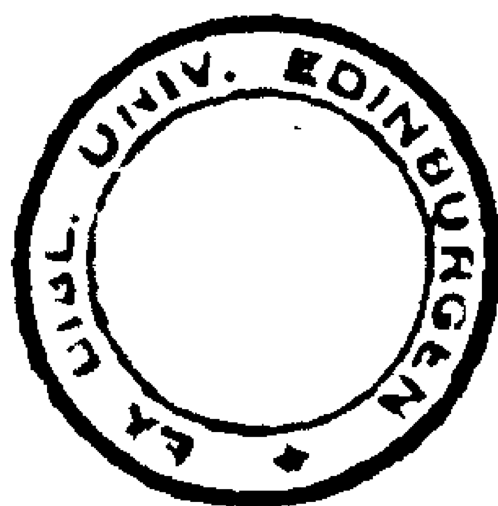
THE POETRY OF ROBERT HENRYSON: A STUDY OF THE USE OF SOURCE MATERIAL

by

I.W.A. JAMIESON



Thesis presented for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of Edinburgh in the Faculty of Arts.

November, 1964.

BEST COPY

AVAILABLE

Variable print quality

BEST COPY

AVAILABLE

TEXT IN ORIGINAL IS CLOSE TO THE EDGE OF THE PAGE

PREFACE

Most of Henryson's poetry retells tales already told many times before; all of it is written within the context of accepted genres and forms. Henryson's audience would have known these stories and genres, and even today readers approaching his works will know the stories of certain of the fables, and of Orpheus and Eurydice. What is of importance then is the particular way in which the stories are told, the particular emphasis given, the particular themes stressed. While it is of course true that we realize something of this without knowing previous versions, we cannot today obtain a true perspective on Henryson as artist and moralist unless we attempt to discover his debt to tradition; this done we can assess his own creative talent.

There is a second reason why the study of the traditions within which the poet is writing is necessary. It is impossible to understand the full meaning of the poetry unless one is acquainted with the function of mediæval iconographic imagery and form. Often Henryson has reorientated traditional forms by placing them in a new context, by altering details. Unless this is realized, and the original form understood one misses not only Henryson's essential creativity but also part of the meaning and unity of the works in which they are used.

Certain conclusions have become obvious from studying the poetry in connection with related material. Firstly, Henryson is very much a literary artist, not a rustic, a folk poet or an observer of nature. Almost every detail in his poetry can be

traced to some literary source known to mediæval Europe - for Henryson is not a Scottish nationalist despite the efforts of certain modern critics to make him so. But - and this is the second conclusion - though details, forms, stories can be traced to their origin we are not left with a conglomeration of borrowings. Henryson has welded his material creatively into a sophisticated and satisfying artistic and thematic whole. Thus Henryson appears not as the genial schoolmaster charmed with animal behaviour normally portrayed but as a gifted and sophisticated artist interested in form as a means of conveying a serious moral theme, the transitoriness and instability of material pleasures in this fleeting world.

Two comments should be made about the title. Firstly, I have interpreted the term 'source material' very widely to include not only definite sources but also genre material and formal criteria. We cannot be certain that Henryson knew the particular examples of these forms I have chosen, but that is of no importance. Secondly, the thesis is concerned almost exclusively with The Fabillis and the shorter poems, The Testament of Cresseid and Orpheus and Eurydice being mentioned merely as exemplary material and in a brief appendix. To include them would have been to put a large enough work beyond reasonable limits; besides, the type of study I have adopted for The Fabillis has been attempted successfully for the other two long poems by Dr. S.J. Harth.

As a text of The Fabillis I have adopted, with occasional emendations, that of the Bannatyne Manuscript as edited by

W. Tod Ritchie. Reasons for the superiority of this manuscript are given by Professor John MacQueen in his article on the text of Henryson. I have adopted the titles of the poems given in the Bannatyne text and also something of the order (starting of course with *The Prolog*) which has more affinity with the order of the Romulus tradition used by Henryson than have the other early versions, Bassandyne and Harleian. Three fables do not exist in the Bannatyne Manuscript - for these (and for the text of the other poems) I have used Wood's edition.

Editorial policy: in Middle Scots texts and a few Middle English texts I have reduced 'þ', 'ȝ' and superscript 't' to 'th', 'y' and 'cht'. In all edited texts I have expanded ampersands to 'and' without comment; but in manuscripts I have transcribed myself I have indicated expansion of abbreviations in the normal fashion. My policy of underlining rhetorical paralleling and alliteration is explained on p.69 n. 1.

All references to Chaucer's work are to *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. F.N. Robinson, 2nd edn. (London, 1957). I have not thought it necessary to give page references to this volume in my footnotes. In general any particular poem is cited once only in the footnotes in each chapter. Thus, a reference to Gualterus Anglicus' version of *The Cok and the Jewell* for instance will be footnoted only on its first occurrence in the chapter dealing with that poem.

I have many acknowledgements to make: to the typist, Miss A. Turner, for wading through innumerable pages in numerous unintelligible languages; to the Librarians of the Universities

of Manchester and Cork who helped to locate material and obtained permission for its use; to the Librarians and staff of the Cambridge University Library, the British Museum, the National Library of Scotland, the Edinburgh University Library (particularly Mr. C.P. Finlayson, Keeper of Manuscripts, and Mr. R. Christie) for the use of their facilities and never-failing courtesy and help; to the University of Edinburgh for its grant of a postgraduate studentship.

The late Professor W. Croft Dickinson advised on certain historical points; the Rev. Dr. J. Bulloh answered an enquiry on mediæval sermon material; Dr. S.J. Harth, Miss M.B. Lonergan and Mrs. W. Byers Brown kindly gave permission to use their researches on Henryson, Dr. J.W. Blench permission to use his thesis on fifteenth century sermons; Rev. Dr. I. Breward suggested the value of Dr. Blench's work; Miss M.D. Legge helped with a difficult paragraph of Old French; Professor J.E. Butt gave advice on administrative matters; Dr. O.K. Schram taught paleography in his inimitable way; Professor Denton Fox provided the stimulation of agreement on many Henrysonian matters.

Miss Judith Dale and Mr. Colin Bowley have provided very necessary encouragement throughout, and have constantly prodded a somewhat lazy mind to rethink its critical principles. Miss Penny Allen has carefully copied the final draft of the thesis; indeed has made the process of finishing far more pleasant than it would otherwise have been.

But my deepest thanks must go to Professor John MacQueen whose ever present help, encouragement and kindness have made

my three years' stay in Edinburgh so pleasant and whose serious concern with the values of mediæval literature opened up for me a whole new area of interest and proved a constant inspiration.

Abbreviations:

Archiv: *Archiv für das Studium der Neueren Sprachen und Literaturen*

B.M.: British Museum

B.N.: Bibliothèque Nationale

D.O.S.T.: *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue*, ed. W.A. Craigie and J. Aitken (Chicago and London, 1937-

E.E.T.S.O.S.: Early English Text Society Original Series

E.S.: Extra Series

J.E.G.P.: *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*

M.L.N.: *Modern Language Notes*

M.L.Q.: *Modern Language Quarterly*

M.L.R.: *Modern Language Review*

N.E.D.: *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, ed. J.A.H. Murray, 15 vols. (Oxford, 1888-1933)

P.L.: *Patrologia Latina*, ed. J.P. Migne, 221 vols. (Paris, 1844-64)

P.Q.: *Philological Quarterly*

R.E.S.: *Review of English Studies*

S.A.T.F.: Société des Anciens Textes Français

S.P.: *Studies in Philology*

Table of Contents

PART I: THE MORALL FABILLIS

A: Argument 2
B: The Mediæval Animal Tale Collections
i. Fable Collections 7
ii. Le Roman de Renard 21
iii. The exempla tradition 24
C: The Individual Works
i. The Prolog 30
ii. The Cock and the Jewell 39
iii. The Mous and the Paddock 59
iv. The Twa Myis 74
v. The Dog the Scheip and the Wolff 98
vi. The Wolff and the Lamb 109
vii. The Lyon and the Mous 122
viii. The Swallow and Othir Birdis 140
ix. The Fox and the Cock 169
x. The Fox and the Wolf 190
xi. The Fox tryed before the Lyone 213
xii. The Fox the Wolf and the Cadger 239
xiii. The Fox the Wolf and the Husbandman 255
xiv. The Wolf and the Wedder 274
D: Conclusion 287

PART II: THE SHORTER POEMS

A: Introduction 290
B: The Individual Poems
i. Robene and Makyne 294
ii. Sum Practysis of Medecyne 301
iii. Ane Prayer for the Pest 314
iv. The Garmont of Gud Ladeis 326
v. The Bludy Serk 332
vi. The Ressoning Betuix Aige and Yowth 343
vii. The Prais of Aige 351
viii. Obey and thank thy God of All (The Abbay Walk) 355
ix. The Annunciation 361
x. The Thre Deid Pollis 367
xi. The Ressoning Betuix Aige and Yowth 373
xii. Aganis Haisty Credence of Titlaris 376

APPENDIX A: The Testament of Cresseid and Orpheus and Eurydice 381

APPENDIX B: The Want of Wyse Men 386

BIBLIOGRAPHY 393

PART I: THE MORALL FABILLIS

Surely the most pressing problem connected with Henryson is an exhaustive study of the relationship of "Aesop", the Isopets and the beast epic to the *Fables*. Only the most casual attempts have been made to approach the subject... It demands a full-scale hunt through French and Latin literature... Almost nothing can be done in assessing Henryson until we know this literary context.

Francis Lee Utley, *M.L.Q.*, xii (1951), 494.

A: Argument

Henryson makes explicit his intentions in writing his Fabillis:

> Thir nutis schellis thocht thai be hard and tuich
> Thay hald the cirnall sueit and delectable
> So lyis thair a doctryne wyse anewch
> And full of fruct vndir a fenyeit fable (Prolog, 15-18)
> Rycht as the mynoure In his mynorall
> Ffaire gold with fyre may fra the lede welo wyn
> Rycht sa vnder a fable figurall
> A sad centence may seke and efter fyn
> As daylie dois thir doctouris of dyvyn
> Apertly be oure leving can applye
> And preue thare preching be a poesye (The Fox tryed before the Lyone, 288-94.)

But he has rarely been taken at his word. Commentators have concentrated on one, or both, of two aspects. Some have been attracted by the charm of the popular, naive rustic, a poet of delightful and humorous animal tales, a poet with 'an innocent delight in the world of the senses.'[1]

> Henryson is a countryman; and his philosophy is as firmly rooted in rustic folk wisdom as in religious faith. This gives him poise and the sturdy independence of the peasant who does his work but is too stiff to bow. In the fable - essentially democratic in its appeal - this independence finds an appropriate means of expression.[2]

One can of course neglect the moral preoccupations of such a man; they are too boring;[3] or 'too ingenious for modern taste'.[4] Indeed, to take this point of view to its logical conclusion, the poet has failed in what he has set out to do:

---

1. Kurt Wittig, The Scottish Tradition in Literature (Edinburgh and London, 1958), p. 44.

2. Ibid. p. 51.

3. H. Harvey Wood writes '... the moralizing, which is admittedly dull, is confined to the postscript.' The Poems and Fables of Robert Henryson, 2nd edn. (Edinburgh and London, 1958), p. xv.

4. James Kinsley, 'The Mediaval Makars', Scottish Poetry A Critical Survey, ed. Kinsley (London, 1955), p. 18.

> His fables usually have a twofold moral: one - highly humanitarian and sociological - implicit in the tale; the other, the conventional moralitas, at the end. The latter sometimes comes as a surprize: in "The Taill of the Cok and the Jasp". we sympathize with the cock to whom the jewel, swept carelessly on to the midden by wanton damsels, is of no interest - corn or chaff would be more useful. Yet in the moralitas the cock is represented as a fool scorning science, the jewel as the love of learning, now lost because men are satisfied with riches and have no patience to seek it. It seems almost as if the poet has allowed his own colourful fable to run away with him, and is now returning to his duty.[1]
>
> Henryson's moral preoccupation does not so much as might be expected inferfere with his humorous observation. In the Two Mice, for example, it provides little more than shrewd marginal comment...[2]

Others have attempted to see The Fabillis as merely poetry of political protest, a reflection of contemporary social conditions.[3] Often allied with this view is an incipient Scottish nationalism which finds his humour, or his settings, or his understatements or other aspects of his work specifically Scottish.[4]

Now I do not deny that there is humour in Henryson's poetry, though usually it is much more sardonic than has been claimed,[5] but I do wish to claim that it is at all times subject to the moral purpose. Nor do I wish to deny that there are contemporary references in the work - largely making traditional complaints on the nature of man local as a means of persuasion to moral improvement;

---

1. Wittig, The Scottish Tradition in Literature, op. cit., p. 40.
2. John Speirs, The Scots Literary Tradition An Essay in Criticism, 2nd edn. (London, 1962), p. 42 n.
3. Cf. Marshall W. Stearns, Robert Henryson (New York, 1949); Mary Rowlands, 'The Fables of Robert Henryson', The Dalhousie Review, xxxix(1959-60), 491-502.
4. Wittig's discussion contains many such assertions; cf. also H.J.C. Grierson, 'Robert Henryson', Aberdeen University Review, xxi (1933-4), 203-12.
5. The essentially bitter nature of Chaucer's humour has often been similarly overlooked.

but I shall attempt to prove that Henryson's point of view is neither specifically Scottish nor solely political - that it is basically moral and religious rather than political, that it is basically that of any well-educated European. For, it seems to me, it can be claimed that Henryson is a rustic or an entertaining popular poet only if one is ignorant of the medieval traditions which lie behind his work: philosophical and religious traditions, traditions of verse forms, genres, rhetorical techniques, topoi.[1] To neglect these is to neglect one of the main features of the poetry, its sophisticated and conscious use of conventions, its revivifying of old forms through combination into a new whole.[2] For Henryson has taken the fable form - before collections of much shorter and less sophisticated poems studying unrelated ethical problems - and by expansion through forms, through detail[3] made his fables as a group a study of man's essential animality, his desire for the passing pleasures of this world. Much later medieval poetry is a study of the same human motivation. Of course such a statement does not imply adverse criticism for, in essence, poetry is an image of well-worn ideas. In the image we see the idea anew; it becomes of added significance, new relevance.[4]

---

1. For topoi see Ernst Robert Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, tr. Willard R. Trask (Bollingen Series XXXVI, New York, 1953); the concept is defined on p. 70. In many ways the whole of this thesis will serve as further evidence for the central argument of Curtius' invaluable book.

2. To prove my argument I shall constantly be forced to quote, sometimes at length, from previous uses.

3. Many critics have commented on Henryson's addition of detail; it has not invariably been stressed however that the added detail usually helps our understanding of the moral issues under discussion.

4. The stress on the image (the figure) is Henryson's own: see Denton Fox, 'Henryson's Fables', E.L.H., xxix (1962), 341 and note. It will be noticed that my attitude to Henryson's poetry is very similar to that expounded by Professor Fox in his article.

We cannot of course see how Henryson has treated the fable form until we discover just what he has taken from fables written before him. This entails a hunt for sources and analogues through the whole corpus of medieval Latin and vernacular fable literatures.[1] The question of Henryson's sources has been examined by three scholars before me.[2] The first, A.R. Diebler,[3] was certainly the most thorough. He noted many of the important texts and several errors in source ascription would have been avoided if his work had always been examined.[4] Gregory Smith's work[5] showed little advance but is generally accurate as far as it goes. It has been the only discussion of Henryson's source material generally available.

---

1. My method is rather similar to that of S.J. Harth, Convention and Creation in the Poetry of Robert Henryson, A Study of The Testament of Cresseid and Orpheus and Eurydice, an unpublished dissertation for the University of Chicago (1957).

2. Apart from the three general discussions to be mentioned the following should also be noted: Janet M. Smith, The French Background of Middle Scots Literature (Edinburgh and London, 1934), pp. 76-81 - a brief discussion of the relationship of the fox tales to Le Roman de Renart; Charles Elliott, Robert Henryson: Poems (Oxford, 1963), pp. 129-30 - a very brief account of the relationship of the Fabillis to the medieval animal tale traditions; several discussions of the sources of The Fox, the Wolf and the Cadger - see my discussion of that fable; M. Plessow, Geschichte der Fabeldichtung in England bis zu John Gay, 1726 (Palaestra: Untersuchungen und Texte aus der deutschen und englischen Philologie hg. A. Brandl, Gustav Roethe und E. Schmidt, Bd. LII, Berlin, 1906), pp. xliv-xlix - a brief account, based largely on Diebler, stressing, however, Henryson's supposed debt to Lydgate; Mary B. Lonergan, A Study of the Poetry of Robert Henryson and of the Significance of its Medieval and Scottish Setting, an unpublished M.A. thesis for the University of Cork (1957) - Miss Lonergan sets out with much the same aim as my own but her knowledge of the medieval fable tradition is so limited (she does not seem to know anything of the Latin tradition) that her work cannot be said to add to our knowledge of Henryson's sources or methods.

3. Henrisone's Fabeldichtungen, Inaugural-Dissertation zur erlangung der Philosophischen Doctorwürde an der Universität Leipzig (Halle, 1885).

4. See my discussion of the sources of The Fox, the Wolf and the Cadger, pp. 239-40.

5. The Poems of Robert Henryson, 3 vols. (S.T.S. First Series, 1906-14), i (1914), xxix-xlv.

Richard Bauman[1] has recently argued that Henryson was indebted to folk tale traditions. Evidence of the nature of folk tales in mediaval times is, however, notoriously unreliable - there can be little certainty that any given tale existed in folk tradition then, that it has not entered the tradition from an originally written source.[2] Bauman provides but two examples of folk tale parallels which he claims to be closer to Henryson than written sources. However, for both these fables - The Fox tryed before the Lyone and The Fox, the Wolf and the Cadger - he has overlooked or underestimated the importance of significant literary analogues. I shall discuss the problems in considerably more detail later.

Now while Diebler and Smith have found many of the more obvious parallels for Henryson's fables there are still important analogues to be pointed out. Besides, they have not examined in detail just what the poet has taken from his sources. As a result the extent and nature of additions made have not been fully understood and the character of the poetry has tended to be distorted. We must discuss the work poem by poem but first it is essential that we examine the mediaval fable tradition in order to see The Fabillis, and their sources, in context.

---

1. 'The Folk tale and Oral Tradition in the Fables of Robert Henryson', Fabula, vi (1963), 108-24.

2. Cf. the argument over the sources - folk-tale or learned - of Le Roman de Renard; see p. 21 n. 2.

B: The Medimval Animal Tale Collections[1]

(i) Fable Collections

The place of origin of the fable form - whether in the East or in Greece - does not concern us here; nor do the nature and forms of the original collections. Our interest begins with the translation by Phaedrus,[2] in the first part of the first century A.D., of a Greek collection of 'Æsop' into Latin verse.[3] The collection seems to have been almost completely unknown for several

---

1. A large amount of this chapter is necessarily based directly on the work of other scholars, particularly that of Léopold Hervieux, Gaston Paris, Julia Bastin, R. Bossuat and J.Th. Welter.

2. for Phaedrus see Oxford Classical Dictionary, M. Cary etc. ed. (Oxford, 1949), s.v. Phaedrus (4).

