafter you bridle not your tongue, (as base a gentleman as you make me), I'll have you by the ears.”

155 The King informed hereof, grew highly offended, but William who wanted neither money, friends, nor eloquence, so ordered the matter as his maligners might bark but not bite him. But for that all his mind was planted on ambition, and his greatest fear was, lest by over-forward thrusting himself into state, his cloaked aspiring should be discovered, he began for a while to leave the court, to intend⁸ only the causes of the poor, and complot those means, whereby labouring for mightiness without suspect, he might attain the same without countercheck; and first to make show how much his mind was altered from high climbing, he craftily pretended a new-conceited⁹

⁵ *taking the part of a chapleine* i.e., taking up the cause of one of William's servants, his household chaplain.

⁶ *Cheapside* London's Old Marketplace, extending from the NE corner of St Paul's churchyard to the Poultry (*Topographical Dict.*, p. 111).

⁷ *footcloth* an ornamented cloth laid on the back of a horse, only used by those of high rank; by extension, a horse that would be worthy of such an accoutrement.

⁸ *intend* concentrate on.

⁹ *new-conceited* newly-conceived.

love, and but pretending it at first, at last was enforced to practice it, and thus it fell out.

An honest and well-disposed merchant of London had by his wife a fair and amiable young maiden to his daughter, being the only hope of his age and the fruit of his corage.¹ This lovely Maudeline (as the lesser stars are in respect of the sun, or Mercury in regard of the orb of Venus) amongst our London damsels was the *A perse*² for beauty, and the paragon of perfections; her looks, full of quickening purity, were able to animate love in marble; nature could do no more but wonder at her own handiwork; and art had nought but shadows in respect of such a substance. All eyes that beheld her wondered, all pens that praised her were quickened by her excellence. To be short, her least worth was so great consequence, as the best writer might be abashed to conceit³ or imagine them. With this fair damsel William Longbeard trafficked⁴ his fancies, summoning her yielding affections with so many earnest suits and services, that he at last conquered that fort, wherein Fancy himself took delight to tyrannize. And as the jet draweth amber, the loadstone the steel of the compass,⁵ so her beauty assaulted his senses, that all of them had no power of their offices, but were fatally assigned to subscribe to her sorceries. And whereas authority and countenance are wrested, [the] bulwark of chastity (though otherwise impregnable) is oftentimes impugned, and not only assaulted, but at last subdued. William by his friends and followers so wrought, that what by his friends and fair words, he won her for his leman,⁶ sparing no cost to trick her out in bravery,⁷ to the end he might by that means give a foil and

¹ *corage* virility, vital force or energy.

² *A perse* first, most excellent.

³ *conceit* conceive, think.

⁴ *trafficked* related (likening his dealings with Maudeline to a sort of commercial negotiation).

⁵ *jet ... compass* Jet is a substance better known as lignite, and it has magnetic properties; when rubbed, it can attract lighter substances, such as amber (solidified tree resin); a loadstone is a type of stone that also has magnetic properties.

⁶ *leman* lover.

⁷ *trick her out in bravery* dress her in elaborate and costly clothing and adornments.

205 glass to beauty. This Maudeline, thus compassed,⁸
her paramour began to prank it⁹ in the bravest
fashion, wresting his wits make an idol of her
worth, whose amorous passions, since they are of
some regard, I have here set down for the courtliest
210 ear to censure of:

Amidst the maze of discontented mind,
The royal trophy of joy-breeding love,
A happy hold resting place did find,
Within that breast which earst earth's hell did
prove.

215 Since when my long-enfeebled eyes have reared
Their drooping sight to gaze upon the sun,
Since when my thoughts in written lines
appeared,
Rejoicing at that palm my faith had won.

Ennobled thus by that that thrice-nobled passion,
220 Which hath the power all worldly cares to banish,
I fly sweet-seeming lures of false occasion,
And let all thoughts but love-sweet vade and
vanish.
The fruits I reap in spite of Fortune forward,
Makes me suppose no torment too untoward.

[...]

225 Another in respect of the occasion I could not
find in my heart to forget, for being at supper
once in her company, where were many that dis-
coursed of love, showing all the idolatry of their
pens in exemplifying that unchaste deity, he at last
230 when the table was taken up, remembering him of
a sonnet in an ancient French poet, on sudden
wrote this imitation:

As soon as thou dost see the winter clad in cold
Within September on the eaves in sundry forms
to fold,

⁸ *compassed* conquered; possessed (by William).

⁹ *prank it* dress fashionably and with costly ostentation.