3. ed. Léopold Hervieux, Les Fabulistes Latins depuis le siècle d'Auguste jusqu'à la fin du moyen Age: Phèdre et ses Anciens Imitateurs Directs et Indirects, 2nd edn., 2 vols. (Paris, 1893-4), hereafter cited as Hervieux i and ii - ii, 5-81; a useful text is that of J.P. Postgate, Phaedri Fabulae Aesopiae cum Nicolai Perotti Prologo et Decem Novis Fabulis (Scriptorum Classicorum Bibliotheca Oxoniensis, Oxford, n.d.); C. Zander, Phaedrus Solutus vel Phaedri Fabulae Novae XXX (Acta Societas Humaniorum Litterarum Lundensis, 3, Lund, 1921), attempts, as others had done before him, to argue back to the original metrical Phaedrian text of thirty fables now missing in their original form but existing in later prose recensions. For an English translation see T. Riley, The Comedies of Terence and the Fables of Phaedrus literally translated into English prose (London, 1853); a bilingual text in the Loeb Classical Library is promised by Ben E. Perry (Aesopica, i [Urbana, 1952], xiii). For manuscript details and history see Hervieux, i, 5-239. I make no apology for the constant use of Hervieux' work in this thesis. Its deficiencies are many and serious: see Gaston Paris, review articles, Journal des Savants, 1884, pp. 670-86; 1885, pp. 37-51; 1899, pp. 207-26; and E. Mall, 'Zur Geschichte der mittelalterlichen Fabelliteratur und insbesondere des Esope der Marie de France', Zeitschrift fur Romanische Philologie, ix (1885), 161-203. Nevertheless Hervieux' volumes remain the only available text of several medimval fable collections and his discussion of the history of the genre also contains much of value despite its facile solutions to the many problems of the filiations of the Romulus derivations. It is to be hoped that this will be superseded by the fourth volume of Ben E. Perry's Æsopica which he indicated would be 'an essay on the history of the various traditions' (op. cit., p. vii).

centuries during the Middle Ages[1] until rescued from oblivion by the French scholar Pierre Pithou in the sixteenth century.[2] But imitations were of immense importance. The closest, now called the Adémar Æsop, is a prose version found in an early eleventh century manuscript copied by Adémar of Chabannes.[3] Another imitation, the Æsopus ad Rufum, now lost,[4] seems to have formed the basis for a collection known as the Wissenbourg Æsop, found in a tenth century manuscript,[5] and - which is of far greater importance - for the original Romulus collection[6] from which derived, directly or indirectly, partially or completely, all the well-known mediæval fable collections. The prologue to the original Romulus, and its direct derivations, is in the form of an epistle from a certain Romulus to his son Tiberinus. Romulus claims to be sending his son from Athens a collection of Æsop's fables which he has translated from Greek. Some later fabulists, for instance Marie de France,[7] thought of him as a Roman emperor but there can be no certainty of his identity, or even of his

---

1. Ninth century manuscripts are known (Hervieux, i, 80ff); in the fifteenth century, Niccolo Perotti, Archbishop of Sipontum, copied a more complete collection than that of the ninth century MSS.

2. <u>Phaedri Aug. Liberti... Fabularum Æsopiarum Libri V</u> (1596).

3. ed. Hervieux, ii, 131-56; see Hervieux, i, 242-66 and G. Thiele, <u>Der illustrierte lateinische Äsop in der Handschrift des Ademar</u> (Codices Graeci et Latini Photographice Depicti, Supplementum III, Leyden, 1905).

4. But see Hervieux, i, 314-27 and Gaston Paris, <u>Journal des Savants</u>, 1884, pp. 678-85 for discussion of its contents. The name of the collection is taken from the dedication to a certain Rufus - the dedication is copied in one of the derivatives, the Wissenbourg Æsop and adapted in the epilogues of several other collections.

5. ed. Hervieux, ii, 157-92; see also Hervieux, i, 268-327 and Gaston Paris, <u>Journal des Savants</u>, 1884, pp. 678-82.

6. The original text seems lost but cf. G. Thiele, <u>Der lateinische Äsop des Romulus und die Prosa-Fassungen des Phädrus</u>, Kritischer Text mit Kommentar und einleitenden Untersuchungen (Heidelberg, 1910).

7. Prologue ll. 12-16; Marie de France, <u>Fables</u>, sel. and ed. A. Ewert and R.C. Johnston (Oxford, 1942), p. 1.

existence. All that is known is that the adaptation was made in the tenth century or before (the earliest existing manuscript of a derivation is of the tenth century) and that it is in essence merely a prose reworking of Phaedrus' original[1] - perhaps at two removes.

The relationships between the direct and indirect derivations of the original Romulus have never been satisfactorily determined and much work still need be done in this field. The following discussion is thus very tentative in its assumptions of filiations but should be adequate for the needs of this thesis.

a. Prose Derivations of Romulus

Of the prose derivations there are three main groups: the full-scale derivations and expansions, the abridgements, and those versions which contain certain Romulus variants together with fables from other sources.

The most widely known of the full-scale derivations is the so-called vulgate Romulus,[2] a prose compilation of eighty-three fables existing in six manuscripts ranging in date from the tenth to the sixteenth centuries.[3] It seems that the first edition was published in Ulm, about 1475, by Dr. Hainricus Steinhöwel;[4] it was reprinted several times in the next twenty-five years.[5] The edition

---

1. Hervieux, i, 305-14.
2. In his first edition (Paris, 1884), i, 266ff, Hervieux discussed this collection assuming it to be the original Romulus, - hence its name. Gaston Paris, Journal des Savants, 1884, pp. 680-1, showed that Hervieux' assumption was untenable. This the latter himself admitted in his second edition, i, 330-1.
3. see Hervieux, i, 334-60; ed. Hervieux, ii, 195-233 and Thiele, Der Lateinische Aesop des Romulus, op. cit.
4. Steinhöwels Aesop, hg. Hermann Österley (Bibliothek des Litterarischen Vereins in Stuttgart, CXVII, Tübingen, 1873).
5. see Hervieux, i, 360ff and George C. Keidel, A Manual of Aesopic Fable Literature, a first book of reference for the period ending A.D. 1500, 1st fascicule (Romance and Other Studies No. 2, Baltimore, 1896); Keidel lists twenty-six editions before 1500.

comprises not only the fables from the vulgate Romulus - together with the verse recension by Gualterus and a German translation - but also fables from other sources. Book IV - there are four books of about twenty fables each in the manuscripts - ends: Finis quarti libri Esopi viri ingeniosi, nec plures eius libri inveniuntur. Multe tamen eius fabule reperte sunt, quarum plurime sequuntur, ut in processu videbitur. Book V is entitled Extravagantes Esopi Antique Sequuntur; Book VI, Sequuntur Alique Esopi Fabule Nove Translationis Remicii; Book VII, Aviani Fabule Sequuntur; Book VIII, Ex Adelfonso et Poggii. Avianus[1] (fl. c.400 A.D.), a Roman fabulist, wrote forty-two fables in elegiacs based on the Greek fables of Babrius;[2] the collection was known throughout the Middle Ages but did not attain the popularity of the Romulus derivations. The Italian humanist Ranutio d'Arezzo, named here Remicius, translated fables from the Greek Æsop in the mid fifteenth century.[3] The apostolic secretary Poggio Bracciolini (1381-1459) collected tales which Jacob delightfully describes thus: 'They are mostly tales of a kind which we do not tell or print nowadays; or which, to speak more frankly, we only tell when we are young and only print privately in limited editions of 1000 copies.'[4] But the

---

1. see _Oxford Classical Dictionary_, _op. cit._, s.v. Avianus.
2. ed. and discussed L. Hervieux, _Les Fabulistes Latins depuis le siècle d'Auguste jusqu'à la fin du moyen âge: Avianus et Ses Anciens Imitateurs_ (Paris, 1894) - hereafter cited as Hervieux iii.
3. Hervieux, i, 296-8.
4. _The Fables of Æsop_ as first printed by William Caxton in 1484, 2 vols. (Bibliothèque de Carabas Series, London, 1889), i (History of the Aesopic Fable), 200-1. Cf. Richard H. Wilson 'The Poggiana in Caxton's _Esope_', _P.Q._, xxx (1951), 348-52.

books of interest to us, containing versions of fables used by Henryson, are those comprising fables of Petrus Alphonsus and the Fabulae Extravagantes. Petrus Alphonsus, a converted Jew living in Spain in the early twelfth century, translated into Latin certain fabliaux and fables from the East, among them a version of The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman. The work, the Disciplina Clericalis, achieved a wide popularity in later centuries.[1] The Fabulae Extravagantes contain many parallels to Marie de France's collection and to the Roman de Renard cycle both of which will be discussed later. But for the particular fable in which we are interested - The Wolf and the Wedder - there are but two parallels to Steinhöwel's version: an incomplete variant in a British Museum manuscript[2] and Baldo's reworking (c.1300) of Jean de Capoue's translation from an Eastern story.[3] As I have already mentioned Steinhöwel's collection became widely known. Julien Macho translated it into French before 1480 and from that version Caxton translated his Book of the subtyl historyes and fables of Esope (Westmynstre, 1484).[4] I shall attempt to prove Henryson's indebtedness to Caxton in my discussion of the two fables mentioned above.

---

1. See, for details, P.L. clvii, 527-36; H.L.D. Ward Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum, 3 vols., vol. iii by J.A. Herbert, (London, 1883-1910), ii, 235ff; and the introduction to Die Disciplina Clericalis, das älteste Novellenbuch des Mittelalters, hg. Alfons Hilka und Werner Söderhjelm (Sammlung Mittellateinischer Texte, 1, hg. Alfons Hilka, Heidelberg, 1911).
2. Additional 8166ff. 41^b-42^b. The manuscript is of the twelfth century.
3. ed. L. Hervieux, Les Fabulistes Latins depuis le siècle d'Auguste jusqu'à la fin du moyen Âge: Jean de Capoue et Ses Dérivés (Paris, 1899), - herafter cited as Hervieux, v - pp. 368-70. See the discussion of translations from the East pp. 3-75; also Gaston Paris, review article, Journal des Savants, 1899, pp. 207-26.
4. ed. Jacob, The Fables of Æsop, op. cit., ii (Text and Glossary).

A second full-scale prose derivation is the Vienna-Berlin Romulus contained in three related fourteenth century manuscripts.[1] The Florence Romulus, also in a fourteenth century manuscript, is probably also a derivation of the original Romulus.[2]

The three derivations so far mentioned are in many ways very close indeed. I shall illustrate this, and also something of the undeveloped character of the fables contained in them, by quotation from each of a typical fable, also contained in Henryson, The Wolf and the Lamb. Vulgate Romulus:

> Aesopus de innocente et reprobo
> talem retulit fabulam
> Agnus et lupus sitientes ad riuum e diuerso
> uenerunt. Sursum bibebat lupus, longeque
> inferius agnus. Lupus ut agnum uidit,
> sic ait: Turbasti mihi aquam bibenti?
> agnus patiens dixit: Quomodo aquam turbaui
> tibi que a te ad me decurrit. Lupus non
> erubuit ueritati. Maledicis mihi, inquit.
> Agnus ait: Non maledixi. Lupus dixit:
> Ergo pater tuus fuit ante sex menses, et ita
> fecit mihi. Numquid ego natus fui? Sic
> Lupus improba fauce dixit: Et adhuc loqueris,
> latro? Et statim se in eum iniecit, et
> innocenti uitam eripuit.
> Hec in illis dicta est fabula qui
> hominibus calumniantur.[3]

The Vienna-Berlin Romulus:

> De innocente et reprobo
> Agnus et Lupus sitientes ad quendam e diuerso
> venerunt riuum. Superius bibebat Lupus,
> Agnus autem inferius de riuo bibebat. Lupus,
> ut Agnus (sic) vidit, sic ait: Cur turbasti
> mihi aquam bibenti? Agnus paciens ait:
> Quomodo aquam turbaui tibi, que a te ad me
> decurrit? Lupus non erubuit mendacium preferre
> veritati. Maledicis (dicit), inquit, mihi.
> Agnus ait: Non maledico verum dicens. Lupus
> dixit: Ergo et pater tuus fuit hic, qui ante

---

1. Two of the MSS. are edited by Hervieux, ii, 417-73; one by Thiele, Der lateinische Aesop des Romulus, op. cit. See also Hervieux, i, 685-98.

2. ed. Hervieux, ii, 474-512; for details see Hervieux, i, 699-707.

3. Hervieux, ii, 196.

sex menses (qui) mihi pari modo fecerat.
Agnus ait: Numquid ego natus fui tunc?
Sicque Lupus improba facie dixit: Et adhuc
loqueris, latro? Et statim insiluit in eum
ac innocenti vitam abstulit.
Hec de illis dicta fabula est qui non
iuste calumpniantur homines.[1]

The Florence Romulus:

Esopus de innocente
Agnus et Lupus sitientes ad unum riuum e diuerso
uenerunt. Sursum bibebat lupus longeque
inferior agnus. Lupus ut agnum uidit, sic ait:
Turbasti mihi aquam bibenti. Agnus patienter
dixit: Quomodo aquam tibi turbaui, que a te ad
me decurrit? Lupus non erubuit ueritati dicens:
Maledicis mihi, inquit. Agnus ait: Vere non
maledixi. Cui Lupus: Ergo et pater tuus fuit
ante sex menses hic, et ita fecit mihi. Agnus
ait: Numquid ego natus fui? Lupus improba
uoce dixit: Et adhuc loqueris, latro. Et statim
se in eum direxit et innocenti uitam eripuit.
Hec in illo[s] dicta est fabula qui
hominibus calumpniantur. Et qui de
salute alterius mala cogitant non effugient
penam.[2]

The fourth full-scale derivation, the Romulus of Nilant,[3] existing in manuscripts of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, is of a somewhat more expanded character as can be seen from its version of The Wolf and the Lamb.

Esopus de innocente et reprobo talem retulit
fabulam.
Quodam tempore Agnus et Lupus ad vnum riuulum e
diuerso, causa potandi, venerunt; sed Lupus
superior ad illam partem, vnde flumen currebat,
bibebat; Agnus vero inferior. Lupus, vt Agnum
vidit, sic dixisse fertur: Quare michi perturbas
aquam bibenti et lutulentam eam efficis? Cui
Agnus pacienter respondit: Quomodo aquam
pertubarem tibi que a te ad me decurrit? Lupus
non erubescens veritati: Maledicis mihi, inquit.
Ad hoc Agnus respondens: Non maledixi, ait.
At contra Lupus ait: Equaliter mihi pater tuus

---

1. Hervieux, ii, 417-8.
2. Hervieux, ii, 475.
3. ed. Hervieux, ii, 513-48; for details see Hervieux, i, 708-18. The name of the collection is taken from that of its first editor, the early eighteenth century scholar, Nilant.

> ante sex menses bibenti de eodem flumine fecit. Cui Agnus respondit: Numquid tunc natus eram? Tunc Lupus inproba fauce iratus inquit: Et adhuc audacter loqueris, latro? Et statim in eum dirigens cursum, innocenti vitam arripuit.
>
> Hec illos tangit fabula, qui inique aliis calumpniantur, vt aut vitam aut pecuniam vel etiam vtramque accipiant.[1]

Two verse recensions were made of the Romulus of Nilant.[2] Hervieux and Warnke have shown that the Anglo-Latin Romulus also derives partially from it.[3] I shall discuss this collection when describing the versions of mixed origin.

Three abridgements exist - whether they derive from the original Romulus or from one of its derivations is a problem not yet solved satisfactorily. In the mid thirteenth century the Dominican Vincent of Beauvais compiled his four encyclopedia: Speculum Historiale, Speculum Naturale, Speculum Morale and Speculum Doctrinale. In the first and fourth of these he included twenty-nine fables based closely on Romulus.[4] The works achieved widespread popularity,[5] the first, with its fables, being translated into French in the early fourteenth century by Jean de Vignay.[6]

The forty-five fables in a fourteenth century manuscript in the library of Corpus Christi College Oxford[7] are considerably shortened

---

1. Hervieux, ii, 514.
2. ed. Hervieux, ii, 653-757; for details see Hervieux, i, 801-15.
3. Hervieux, i, 722-4; K. Warnke 'Die Quellen des Esope der Marie de France,' Forschungen zur romantischen Philologie. Festgabe für Hermann Suchier (Halle, 1900), pp. 161-284.
4. ed. Hervieux, ii, 234-45.
5. Hervieux, i, 436ff.
6. Cf. G.E. Snavely, The Aesopic Fables in the Mireor Historiale of Jehan de Vignay (Baltimore, 1908).
7. ed. Hervieux, ii, 246-61; for details see Hervieux, i, 461-3.

from their original. As an example one may cite The Wolf and the Lamb, the original of which must have been very close to both the vulgate Romulus and the Vienna-Berlin Romulus to judge from their similarities:

> Quod innocens se iungere non debet inprobo. Agnus et Lupus sitientes ad riuum e diuerso venerunt. Sursum bibebat Lupus, longeque inferior Agnus. Lupus uero, fingens sibi ab Agno aquam fuisse turbatam, nullamque inde racionem suscipiens, seque iam pridem a patre suo talia sustinuisse affirmans, irruit in eum et occidet. Sicque innocenti vitam eripuit.[1]

The Berne Romulus, found in a fifteenth century manuscript,[2] contains only thirteen fables none greatly developed from the original; but there are some interesting and unique variants which will be discussed when relevant to individual fables.

Of the versions of mixed source there are two of considerable importance, three of less. The Anglo-Latin Romulus is no longer in existence but something of its nature can be deduced. Marie de France, writing of her translation, tells how le cunte Willame ...

> M'entremis de cest livre feire
> E de l'engleis en romanz treire.
> Esopë apel'um cest livre,
> Qu'il translata e fist escrire,
> Del griu en latin le turna;
> Li reis Alvrez, que mut l'ama,
> Le translata puis en engleis
> E jeo l'ai rimee en franceis.[3]

---

1. Hervieux, i, 246.
2. ed. Hervieux, ii, 758-62; for details see Hervieux, i, 816-8.
3. epilogue ll. 11-18, ed. Ewert and Johnston, op. cit., p. 62. Marie's complete fables (102 in all) have been edited by B. de Roquefort, Poésies de Marie de France, 2 vols. (Paris, 1832), ii, 59-402 and K. Warnke Die Fabeln der Marie de France (Bibliotheca Normannica, Denkmäler Normannischer Literatur und Sprache hg. Hermann Suchier, VI, Halle, 1898). It is generally agreed that Marie was wrong in attributing the English translation to Alfred; a few MSS. read Henri and Hervieux (i, 720-1), surprizingly, attributes the work to Henry I.