235 Sweet swallow far thou fliest till to our native
 clime,
 In pleasant April Phoebus¹ rays return the
 sweeter time.
 But Love no day forsakes the place whereas I
 rest,
 But every hour lives in mine eyes and in my heart
 doth nest.
 Each minute I am thrall² and in my wounded
 heart
 240 He builds his nest, he lays his eggs, and thence
 will never part.
 Already one hath wings, soft down the other
 clads,
 This breaks the skin, this newly-fledged about my
 bosom gads.³
 The one hath broke the shell, the other soars on
 high,
 This newly laid, that quickly dead, before the
 dam⁴ come nigh.
 245 Both day and night I hear the small ones how
 they cry,
 Calling for food who by the great are fed for fear
 they die.
 All wax and grow to proof and every year do lay
 A second nest, and sit and hatch the cause of my
 decay.
 Ah, Maudeline, what relief have I for to remove
 250 These crooked cares that thus pursue my heart in
 harbouring love:
 But helpless of relief since I by care am stung,
 To wound my heart thereby to slay both mother
 and her young.

[...]

These other two for their shortness and strange-
 ness, I could not find in my heart to pretermit,
 255 knowing that the better sort, that are privy to⁵ imi-
 tation and method, will have their due estimate:

¹ *Phoebus'* the sun's.

² *thrall* bound, enslaved.

³ *gads* frolics, plays.

⁴ *dam* mother.

⁵ *privy to* knowledgeable about, acquainted with.

My mistress when she goes
 To pull the pink⁶ and rose,
 Along the river bounds
 260 And trippeth on the grounds,
 And runs from rocks to rocks
 With lovely scattered locks,
 Whilst amorous winds doth play
 With hairs so golden gay.
 265 The water waxeth clear,
 The fishes draw her near,
 The Sirens⁷ sing her praise,
 Sweet flowers perfume her ways,
 And Neptune glad and fain
 270 Yields up to her his reign.⁸

Another.

When I admire the rose
 That nature makes repose
 In you the best of many,
 More fair and blest than any,
 275 And see how curious art
 Hath decked every part,
 I think with doubtful view
 Whether you be the rose, or the rose is you.

280 An ode he wrote amongst the rest I dare not
 forget, in that the poesy is appertinent⁹ to this
 time, and hath no less life in it than those of the
 ancient, and the rather because hereby the learned
 may see how even in those days poesy had her
 impugners, and industry could not be free from
 285 detraction:

⁶ *pink* carnation.

⁷ *Sirens* a somewhat ominous chorus, since the classical Sirens were a group of sea nymphs whose singing was so enthralling that listeners would become entranced, losing themselves in the music and finally starving to death because they forgot to eat. They appear most famously in Homer's *Odyssey*.

⁸ *And Neptune ... reign* William's mistress is clearly associated with the spring, while Neptune (the god and the planet) were thought to rule over winter.

⁹ *appertinent* appertaining or properly belonging to; appropriate, fitting.

His Ode.

Since that I must repose
Beyond th' infernal lake,¹
What vails² me to compose
As many verses as Homer did make?

290 Choice numbers cannot keep
Me from my pointed grave,
But after lasting sleep
The doom of dreadful judge I needs must have.

I put the case my verse,
295 In lieu of all my pain,
Ten years my praise rehearse
Or somewhat longer time some glory gain.

What wants there to consume
Or take my lines from light,
300 But flame or fiery fume
Or threat'ning noise of war or bloody fight?

Excel I Anacreon³
Stesicores, Simonides,
Antimachus or Bion,⁴
305 Philetas, or the grave Bacchilides?⁵

All these though Greeks they were
And used that fluent tongue,
In course of many a year
Their works are lost and have no biding long:

¹ *th' infernal lake* the Stygian Lake in the classical underworld, Hades.

² *vails* i.e., avails.

³ *Anacreon* (c. 575-490 BCE), Greek court poet, famed in the Renaissance for his love lyrics.

⁴ *Stesicores* i.e., Stesichorus, ancient Greek lyric poet, most of whose works have been lost, except for a few fragments; *Simonides* (fl. 529 BCE), celebrated Greek poet, author of elegies, epigrams, and epics, whose works also survive only in fragments; *Antimachus* ancient Greek poet and musician; *Bion* ancient Greek poet, of whose works only six are fully extant.

⁵ *Philetas* Philetas, ancient Greek poet and grammarian, author of celebrated elegies and epigrams, of which only fragments remain; *Bacchilides* Bacchylides, an ancient Greek lyric poet, of whose celebrated songs only fragments remain.

310 Then I who want wit's sap,
And write but bastard rhyme,
May I expect the hap,⁶
That my endeavours may o'ercome the time?

No, no: 'tis far more meet⁷
315 To follow merchant's life,
Or at the judge's feet
To sell my tongue for bribes to maintain strife,

Than haunt the idle train
Of poor Calliope,⁸
320 Which leaves for hunger slain
The choicest men that her attendants be.

These and such like fruits of his fancy⁹ may sufficiently testify unto you both the high spirit and deep invention of this crafty citizen, who
325 flourishing thus in the very fullness of love's joy, and revelling in the chiefest palaces of pleasure, at last recalled to mind the ambitious desires that were wont to accompany him, which having the nature of fire (which no sooner catcheth hold of dry matter but presently it consumeth it) from a light smoke at last fell to so huge a flame, that himself was confounded¹⁰ therewith, and all his hopes made frustrate: and thus it fell out.

The King's Majesty, hearing of his¹¹ continual
335 assemblies and comparing his purposes with his practice, began under no small grounds to conceive his cursed intention: for considering with himself the manner of his life, the busyness¹² of his brain, the 'ticing¹³ eloquence of his tongue, and the mightiness of his mind, he imagined (as
340 afterward it fell out) that so great means of quick and capable fuel would at last break out to an unquenchable flame. Whereupon, the King with

⁶ *hap* fortune.

⁷ *meet* fitting, appropriate.

⁸ *Calliope* Muse of eloquence and heroic poetry.

⁹ *fancy* imagination.

¹⁰ *confounded* destroyed, consumed.

¹¹ *his* William's.

¹² *busyness* active, restless working.

¹³ *'ticing* i.e., enticing, alluring, seductive.

345 considerate judgement called him to court, commanding him to cease his disordered assemblies, lest in seeking to exterminate the injuries of the rich, he should revive the insolence of the poor.

350 “For,” said he, “William, who seeth not whereto these routs¹ tend? Who thinketh not that riot will follow them? The labouring men that were kept from innovations by their work are now capable of all change and novelties in their idleness. In living as they do, they rather are drawn to detest labour than to follow it; wherethrough the offices and mechanical crafts in the city do cease, and by the omission of industry riseth the pretermission² of duty. For this cause, as you have care of my love, incite them not to too much liberty. Further them what you may, if they be wronged, but let not justice be a colour³ to win them to wickedness.”

360 With these, or such like admonitions King Richard attempted him, and so wrought him, that for a while the commotions and motives of trouble were laid apart, so that he walked London streets with lesser troops, and wholly addicted himself to play with his fair Maudeline, whose unchaste life was a byword in the city.

How William with the Long Beard Slew Arthur Brown, Who Deceived Him of His Maudeline. [Chapter 4].

370 Whilst William was conversant in the affairs of state, intending every way to enlarge his own power, and attending daily upon the King’s pleasure, it fortuned that one Arthur Brown, furthered by his youth and fitted by occasion, fell in with Maudeline, William’s wanton concubine. And having wealth sufficient and wit no less subtle, he so craftily handled the cause that he won the young woman to stoop to a second lure,⁴ and to

¹ *routs* disordered or tumultuous assemblies.

² *pretermission* neglect, disregard.

³ *colour* outward appearance aimed at concealing the truth.

⁴ *to stoop to a second lure* The image is taken from the falconer’s training of the falcon to hunt for him through first training it to come to a lure; a falcon would generally only hunt for its trainer, and Maudeline is by implication betraying her first “trainer” William, by being willing to pursue the lure offered by another “trainer” (Arthur).

380 accept his love. Many and often times had they intercourse,⁵ so that at last the rumour passing in every place, it could not choose but light at last in William’s hearing, who moved beyond measure to see himself outfaced by one who had so long time been feared by all, he frowningly prepared revenge, resolving with himself that no means were too mean⁶ to give a tragical sauce to his corrupt meaning. Whereupon, breaking his mind with certain of his faction, he agreed to watch an opportunity to revenge impiety: and for that cause watching very craftily when Arthur his rival should repair unto his lawless leman, he at last surprised and encountered him, and causing some of his train to muffle him in his cloak and to stop his mouth for fear of crying, he stabbed him with a dagger in divers places, and in the last wound left the same sticking, fastening the poor caitiff’s own hand with his own dagger, which he had purposely (to avoid all means of suspicion, and to raise an opinion that he had murdered himself) sheathed in Arthur’s own body. This done, he departed unspied and unsuspected; and the body being found, according to the censure and verdict of the jury which beheld the same, was thrust through with a stake, and so buried as if he had been guilty of his own murder. William—thus delivered of a supplanter of his pleasure—after some unkindness past and calmed between him and his Maudeline, finally fell to an accord, accustoming her as he was wont, under promise of more constancy in affection [...]

405 But leaving these his effeminate follies of youth, wherein he so ungraciously passed his time, let us draw to the consideration of his traitorous practices, and finally, as the fruit of such sinister follies, conclude with his tragical end. After he had for a time, until the Prince’s mind were otherwise withdrawn with more weighty matters, ceased both his routs and riots, the old

⁵ *intercourse* “Intercourse’s” exclusive meaning of “sexual intercourse” is not available in the sixteenth century; here, the meaning is more generally “meeting” or “social converse,” although sex was obviously part of their frequent meetings.