From this English version too, as Gaston Paris has shown,[1] has come the Latin translation known as the LBG derivation or the Göttingen fragments.[2] The fables are in a form considerably extended from the original Romulus. Thus:

> Lupus et Agnus simul de rivo biberunt; sed Lupus erat in parte superiori et Agnus in inferiori. Lupus itaque, cum haustum fecerat, erexit se et dixit ad Agnum: Tu qui lanam in decepcione portas, semper meis offensis insistis. Agnus vero, ad hanc vocem trepidus, timide respondit et humiliter: Domine potens et tremende, quare tam aspere michi loqueris innocenti? Quas enim offensas possem parvulus ego tibi inferre? Et Lupus ait: Tu turbas aquam, quod inde gustare non possum. Responditque Agnus: mira sunt que dicis; quia, cum tu sis superius et ego inferius, quomodo possum tibi aquam turbare? Sed occasionem adversum me queris, sicut qui vult ab amico recedere. Tunc ergo exasperatus Lupus ait iterum: Tu minis (sic) es garrulus et iurgia mecum multiplicare presumis, sicut pater tuus, qui, nondum transactis sex mensibus, de eodem in hoc loco michi servivit, quod in te merito redundabit. Et ait miser Agnus: cur sic in me illas patris culpas refundis, qui nondum natus eram? Tunc raptor ait: Sic michi respondes in omnibus, et reclamare non cessas? Irruensque in eum, guttur eius crudeliter apprehendit et finem fecit verborum.
>
> Moralitas. Sic tyranni faciunt: cum innocentum res vel mortem cupiunt, sive iuste sive iniuste eos spoliant et opprimunt.[3]

From Marie's collection and the Göttingen fragments we have evidence of the nature of the English version and thus probably of the Anglo-Latin Romulus which formed its source. The collection, certainly composed before the last decade of the twelfth century when Marie's

---

1. Journal des Savants, 1885, pp. 42-3.
2. Manuscripts, of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, are found in London, Brussels and Göttingen - also in Trèves; the first edition was taken from one of the Göttingen MSS. (H. Osterley, Romulus die paraphrasen des Phaedrus und die Aesopische fabel im mittelalter [Berlin, 1870]) pp. ed. Hervieux, ii, 564-649; for details see Hervieux, i, 775-93.
3. Hervieux, ii, 565.

translation was made, contained more than 130 tales, some from the Romulus of Nilant, some related to the fox tale and fabliaux traditions; there were also a few from other parts of the Romulus tradition not found in the Romulus of Nilant. Of the Anglo-Latin Romulus a mere fragment, the Romulus of Robert,[1] twenty-two fables in all, remains. Before we leave the Anglo-Latin Romulus and its derivatives it should be mentioned that Lydgate's Isopos Fabules,[2] a fifteenth century collection comprising a prologue and seven fables in rhyme royal, is also attached to this tradition.

With the work of Odo of Cheriton,[3] an English priest writing about 1320, we begin to move away from the direct fable tradition into two other genres which we shall discuss later: the exempla collections and the Roman de Renard cycle. Many of Odo's fables contain moralitates giving specifically Christian teaching; and of the seventy-five or so fables making up the collection only about fifteen can be directly related to the Romulus tradition: most are moralized incidents from the Roman de Renard or bestiary stories. The collection achieved widespread popularity.[4]

The mixed Romulus of Berne,[5] existing in a thirteenth century manuscript, contains shortened versions of fables from the original

---

1. so called after its first editor A.C.M. Robert, Fables inédites des XIIe, XIIIe et XIVe siècles et Fables de La Fontaine, 2 vols. (Paris, 1825), ii, 547-62; also ed. Hervieux, ii, 549-63; for details see Hervieux, i, 763-75 and Gaston Paris, Journal des Savants, 1885, pp. 41-3.

2. ed. H.N. MacCracken, The Minor Poems of John Lydgate, ii, Secular Poems (E.E.T.S.O.S. 192, 1934) 566-99.

3. L. Hervieux, Les Fabulistes Latins depuis le siècle d'Auguste jusqu'à la fin du moyen âge: Eudes de Cheriton et ses Dérivés (Paris, 1896) - hereafter cited as Hervieux, iv.

4. Hervieux, iv, 46-77 mentions twenty-six manuscripts from libraries throughout Europe.

5. ed. Hervieux, ii, 302-15; for details see Hervieux, i, 468-71.

Romulus or one of its close derivatives, and other fables which have parallels in the Anglo-Latin Romulus and Odo. The collection of John of Sheppey, Bishop of Rochester (1352-60),[1] is partially based on that of Odo though there are important differences between fables existing in both,[2] and other sources have been used, amongst them a Romulus collection. The Munich Romulus,[3] from a fifteenth century manuscript, comprises forty fables, twenty-five copied from the vulgate Romulus, fifteen, more fully developed, parallelled by fables in the Fabulae Extravagantes.

b. Verse derivations of Romulus[4]

The collection known as the Romulus of Gualterus Anglicus,[5] perhaps written in the latter half of the twelfth century, is in elegiacs and comprises a prologue (original to the collection) and sixty-two fables taken almost entirely from the first three books of the prose Romulus. It became the most widely used of Latin

---

1. ed. Hervieux, iv, 417-50; for details see Hervieux, iv, 161-70.

3. ed. Hervieux, ii, 262-301; cf. Hervieux, i, 464-8.

4. Again I shall not discuss the particular version of Romulus from which the derivations were made. Hervieux (i, 472-5 and 673-4) attributes both to the vulgate Romulus apart from the few fables not occurring there but his evidence seems very flimsy and needs further substantiation.

5. ed. W. Foerster, Lyoner-Yzopet (Altfranzösische Bibliothek, V, Heilbronn, 1882); Hervieux, ii, 316-82; K. MacKenzie and W.A. Oldfather, Ysopet-Avionnet: the Latin and French Texts (University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature Vol. V No. 4, Urbana, 1919); Julia Bastin, Recueil Général des Isopets, 2 vols. (S.A.T.F., 1929-30) - hereafter cited as Bastin i and ii - ii, 7-66. I have used Bastin's text of Gualterus throughout. For details see Bastin, ii, II-VIII. The collection was for long known as the anonymous collection of Nevelet for it was first edited by I.N. Neveletus in his Mythologica Aesopica (Frankfurt, 1610). Hervieux (see i, 475-95) found a few manuscripts attributing it to one Gualterus Anglicus; he linked the name with Gualterus Anglicus, chaplain of Henry II of England, tutor of William II of Sicily, later Archbishop of Palermo. Gaston Paris disputed the attribution (Journal des Savants, 1885, p. 39) and many scholars have agreed with him; but the collection has become generally known as the Romulus of Gualterus Anglicus.

fable collections in mediæval times: Hervieux records more than a hundred manuscripts containing the fables,[1] and from 1473, when the collection was first published, up to and including 1500 there were, according to Keidel,[2] fifty-nine editions. Henryson certainly made use of it as I shall prove later. Two French versions of Gualterus were made, one of which at least is of great importance to us. The Isopet de Lyon, written in the dialect of Franche-Conté, exists in one manuscript only, of the thirteenth century.[3] There are a prologue and sixty fables, some of which are considerably developed, or changed in emphasis, from Gualterus' version. In several places the Isopet seems nearer to Henryson than any other text though it is difficult to imagine how the Scot could have known it - the lack of manuscripts suggests it was not widely dispersed. Isopet I,[4] a compilation of the mid-fourteenth century, appears to have been much more widely known. A prose recension, known as Isopet III,[5] exists in a fifteenth century manuscript.

Alexander Neckam's Novus Æsopus,[6] another version in elegiacs of Romulus, also gave rise to French translations, Isopet II de

---

1. i, 503-602.
2. A Manual of Æsopic Fable Literature, op. cit..
3. ed. Foerster, Lyoner-Yzopet, op. cit.; Bastin, ii, 83-197; for details see Bastin, ii, XVI- XXV.
4. ed. MacKenzie and Oldfather, Ysopet-Avionnet, op. cit.; Bastin, ii, 199-348; for details see Bastin, ii, XXVI-XXXVIII. The collection also contains a French translation of Avianus' fables, the Avionnet.
5. ed. M.P. Brush, 'Ysopet III of Paris' P.M.L.A., XXIV (1909), 494-546; Bastin, ii, 385-420; for details see Bastin, ii, XXXIX-XXXX.
6. ed. Hervieux, ii, 392-416; Bastin, i, 1-30; for details see Bastin, i, IX-XII.

Paris,[1] and Isopet de Chartres,[2] both probably made towards the end of the thirteenth century.

---

1. ed. Bastin, i, 31-111; for details see Bastin, i, XIII-XX.
2. ed. Bastin, i, 113-81; for details see Bastin, i, XXI-XXVII.

(ii) Le Roman de Renard

Le Roman de Renard, a vernacular cycle by various authors, appeared in France towards the end of the twelfth century and was continued into the mid-thirteenth century (approximate dates 1175-1250).[1] Its occurrence provides further evidence of the interest in animal stories at this period - we have already discussed the versions of Gualterus Anglicus, Neckham, Vincent of Beauvais, Marie de France and Odo of Cheriton and the Isopets. The sources,[2] apart from the Romulus, and Petrus Alphonsus' Disciplina Clericalis, seem to have been the Ecbasis Captivi,[3] a tenth or eleventh century poem recounting, under the guise of an animal story, the attempt of a monk, uncertain of his vocation, to leave his monastery; and the Ysengrimus,[4] a long Latin poem of the mid-twelfth century which shows the wolf engaged in many of the adventures also described in Le Roman de Renard. The

---

1. a useful summary of what is known of the cycle is to be found in R. Bossuat, Le Roman de Renard (Connaissance des Lettres, 49, Paris, 1957).

2. Cf. L. Foulet Le Roman de Renard (Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, Sciences Historiques et Philologiques, fasc. 211, Paris 1914). Foulet successfully combats the arguments of J. Grimm, Reinhart Fuchs (Berlin, 1834), and L. Sudre, Les Sources du Roman de Renart (Paris, 1892) who attempted to find the origin of the cycle in folk tale analogies.

3. ed. K. Strecker, Ecbasis Cuiusdam Captivi per tropologiam (Scriptores Rerum Germannicarum in usum Scholarum, Hanover, 1935).

4. ed. Ernst Voigt (Halle, 1884).

collection as we have it comprises twenty-six branches - about 30,000 lines in all - telling varying adventures (sometimes varying versions of the same adventure) of the Fox as he tries to outwit all the other animals, particularly the wolf Isengrin. It exists in three manuscript traditions[1] distinguished by the number and order of branches contained and by the way in which these are linked.

Later works in the Renard tradition often comprised retellings of the earlier stories though usually in a much more strongly satirical context.[2] The most important were Rutebuef's Renard le Bestourné,[3] (c. 1265), the anonymous Le Couronnement de Renard[4] (after 1251), Jacquemard Gieléeb Renart le Nouvel[5] (c. 1288), and the anonymous Renard le Contrefait,[6] (1319-42).

Two separate English stories seem taken from Le Roman: an anonymous thirteenth century poem Of the Vox and of the Wolf[7] and Chaucer's Nonnes Preestes Tale.[8] A version of branche I (the

---

1. α, the smallest, was edited by Ernst Martin, 3 vols. (Strasbourg, 1882-7); β, of twenty-one or twenty-two branches, was being edited until his death by Mario Roques (Classiques Français du Moyen Age, 78, 79, 81, 85, 88, 90, Paris, 1948-63); γ, the most complete edition, was edited by M.D-M. Méon, 4 vols. (Paris 1826) - vol. iv contains Le Couronnement de Renard and Renart le Nouvel. For mss. details see the editions of Martin and Roques; also Bossuat, Le Roman de Renard, op. cit., pp. 177-9. Except in special circumstances, discussed when they occur, I have used Roques' edition throughout.
2. Cf. Bossuat, Le Roman de Renard, op. cit., pp. 139-54.
3. ed. E.B. Ham (The University of Michigan Contributions in Modern Philology, IX, Ann Arbor, 1947).
4. ed. A. Foulet (Elliott Monographs, 24, Princeton and Paris, 1929).
5. ed. Henri Roussel (S.A.T.F., 1961).
6. ed. Gaston Raynaud and Henri Lemaître, 2 vols. (Paris, 1914).
7. ed. T. Wright, A Selection of Latin Stories (Percy Society, 8, London, 1843) pp. xvi-xxvi.
8. Cf. James R. Hulbert, 'The Nun's Priest's Tale' in Sources and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, ed. W.F. Bryan, and Germaine Dempster (Chicago, 1941), pp. 645-658.

attempts to bring the Fox to trial) was made in Middle Dutch before 1272. Called *Van den Vos Reinaerde*, it was later enlarged and continued, with reference to other branches of the original, as *Reinaerts Historie*. A prose redaction of this work, published at Gouda by Gerard Leeu in 1479, was translated - and published in 1481 - by Caxton.[1] Henryson may have known his version. We noticed the European-wide interest in animal tales in the latter part of the fifteenth century evidenced by the large numbers of editions of *Steinhöwels Aesop* and Gualterus Anglicus' fables published; something of the same interest can be seen in the publication of various versions (though not the original *Roman*) of fox tales.

---

1. Best read in Edward Arber's edition, *The History of Reynard the Fox* (The English Scholar's Library of Old and Modern Works, I, London 1890); a modernized version is provided by Donald B. Sands, *The History of Reynard the Fox* (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1960). Sands' edition contains a very valuable introduction discussing in detail the Dutch versions.

(iii) The exempla tradition[1]

Animal tales are also to be found in many of the collections of sermon exempla made in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The use of exempla to any marked degree in sermons first becomes noticeable with the growth of popular preaching in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a growth to be associated, at least to some extent, with the preaching of the Crusades and the aims of the newly founded orders of friars - the Dominicans especially had much to do with the spread of exempla collections.

It is probably of profit to quote typical examples of the reasons given for the use of exempla: Henryson himself compares his work to that of a preacher finding 'under a fable figurall ... sad sentence' (The Fox tryed before the Lyone, 290-1); and, in the Bannatyne Manuscript, The Fox and the Wolf ends with the postscript: Explicit exemplum veritatis et falsitatis. Johannes Gobi writes:

> ... Cum enim, reverende pater, impossibile sit nobis superlucere divinum radium nisi sub velamine simillitudinis et figure, ut testatur in angelica hierarchia, hinc est quod mentis

---

1. See J.Th. Welter, L'Exemplum dans la littérature religieuse et didactique du moyen âge (Bibliothèque d'Histoire Ecclésiastique de France, Paris and Toulouse, 1927) - hereafter cited as Welter; T.F. Crane's introduction to his edition of The Exempla or Illustrative Stories from the Sermones Vulgares of Jacques de Vitry (Publications of the Folk-Lore Society, XXVI, London, 1890) - hereafter cited as Crane. Also A. Lecoy de la Marche, La Chaire française au moyen âge, 2nd. edn. (Paris, 1886) and J.A. Mosher, The Exemplum in the Early Religious and Didactic Literature of England (Columbia University Studies in English, New York, 1911). R. Bauman, 'The Folk Tale and Oral Tradition in The Fables of Robert Henryson', op. cit., also seeks to relate Henryson's work to this tradition though he neglects the fact that Henryson would very probably read as well as hear exempla: several of the collections were printed early and manuscript copies of many were numerous.

> nostre racio in tam excellenti luce non figitur nisi eam accipiat per similitudines et exempla. Unde unigenitum Dei verbum ut sedentes in tenebris et in umbra mortis ad celestia elevaret, in exemplis et parabolis loquebatur eo quod forcius moveant avidius audiantur firmius retineantur et a terenis mentem erigant ad eterna, ut Augustinus adestatur ...[1]

Similarly Johannes Herolt:

> ... Nam exempla facilius intellectu capiuntur et firmius memorie imprimuntur et a multis libentius audiuntur. Legimus enim patrem nostrum dominicum ordinis predicatorem fundatorem hoc fecisse. De eo quidem scribitur quod ubicumque conversabatur edificatoriis effluebat sermonibus: abundabat exemplis quibus ad amorem Christi seculive contemptum audientium animas provocabat.[2]

My interest is largely with exempla collections but there are two preachers I should like to mention. Jacques de Vitry (c. 1180-c. 1240), an ardent preacher of the Crusades (both against the Albigensians and against the infidels in the Holy Land) became

---

1. *Scala Celi* (Lubec, 1476); also quoted by Welter p. 321, n. 75.
2. *Sermones Discipuli de sanctis cum promptuario exemplorum et miraculis beate Marie virginis* (Lugdunensis, 1502), Prologus in promptuarium exemplorum, col. AA; also quoted by Welter, p. 400, n. 9. Cf. also the prologue to Humbertus de Romanis, *De dono timoris* (printed by J. Zainer, Ulm, 1480? as *Liber de Abundantia exemplorum* magistri Alberti magni Ratispa episcopi ad omnem materiam). *An Alphabet of Tales*, ed. M.M. Banks, 2 vols. - a projected third did not appear - (E.E.T.S.O.S. 126-7, 1904-5) recounts the story (CCCXV, p. 217) of St. Aidan's success through exempla where his predecessor (who 'usid so mekull soteltie and strange saying' in his sermons) had failed: the story stems from an apparent misreading of Bede but was widely repeated in exempla collections.

Cardinal of Tusculum.[1] His sermons[2] contain many animal stories, usually but scantily developed, usually with specifically Christian moralizations rather than the generalized ethical lessons of the fables in fable collections. Many later collectors drew heavily on his work and his exempla were at times extracted from the sermons and circulated separately. Also popular, to judge from the many printings of the work, were the sermons of Johannes Hérolt, a Dominican of Basle writing in the first half of the fifteenth century.[3] To the collection, the Sermones Discipuli, was attached a promptuarium exemplorum, listing the exempla used: the work thus served the double purpose of sermon manual and exempla source.

Of the exempla collections there are two groups which are of importance:[4] those compiled for the aid of preachers, moralized and unmoralized, sometimes with linking theological commentary;

---

1. for life see Crane, pp. xxii - xxxiv.

2. The exempla from the Sermones Vulgares are extracted by Crane; selections from these sermons are to be found in J. Pitra. Analecta Novissima Spicilegii Solesmensis Altera continuatio Tom II (Paris, 1888), pp. 344-461. Cf. also G. Frenken, Die Exempla von Jacob von Vitry (Quellen und Untersuchungen zur lateinischen Philologie des Mittelalters, Bd. 5, Hft. 1, München 1914), and J. Greben, Die Exempla aus den Sermones Feriales et Communes des Jakob von Vitry (Sammlung Mittellateinischer Texte hg. Alfons Hilka, 9, Heidelberg, 1914). For details see Crane, pp. xxxiv-liii; and Welter, pp. 118-124.

3. Crane, pp. lxxvi-lxxvii; Welter, pp. 399-402.

4. I shall not, of course, attempt to describe all the collections, but limit myself to what seem the most important: those illustrating general trends and, especially, those containing numerous animal tales of which I make use later.

and those which are general moral treatises using exempla to reinforce their lessons. In some ways the most important of the first type is that of Stephanus de Borbone: his vast Tractatus de diversis materiis predicabilibus,[1] unfinished, contains nearly 3,000 exempla. This collection inspired another important work, Liber de Dono Timoris,[2] (c. 1270) by another Dominican, Humbertus de Romanis. Other interesting collections of the late thirteenth century include the Durham Liber Exemplorum,[3] the Tabula Exemplorum secundum ordinem alphabeti[4] and the Speculum Laicorum.[5] In the early fourteenth century Arnold of Liège, another Dominican, wrote his Alphabetum Narracionum.[6] Of particular interest to us is John Bromyard's Summa Praedicantium,[7] a preaching manual containing over 1,200 exempla including many animal stories. Gobi's Scala Celi[8] (c. 1350) also contains fables.