⁶ *mean* base, low.

rankled venom of his ambition began more freely
to break forth, so that what before time he
coloured¹ under conscience, now at last he mani-
420 fested with audacious confidence. The mighty in
court that maligned him, he overmastered by his
attendants, swashing out² in open streets upon
every light occasion. For himself, he thought no
man sufficient to suppress him, nor of sufficiency
425 to brave him, for at a beck, cobblers, tinkers,
tailors, and all sorts of the hare-brained multitude
attended him, fought for him, supported him, and
made him lord of their factions; where-through,
the better sorts neither were lords of themselves,
430 neither commanders of their own livelihoods.
From some he extorted wealth by corrupt wit-
nesses, sparing no means to enrich his followers,
by racking and wresting the King's authority. And
no sooner did he hear that the King had given
435 order to his Council to censure his bad
demeanours, but gathering to himself a huge mul-
titude, he openly used this discourse unto them,
beginning his exhortation with this place of
Scripture:

440 *Haurietis aquas in gaudio de fontibus salvatoris.*³

Which is as much to say, as, "You shall draw
waters with joy out of the fountains of our
Saviour."

445 "For," quoth he, "my worthy and faithful
friends, who have more courage than coin, and
ability in arms than possibilities of wealth, I am
the saviour of you that are poor, and the sovereign
of such as are penniless. You that have assayed the
hard hand the rich shall be succoured by the happy
450 hand of the righteous. Now, therefore, draw your
happy fountains of counsel out of my words, and
turn the troubles you have to assured triumphs,

¹ *coloured* disguised, concealed [under the show of].

² *swashing out* lashing out; blustering or swaggering about with their weapons.

³ Isaiah 12:3 (Latin Vulgate). The translation is more strictly: "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation."

for the days of your visitation is at hand. I shall
depart waters from waters;⁴ I mean, the proud
455 from the poor, the merciless from the merciful,
the good from the evil, and the light from the
darkness. I will oppose myself against all dangers
to prevent your damage,⁵ and lose my life, but you
shall have living. Be confident therefore and bold,
460 for such as have courage are seldom conquered.
Let the greatest upbraid, they shall not bite. We
have weapons to withstand as well as words to
persuade; we are as courageous as our enemies are
crafty. Stick therefore unto me, who will strive for
you. Let me be suppressed, you are subdued; let
me flourish, you are fortunate. But if sinister
chance threaten, why, *Alea iacta est:*⁶ *una salus victis*
*nullam sperare salutem.*⁷

470 Thus daily and hourly animated he the ill-
minded sort; and although the King did often-
times summon him, and by letters dissuaded him
from his ill demeanour, yet was he enforced to use
violence, or otherwise that stripe which at first
seemed to be but a fillip would at last have grown
475 unto a fistula.⁸ For which cause, Hubert, then
bishop of Canterbury, soundly resolving in his
thoughts that forbearance would be the means of
further mischief, by the advice of others of the

⁴ *I shall depart waters from waters* See Exodus 14:15-29. William presents himself as a latter-day Moses, referring to Moses' parting of the Red Sea to allow the fleeing Israelites to escape slaughter by the army of the Egyptian Pharaoh; like the ancient prophet and chosen one of God, William will lead his people (the poor of London) into a Promised Land, ensuring the destruction of their oppressors (by implication the rich, the nobility, and the King).

⁵ *damage* injury, harm.

⁶ Latin, "The die has been cast." According to the Roman historian Suetonius, these were the words of Julius Caesar before he led his army across the River Rubicon and into Italy; it was forbidden for a Roman general to lead troops into Italy, and thus Caesar's actions thrust Rome into a crisis. The phrase has come to refer to any action that is irrevocable.

⁷ Latin, "The one safety for the vanquished is to have no hope of safety" (Virgil, *Aeneid*, 2.354). Aeneas uses these words to encourage the Trojans to fight with all they have when Troy is taken and he believes they are all doomed.

⁸ *or otherwise ... fistula* A stripe is a mark left by a lash with a whip; a weal. Such a wound might seem at first trivial or minor (a fillip), but without proper attention it might develop into a serious, suppurating ulcer (a fistula).

480 Privy Council called him in question, summoning
him against an appointed day to come and yield a
reason of those his factious tumults.

485 William, that saw the iron ready to wax hot and
the hammers ready to strike, began to remember¹
himself; and his guilty conscience (which, as the
490 wise man sayeth, is a hundred witnesses)² would
not suffer him to walk with so great confidence,
yet lest fear should be suspected in him, whose
good fortunes and life wholly depended on his
495 courage, he oftentimes looked abroad, but
attended by such a band of base companions, as if
it had been the proud Changuis leading his legions
of Tartars through Europe.³ But when the day of
his appearance came, he was backed with such a
500 number of mechanical rebels that Hubert, instead
of attempting him with upbraids,⁴ was fain to
temper him with flattering persuasions. Yea, the
stoutest counsellors, though never so considerate,
were fain⁵ to entreat him, whom they had resolved
to threaten and imprison. William, seeing them
505 abashed, waxed bold, and in these words saluted
them:

“Honourable fathers and grave councillors,
according to your honourable summons and the
510 duty of a subject, I present myself before you,
attended in this sort as you see, not to violate laws
by lewd insurrections, but both to present my
service to my Prince and your Honours, and to
draw my friend and well-willers to that duty,
515 whereunto in soul I am devoted to this state. If
therefore you have ought to command me, or if
my services in times past be any way suspected, I
stand ready to satisfy you in the one or answer to
the other.”

515 Hubert, that knew well that soft drops in time
pierce hard stones, and that the diamond though
not tainted by hammer is tempered in strong

¹ *remember* recollect, reflect on.

² *and his guilty ... witnesses* Proverb, “Conscience is a thousand witnesses” (*Tilley* C601).

³ *Changuis ... Europe* For the tale of Changuis, how he became the emperor of all the Tartars, and how his sons succeeded him, see the medieval English writer John Mandeville, *Travels*, Chapter 24.

⁴ *upbraids* rebukes.

⁵ *fain* willing, eager.

vinegar, began to colour⁶ where he might not
command, and flatter where he could not enforce;
and thus he said:

520 “Being assured, William, that good subjects tied
by no bounty to their prince yet yield him all
observance, we cannot persuade ourselves that
you, who have been authorized by your prince to
525 countercheck injustice, will be the pattern of inju-
rious insolence. For which cause we have called
you, not as condemners of your faith, but com-
menders of your forwardness; neither have we so
bad an opinion of these good men that follow
you, that either they would be drawn to violate
530 justice, or you could be induced to violate and alter
their honest and Christian-like duties. Our only
request to you in the King’s behalf is to cast off
this lordly train, and suffer these poor men to
follow their professions, lest being unawares
535 assailed by want, they shall at last desperately
attempt wickedness. As for these good fellows
who in their looks promise no looseness,⁷ I
beseech them, [in] his Majesty’s name, to keep
their houses,⁸ promising them in general, that if
540 any one of them be wronged, they shall have
remedy.”

“Nay, we will have remedy in spite of you,” said
they, “as long as William lives.”

545 And this said, without all reverence they
departed the place, carrying with them their
captain commander, scoffing at the fainthearted-
ness of the archbishop; for full well was he⁹
assured that greater severity was concluded upon
than he¹⁰ there would insinuate. For which cause
550 he¹¹ continually stood on his guard, spoiling¹² all
such men as he thought abettors of the Bishop.¹³

⁶ *colour* i.e., represent in fair colours [William’s inexcusable behaviour]; gloss over, cloak.

⁷ *looseness* amorality, lewd behaviour.

⁸ *keep their houses* remain in their houses following their daily business [rather than accompanying William about the street, and attending his “routs”].

⁹ *be* William.

¹⁰ *be* the archbishop of Canterbury, Hubert.

¹¹ *be* William.

¹² *spoiling* robbing, attacking.

¹³ *Bishop* Hubert, archbishop of Canterbury.

The bailiffs of London, according to their authority, seeing matters were grown to such extremity, kept diligent and strong watch, drawing
 555 some of the commons from him by fair words, and some by gifts. This notwithstanding, William was never unattended. The Council, who every
 560 ways were vigilant to root out this viper from the commonweal, what they could not by proves,¹ they adventured by policy,² animating divers
 valiant men with huge promises to mark his manners, and when the occasion was offered, to
 565 apprehend him at such time as he little suspected. But long was it ere³ they either could find opportunity, or catch the fox in his form.⁴ Yet at last, when he least suspected, they caught him tardy⁵ in
 Bread Street, attended only by ten or twelve; at which time, they drawing their swords assailed him valiantly.

570 But he, who in all conflicts of fortune was both confident and courageous, first animated his retinue to the fight, and after that wresting himself by main force out of their hands, he took him to flight towards the heart of the city, and ran into Cheapside. They, who were busied
 575 against his poor followers, seeing him fled, gave over fight, and earnestly pursued him. By this time, the city was in an uproar: the poorer sort laboured to rescue William; the bailiffs with the
 580 best citizens armed them to back the King's officers. So that the city was altogether up in arms. William Longbeard seeing himself hotly pursued, and knowing no mean to escape, stepped to a
 585 poor carpenter who stayed in Cheap for work, and, taking his axe from him, desperately assailed his pursuers, and with his own hands valiantly slew some of them. But when he perceived the factions of his enemies to be great, and his friends well nigh tired, he betook himself at last

¹ *proves* perhaps, "proofs" in the sense of legal evidence of wrongdoing.

² *policy* stratagem, trick, underhanded device.

³ *ere* before.

⁴ *form* lair.

⁵ *caught him tardy* overtook him; took him unawares or unprepared.

590 into Bow Church,⁶ not for his sanctuary,⁷ but for a bulwark of his safety.