---

1. The most complete MS. is B.N. 15970; B.M. Additional 28682 ff. 208-276 b contains a part (described by J.A. Herbert, Catalogue of Romances, op. cit., iii, 78-87). There is no complete edition but see A. Lecoy de la Marche, Anecdotes historiques, légendes et apologues tirés du recueil inédit d'Etienne de Bourbon (Société de l'Histoire de France, Paris, 1877). For details see Welter, pp. 215-23.
2. see p. 25 n. 2. above; for details Welter, pp. 224-8.
3. ed. A.G. Little, Liber Exemplorum ad usum praedicantium (British Society of Franciscan Studies, I, Aberdeen, 1908); see Welter, pp. 290-4.
4. ed., in summary form, by J.Th. Welter (Thesaurus Exemplorum, Fasc. III, Paris, 1926).
5. ed., in summary form, by J.Th. Welter (Thesaurus Exemplorum, Fasc. V, Paris, 1914).
6. see Welter, pp. 304-19; there is a fifteenth century translation, The Alphabet of Tales, ed. M.M. Banks, op. cit.,
7. I have used the Antwerp edition of 1614. See Welter, pp. 328-34. The collection was certainly made by an English Dominican in the fourteenth century but his identity has not so far been established with any finality: see W.A. Pantin, The English Church in the Fourteenth Century (Cambridge, 1955), p. 147, n. 2.
8. op. cit.; for details see Welter, pp. 319-25.

Of the second type of exempla collection there are three works of particular interest for us: Nicole Bozon's Les Contes Moralisés,[1] an Anglo-Norman text composed by an English Franciscan about 1320; Mayno de Mayneri's Dialogus Creaturarum[2] (after 1326), 122 dialogues, usually between animal and man or animal and animal - each dialogue usually contains exempla to illustrate further the central theme and many of these are also animal tales; and the anonymous Speculum Sapiencie,[3] a fifteenth century book of moral teaching which also contains a few animal stories. Here too we should probably mention the medieval encyclopedias of science (sometimes moralized), well represented by Bartholomaeus Anglicus' De Proprietatibus Rerum.[4] But Henryson seems to have used little of the lore of such works. Nor, in his moralizations, is it generally necessary to ascribe to him knowledge of the traditional allegorizations of animals as found in, for instance, the Gregorianum of Garnerus of St. Victore,[5] or Hrabanus Maurus' Allegoriae in Universam Sacram Scripturam.[6]

---

1. ed. P. Meyer and L. Toulmin-Smith, Les Contes Moralisés de Nicole Bozon (S.A.T.F., 1889). Bozon's animal tales seem largely drawn from Marie de France: see Philip Warner Harry, A Comparative Study of The Aesopic Fable in Nicole Bozon (University Studies published by The University of Cincinnati, Series II, vol. 1, no. 2, Cincinnati, 1905).
2. Die Bieden Ältesten Lateinischen Fabelbücher des Mittelalters des Bischofs Cyrillus Speculum Sapientiae und des Nicolaus Pergamenus Dialogus Creaturarum, hg. J.G.Th. Grässe (Bibliothek des Litterarischen Vereins in Stuttgart, CXLVIII, Tübingen, 1880). Grässe's ascription of the work to Nicolaus Pergamenus has since been contested: see Welter, pp. 357-8. For details see Welter, pp. 357-60. There is an English translation, The Dialoges of Creatures Moralysed Applyably and Edificatyfly (Antwerp, 1535).
3. Die Bieden Altesten Lateinischen Fabelbücher des Mittelalters, op. cit.; again Grässe's ascription of authorship has been questioned: see Welter, p. 433, n. 16. For details see Welter, pp. 433-5.
4. I have used John of Trevisa's translation in the London edition of 1535.
5. P.L., cxciii, 23-462 (cols. 65-136 are of particular interest).
6. P.L., cxii, 849-1088.

I hope this discussion to have served two purposes. Firstly, to have reminded that Henryson's Fabillis belongs to a long literary tradition,[1] European-wide in its occurrence; more particularly perhaps the work can be related to the widespread interest in animal literature in the second half of the fifteenth century illustrated by the number of such texts printed: some of these texts almost certainly provided Henryson with certain of his sources. Secondly, I hope this discussion will have placed in some sort of context those works which I shall proceed to examine as sources and analogues.

Now, Henryson calls his work 'a maner of translatioun' (Prolog 32). But the Fabillis are far more than a translation: rather they are an expansion, a reinvigoration of the tradition. Thus to discover the exact source is at times almost impossible. There is also the possibility that variants Henryson has used have been lost - the analogues found for some of the fables may suggest this. The sources and analogues of each fable thus require the closest analysis. Thus rather than write a general source study to begin and then examine the individual fables in relation to the discovered sources, as might be expected,[2] I have decided to discuss the sources of each individual fable separately. The method will have another advantage: for each fable we shall be able to see just what existed in the tradition before - and thus Henryson's own contribution will become more obvious.

---

1. The literary tradition inspired imitation in the other arts: see for instance Bossuat, Le Roman de Renard, op. cit., pp. 164-7; Lillian M.C. Randall, 'Exempla as a source of Gothic art illumination', The Art Bulletin, xxxix (1957), 97-107.

2. If a general statement is required at this point I can but refer to the tabulation - with which I largely agree - of Professor John MacQueen, 'The Text of Henryson's Morall Fabillis', The Innes Review, xiv (1963), 4.

C: The Individual Works

(i) The Prolog

The Prolog is based ultimately on that of Gualterus Anglicus.[1] An examination of the changes of emphasis and the extensions the poet has made to his original will show the different theory of literature which Henryson used and also stress the philosophical and theological elements underlying The Fabillis, elements which earlier collections, in which the fables deal with unrelated ethical problems, do not develop.[2]

Gualterus' Prologue reads

> Ut juvet et prosit, conatur pagina presens:
>   Dulcius arrident seria mixta jocis.
> Hortulus iste parit fructum cum flore, favorem
>   Flos et fructus emunt; hic nitet, iste sapit.
> Si fructus plus flore placet, fructum lege; si flos
>   Plus fructu, florem; si duo, carpe duo.
> Ne mihi torpentem sopiret inertia sensum,
>   In quo pervigilet, mens mea movit opus.
> Ut messis pretium de vili surgat agello,
>   Verbula sicca, Deus, imple rore tuo.
>   Moralitas.
> Verborum levitas morum fert pondus honestum,
>   Ut nucleum celat arida testa bonum.

---

1. Bastin, ii, 7-8. Most of the material Henryson adapts could also have been taken from the prologues to the Isopet de Lyon or Isopet I which are based closely on Gualterus' version. However it can be proved that Henryson used Gualterus' prologue directly (l. 28 is a direct quotation of l. 2 of that work) and there is no need thus to postulate the influence of the other versions. Two interesting parallels - they are, I think, no more than analogues - between Henryson and these versions I shall discuss later.

2. I assume that the poet intended his Prolog to apply to the complete group of fables. Henryson's work is drawn from varying sources and his plan may have changed considerably during its composition (after the appearance of Caxton's Esope, for instance - cf. David K. Crowne, 'A Date for the Composition of Henryson's Fables', J.E.G.P., lxi [1962], 583-90) but his theory of the nature of the fable form set out in the Prolog seems to me applicable to every fable in the collection. But cf. the discussion of this point, and related textual matters, in John MacQueen, 'The Text of Henryson's Morall Fabillis', op. cit., pp. 3-4.

Additio
Ut loquar uberius, adsit mihi Virgo Maria,
  Suppleat eclipsim Filius ipse suus.
Cum nescimus enim perplexi quid faciamus,
  Auxilium mittunt caelitus isti duo.

Henryson adapts the image of ll. 2-5 markedly to express a very different literary theory.

> In lyk maner as throw a busteois erd
> So it be lawborit with grit diligence
> Springis the flouris and the cornis brerd
> hailsum and gud to manis sustenence
> So springis thair a morall sueit sentence
> Out of the sotell dyt of poetre
> To gud purpois quha culd it rycht aply (8-14)

In the original the pleasure to be gained is represented by the flowers, the wisdom by the fruit. One can choose to gather one or the other or both, they are seemingly of equal value. Henryson characterises the earth as the poetry - merely that from which the valuable is tilled - both flowers (the beautiful) and fruit (the nourishing) as 'morall sueit sentence' gained through hard work. There is no choice offered, the priorities obvious. A second image, taken more directly from Gualterus, conveys similar implications:

> Thir nutis schellis thocht thai be hard and tuich
> Thay hald the cirnall sueit and delectable
> So lyis thair a doctryne wyse aneuch
> and full of fruct vndir a fenyeit fable (15-18).[1]

The poetry is merely the cloak, penetrated with difficulty (the shell

---

1. There is a common medieval fable concerning a foolish ape (usually interpreted as a worldly fool) which when it finds the rind (penance) bitter does not bite through to the sweetness of the nut (eternal life). So, for instance, Jacques de Vitry, Crane cxxvii, p. 58; B.M. MS. Arundel 506, fol 42b; B.M. Additional MS. 18347, fol 126a; Odo of Cheriton, Hervieux iv, 218; Speculum Laicorum, B.M. Additional MS. 11284, fol 10; Liber Exemplorum Secundum Ordinem Alphabeti, B.M. Additional MS. 18351, fol 46; Dialogus Creaturarum, ed. J.G.Th. Grässe, op. cit., dialogue 11, p. 149; An Alphabet of Tales, ed. M.M. Banks, op. cit., cccxv, p. 217; The Early English Version of the Gesta Romanorum, ed. S.J.H. Herrtage (E.E.T.S.E.S. 33, 1879), lvi, p. 373. The image of rind and kernel was commonly used to describe Scriptural exegesis, the rind being the literal level, the kernel the various 'higher' levels of meaning, tropological, allegorical and anagogical. It also became widely used to describe the methods to be used in reading certain allegorical literary works. See D.W. Robertson Jr., 'Some Medieval Literary Terminology with Special Reference to Chretien de Troyes', S.P., xlviii (1951), 669-92.

is 'hard' and 'tuich'), covering the 'doctryne' which provides both nourishment ('fruct', stressed by the alliterating f[1]) and pleasure ('sueit' - cf. l. 12)[2]

Ll. 19-28 are probably developed from the first two lines of Gualterus prologue.[3] The development in the prologue to the Isopet de Lyon[4] is also of interest, likewise invoking authority:

---

1. Henryson's frequent use of alliteration has been noted by several critics, for instance Diebler, Henrisone's Fabeldichtungen, op. cit., pp. 24-7; Speirs, The Scots Literary Tradition, op. cit., p. 49; Wittig, The Scottish Tradition in Literature, op. cit., p. 35. It has been discussed at most length by Pauline E. Knight, The Alliterative Tradition in Medieval Scottish Poetry, an unpublished M.A. thesis for the University of Manchester (1952), pp. 55-77 and 156-61. In her analysis of the heavy alliterative pattern of the parliament of the gods in The Testament of Cresseid Miss Knight described the function of the device in Henryson's work:

    It may be argued that the latter [the use of alliterative verse for close description] is a merely decorative use, but it should be noted that the vocabulary and the heavier verse rhythm introduced by alliteration bring about a significant enrichment in the texture of the verse ... (p. 66). The reiteration of a key letter adds force and intensity to the sense, so that the employment of alliteration is not merely ornamental device, but a true recognition of its proper virtue (p. 69).

   There is no need to give examples here for many alliterative patterns will be analysed throughout this thesis showing how emphasis is given to the meaning by their use.

   The use of alliteration in "Chaucerian" metres is as old as Chaucer himself (for instances, The Knyghtes Tale, I(A) 2605ff) but Henryson's use of the device seems much more extensive. I make this statement with some reservation for it is a personal impression only; intensive study of fifteenth century poetry with this point in mind would be needed to substantiate it. If the impression is correct it provides a further example of Henryson's creative method - the combination of separate traditions in an effort to create a new image for well-known, but still important, ideas.

2. Cf. the discussion of medieval aesthetics in D.W. Robertson Jr., A Preface to Chaucer, Studies in Medieval Perspectives (Princeton and London, 1963), pp. 52-137. Henryson's own words would seem to condemn those who refuse to take seriously his ethical and religious preoccupations.

3. The fact that fables both entertain and teach is mentioned throughout the tradition. Thus Phædrus, Prologue, Hervieux, ii, 5; the vulgate Romulus, Steinhöwels Äsop, op. cit., p. 78, for instance.

4. Bastin, ii, 85-6.

Raisons qu'est de solez paree
Est plus voluntiers escoutee,
Car cilz fait comm'un soutilz laz
Qui melle sent avuec soulez.
Tulles aussi l'ensoigne a faire
Por les cuers des genz plus atraire (3-8)

Henryson's development of the idea is, at least at first, far less emphatically didactic. We have noticed that he has stressed, in the two images discussed, the sweetness of the moral content, the pleasure it can give. Here too 'mirrines' (in l. 26 emphasized through alliterating m) receives the initial stress. This 'mirrines' is probably not the sweetness of the moral but sheer delight in poetry (ll. 3-4),[1] delight which is of course only a means to an end: Dulcius arrident seria picta Iocis.

Henryson's handling of the three stanzas discussed so far (the material taken from his original) shows great skill in rhetorical persuasion. He has made them part of a defence of the fable form, answering two criticisms: on the one hand, that the form is dull, on the other that because it is 'grundit' upon fiction it cannot be of value. The latter criticism (the subject is not discussed in the original Gualterus but is an addition) is answered largely in the first stanza though the answer is also implied in the two images

---

1. In ll. 3-4 Henryson tells us that what pleases in poetry is 'poleit termis of sueit retory.' The mirrines, one may perhaps assume, arose from a skilled hearer's delight in poetic craft (the 'scitell dyt', 'the gay me'ir facound and purperat') rather than from 'the wealth of personal observation; simple pathos and lively humour' (Wood, Poems and Fables, op. cit., p. xv) which delight the modern connoisseur of charm.

discussed above - the adaptation of these images is at least partially explained by this purpose. There is an interesting parallel to Henryson's defence in the epilogue to Isopet I:[1]

> Car l'en y treuve verité
> Combien que fable recité
> L'ait; ce n'est pas a merveillier:
> Qui en logique vuet veillier,
> Il trouvera que de premisses
> Fausses, ensamble bien assises
> S'en suit vraie conclusioun (49-55)

But his defence is of course very different from that of Isopet I - the 'fegour' is of central importance.[2]

Having disarmed criticism of the fable form in general, the poet proceeds to disarm that directed against his particular collection, professing knowledge of his own inadequacies, maintaining that the task of translation was undertaken at the insistence of a lord. As has been pointed out several times we do not know - and there is little likelihood that we shall know - the lord whose 'requeist and prayeris' (34) caused Henryson to 'mak a maner of translatioun' (32). Indeed it is open to question whether there were such a lord: the explanation[3] may be merely part of the humility topos expanded upon, in thoroughly conventional terms, in the sixth stanza. The topos, of classical origin, was often used

---

1. Bastin, ii, 329-31.
2. Cf. Denton Fox, 'Henryson's Fables', op. cit., p. 341 and notes.
3. Assertions that a poet has been commanded to write by a nobleman are not uncommon - in the fable tradition Marie de France's Prologue contains such a statement (ll. 30-7; Ewert and Johnston, op. cit., pp. 1-2). Cf. also E.R. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, op. cit., pp. 86-7.

in later medieval poetry.[1] I quote but one parallel, from the prologue to Lydgate's Isopos Fabulis,[2] to illustrate Henryson's debt to the convention:

> And, though I haue no rethoryk swete,
> Haue me excusyd: I was born in Lydgate ... (31-2)
> ... And yef I fall bycause of ignoraunce ...
> ... I me submyt to theyr correccion
> Of hem; that haue more clere inspeccion
> In matyrs that touche poetry ... (43-8)

The critic cannot now castigate the faults of the form or those of Henryson's verse; he has no excuse for not attending to the 'doctryne' presented.

The poet proceeds to expound the central 'fegour' of the work. The traditional apology for telling of animal fables is well illustrated from the vulgate Romulus:

> Verum et vitam hominum et mores ostenderet, inducit aves, arbores, bestias et pecora loquentes, pro vana cuiuslibet fabula, ut noverint homines, fabularum cur sit inventum genus, aperte et breviter narravit.[3]

But, as far as I have been able to discover, Henryson seems the first to import explicitly into the literary fable form what was a theological commonplace

---

1. As examples see Chaucer's Franklin's Tale, ll.V(F) 716-28; Hawe's Pastime of Pleasure, ed. W.E. Mead (E.E.T.S.O.S. 173, 1928), ll. 43-9; Lydgate's Fall of Princes, ed. H. Bergen, Pt. i (E.E.T.S.E.S. 121, 1924) ll. 225ff.; cf. also E.P. Hammond, English Verse Between Chaucer and Surrey (Durham, North Carolina and London, 1927), p. 392; E.R. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, op. cit., pp. 83-5, 407-13.

2. ed. MacCracken, The Minor Poems of John Lydgate, ii, op. cit., pp. 566-8.

3. Steinhöwels Esop, op. cit., p. 78.

how mony men in operatioun
ar lyk to beistis in thair conditioun (48-9)

The idea has Biblical authority: II Peter ii, 9 ff.

Novit Dominus pios de tentatione eripere, iniquos vero in diem judicii reservare cruciandos. Magis autem eos qui post carnem in concupiscentia immunditiae ambulant, dominationemque contemnunt, audaces, sibi placentes, sectas non metuunt introducere, blasphemantes ... Hi vero, velut irrationabilia pecora, naturaliter in captionem et in perniciem, in his quae ignorant blasphemantes, in corruptione sua peribunt.[1]

The idea was also to be found in Boethius' De Consolatione Philosophiae:

And yif thow wolt leden thi lif in delyces, every wyght schal despysen the and forleeten the, as thow that art thral to thyng that is right foul and brutyl (that is to seyn, seruaunt to thi body).[2]
... yif he be lyght and unstedfast of corage and chaungith ay his studies, he is likned to briddes: and if he be ploungid in fowle and unclene luxuris, he is witholden in the foule delices ot the fowle sowe. Than folweth it that he that forleteth bounte and prowesse, he forletith to ben a man; syn he may nat passe into the condicion of God, he is torned into a beeste.[3]

Innumerable later medizval examples could be quoted. I shall content myself with two which help to place our passage (indeed much of Henryson's work) in its theological and philosophical context. The Cloud of Unknowing:

---

1. I have taken all Biblical quotations to be used in this thesis from the Latin Vulgate in an attempt to provide a text which is probably close to that which Henryson would have known.
2. Book III, Prosa 8. I quote from Chaucer's translation, Robinson, p. 347.
3. Book IV, Prosa 3. Robinson, p. 363.

> Before er man synnid was the sensualyte
> so obedyent vnto the wille - unto the whiche
> it is as it were seruaunt - that it ministred
> neuer unto it any vnordeinde likyng or groching
> in any bodely creature, or any goostly feynyng
> of likyng or mislykyng maad by any goostly
> enmye in the bodely wittes. Bot now it is not
> so; for bot yif it be reulyd by grace in the
> wille, for to suffre meekly and in mesure the
> pyne of the original synne - the whiche it
> felith in absence of needful likyng and in
> presence of speedful groching - and therto
> also for to strayne it fro luste in presence
> of needful lykyng, and fro lusty plesaunce in
> absence of speedful groching, elles wil it
> wrechidly and wantounly weltre, as a swyne in
> the myre, in the welthes of this woreld and
> the foule flessche so mochel, that alle oure
> leuyng schal be more beestly and fleschly than
> outher manly or goostly.[1]

St. Vincent Ferrer preaches that those

> qui viuunt ibi secundum rationem sunt homines,
> qui viuunt secundum sensualitatem sunt bestie.
> Superbi sunt leones. auari uulpes. luxuriosi
> porci. inuidi sunt canes. gulosi sunt lupi
> iracundi. serpentes siue vipre.[2]

---

1. ed. P. Hodgson (E.E.T.S.O.S. 218, 1944) pp. 118-9.