Thither repaired all the poor commons, some with bats, some with spits, and such weapons as they had, driving away all the King's officers in despite of
 595 their friends, and determining with themselves rather to die than to lose their William Longbeard. Amongst the rest, Maudeline his minion knowing that his wrack was her ruin, came unto him, where weeping mild tears from her immodest eyes, she
 600 mollified his marble heart, that (as some testify) he was more moved therewith than with the threats and terrors of his greatest enemies. But see impiety where it prevaieth, how it worketh. That church which was sacred to prayers was now made a den of
 605 rebels; those places which were reserved to holy uses, were now soiled with dishonest abuses; where before Our Lady⁸ was prayed to, lewdness was played withal. But to bring these causes to their catastrophe, sufficeth it that darkness for this time
 610 ended the dissension, and the coming on of the night, wrought also the conclusion of the fight.

How William with the Long Beard after Long Trouble Was Taken by the King's Officers, and Executed for his Misdemeanours. [Chapter 5].

No sooner 'gan the hours draw forth the burnished chariot of the sun, and the star that beautifieth the morning's break shut up her beams in the
 615 bowels of the hidden hemisphere, but Richard and his Council, ascertained of that which was happened, commanded the bailiffs of the city by express letters to ferret him out of his hole and cease the tumults by their authorities; for which
 620 cause, the bailiffs, attended by a bold troop of men in harness,⁹ came into Cheap. The eldest of

⁶ *Bow Church* The Church of St Mary-le-Bow (St Mary de Arcubus); located on the S side of Cheapside, E of Bread Street.

⁷ *sanctuary* A person who fled into a church could claim *sanctuary*, immunity from arrest for certain crimes, but only while he/she remained within the sacred precincts of the church.

⁸ *Our Lady* the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ.

⁹ *men in harness* armed men; men in armour.

whom, being called Gerard de Antiloche, handled himself with such gravity and used so effectual persuasions that the commons for the most part withdrew them to their own houses, and, after assurance of pardon from his Majesty, betook them to their labour. As for the rest in the church, when neither persuasions could allure them nor threats intenerate¹ their hearts, the bailiffs fell to arms, and for the space of four hours continued a bloody and desperate fight. But when they perceived the traitors were desperate, and the church was sufficiently strong to keep them out, they at last found out this worthy policy.

They caused some chief men to bring them great store of straw, which they fired in divers parts about the church, and in every corner whereas the wind might work the smoke any entrance, which so smothered and stifled them in the church that they were all of them for the liberty of a short time of life to submit themselves to the judgement of succeeding death. Hereupon, after many woeful complaints poured out on every side by William, his Maudeline, and other malefactors, they were all enforced to leave the church and submit themselves to the hands of the bailiffs, who, according to the King's command, picking out William with nine other his confederates, committed them unto ward² for that time, dismissing the rest under the King's general pardon, who³ certified hereof was not a little solaced. For which cause, he sent some of his Council and judges the next day, who ascending the judgement seat called forth William with the long beard with his confederates, arraigning them of high treason against God, the King, and country.

Among all the rest, William showed himself most confident, for neither did the taunts of the judges extenuate⁴ his courage, neither could the bonds he was laden withal abash him any ways, but that with a manly look and enticing eloquence, he thus attempted⁵ the justices:

¹ *intenerate* soften, mollify, make tender.

² *unto ward* to jail.

³ *who* i.e., King Richard I.

⁴ *extenuate* diminish, lessen.

⁵ *attempted* addressed with urgency, sought to move or influence.

“You lords and honourable judges, though I know it a hard thing to strive against the obstinate or to extort pity there where all compassion is extinguished, yet will I speak, using the officer of nature to work you, although I know I shall not win you. I am here called and indicted before you for high treason, a heinous crime I confess it, and worthy punishment I deny it not; but may it please you with patience to examine circumstances. I have emboldened the poorer sort to innovation, to fight for liberty to impugn the rich, a matter in the commonweals of Greece highly commended, but here accounted factious, and why? There, subjects made kings; here, kings master subjects. ‘And why not?’ say you. ‘And why not?’ think I. Yet am I faulty under a good precedent, and the ambition which hath entangled me hath not been without his⁶ profit. To offend of obstinate will were brutish, but under some limits of reason to default, can you (my lords) but think it pardonable? I have raised one or two assemblies, and what of this? Peace was not broken, only my safety was assured; and were it that the law had been injured, might not the righting of a hundred poor men's causes merit pardon for two unlawful assemblies? But you will say, I have animated subjects against their Prince. I confess it, but under a milder title: I have counselled them to compass⁷ liberty, which (if nature might be equal judge between us) I know should not be so heinously misconstrued.

“For my last tumult, I did nothing but in mine own defence. And what is lawful, if it be not permitted us, *Vim vi repellere*?⁸ But why plead I excuses, knowing the laws of this realm admit no one of my constructions? If it be resolved I must die, do me this favour, my lords, to protract no time: execute your justice on my body, and let it not pine long time in fear through supposal of extremes. For my soul, since it is derived from a more immortal essence, I dare boast the liberty thereof, knowing that eternity is prepared for it,

⁶ *his* the King's.

⁷ *compass* achieve.

⁸ Latin, “To repel force with force.”

705 and mercy may attend it. But for these poor ones
 who have defaulted through no malice, but have
 been misled through vain suggestions, how gra-
 cious a deed should your Honours do to exemplify
 your mercy on them? Poor souls, they have
 710 offended in not offending, and but to enthrone
 me have overthrown themselves. For which cause,
 if consideration of innocent guiltiness and guilty
 innocence may any ways move you, grant them
 life, and let me solely enact the tragedy, who am
 confirmed against all Fortune's tyrannies."

715 These latter words were delivered with so great
 vehemency of spirit, and attended with so quick-
 ening motions and actions of the body, that
 everyone pitied that so rare virtues should be rav-
 ished by untimely death or accustomed with so
 720 many ungodly practices. The judges—who were
 Socratical¹ in all their speeches, showing their
 rhetoric in their upright judgements not quaint²
 discourses—after the examinations, indictments,
 verdicts of the jury, and such like, at last gave final
 725 and fatal judgement: that William with the long
 beard with his confederates should the next day
 be hanged, drawn, and quartered.³ And so, after
 some other worthy exhortations to the people to
 maintain peace, and that they should show them-
 730 selves more dutiful, and after thanks to the bailiffs
 and good citizens for their faithful and good
 service to his Majesty, the assembly broke up, and
 the prisoners till the next day were committed to
 the dungeon.

735 No sooner was the gay mistress of the day-
 break prepared in her roseate coach, powdering
 the heavens with purple, but the bailiffs repaired
 to the prison, leading forth William and those his

¹ *Socratical* in a measured and unbiased way, like the great philoso-
 pher Socrates.

² *quaint* elaborate, ingenious.

³ *hanged, drawn, and quartered* The punishment for treason was excru-
 ciatingly painful: the convicted would first be hanged, then cut down
 while still alive, then castrated, disembowelled, and beheaded; then
 the body would be divided into four pieces (quartered) with the
 pieces and the head set up in prominent places around the city of
 London: on London Bridge, for example. The pieces of the body
 would often be parboiled first to preserve them so they could remain
 for a long time in the public eye as a warning to others.

740 other confederates to their execution. Then
 flocked about them divers sorts of people, some
 to see those who were so much searched after,
 others to lament him whom they had so loved. At
 last [they] arrived at the place where they should
 finish their days, and all stood to behold their
 745 death. William, as principal in his lifetime of sedi-
 tious practice, was to enact the first and fatal part
 in the tragedy; for which cause, boldly climbing up
 the ladder, and having the rope fitly cast about his
 neck, after some private prayers, he spoke after
 750 this manner unto the people:

"My good countrymen, you are repaired hither
 to see a sorry spectacle, to behold the folly of life
 paid with the fruits of death, to mark how sinister
 treasons end with condign⁴ torments. If you apply
 755 what you here see and behold to your own profits,
 I shall be glad, who now even at this my last hour,
 desire rather you should reconcile yourselves from
 all wickedness than be dismayed or moved with
 my wretchedness.

760 "O my dear friends, I now protest before God
 and vow before men that mine own presumptuous
 climbing hath been the just cause of my confu-
 sion. I have had more desire of glory than respect
 of God, more regard of dignity than of duty,
 765 deeming it better to be a famous traitor than a
 faithful and true subject. For which my ines-
 timable sins I cry God heartily mercy. I beseech
 his Majesty to forgive me, and pray you all by your
 prayers to implore God's grace for me. Neither
 770 deserve I death only for the offence I have made
 the King, but my conscience accuseth me, and I
 here do openly confess it, that I was he who mur-
 dered Anthony Browne, in that he was a rival in
 my most lewd love. This, this, if nought else, my
 775 countrymen, sufficeth to condemn me; for this
 and all I am heartily sorry. My God, I repent me
 from my soul, my God."

780 Which said, lifting up his eyes to Heaven, he
 prayed a long time very vehemently and, after
 many fruitful exhortations, finished his life to the
 comfort of those who wished his soul's health.

⁴ *condign* worthily deserved, merited, fitting.

The rest his confederates after their several¹ confessions, were served with the same sauce, and thus ended the troubles with their tragedies.