2. Sermones de Tempore (Cologne, 1487), Dominica ii adventu domini, Sermo I, col. 3. Cf. also Humbertus de Romanis, De Dono Timoris, op. cit., para sexta de timore peccati; Malachy, Libellus septem peccatorum mortalium venena eorumque remedia describens (Paris, 1518), fol. 14ª; for Malachy, an Irish Franciscan of the beginning of the fourteenth century, and his work, see Welter, p. 173; Bartholomaeus Anglicus, De Proprietatibus Rerum, tr. John of Trevisa, op. cit., Liber XVIII, fol. cccia; T. Wright, Latin Stories, op. cit., no. 63, pp. 57-8; W. Hilton, Scala Perfectionis, Bk. ii, ch. 14, B.M. MS. Harl. 6579, fol. 75ᵇff.; Hoccleve, The Regement of Princes, ed. F.J. Furnivall (E.E.T.S.E.S. 72, 1897), ll. 1602-3; W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons Edited from British Museum MS. Royal 18 B xxiii (E.E.T.S.O.S. 207, 1940), p. 275; Caxton's The Game and Playe of Chess, ed. W.E.A. Axon (London, 1883), pp. 104, 132, 186. Also D.W. Robertson Jr., A Preface to Chaucer, op. cit., pp. 27-8 and 150 ff., also figures.

Three points in Henryson's exposition of the idea (ll. 43-56) should be noted. Firstly, the poet will show the animals 'A sylogysme propone and eik exclud' (46) - worldly men seem learned: we must remember this when we are introduced to technical terms in the Fabillis, for instance the legal terms of The Fox tryed before the Lyone. Secondly, we must not be misled by phrases such as 'carnall fowll delyte' (51), 'lust and appetyt' (54) into thinking that the Fabillis will deal primarily with crimes of violence or passion. The basic sin (the consideration of which forms the central preoccupation of the Fabillis, thus linking the work to the large body of mediaeval literature) is that of worldliness, the placing of one's trust in this world's false values. The vicious sins are but a consequence of the misplacing of values as Henryson shows us in The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff, and The Wolff and the Lamb for instance. Thirdly, emphasis is given to the way in which sin becomes a habit - we shall be shown this again, especially in The Swallow and Othir Birdis.[1]

The Prolog then illustrates Henryson's nature as an artist (construction, through combination, often of conventional forms and ideas, of sophisticated argument, thus reinvigorating the form and providing a new image for an idea which had preoccupied many artists in the preceding mediaeval centuries) and establishes the critical criteria which must be observed to follow the author's intentions: we shall gain pleasure from his skill as an artist but we must seek (a task which will require effort) for a fuller understanding of the moral purpose (which will give spiritual nourishment and its own pleasure) illustrated in the central figure of the cycle - man as animal.

1. Cf. D.W. Robertson Jr., A Preface to Chaucer, pp. 65 ff..

(ii) The Cock and the Jewell

There are two major points in determining Henryson's sources for this fable.

As Gregory Smith pointed out, 'Henryson's use of the word "Iasp" in the title is an important clue'.[1] The LBG Romulus begins with the tale entitled 'De Gallo et Iaspide';[2] in the tale itself, however, the jewel is found to be a pearl (Gallus ... invenit margaritam) which is the form of precious stone commonly described in the Latin versions of the fable. Gualterus Anglicus' version also begins with the fable 'De Gallo et Iaspide';[3] here the term is kept in the text itself. The Isopet de Lyon uses the form 'Jaspe' throughout.[4] In a note to the section on sources in his introduction, Smith states: 'There can be no suggestion of borrowing from Fr. jaspe (as in the Bestiaries) or from earlier Southern examples (as noted in the N.E.D.), in some of which the effect of direct translation is clear.'[5] He gives no reason for this statement and, to my mind, there appears to be none: Henryson's 'jasp' seems as likely to derive from the French 'Iaspe' as from the Latin 'Iaspis/Iaspidis.'

---

1. Poems, op. cit., i, xxxii.
2. Hervieux, ii, 564-5.
3. Bastin, ii, 8.
4. Bastin, ii, 86-7.
5. Poems, op. cit., i, xxxiii. n. 4.

The second clue to the source is the nature of the moralitas. A survey of the applications found throughout the tradition will be of interest. Lydgate is alone in praising the cock;[1] it knows its correct station in society he explains:

> The cok demyd, to hym hit was more dew
> Small simple grayne, then stones of hygh renoun,
> Of all tresour chief possessioun
> Suche as God sent, eche man tak at gre
> Nat prowde with ryches nor groge with poverte (213-7)

All other versions are condemnatory. Bromyard's[2] refers to the preacher's congregation:

> Patet ergo, quod nulli praedictorum sufficientem excusationem habent, quare non debeant Dei verba audire, sed praedictas fingunt causas, vel propter causas factas .... Vel quia Dei verbi, et virtutum et poenitentiae et bonorum operum ignorans preciositatem. Et est de eis, sicut dicitur secundum fabulas de gallo, qui in fimo lapide precioso invento, ait, libentius invenissem unum granum, quia nec tu utilis mihi es, nec ego tibi. Habentes enim stomachum occupatum aliis, in istis non inveniunt saporem, sed dicunt, quam bonus cibus esset, si quis haberet appetitum, Iere. 22. Locutus sum ad te in abundantia tua, et dixisti, non audiam, vel quia diabolus aures obturat ...

Nicole Bozon interprets similarly[3] under the heading 'Quod amaritudo mundi multis placet et verbum Dei displicet'. Now neither of these texts in any way influences Henryson but two points at least are interesting. Firstly a specifically religious application is

---

1. The Minor poems of John Lydgate, ii, op. cit., 568-74.
2. Summa Predicantium, op. cit., A xxvi (Audire), 32.
3. Les Contes Moralisés, op. cit., pp. 40-1.

given to the fable; we shall see this to some extent in this fable of Henryson, and, even further, in others. Secondly, Biblical passages are quoted to support the argument; this too is a characteristic of Henryson's method both in this fable and elsewhere.

Another class of moralitas refers solely to those who do not understand the fables. This interpretation stems from the original moral in Phædrus: 'Hoc illis narro, qui me non intellegunt'.[1] This becomes, in later redactions, 'Hoc Esopus illis narrat, qui ipsum legunt et non intellegunt'.[2] Marie de France[3] condemns more generally:

> Autresi est de meinte gent:
> Si tut [ne] veit a lur talent
> Cume del cok e de la gemme -
> Veü l'avums de humme et de femme -
> Bien e honur nient ne prisent,
> Le pis pernent, le meus despisent (17-22)

We come closer to Henryson, however, when we examine those fables which interpret the Cock as a fool: thus the version in the Corpus Christi Oxford Romulus[4] headed 'Quod quisque insipiens bona queque ac preciosa quasi vilia contempnit'. The version in hexameters derived from the Romulus of Nilant[5] moralizes:

---

1. Hervieux, ii, 35.
2. Vulgate Romulus: Steinhöwels Æsop, ed. Österley, op. cit., p. 80. Also Wissembourg Æsop. Hervieux, ii, 190; Munich Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 262; Florence Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 474-5. A variant in the Vienna-Berlin Romulus (Hervieux, ii, 418) introduces the concept of foolishness which we shall find important: 'Hec illis Esopus narrat qui eum minus intellegunt. Quid prodest stulto divicias habere, cum non possit sapienciam emere'.
3. Ewert and Johnston, op. cit., p. 2.
4. Hervieux, ii, 246.
5. Hervieux, ii, 654.

> Penniger insipiens ut spreuit regia dona
> Sic stolidi bruti contempnunt optima queque

The LBG Romulus concludes with the moralitas: 'Sic stultos arguit Esopus, qui sapienciam invenire non curant, quia eum sibi necessariam forte non cognoscunt.' Here too, we find the jasp interpreted as wisdom; a similar interpretation is found in Henryson's fable. This interpretation is also found, without mention of foolishness, in the Romulus of Nilant: 'Esopus hanc primam fabulam dixit de hiis qui despiciunt sapienciam; ut quodcunque bonum inveniunt'.[1] But it is the combination of the two interpretations we seek. And it is to be found in Gualterus Anglicus and the French versions stemming from him, as well as in the LBG Romulus:

Gualterus:
> Tu Gallo stolidum, tu Jaspide dona sophie
> Pulchra notes; stolido nil sapit ista seges (9-10)

the Isopet de Lyon:
> La riche Jaspe, c'est Savoir,
> Que li fous Pous ne puet avoir
> Bons est donc la comparoison
> Dou Foul a Poul qu'est sanz raison.
> Sapience qu'est espandue
> Entre Fous, c'est chose perdue (25-30)

Isopet I[2]:
> Iceste pierre senefie
> Sagesse, et le Coch la folie (17-18)

Interestingly, for it is basically derived from the Romulus version which has no mention of this interpretation, Caxton's <u>Esope</u>[3] reads

> And thys fable sayde Esope to them that rede this book for by the cok is to understond the fool which retcheth not of sapyence ne of wysedome as the cok retcheth and setteth not by the precious stone. And by the stone is to understond this fayre and playsaunt book.

---

1. Hervieux, ii, 513-4.
2. Bastin, ii, 204-5.
3. ed. Jacob, <u>op. cit.</u>, ii, 4.

An examination of these two 'clues' leads then to the conclusion that Henryson was influenced by the LBG Romulus or by Gualterus Anglicus' versification of Romulus or by the Isopet de Lyon - we can exclude the Isopet I and Caxton's Esope as they do not mention a 'iasp' and contain nothing occurring only in themselves and in Henryson. I shall examine the three relevant texts more closely in relation to Henryson's fable. The LBG Romulus can be eliminated immediately. Line 112 in Henryson's version (Thow ganis not for me nor I for the) can be closely paralleled to Gualterus but not to the LBG Romulus. Gualterus writes:

> Nec tibi convenio, nec tu mihi; nec tibi prosum
> Nec mihi tu prodes; plus amo cara minus (7-8)

This type of phrase was the common ending for the fable from the time of Phædrus: 'Nec tibi prodesse, nec mihi quicquam potes' (7). The LBG Romulus, however, concludes: 'Ego vero qui te inveni, pocius escam quam te quesivi, nec tibi honorem faciam, quia te michi non video necessariam'. Besides, there is no point at which the LBG Romulus and Henryson coincide which is not to be found in Gualterus. Gualterus' version may now be examined alone. A further point at which Henryson's fable is close to it may be found in the opening lines of the cock's address to the jasp:

Gualterus: Res vili pretiosa loco natique decoris
Hac in sorde jaces, nil mihi messis habes (3-4)

Henryson: O gentill gem o riche and noble thing
Thocht I the fynd thow ganis nocht for me ...
... It war pety thow suld in this midding
be burit thus among thus muk and mwd (79-83)

In the Isopet de Lyon there is a greater emphasis than in Gualterus on the cock's desire for food, an emphasis which, as will be seen later, Henryson strengthens. In Phædrus the phrase is: 'potior cui multo est cibus' which forms the original for many similar phrases in later versions; Gualterus' phrase is: 'nil mihi messis habes' (4). In the Isopet de Lyon the cock says:

... En toi ne truis point de pasture.
Muez ainz grains de fromant ou d'orge
Quar miez me font ovrir la gorge (20-2)

Henryson: the cock says that he would rather
... luk my lyvis fude
as corne or drafe small worme or naillis
or ony meit wald do my stomok gude ... (93-5)

Of course Henryson could have developed this argument himself; he certainly extended it. A point of greater certainty is the Isopet's interpretation of the jasp as knowledge: 'La riche Jaspe, c'est Savoir' (25). This is the only text which I have been able to find which has any equivalent for Henryson's 'science'. It should be noted, however, that there is no parallel in the Isopet de Lyon for line 112 and that there is material in the Isopet which cannot be found in Henryson:

Ensic quier un proverbe fin
Es autres fables en la fin
Et pense bien dou retenir
Quar grant profit t'en puet venir (31-4)

There is a further parallel which can be made between Henryson's fable and another version. Henryson writes that the cock: 'Flew furth at a dounhill sone be day' (66). Lydgate describes at length:

Whylom thys foule in a glad mornyng
Reioysyd hym ayene the son[ne] shene
With all hys flok to walke opon a grene.
(16)

He was furst besy for to breke hys faste,
With hys wyves about hym eueryehone,
On a small donghyll to fynde a good repaste ... (103-8)

Lydgate's setting seems to me a reminiscence of the scene in Chaucer's Nonnes Prestes Tale where the cock strides forth among his paramours at this very time of day. Henryson may have read Lydgate and, remembering him, set his tale at the same time of day for none of the direct sources mention this detail. However I see no necessity to claim this: the setting seems to me, as I shall explain later, rather a use of another convention to emphasize the poem's theme.

From this study of previous tellings of the tale of the Cock and the Jewell we have almost certainly isolated Henryson's sources: there seems to me one detail at least ('savoir' as the interpretation of 'jaspe') that he could have taken only from the Isopet de Lyon. That text, however, does not contain all the details Henryson drew from the tradition. These details can be found in Gualterus' version. It could perhaps be argued that he used the Isopet and some other text, providing the necessary parallel for l. 112, which did not necessarily either use the word 'jasp' or contain a moralitas similar to his own. However we have already seen that Henryson used Gualterus in the prologue and there is thus no need to posit any other source. From these sources Henryson took the bare outlines of the story and of the moralitas: the cock finding a 'jasp' on a dunghill; his address to the jasp telling of its beauty, of its fallen state, of its uselessness to him; perhaps a stress on the cock's desire for food; and the skeleton of the moralitas: a fool dismissing wisdom and 'Savoir'. But to this bare outline Henryson has added a great deal and emphasized many details; these changes must be examined at length.

Henryson does not merely state, as all tellings of the story except Lydgate's had done before him, that a cock searching for his food on a dungheap finds a precious stone. He adds firstly a portrait of the cock:

> A Cok sumtyme with fethreme fresch and gay[1]
> rycht cant and crous suppois he was bot pure
> Flew furth at a dounhill sone be day
> To get his denner sett was all his cure (64-7)

The poet has portrayed a self-confident being caring for nothing but its material comforts: it seems smart ('fethreme fresch and gay); it is confident and proud (the emphatic adverb 'rycht') despite its poverty; '<u>all</u> his cure' is upon material comfort - its first thought in the morning is of food. Perhaps in the time in which the action is set we may see an echo of the chanson d'aventure convention in which the narrators or others go forth at morning, usually in search of worldly pleasure, at a time when the world <u>seems</u> fresh and gay. The narrators in Henryson's own <u>Lyon and the Mouse</u> and in Chaucer's <u>Legend of Good Women</u> might be instanced. The cock finds the jasp not because he is seeking it but 'be aventure' (68). It might be objected to this analysis that I am reading values back from the moralitas: several readers have told me that their picture of the cock at this point was favourable and, on first reading the fable, my reactions were similar.[2] This raises the question of how Henryson intended the

---

1. B.M. reads 'gray' which is scarcely intelligible. I have adopted 'gay', the reading of all other MSS. and early prints.
2. Cf. also Wittig, <u>The Scottish Tradition in Literature</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 40.

poem to be read. There are three possibilities. Firstly, I think it possible that the poet may have expected his readers to know the fable and its probable moralitas: their interest would be in the way he was to tell it, in the particular slant he was to give the story. There is a great deal of evidence in the fable itself, which I shall examine as we proceed, condemning the cock; if one were expecting condemnation from the beginning one could perhaps find it even at the first encounter. Secondly the poet, although supposing his audience to be unaware of the fable, might expect them to be sensitive enough to his devices to be able to pick up criticism at the first encounter. Thirdly - and this would be an extraordinarily sophisticated device - he might have expected his audience to be shocked by the moralitas (either on first encounter with the fable or having come across Lydgate's radically different interpretation) so that they thought or read back over the fable itself and discovered how they too had been duped, how they were foolish like the cock. We shall encounter these three possibilities again in examining The Fox tryed before the Lyone and The Wolf and the Wedder. The third possibility is certainly the way the poem works today, at least to judge from my reaction and that of other readers I have asked.[1] Whether the poem brought about a similar reaction when it was first heard or read I find it impossible to be certain. The question does not occur to Stearns for he judges the cock to be: 'a poor

---

1. and cf. Denton Fox, 'Henryson's Fables', op. cit., p. 343.

person of character and integrity';[1] he takes no account of the moralitas nor of the condemnatory material in the story and I consider his reading of this fable to lack any kind of rapport with the work itself. He writes of The Cook and the Jasp in his chapter 'The Poet as Humanitarian' and has been mislead by his preconceptions. I defend my analysis of the first four lines then because I consider this to be certainly the way in which they were finally meant to be read, whether after a preliminary "false" reading or not does not matter.

Now just as Henryson has added to his poem a description of the cock not found in his sources so he adds a description of the jewel: it is a 'Ioly Iasp rycht pretious' (69). Henryson uses what are, we shall find, common devices in his poetry - two adjectives qualifying a noun, an intensifying adverb, alliteration - to stress the beauty and value of the jewel. The jewel is lost ('tynt', 75) and not sought but thrown out among the sweepings; the most valuable thing in this world (... science, for him nedit no mair, 154) is lost through the carelessness of those who neglecting it care rather for pleasure:

> ... madynis wantoun and insolent
> That fane wald play and on the streit be sene (71-2)

The episode is perhaps presented in contrast with the parable told in St. Luke xv, 8-10:

> Aut quae mulier habens drachmas decem, si
> perdidit drachmam unam, nonne accendit
> lucernam, et everrit domum, et quaerit
> diligenter, donec inveniat? Et cum

---

1. Robert Henryson, op. cit., p. 109.

> invenerit convocat amicas et vicinas, dicens: Congratulamini mihi quia inveni drachmam quam perdideram.

This woman knew the value of what she had lost and, seeking it, swept her home carefully, not carelessly with no concern at her loss. Extra meaning is given to the comparison by the normal exposition of the passage:

> Qui signatur est per pastorem, [the good shepherd of the previous parable] ipse et per mulierem. Ipse enim Deus, ipse et Dei sapientia. Et quia imago exprimitur in drachma, mulier drachmam perdidit, quando homo, qui conditus ad imaginem Dei fuerat, peccando a similitudine sui Conditoris recessit. Sed accendit mulier lucernam, quia sapientia Dei apparuit in humanitate. Lucerna quippe lumen intesta est ...[1]

I am not of course suggesting that Henryson is writing an allegory, of Man's loss of his soul, which is not explained in the Moralitas and which he expects his readers to work out. But the comparison with this Biblical passage, and its widely known exposition, shows both the importance of the jewel and the foolishness of the cock and the careless women. We shall find Henryson often using Biblical stories and quotations, on many occasions obliquely has here, to emphasize his argument. Such a practice is, of course, not original to him: it is a common sermon device (we have already noted its use in sermon manuals) and it was used by many other poets.[2] So when Gualterus Anglicus (and all other versions of the fable are very similar) has merely stated:

---

1. Bede, In Lucae Evangelium Expositio, Lib. IV, P.L., xcii, col. 521. Cf. also St. Bruno Astensis, Commentarius in Lucam, P.L., clxv, cols. 413-4.
2. Cf. for example, R.E. Kaske, 'The Canticum Canticorum in the Millers Tale', S.P., lix (1962), 479-500.

Dum rigido fodit ore fimum, dum quaeritat escam
Dum stupet inventa jaspide Gallus, ait: (1-2)

Henryson has sketched the character of the cock and the value of the jewel.