785 Their bodies cut down were buried by their friends, and happy was he among the poorer sort that had any thing to enrich the funeral of William Longbeard. And notwithstanding his confession at his death, and divers other evidences at his condemnation, yet were there divers² who after his death held him for a saint, casting out slanderous libels against the Archbishop, terming him the bloodsucker of good men. There were many superstitious women, who in their devotion were
795 went to pray to him, and after his death digged up the ground about the gallows' tree, affirming that many had been healed of sundry sicknesses by the touch thereof. All this their idolatrous constructions at first began by reason of a priest, a near ally to William, who openly preached that by virtue of
800 a chain wherewith William was bound, during the time of his imprisonment, there were divers men healed of hot fevers. The blood that fell from him at such time as he was quartered, they clearly
805 scraped up, leaving nothing that could yield any memory of him, either unsought or ungotten. But at last the Archbishop of Canterbury remedied all these things, who first accursed the priest that brought up the fables, and after that caused the
810 place to be watched, where-through³ such idolatry ceased, and the people were no more seduced. But for that William wrote many notable poems and translations in the prison, which if you peruse will notify unto you his singular wit, I have thought
815 good to subscribe them, desiring your favourable censure of them.

William Longbeard's Epitaph.

Untimely death and my fond⁴ fruits of treason,
My lawless lust, my murders long concealed,
Have shipwrecked life amidst my April season.

¹ *several* separate, individual.

² *divers* many.

³ *where-through* whereby; by that means.

⁴ *fond* foolish.

820 Thus, covered things at last will be revealed.
A shameful death my sinful life succeedeth,
And fear of heavenly judge great terror breedeth.

My mangled members in this grave included,
Have answered law's extremes to my confusion,
825 O God, let not my murders be obtruded
Against my soul wronged through my earth's
illusion.

And as the grave my lifeless limbs containeth,
So take my soul to thee where rest remaineth.

Thou travailler⁵ that treadest on my tomb
830 Rememb'reth thee of my untimely fall;
Prevent the time, forethink what may become,
See that thy will be to thy reason thrall,⁶
Scorn world's delights, esteem vain honour small:
So may'st thou die with fame, where men of
conscience foul
835 Perish with shame and hazard of their soul.

I have hereunto annexed likewise some other of his spiritual hymns and songs, whereby the virtuous may gather how sweet the fruits be of a reconciled and penitent soul.

The First.

840 That pity Lord that earst⁷ thy heart inflamed
To entertain a voluntary death,
To ransom man, by loathed sins defamed,
From Hell and those infernal pains beneath:

Vouchsafe, my God, those snares it may unlose⁸
845 Wherein this blinded world hath me entrapped,

⁵ *travailler* labourer; but also, "traveller."

⁶ *thrall* bound.

⁷ *earst* first.

⁸ *unlose* unloose.

That whilst I traffic in this world of woes,
My soul no more in lusts may be entrappd.

Great are my faults, Oh me, most wilful witted:
But if each one were just, there were no place
850 To show thy power that sins might be remitted.
Let then, O Lord, thy mercy quite displace,
The lewd and endless sins I have committed,
Through thine unspeakable and endless grace.

The Second.

Such dark obscured clouds at once encumbered
855 My mind, my heart, my thoughts from grace
retired
With swarms of sins that never may be
numbered,
That hope of virtue quite in me expired.

When as the Lord of hosts, my gracious Father,
Bent on my dulled powers his beams of
brightness,
860 And my confused spirits in one did gather
Too long ensnared by vanity and lightness.

A perfect zeal (not office of my senses)
So seized my judgement smothered in his miss,
That Heaven I wished and loathed this earthly jail,
865 My heart disclaimed vile thoughts and vain
pretences.
And my desires were shut in seemly vail,¹
So that I said, "Lord, what a world is this?"

After such time as he had received his judgement,
he grew into this meditation of the miseries of

870 life, which I dare avow is both worthy the reading
and noting, yea even among the learnedest.

The Third.

A shop of shame, a gain of life-long grief,
A heaven for fools, a hell to perfect wise,
A theatre of blames where death is chief,
875 A golden cup where poison hidden lies.

A storm of woes without one calm of quiet,
A hive that yieldeth hemlock and no honey,
A booth of sin, a death to those that try it,
A fair where cares are sold withouten money.

880 A fleshly joy, a grave of rotten bones,
A spring of tears, a let² of true delight,
A loss of time, a labyrinth of moans,
A pleasing pain, a prison of the sprite,
885 To pray with Paul³ and wish to be dissolved?

Thus endeth the life of William Longbeard: a
glass⁴ for all sorts to look into, wherein the high-
minded may learn to know the mean, and corrupt
consciences may read the confusion of their
890 wickedness. Let this example serve to withdraw
the bad-minded from Bedlam⁵ insolence, and
encourage the good to follow godliness, so have I
that fruit of my labour which I desire, and God
shall have the glory, to whom be all praise.

FINIS.

—1593

¹ *vail* something which obscures or cloaks.

² *let* hindrance, stop.

³ *To pray with Paul* This might be a reference to any of the places in his Letters where Paul expresses his desire to abandon the body and become one with Christ after death: for example, Romans 7:24-8:3; 1 Corinthians 15:50-58; 2 Corinthians 4:8-18.

⁴ *glass* mirror.

⁵ *Bedlam* mad, insane.