As I pointed out earlier, Henryson took the outline of the cock's speech from his sources, but he has expanded it considerably, placing his own emphases. There are two points to be noted particularly: the first is the way in which Henryson uses rhetoric to present the cock as a fool. The poet develops the address to the jasp into a full apostrophe: 'o gentill gem o riche and noble thing ...' (79). This device (exclamatio[1]) was used for subjects of great importance: Faral[2] quotes Cornificius' Rhetorica ad Herennium, IV, 15 which states that it is used: 'cum rei magnitudo postulare videbitur'. Geoffroi de Vinsauf[3] states that the effect occasioned by its use is:

... signum sollemne. Diutius aures
Pascimus ex variis et ditius, hic cibus auri
Quando venit sapidus et odorifer et pretiosus (269-71)

Geoffroi also states that the device can be used for ridiculous effect.[4] In the poem we are presented with a farmyard cock addressing in full rhetorical style something it has dug up from the dungheap while scratching for food, something which it considers may be used decoratively by royalty which is in reality of little importance. The final two stanzas of the cock's speech reinforce the impression gained from the first few lines: the cock quotes a

---

1. See Geoffroi de Vinsauf, Documentum de Arte Versificandi, II, ii, 25, ed. E. Faral, Les Arts Poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe Siècle, Recherches et Documents sur la technique littéraire du moyen âge (Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études: Sciences Historiques et Philologiques, fasc. 238, Paris, 1924), p. 276.
2. E. Faral, Les Arts Poétiques, op. cit., p. 71.
3. Poetria Nova, ed. Faral, Les Arts Poétiques, op. cit., pp. 194-262.
4. Ibid. ll. 431 ff..

proverb to prove its point (102), a common rhetorical device, and continues with involved parallelism:

> Quhair suld thow mak thi tributatioun
> quhair suld thow dwell bot in a ryall tour
> quhair suld thow sit bot on a kingis croun (106-8)

The rhetorical structure - and through it the author's indirect criticism of the cock - becomes obvious.[1] The address ends with the cock's ridiculous declamation (not found in the sources):

> rys gentill Iaspis of all stonis the flour
> Out of this as and pas quhair thow suld be (110-1)

The second point to be noted about the cock's speech is the way in which Henryson emphasizes that the cock is solely concerned with material things. It seems to realize the value of the stone: it states:

> O gentill gem o riche and noble thing (79)
> ... and thow so deir and worth so mekle gude (84)
> ... thy grit vertew nor yit thy cullor cleir (86)
> ... gentill Iaspis of all stonis the flour (110)

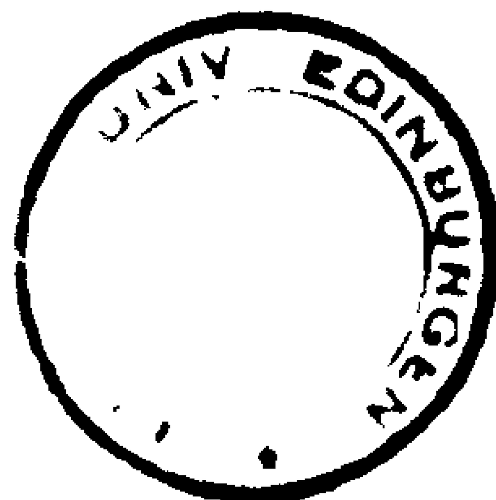
and it constantly emphasizes the stone's right to royal ownership (81; 107-8). This is a change from the sources: Gualterus reads:

> Si tibi nunc esset qui debuit esse repertor,
> Quem limus sepelit, viveret arte nitor (5-6)

But there is dramatic irony here; the cock is speaking the truth, even from the point of view of the moralitas, but does not recognize its full implications. The jasp, it says, is for others: its desire is to fill its stomach, to enjoy material comforts. Throughout the speech there is a constant emphasis on its own desires:

---

1. Cf. Denton Fox, 'Henryson's Fables', op. cit., pp. 343-5.


UNIV EDINBURGEN

> ... Thocht I the fynd thow ganis nocht for me (80)
> ... And thow to me ma mak bot littill cheir (88)

The cock speaks continually of food and its stomach's needs:

> ... I lawfe fer better thing of les availl
> as cafe or corne to fill my tome entrell (90-1)

It wants food to: 'do my stomok gude' (95), colour 'is nocht annwch my wame to feid' (101). Similar phrases abound: 'corne or draf small worme or naillis / or ony meit' (94-5); 'Thow hes no corne' (99); 'I wald sum meit haf' (103); 'had I dry breid' (105). It does not remember that 'Non in solo pane vivit homo'. The condemnation of the cock implicit in this speech - it is made to appear foolish, self-satisfied and materialistic - accords ill with Stearns' statement: 'it is impossible not to sense the poet's amused sympathy with the poverty-stricken Cock's airy dismissal of the jewel and his sturdily independent advocacy of the simple way of life.'[1] Again we see then that Henryson has taken the bare outlines of his story and built it into a considerably more complex - and I believe more convincing - work of art.

Whereas the previous versions of the fable usually finish with the line represented by 112, Henryson further emphasizes the cock's foolishness; it leaves the jewel (full law vpone the ground, 113) and goes away thinking only of his stomach: 'To seik sum meit this cok his wayis went' (114). To end this section of his poem Henryson adds the humility formula, and a further emphasis on the fact that he is taking everything from his 'awtour' (117-8), topoi

---

1. The Poetry of Robert Henryson, op. cit., p. 108.

which were discussed in connection with the prologue. He is not pretentious, using high-flown rhetoric like the cock: he follows his 'awtour' and writes in 'rude and hamely dyt' (119); the cock's words were not to be trusted - his are.

The moralitas shows Henryson's creative talents in much the same way as the fable itself. Thus, for three stanzas, the poet expands upon the virtues of the jasp. I have not been able to find the particular significance of the 'properteis sevin' (120), indeed it is impossible to isolate them; however, seven is a perfect number[1] and this fact may have some relevance for the stone allegorized is a charm (a further addition by the poet). Henryson's interpretation of the jasp must be discussed at length. Of the sources, Gualterus interprets as 'Sophia' (9); the Isopet de Lyon as both 'Savoir' (25) and 'Sapience' (29). Henryson's terms are 'prudens' (128), 'cunnyng' (128 and 148), 'deidis of vertew' (129), 'science' (137, 143, 148, 154, 158). These terms seem to translate, and to extend, the 'savoir' and 'Sapience' of the Isopet de Lyon. 'Prudens' implies some measure of wisdom: in The Lyon and the Mouse Æsop's fables are described as 'full of prowdens and moralite' (61). God's judgement, understanding is his 'prudens' (Ane Prayer for

---

1. Cf. E.R. Curtius, European Literature in the Latin Middle Ages, op. cit., Excursus XVI; Numerical Apothegms, pp. 510-14. Professor Denton Fox tells me that he feels this stanza was probably an original sketch which Henryson intended to leave aside. He intends to omit it in his forthcoming edition of the Fabillis.

the Pest 67[1]). Wisdom, or judgement (discretion) would then seem an apt translation for the term. 'Cunnyng' usually implies knowledge, skill or ability to carry out some desire; in The Fox and the Cock Henryson writes of 'brutale beistis':

> So different thay bene in properteis,
> Unknawin unto man, and infynite
> In kynd haifand so fele diuersiteis
> My connyng it excedis for to dyte (8-11)

Sum Practysis of Medecyne:

> Because I ken your cunnyng in to cure
> Is clowtit and clampit and nocht weill cleird (14-15)

'Science' is derived from the Latin 'Scientia', and as far as I have been able to discover always conveys the meaning "knowledge". It is not always a praiseworthy thing in Henryson; thus, in The Fox and the Wolf: 'ffreir wolf waitskaith, in science wondrous sle' (54). All earlier and contemporary examples in the N.E.D. contain this idea of knowledge. One is particularly interesting: the prologue to The Romans of Partenay:

> Who wyl know and enquere in what maner wyse
>   By se and land merulous auentures
> Which came unto sondry creatures
>   For to conne it is an excellent thyng
> And cause of many mannys preferring
>
> As rose is aboue al floures most fine
>   So is science most digne of worthynesse
> Ho noght no can, noght wirth is to deuine; (101-8)[2]

---

1. The Want of Wyse Men, l. 38 reads 'prudence and policy ar banyst our al brinkis'. However, I prefer not to use this as evidence because, as will be seen later, it is very doubtful whether the poem be Henryson's.

2. The Romans of Partenay or of Lusignen, a fifteenth century translation from the French, ed. W.W. Skeat (E.E.T.S.O.S. 22, rev. edn., 1899).

So Henryson's ideal seems to be the attainment of knowledge; but not of knowledge alone, but of judgement and virtue as well. A comprehensive term would perhaps be wisdom. This knowledge will last for eternity, the poet states in a paraphrase (ll. 138-40) of Matthew vi, 19-20:

> 'Nolite thesaurize vobis thesauros in terra, ubi aerugo, et tinea demolitur et ubi fures effodiunt et furantur. Thesaurizate autem vobis thesauros in caelo, ubi neque aerugo, neque tinea demolitur, et ubi fures non effodiunt, nec furantur.

The Book of Proverbs is of particular interest in examining the properties of the jasp: ii, 10-12:

> Si intraverit sapientia cor tuum, et _scientia_ animae tuae placuerit, consilium custodiet te, et _prudentia_ servabit te; ut eruaris a via mala, et ab homine qui perversa loquitur.

We compare:

> prudens and cunnyng ... makis men ...
> Happy and stark to haif the victory
> Off all vicis and sprituall enemy (128-33)

With these lines and with the stanza following, it is interesting to compare Proverbs viii, 12-16:

> Ego sapientia ... Meum est consilium, et aequitas; mea est _prudentia_, mea est fortitudo. Per me reges regnant et legum conditores justa decernunt; per me principes imperant, et potentes decernunt justitiam.

Again xxviii, 2:

> Propter peccata terrae multi principes ejus; et propter hominis sapientiam, et horum _scientiam_ quae dicuntur, vita ducis longior erat.

Again iii, 13 ff.:

> Beatus homo qui invenit sapientiam, et qui affluit prudentia. Melior est acquisitio ejus negotiatione argenti, et auri primi et purissimi fructus ejus. Pretiosior est cunctis opibus, et omnia quae desiderantur huic non valent comparari. Longitudo dierum in dextera ejus, et in sinistra illius divitiae et gloria. Viae ejus viae pulchrae, et omnes semitae illius pacificae. Lignum vitae est his qui apprehenderint eam, et qui tenuerit eam beatus.

The fact that wisdom cannot be bought with material wealth (cf. l. 151) is also stated in Job xxviii. The poet has thus emphasized, and extended the reference of 'Savoir' and 'Sapience' of his sources by direct scriptural quotation and by passages which at least recall Biblical parallels. He has also done so in his so-called 'rude and hamely dyt'; alliteration in 'gentill Iesp ... betakinis perfyt prudens and cunnyng'(127-8); intensifying adverbs in 'mony deidis of vertew' (129); 'off all vicis' (133). There is also rhetorical paralleling:

> Quha may be rycht hardy and gratious
> Quha can eschew perrell and aventure
> Quha can gowern citie and burchgus
> without science ... (134-7)

The portrait of the fool is similarly extended. It should be noted that the comparison of the wise and the knowledgeable man with the fool is one of the most repeated contrasts in the Book of Proverbs. The following phrases seem of especial importance for our poem: i, 7: 'Sapientiam atque doctrinam stulti despiciunt;' i, 22: 'Usquequo, paruuli, diligitis infantiam, et stulti ea quae sibi sunt noxia cupient, et imprudentes odibunt scientiam?' xviii, 2: 'Non recipit stultus verba prudentiae'.... In lines 146-7 Henryson paraphrases directly part of Matthew vii, 6:

> Nolite dare sanctum canibus, neque mittatis margaritas vestras ante porcos, ne forte conculcent eas pedibus suis, et conversi dirumpant vos.

Once again it must be emphasized that Henryson is using these scriptural passages obliquely: it is his own interpretation that 'pretius stonis' are arguments, not that of traditional commentary. But the use of the passage serves two functions: it is used like a proverb, a well-known phrase reinforcing the argument, a common medieval rhetorical device, and it also gains from the importance of the Biblical context - the foolishness of the cock appears far more culpable, far more serious. While dealing with scriptural reference we should remember too the parable of the man who cared solely for earthly things: St. Luke, xii, 16-21:

> 'Hominis cujusdam diuites uberes fructus ager attulit; et cogitabat intra se, dicens: Quid faciam, quia non habeo quo congregem fructus meos? Et dixit: Hoc faciam: destruam horrea mea et majora faciam: et illuc congregabo omnia quae nata sunt mihi, et bona mea. Et dicam animae meae: Anima, habes multa bona posita in annos plurimos; requiesce,comede, bibe, epulare. Dixit autem illi Deus: Stulte, hac nocte animam tuam repetunt a te; quae autem parasti, cujus erant? Sic est qui sibi thesaurizat, et non est in Deum dives'

Henryson ends his fable with an added topos: he bemoans the state of the world now (in implied comparison perhaps with the garden of Eden). He uses the device several times in his own poetry: in The Lyon and the Mouse:

> Now in this warld me think rycht few or nane,
> Till godis word that hes devotioun (71-2)

The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff:

> Now few or nane will execute iustice
> In falt of quhome the pure man is ou'rthraw (157-8)

This device is a common one in medieval poetry;[1] the idea it expresses is even more widespread.[2]

I have tried to show how Henryson, largely by the addition of old devices to an old story, (the chanson d'aventure setting, rhetorical formulae, scriptural quotations, the humility formula, the laudator temporis acti) has made something new. As we have seen, his ideas are not new:[3] we noted the 'Savoir' and 'Sapience' of his source and the parallels in Biblical passages; and the following passage from a poem in the Liber Pluscardensis has considerable relevance:

> Quha wald be ryche, have ee til honour ay;
>   For riches folowis honour euir mair.
> Til honour wisdum is the nerest way
>   And wisdum to vertu is the verray air;
>   And uertu cummis of science and of lair,
> And science cummis only of Godis grace
> Conqueste throw gude life, Trauale and besinas.[4]

But in this new context the idea takes a new force: a new image has been provided for it, just as Shakespeare provides a new image for commonplaces in his history plays.

---

1. See my work on the minor poems.
2. Cf., for example, A Song on the Times, ed. T. Wright, Political Songs of England from the Reign of John to that of Edward II (Camden Society, VI, London 1839), pp. 195-205; Caxton's Game and Playe of Chess, op. cit., p. 61; Hoccleve's Regement of Princes, op. cit., stanzas 399 ff. and 726 ff. Also G.R. Owst, Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1961), particularly chapters V-VII and J.W. Blench, Preaching in England in the late Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries: A Study of English Sermons 1450-c. 1600 (Oxford, 1964), pp. 228 ff..
3. I must leave aside the problem of the influence of the educational ideas of Italian humanism on Henryson's work. It will be dealt with by Professor John MacQueen in his forthcoming study of Henryson. The more general effect of Italian Humanism on the poet has been suggested by S.J. Harth, Convention and Creation in the Poetry of Robert Henryson, op. cit..
4. Liber Pluscardensis, ed. F.J. Skene (Historians of Scotland, VII, Edinburgh, 1877) p. 395.

(iii) The Mous and the Paddock

There seem definite indications of the source of The Mous and the Paddock. The traditional moralitas to the fable is the following, which I quote from the Vulgate Romulus: 'Qui de salute alterius adversa cogitat, non effugiet malum'.[1] A large group, made up almost exclusively of versions in the exempla collections, allegorize the relationship of the animals as that between prelates or priests and their charges.[2] Others liken the Frog to the World: 'Mundus similis est Rane, que blandiendo Muri promisit ...'[3] The mention of flattery here is interesting; we shall discuss it later. But there is little evidence of these three common interpretations in Henryson's moralitas. There we are given two particular emphases: a criticism of those who deceive with 'honied words'; and an allegorization of the animals' struggle as that between body and soul. For this latter I have been able to find no specific parallel and I believe it could be Henryson's own. There is, however, one moralitas approaching Henryson's interpretation;

---

1. Steinhöwels Äsop, ed. Österley, op. cit., pp. 82-3.

2. Jacques de Vitry, Sermo I ad prelatos, Analecta Novissima Spicilegii Solesmensis, op. cit., ii, 353 (a more extensive version is given here than Crane, III, p. 1); Odo of Cheriton, Hervieux, iv, 195; Stephanus de Borbone, B.M. MS. Additional 28682, fol. 260; B.M. MS. Harley 268, fol. 33b; B.M. MS. Harley 2851, fol. 117b; Bromyard, Summa Praedicantium, op. cit., P. xiii (Praelatio), 37.

3. Odo of Cheriton, Hervieux, iv, 406-7; B.M. MS. Harley 3244 fol. 81b col. 1; H.S.I.Q. 267 fol. 101 aus der Bibliothek des Domes zu Neiße - Sermones de Tempore in a manuscript of the twelfth century - hg. J. Klapper, Exempla aus Handschriften des Mittelalters (Sammlung Mittellateinischer texte, hg. Alfons Hilka, II, Heidleberg, 1911), no. 111, p. 76.

it is found in the Berne Romulus,[1] and it states, after the merest sketch of the story: 'Sic maiores et minores inter se disceptantes. Sic etiam dyabolus animam et corpus dissipat.' There is no other manuscript extant of this version, a fact which scarcely suggests that it was widely known. Also, Henryson has discussed elsewhere, as we shall see, the conflicting natures in man - his interpretation here could well have been suggested by that treatment rather than by the version I have quoted. Even if Henryson has taken a part of his interpretation from such a version, he has developed it considerably.

Again, there is no specific parallel in any other moralitas for the first part of Henryson's interpretation. But there are several parallels to be found <u>within</u> various versions. We noticed 'blandiendo' in the version, based on Odo of Cheriton, which allegorizes the Frog as the world. In Gualterus Anglicus[2] we find:

> Omne genus pestis superat mens dissona verbis,
> Obsontes animos florida lingua polit (3-4)

The Isopet de Lyon:[3]

> Langue vaut pis que nul raige
> Qui ne s'acorde a son coraige
> Les paroles qui de fuers oignent
> Celent les maus qui lo cuer poignent (17-20)

Isopet I:[4]

> Pour ce est ce trop grans peris
> Quant la bouche au cuer ne s'acorde;
> Tels a pensee vis et orde
> Qui mout a douce la parole (8-11)

---

1. Hervieux, ii, 758.
2. Bastin, ii, 9-10.
3. Bastin, ii, 89-91.
4. Bastin, ii, 207-8.

Henryson has taken an idea expressed in his sources within the fable itself and made of it part of his moralitas.

In the fable itself we have an even more specific parallel between Henryson's fable and the Gualterus tradition: Henryson:

> Than fute for fute thay lap baith in the brime
> Bot in thair mynd thay were rycht different (99-100)

Gualterus:

> Pes coit ergo pedi, sed mens a mente recedit (7)[1]

Isopet de Lyon:

> Pié a pié se sunt ajostees,
> Mais desjointes sont les pansees (25-6)

Isopet I:

> Or sont les piés liés ensamble
> Mès les cuers divers, ce me samble (15-16)

Another point of interest is the fact that, except in the Gualterus tradition, the Mouse asks for help to cross the river; in the Gualterus tradition, and in Henryson, the Frog offers its help. We may also parallel parts of the speech of the Frog:

> q scho sister lat be your havy cheir
> Do my counsall and I sall fynd the way (24-5)

Isopet de Lyon:

> Mout estes lessae
> Bele suer, soiez confortee!
> Je vos metrai a savetey (9-11)

Thus we see again Henryson's reliance on the Gualterus tradition.

From his sources Henryson obtained the basic story - a Mouse, wishing to cross a river, is offered aid by a deceiving Frog.

---

1. The parallel was first noted by A.R. Diebler, Henrisone's Fabeldichtungen, op. cit., p. 83.

They tie their legs together. In the middle of the stream the Frog submerges, attempting to pull the Mouse to its death. A Kite sees their struggle and devours both. Henryson has also obtained the idea for at least part of his moralitas, and also certain expressions in his text from his sources. We are now in a position to see what he made of them.

I shall discuss separately the two sections of the moralitas - we have already noted that there are additions themselves - and show how additions in the fable contribute to the exemplification in these sections. The first three stanzas, emphasizing the danger of believing honied words, are, as we have already seen, an expansion by the poet of lines found in the sources in the fable itself (though to this he adds advice not to be 'machit with a wicket marrow' [141] which is not to be found in any of the sources but which is of course traditional). The problem is also discussed in other parts of Henryson's work[1] and once again we can note verbal parallels between passages of similar theme.

<u>Aganis Haisty Credence of Titlaris</u>:

> It is the grund of stryf and all distance
> moir perrellus than ony pestilence
> Ane lord in flatterreris to haif plesance
> Or to gif lyaris hestely credence (29-32)

The following extracts from our poem show close similarities:

> It pass far alkynd of pestilens
> A wicket mynd with wirdis fair and she (136-7)
> Grit folly is thairfoir to gife credence
> Our sone to all that speikis fair to the (144-5)

---

1. There is a possibility that Henryson's preoccupation with this problem reflects contemporary events. Consideration of this, I leave over till dealing with <u>The Fox and the Cock</u>.

Again with: 'Ane bludy tung, undir a fair pretence'(*Aganis Haisty Credence*, 54) we compare, from our poem; 'A fals intent vndir a fare pretence'(142). Very similar thought and expression is found in the moralitas to *The Fox and the Cock*:

> This feynit fox may wele be figurate
> To flattoraris with plesand wirdis quhite
> With fals mening and mouth melliffluate
> To loife and lee qlk settis thair delyte
> All worthy folk at sic suld hafe dispyte
> Ffor quhair is moir perilous pestilence
> Than giff to liaris haistelye credence (204-10)

The common occurrence of this advice in medieval poetry, and also in Scripture, I shall show in my analysis of *Aganis Haisty Credence of Tittaris*. We should also note advice against being 'machit with ane wickit marrow' in Nicole Bozon:[1]

> 128 De mala societate fugienda
> Aristotil dit en son livere qu si
> poleyne [en juvente] seit del let
> de asne norri, qe cely quant vendra
> en age guerpira sa nature demeigne,
> e par la norissaunce del let le asne
> qe en juvente ad receū, se joyndra al asne.
> Auxint meynt homme par fol compaignie en
> juvente est hony en age, si com avent a
> Roboam. Pur ceo dit le seint Esprit:
> "Si vos recevez en compaignye [homme]
> de estraunge nation, il bestornera
> vostre manere e vos amenera hors de la
> dreit veie." *Si admittas alienigenam, subvertet te et alienabit te a viis propriis.* Provor XI.

Bozon then recounts the fable of the buckets, this time using the fox and the sheep as his protagonists. He concludes:

---

1. *Les Contes Moralisés*, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-1; cf. also *Dialogus Creaturarum*, *op. cit.*, dial. 49, pp. 192-3; Chaucer, *Parson's Tale*, 638 ff., Robinson p. 248; Jean Tennessax, *Le Livre de Maistre Regnard et de Dame Hersant, sa Femme*, (Paris, 1530), chapters v-vii - Tennessax' work is a prose version of *Renart le Nouvel* with moral lessons drawn from the stories told.

> Pur ceo dit SALAMON Prov 1°: "Si lui mauveis homme te prie de aver ta compaignie, veietz qe vous ne assentez mye." <u>Si te lactaverint peccatores, ne adquiescas illis; si dixerint: veni nobiscum</u>, etc.

In formal matters too comparisons are interesting. We compare the rhetorical device: 'Grit folly is ...' (144) with that used in <u>The Swallow and Othir Birdis</u>: 'Grite ffule is he ...' (239, 41, 43). The three stanzas of this part of the moralitas use the Monk's Tale stanza form: it is used, as I hope to show in my study of the shorter poems, in many of the overtly didactic poems of the fifteenth century; an eight-line stanza, rhyming a b a b b c b c with the last line a refrain (it is used also in the moralitas of <u>The Twa Mylis</u>). Again then Henryson has used traditional forms in expressing a traditional concept - but both form and concept are new in this environment.

Many of the additions made by the poet in his fable serve to stress the theme of flattery, even if indirectly. The reason for the Mouse's wish to cross the river is new to this version: in many there is no reason given; in two other types food is mentioned, but not in these circumstances: in the branch of the fable represented by the LBO Romulus, by Marie de France and by Lydgate, the Mouse has been invited to the Frog's home for a meal; in the Isopet de Lyon the Mouse has been out seeking food and finds her way home blocked by water. But the Mouse in our fable has different reasons:

> Seis thow q scho of corne yone joly flat
> of ryp aitis of beir of peis and quheit
> I am hungry and fane wald be thair at ...
> ... And on this syd I get no thing till eit
> Bot hard nutis quhilk with my teith I boir
> War I beyond my feist wald be the moir (15-21)

She is not content with her own lot and, being completely unable to cross by herself, (as emphasized by the rhetorical paralleling and alliteration of ll. 3-4) is predisposed towards taking any kind of help offered ('Lat be preching q the hungry mous' 75). We remember and compare the state of the mice in The Twa Myis who also put themselves in great danger by discontent with 'Widderit peis and nutis' (61).

All three parts of the debate (for the argument between Frog and Mouse is in debate form, as we shall see) are innovations by Henryson: the question of how the Frog can swim; the dispute on physiognomy; the dispute on liberty. The second is of particular interest

> The mows beheld onto hir fronsyt face
> Hir runclit beik and hir lyppis syd
> hir hyngand Browis and hir voce so hace
> hir logrand leggis and hir harsky hyd. (43-6)

The Mouse's knowledge of 'fysnomy' (68) seems accurate according to contemporary text books. She maintains its value (50-6). And clerkis do say

> That Phisnomye is a necessarie scyence to knowe the Maners of men - Capitulum LV[m].
> ... But for - als - moche as stronge is to fynde and knowe condycones and good vertues and maneris of Pepil wythout longe Prewe, hit is a ful couenabille and profitabill thynge to euery Prynce, that he cane the scyence of Physnomy, by wyche he may know by syght every man of wych maneris and thewis he sholde be by kynde[1]

In comparing the passage in Henryson with appropriate passages in the texts of 'fysnomy', I realize that they are not always exactly

---

1. The Gouernaunce of Prynces translated by James Yonge (1422), Three Prose Versions of the Secreta Secretorum, Pt. I, ed. R. Steele (E.E.T.S.E.S. 74, 1898) p. 216.

parallel. All comparisons made do, however, have points of interest. From the appearance of the Frog, the Mouse concludes that she has: 'Sum pairte of frawd and als invy' (49). Face:

> As from thy Enemy fle his presence
>   Which a-complysshed in membrys Organychall
> Is not and noote this sentence,
> Ffor avayll of thy excellence Royal:
> Ffroom hym that is looke thou ffal,
>   Markyd in visage for lerne this Conclusyoun
>   he is disceyvable by disposicioun.[1]

A sign of a bitter man: he has: '... a lene visage and frounset'.[2] The eyebrows:

> And whooso heer thykke doth bere
> On the browys is a shrewd spekere
> ... Browys large to templys ech strecchyng,
>   Signe of hym that falsnesse wyl mayntyne.[3]

Nose:

> Ffertheremore take heed to my doctryne
>   large nose in myddys which doth vp ryse
> Of a lyere and greet spekyng is signe
>   As oold philosoffres clerly doth devise;[4]

Voice: 'He that haue a grete voice and orible and not ful hey, done gladly wronges, and bene likenyd to assis.'[5]

> 'Greet voys signe of hastynesse
>   Greet sawnyng Envyous and Angry
>   ffair and hih of wyldenesse and ffooly'[6]

Legs: 'Whoo hath greet feet vntrewthe wyl mayntyne';[7] 'The tokenys of ille complexcioun ... the vje longe legges'.[8]

---

1. Lydgate and Burgh's Secrees of old Philisoffres (a version of the Secreta Secretorum) ed. R. Steele (E.E.T.S.E.S. 66, 1894) ll. 2542-8.
2. The Gouernaunce of Prynces, op. cit., p. 224.
3. Secrees of old Philisoffres, op. cit., ll. 2610-1, 2614-5.
4. ibid. ll. 2626-9.
5. The Gouernaunce of Prynces, op. cit., p. 231.
6. Secrees of old Philisoffres, op. cit., ll. 2651-3.
7. ibid. l. 2678.
8. The Gouernaunce of Prynces, op. cit., p. 223.

The poet puts into the animal's mouth the typical methods of argument of the debate form: the citing of the authority of the wise ('For clerkis sayis...'), of proverbs (55-6), of Scripture: 'I fynd in scriptor in a place (62). The reference seems to be to John vii, 24 'Nolite judicare secundum faciem, sed justum judicium judicate'. The Frog seems completely convincing: her Scriptural quotation refutes the Mouse's physiognomical and proverbial lore; her arguments appear thoroughly reasonable and orthodox:

> This differens in forme and qualite
> Almychty god hes causit dame nature
> To prent and set in every creature (68-70)[1]

People are not to be judged by their external appearance:

> Off sum the face may be rycht flurisand
> With silkin tong and cheir most amorus
> With mynd inconstant fals and variand
> Ffull of dissait and menys cautelus (71-4)

The Frog has described herself: true, she has not a face: 'rycht flurisand, ... and cheir most amorous' but she has: 'a silkin tong ... with mynd inconstant.' Ironically the Mouse's physiognomical lore turns out to be more accurate than the Scripture and reason which the skilled deceiver has put to her own use. Similarly, in The Fox and the Wolf, the Fox's astrological prediction (a sign of his folly and superstition) turns out ironically to be true, though not because of the power of the stars but because of his own folly.

---

1. Cf. The Parliament of Fowls, ll. 379-81.

> Nature, the vicaire of the almyghty Lord,
> That hot, cold, hevy, lyght, moyst and dreye,
> Hath knyt by evene noumbres of acord ...

In the third part of the debate the Mouse at first objects ('To preif that play it wer our perellous' 84) - an addition by the poet - to being bound with 'double twynnit threid', (80), with knotis fast (81) - (the moralitas warns against being: 'machit with a wickit marrow' [157], of being bound 'fast quhair thow was frank and fre' [151]). But the false will even swear an oath (another addition). The fact that the Frog swears to Jupiter is probably of importance: earlier she referred to 'Scriptor' (62), quoted an example from it ('loly absalone' 66), and spoke of Almighty God (69); now her oath is to: 'Iupiter of natur god and King' (93). The false Fox in The Fox, the Wolf and the Cadgear also swears 'Be Juppiter' (76). The additions then have emphasized the point to be made in the moralitas: they have shown how plausible a person can be. At the end, the emphasis (brought by heavy alliteration) shows the dangers of believing such. The kite slew the animals 'but pety' (126):

> Syne bowellit thame that bowchir with his bill
> and belly flawcht full fetly he thame flaid. (126-8)

The second portion of the moralitas is of a very different type from the first. Whereas the first had the character of an exemplum, with its moral lessons obvious from the fable itself, the second is an 'allegorization': we might perhaps compare the tropological and allegorical levels in Biblical interpretation. In this section the stanza form is again the rhyme royal.[1] The Paddock is man's body:

---

1. Cf. Harvey Wood, Poems and Fables, op. cit., p. 251, note to l. 2910; he implies that the complete moralitas is in this form.

> Now he now law quhyle plungit vp and doun
> Ay in to perrell and redy for to droun
>
> Now dolorous now blyth as bird on breir
> Now in fredome now wardit in distres
> Now haill now sound now deid now brocht on beir
> Now gownis gay now brattis to Imbras
> Now full as fysche now hungry as a hound
> Now on the quheill now wappit to the ground (165-71)[1]

It would be idle to illustrate how common this conception of Fortune's power is in medieval writing. But Henryson has given it new life in introducing it to this Fable. And I think it valuable to note Henryson's use of this particular rhetorical device: Smith[2] calls it a common Henrysonian device, and so it is; but interestingly the poet uses it, or a variant on it, in those passages where he wishes to emphasize the idea of the vulnerability of man to Fortune. Thus, in the Twa Myis, the Country Mouse is tortured by the cat:

> quhyle vp quhyle doun Als tait as ony kid
> quhyle wald scho lat hir ryn vndir the stra
> quhyle wald scho wynk and play with hir bukhid (170-2)

Orpheus and Eurydice: man's

> grit solicitud
> quhyle vp quhyle doun to win this warldis gud (515-6)

The Lyon and the Mouse: the lion in the net of Fortune:

> Voluand about with hiddous rowmissing
> Quyle to quhyle fro gif he mycht succor get (204-5)

---

1. At this stage in the thesis I underline rhetorical paralleling (in black) and alliterative patterns (in red - alternating single and double underlining to differentiate patterns). Later, once the devices I am pointing out have been recognized, this will not be necessary.

2. Poems, op. cit., i, 24, note to l. 1517.

The 'litill mous' - I discussed earlier the reference in the tale itself to the smallness, the helplessness of the Mouse - is the soul. In other poems Henryson has shown the dire effect of carnality: in The Swallow and Othir Birds the poet described how: 'carnall lust growis ful grene and gay' (286). The Fox and the Wolf:

> Sum bene also throw consuetude and ryte
> Vincust with carnal sensualitie (169-70)

The image of the sea or water, in its constant changeableness, representing the world was common in all types of medieval writing. In sermons:

> By the see in scripture is undirstond the world: "Hoc mare, magnum et spaciosum manibus", in Psalmo.[1] How to speke goostely, the see is not els but redines to synne. And that euery man and womman ... was borne aftur Adam. But sum were ravesshed of this floode and borne down lowe in to the depnes of the watur. Tho be thise that lyven aftur the lustes of her flessh. And sum were swymmyng aboven the watur and sonke not as Iohn Baptiste and many othur ...[2]
>
> For schip fletes on the flode
> And hali kirk wit costes gode,
> Flotes abouen this werldes se,
> Flouand wit sin and caitifte.[3]

In literature we may instance its use in Chaucer's Man of Law's Tale.[4] But once again we must note that Henryson has been the first to

---

1. W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., p. 266.
2. ibid., p. 327.
3. English Metrical Homilies from Manuscripts of the Fourteenth Century -, ed. J. Small (Edinburgh, 1862), p. 135. Cf. also G.R. Owst, Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England, op. cit., pp. 68-75.
4. For discussion of such references see John MacQueen, 'Tradition and the Interpretation of the Kingis Quair', R.E.S., New Series, xii,(1961)124-6.

introduce this interpretation of the stream into this fable.

A struggle between body and soul seems also an innovation, though, as we saw, one rare version has an undeveloped hint of this interpretation. Again, the idea of such a struggle was common:[1] mankind's three greatest enemies, it was repeated endlessly, were the world, the flesh and the devil; and the struggle between Reason and Sensuality is, in many ways, another expression of the same idea, though usually these are identified, as in Henryson's own Orpheus and Eurydice (cf. lines 427-434), as two parts of the soul.[2] Some interesting parallels between that poem and our fable may, however, be shown:

> The perfyte wit and eik the fervent luve
> We suld haif allway to the hevin abuve
> Bot seildin thair our appetyte is fundin
> It is so fast within the body bundin
> Thairfoir dounwart we cast our myndis E
> Blindit with lust and may not upwartis fle
> Sould our desyre be soucht vp in the spheiris
> Quhen it is tedderit in thir warldly breiris
> Quhyle on the flesch quhyle on this warldis wrak ...
> (449-57)

---

1. See Galatians, v, 17; W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., pp. 95 and 111; Chaucer, Parson's Tale:

> As for to speken of heele of body, certes it passeth ful lightly, and eek it is ful ofte enchesoun of the siknesse of oure soule. For, God woot, the flessh is a ful greet enemy to the soule; and therfore, the moore that the body is hool, the moore be we in peril to falle. Eke for to pride hym in his strengthe of body, it is an heigh folye. For certes, the flessch coveiteth agayn the spirit; and aye the moore strong that the flessh is, the sorier may the soule be. And over al this, strengthe of body and worldly hardynesse causeth ful ofte many a man to peril and meschaunce (457-9; Robinson p. 241)

Cf. also Sydney J. Harth, Convention and Creation in the Poetry of Robert Henryson, op. cit., pp. 101-2 and the references there cited.

2. Cf. D.W. Robertson Jr., A Preface to Chaucer, op. cit., pp. 106-7 n.

But in the fable there is no sign of condemnation of the Mouse in this way: the soul is necessarily bound to the body till death (174-5).

The Kite is Death - the nearness, the all-conquering nature of death we see in other fables. I have shown in my analysis of the shorter poems the prevalence of this concept in medieval literature.

There remains the question of the relationship between the fable and this part of the moralitas. I think this to be another example of the type of fable represented by *The Fox tryed before the Lyon* where there is a general exemplum (there it is to be drawn out by the readers/hearers) and an 'allegorization' interpreting one part of the fable only.[1] I do not see that the first part of our fable - the reason for crossing the river, the argument between the animals - is relevant to the 'allegorization': Henryson certainly had no Platonic notion of the pre-existence of the Soul; and one would scarcely attribute to him the idea of the soul being slain by death. The part of the fable with particular reference to the second part of the moralitas, emphasizes the bond between the two creatures and the struggle:

> The dreid of deid hir strenthis gart incres
> and fandit hir defend with mony mane
> the mows upwart the paddok doun can pres
> Quhile to quhile fra quhile dowk quhile up agane
> This silly mous this plungit in grit pane
> can fecht als lang as breth wes in hir breist (113-8)

As in many others of his works Henryson concludes his fable with a prayer: a common device in medieval poetry as I have shown

---

1. Cf. D.W. Robertson Jr., *A Preface to Chaucer*, *op. cit.*, pp. 298-300.

elsewhere. As always it has reference to the particular fable:

> Now chryst for ws that deit on the rud
> of saule and lyf as thow art Saluiour
> grant ws to pas in till a blissit hour (197-9)

So once again we have seen Henryson creating of his original something completely new: adding details, adding forms (the debate, the prayer ending, the Monk's Tale stanza), adding moralitates stressing ideas which, although not new in themselves, are new in this context.

(iv) The Twa Myis

There seem to me five points particularly relevant in a discussion of the sources for this fable. I shall deal with the more straightforward first.

The Country Mouse replies to her sister's criticism of her food:

> Ye sall it haif with blyth and hairtly cheir
> That suld mak the meiss that ar rude
> among freindis rycht tendir sueit and gude (68-70)

Three other versions of the fable contain similar thoughts: Gualterus' version:[1]

> In mensa tenui satis est immensa voluntas;
> Nobilitat viles frons generosa dapes (3-4)

The French derivatives of Gualterus follow and expand their source: the Isopet de Lyon:[2]

> La povretey sambler richesce
> Fait de la chiere la lièsce (13-14)

It continues with the advice that all men, rich or poor, should be treated well, advice which is not to be found in Henryson. Isopet I[3] reads:

> Car mengier ne puet estre vils
> Qui est donnés a belle chiere (14-15)

It is perhaps possible to distinguish still further. The moralitas to the Isopet de Lyon begins:

> Qui de trop haut choir dote l'onte
> Saiges est, se trop haut ne monte (89-90)

---

1. Bastin, ii, 15-16.
2. Bastin, ii, 105-7.
3. Bastin, ii, 219-22.

Henryson:

> So inter mellit is aduersitie
> With erdly Ioy so that no stait is fre
> Without truble or sum vexatioun
> And namely thay that clymis vp most he (207-10)

The Isopet is the only version to introduce this concept, a concept of which, as we shall see, Henryson makes much.

The Country Mouse continues:

> Quhat plesans is in feistis delicat
> The quhilk ar gevin with a glowmand brow
> a gentill hairt is bettir recreat
> With blyth visage than feche to him a cow (71-4)

There is no equivalent for this in the French tradition, but in Lydgate's The Tale of the Frogge and the Mouse[1] we find, in the Mouse's speech inviting the Frog to dine,

> Salomon wryteth, howe hit ys bet by halfe
>   A lompe of brede with reioysyng
> Then at festis to haue a rosted calfe
>   With heuy chere, frownyng or grogyng (428-31)

Gregory Smith states[2] that this is a reference to Proverbs vii, 1: 'Melior est buccella sicca cum gaudio quam domus plena victimis cum jurgio'. But similarities with Proverbs xv, 17 should also be noted. I quote verse 16 as well: 'Melius est parum cum timore Domini, quam thesauri magni et insatiabiles. Melius est vocari ad olera cum charitate, quam ad vitulum saginatum cum odio'. In one place at least Henryson seems closer to Lydgate than to the Vulgate: 'odio, jurgio; heuy chere frownyng or grogyng; glowmand brow'; and we must at least presuppose some linkage from the fact that the two passages are found in similar settings only in these

1. The Minor Poems of John Lydgate, ii, op. cit., 578-84.
2. Poems, op. cit., i, xxxviii n. 3.

two poems: Proverbs xvii, 1 is quoted by both John of Sheppey[1] and Bromyard but in their moralitates without the similarities of setting. Further evidence for the linking of the two poems (though of course in many places the story told is very different) has been found by Gregory Smith: 'The "burden" throughout the Moralitas recalls the last line of Lydgate's tenth stanza:

> "Nor more asswerd, to myn oppynioun,
>   Than glad pouert with smal possessioun"'[2]

The phrase is also used in l. 346:

> As men deserue, they receue theyr guerdon.
>   Onrepentaunte the tyraunt goth to hell.
> The pore man with small possession
>   Vertuosly doth in the erthe dwell,
>   Content with lytell doth trewly by and soll
> And of hoole hert can loue God and drede
> When he goth hens hathe heuen to hys mede (344-50)

I shall deal with the name Gyb, which is given to the cat in Lydgate and Henryson only, at a later stage.

None of the texts discussed so far, make mention of the wretched condition of the Country Mouse's dwelling,[3] a fact which Henryson stresses (ll. 36-42). The vulgate Romulus text[4] calls it a 'brevi casella'; translating, Caxton[5] describes a 'poure cauerne or hole', the Romulus of Nilant[6] 'despecta et vili castella' and

---

1. Hervieux, iv, 435-6.
2. Poems, op. cit., i, xxxvii-xxxviii.
3. The Mouse, in Lydgate's poem, makes the comparison:
   Ther ys no lorde, mo castelles hath to kepe
   Then I haue hernes and hooles in to crepe (447-8)
   but this offers no parallel to our poem.
4. Steinhöwels Äsop, ed. Österley, op. cit., pp. 92-3.
5. Jacob, op. cit., ii, 17-18.
6. Hervieux, ii, 519-20.

the LBG Romulus[1] 'parvo foramine in arboris radice'. Bromyard[2] tells of 'fossa seu foramen terrae'. This is one of the several points, which occur throughout the Fabillis, about which it is impossible to decide whether Henryson borrowed the idea or whether it was his own invention to emphasize his theme: if he borrowed it he certainly adapted it and extended it. But in view of the unsatisfactory nature of the evidence for the sources of this fable this point must be kept in mind hinting as it does either at Henryson's use of several sources or at his use of an undiscovered source. A similar point - one which Henryson could have developed himself but which does occur elsewhere in the tradition - is the Town Mouse's statement that 'this rude dyet and I can nocht accord' (58). This is not stated directly in the Gualterus tradition - it is indirectly stated in the Isopet de Lyon ('Tu moinnes cy mout povre vie', 39) and merely implied by Gualterus himself. But in the LBG Romulus we find:

> Contigit autem ut ipse uno die de foraminis
> angustia querulosus fieret, et cibaria illa
> minus saporasa fierent, et hoc esse dicent.

And in Marie de France:[3]

> Quant ele ot piece iluec esté
> A sa cumpainĕ ad parlé
> Dist que sis estres est mauveis.
> E que el ne volt demurer meis; (15-18)

---

1. Hervieux, ii, 571-3.
2. Summa Predicantium, op. cit., M. viii (Ministratio), 31.
3. Ewert and Johnston, op. cit., pp. 9-10.

The fourth point in this discussion of sources concerns Henryson's use of the cat: in Gualterus and his followers there is no mention of a cat: the steward's arrival suffices to warn the Country Mouse of the dangers of town life. And this is the case with all other tellings of the tale except those of Odo of Cheriton and his follower John of Sheppey. Leaving aside these two versions for the moment we must note that, except in the Gualterus tradition, the Romulus tradition, while describing the first incident only, contains the following warning given by the Country Mouse to its host (illustrated here from the Vulgate Romulus):

> At tibi omnis sollicitudo et nulla est securitas, a tensa teneris muscipula, a catto captus comederis, ac infestus ab omnibus exosus haberis[1]

The LBG Romulus expands: 'catti quoque precipue cavendi sunt insidie, quia ve vobis, si in manus catti incideritis'. In Lydgate's The Frogge and the Mouse, the Mouse boasts:

> As I haue appetyte, I dyne late or sone
> For Gyb, the catte, hathe here nothyng to done (405-6)

Henryson's Town Mouse makes a similar boast (90): and his cat is 'gib huntar our joly cat' (165). The poet may have developed his second episode from these hints. But there is other evidence to be considered. In Odo of Cheriton's version[2] of the fable there is also one incident only. The Country Mouse goes to the home of the Town Mouse; there

---

1. Similarly the Oxford Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 248-9; Vienna-Berlin Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 422; Florence Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 478-9; Romulus of Nilant. Marie de France also warns 'de chaz' (48).

2. Hervieux, iv, 190-1.

> Homines sedentes ad prandium micas et morsellas proicerunt. Mus domestica dixit siluestri: Exeas de foramine; ecce quot bona proieciuntur. Exivit campestris et cepit unum morsellum, et saltauit Catus post Murem, et vix evasit in foramen.

This is the only warning the Town Mouse needs to persuade it to return home. The setting here is entirely different from Henryson's which is based on the Romulus tradition: the cellar; the steward; the Mouse escaping (it had been caught; in Odo: 'vix evasit') by climbing a wall. But the version of Odo is the only one (apart from that of John of Sheppey, which follows it almost verbatim) in which the cat actually appears. Henryson certainly knew more than the Gualterus tradition, but we find ourselves still uncertain of the versions he did use.

The fifth point at first sight complicates the issue still further. In Henryson's text the two mice are sisters: the town sister sets out to visit her country relative. In all the usual versions the mice are in no way related - in several they are male as well. The Town Mouse is lost going from one city to another[1] or no explanation is given for her appearance at the Country Mouse's dwelling.[2] But in Bromyard we read:

> Iterum eis respondere poterunt, sicut in eisdem fabulis legitur murem siluestrem respondisse muri villano sorori suae. Villanus namque fingitur visitasse, et quaesiuisse ...

The question arises as to whether Henryson knew Bromyard's version,

---

1. Cf. Romulus of Nilant; the LBG Romulus; Marie de France.
2. Cf. Gualterus Anglicus.

or whether he knew his source (in ... fabulis legitur) or some derivation of it. In attempting to answer this question we must first note the similarity between Bromyard and Odo. Odo:

> Quedam Mus domestica querebat a campestri Mure quid com[m]ederet. Quo respondit: Duras fabas, quandoque sicca grana tritici uel [h]ordei. Et ait Mus domestica: Arida sunt cibaria tua. Mirum est quod fame non peris. Quesiuit siluestris: Et quid comedis tu? Certe comedo pingues morsellos, quandoque album panem.

Bromyard:

> ... Villanus namque fingitur visitasse, et quaesiuisse a campestri, quid comederet et biberet, et ubi cubaret, qui respondit, quod fabae et huiusmodi dura, eius erant cibus, et aqua potus et fossa seu foramen terrae lectus, et haec ei ostendit. Alius vero dixit, cibum suum esse panem albissimum et optima quaequae ...

The setting is the same: the Town Mouse has not been offered food (as in the Romulus tradition) but asks the Country Mouse what she eats. Phrases are identical: 'querebat a campestri, quid commederet', 'quaesiuisse a campestri quid commoderet ...'; 'Que respondit: Duras fabas,' 'qui respondit, quod fabae et huiusmodi dura ...'; 'album panem', 'panem albissimum'. But equally interesting are the differences between the two texts: Odo does not mention the relationship between the mice; and while, as we have seen, Odo describes an adventure with the cat, the crisis in Bromyard's version is normal: '... contingit dispensatorem sepius intrare, ad cuius introitum timore magno perterriti foramina petebant'. There is one other important similarity between the two texts: they both quote (or their source quotes) from Gualterus. Odo repeats line 23 of Gualterus: 'Rodere malo fabam quam cura

perpete rodi'. Bromyard's quotation is more extensive: the Country Mouse says, 'Rodere malo fabam quam culpa perpete rodi. Pellitumque metu non puto dulce bonum': the second sentence here is line 20 of Gualterus' version. Now if their source was Gualterus' poem they have differed widely from it; we would have to assume that Bromyard used both Odo and Gualterus. If they had a common source it seems certain that its setting is very different from that in the traditional telling: no meal is spread out but questions are asked of the Country Mouse concerning her food. Henryson's tale is based on the traditional setting: the meal is spread and the Town Mouse objects to the food.

So, unless we are to assume some unknown source from which Henryson has copied, our study of the sources has shown us not only what the poet took from the traditional telling of the story, but also part of his originality: on to the traditional telling (which he probably knew from the Isopet de Lyon and Gualterus Anglicus and supplemented by Lydgate) he has grafted events from other versions: the relationship between the mice, and the adventure with the cat - this latter he has either developed from a mere hint or considerably changed; and he has made it a second episode to frighten the Country Mouse, whereas in all other versions one such episode suffices. The effects created by these graftings will be discussed in context. From the traditional version Henryson has taken: the Town Mouse's disgust at the poorness of the meal set before her, in spite of her sister's insistence that she should have it 'with blyth and hairtly cheir' (68); the Town Mouse's suggestion that her sister come to stay with her; the

initial joy and feasting; the scare at the steward's entry; an escape on the wall; the Country Mouse's dismissal of her sister's wealth (here we might compare, though the link is tenuous, Gualterus' 'Latet hoc in molle venenum' [19] - paraphrased by the Isopet de Lyon - with Henryson ll. 183-5); and at least the basis of the moralitas. We are now in a position to see what Henryson has made of his tale, what he has added, how he has expanded, for his version is much longer than any previous telling (as is the case with almost everyone of his fables), and what he has stressed.

We shall find three major types of additions: structural changes, addition of detail and addition of rhetoric (formal rhetoric, proverbs, Biblical quotations, forms). I think it best to discuss these as they occur in the poem, rather than to attempt to separate them under these three headings, since they often overlap. The poet's originality is evident from the first lines: I have stated already that it is to be seen in his grafting of the close relationship of the two sisters ('sisteris deir', 2) onto the traditional setting. Throughout the poem he will stress the differences between the two sisters, differences which are made more significant by the original equality of the mice: they had lain: 'baith within hir [i.e. their mother's] wame' (53); but from her original state the Town Mouse had climbed 'vp most he' (210). The addition is of considerable thematic importance as we shall see. The poet proceeds to establish the differences between the mice by rhetorical paralleling. One was respectable (living in 'a borrowis toun', 3), the other lived as if an outlaw (7) though I am sure we are to presume it was not - it is a question

of class distinction, the successful sister wishing to disown her class and thinking of it as criminal; one lived in company and the other alone:

> rycht solitar *quhyle vndir* busk and breir
> *quhyle in* the corne ... (5-6)

One suffered immensely (*grit* distres 9), the other was very comfortable: the use of conjunctions in the following passage is most noteworthy, conveying as it does the sense of enormous prosperity; the 'quhair euer' and 'alswa' create the same effect:

> ... Was gilt bruther *and* maid ane fre burges
> Tole fre alswa but custome mair *and* les
> *and* fredome had to ga quhair euer scho list
> Amang the cheis *and* meill in ark *and* kist. (11-14)

The fact that the Town Mouse is a 'gilt bruther' is again an addition by Henryson: it serves to increase our knowledge of the Town Mouse's respectability and wealth. But it also, I fell, served another purpose: it helped to fix the story in the poet's own day[1] and thus make it more immediately relevant and thus more likely to be applied to the reader's own experience. Of course I am not suggesting that Henryson was implying that country dwellers

---

1. The growing importance of the merchant class in later fifteenth century Scotland is examined by Professor W. Croft Dickinson, *Scotland from the earliest times to 1603* (A New History of Scotland, I, London etc., 1961), pp. 233-8. To state however, as Stearns does (*Robert Henryson*, *op. cit.*, pp. 34 ff.) that differences between town and country life as shown in Henryson's poem provide us with an accurate guide to social conditions of the time, seems to me to be misleading: similar contrasts (even in the details of food) had been made as long as the fable had been written and these contrasts were as applicable to thirteenth century France, for instance, as to fifteenth century Scotland.

were by nature more upright, pure and honest than town dwellers: his story uses the two animals and their differing homes as symbols for two opposing moral states (it would of course be possible to have an avaricious Country Mouse and an unseeking Town Mouse). So, as we saw in the Cok and the Jewel, Henryson, even before the story has begun, has added material which describes his characters showing the emphases he is to make in the tale.

The difficulty of the journey is an extension by the poet: the facts that it was long, that the Town Mouse became tired and lost had been mentioned in other accounts but the ruggedness of the terrain had not been stressed at such length before: the stress serves to emphasize how far the Town Mouse had 'climbed' above her sister - she had become unaccustomed to her former environment; the 'suetest lif' had become unattractive to her. Once again the stress is gained through accumulations ('baith ... and; throw ... throwcht ... throwcht; fra ... to ... fra ... to') and alliterative emphasis

> baith our daill and doun.
> Throw many wilsum wayis cwth scho walk
> Throwcht mure and mos throwcht bank busk and brayre
> Fra fur to fur cryand fra balk to balk (21-4)

The greeting is also added - it serves to emphasize the close relationship of the two mice which had been disturbed by the Town Mouse's climb. It is interesting to find in an English version of the Gesta Romanorum, in the tale of a cat and a mouse, the following: 'The Cate come beside, and herde the mouse Criein the barme pepe! pepe! for she myght not come oute!'[1] Although one

---

1. The Early English Versions of the Gesta Romanorum, ed. S.J.H. Herrtage, op. cit., p. 364.

cannot assume Henryson's knowledge of this work (and the circumstances of the stories are very different) the similarity of expression perhaps provides additional evidence for the view that one must question seriously any attempt to describe Henryson as an observer of animal life; he is rather dependent on literary inspiration. So:

> ffor quhyle thai luche and quhyle for Ioy thay gret
> quhyle kissit sueit and quhyle in armis plet (32-3)

I have mentioned how Henryson may have taken the idea of the poor conditions of the Country Mouse's dwelling from other versions of the fable; however, his description is much more detailed than the others which usually tell of merely a hole in the ground. This addition of detail is a very important factor in Henryson's art: as we shall see, in almost all the fables he worked from the most generalized sources and almost all the detail is his own. In his The Scottish Tradition in Literature Kurt Wittig writes:

> Usually, the animal disguise is rather threadbare, a mere allegory. But Henryson's peculiarity is the close observation of both the human and the animal detail ... The difference can perhaps best be summed up as follows: in most fables the animals are simply human beings in disguise, but Henryson's animals are closely observed, and they are real animals ... Henryson's details are so accurate that they give us a real picture of contemporary social conditions.[1]

I shall have more to say about the so-called 'personal observation' - which in many cases is literary in origin, in later chapters. The critics have noticed the detail but have neglected its most important

---

1. op. cit., pp. 39-41.

purpose, which is not only - if at all - to make a better story, to give the listener/reader mere emotional satisfaction from a good story well told,[1] but to give added meaning to the moralitas. We should note Robertson's explanation of verisimilitude in The Canterbury Tales, an explanation which, I feel, applies equally well to The Fabillis:

> The function of verisimilitude is, first of all, to attract attention, and, ultimately, to show the validity of the underlying abstractions as they manifest themselves in the life of the times.[2]

The details make the account more 'vivid' certainly, but more 'vivid' here, in order to make the contrast between Town and Country Mouse greater, to reinforce the moral outlook of the work. We are shown a poor house which contrasts greatly with the respectability of the sister's dwelling - for the Country Mouse, the poet reemphasizes, does not seem respectable: 'sic pykeris luvis not licht' (42).

Henryson's use of the relationship between the two mice allows him another addition: when the Town Mouse, 'prwnnigit ful of pryd' (47), criticized her sister's food, the Country Mouse reminded her that they had come from the same origins and that it was she herself who lived as her parents had done; the Town Mouse was living out of character:

> I keip the ryt and custome of my deme
> and of my ser Levand in pouertie
> For landis haif we none of propirtie (54-6)

This addition is of particular importance as background for the special emphasis of the moralitas (lines 206-211 especially). In

---

1. Cf. D.W. Robertson Jr., A Preface to Chaucer, op. cit., pp. 45 ff..
2. Ibid., p. 247.

the sources the advice that friendship and good cheer make the poorest meal seem 'sueit and gude' was spoken by the narrator. Here it is put into the mouth of the Country Mouse who rebukes her sister: she does so in the words of the Bible which give authority - the authority of oft-quoted wisdom, the authority of the Word of God - to her position. But this has no effect upon the worldly mouse. Here I must protest at one of Stearns' misreadings. He states, concerning lines 78-9:

> For the first time, the town Mouse is a bit shaken by the moral conviction of her younger sister and sits sadly but quietly at the table, with 'littill will to sing'[1]

The Town Mouse shows no sign of being shaken by moral conviction. Despite all her sister's 'mery exortation' (78) she will not rejoice for the food is too much for her; again she shows pride: the food may 'suffyis for sic a rurall beist' (84) but it is not good enough for her despite the fact that, as has been emphasized before, she is but a 'rurall beist' herself by origin. She is proud; her religion means nothing to her in her pursuit of worldly goods - her statement that her 'gud fryday is better nor your pase' (87) scarcely suggests devotion, and indeed we are informed that her god is her stomach (220-1); and she is self-reliant and self-assured, ironically so, as we shall find later:

> I haif hous anew of grit defens
> of cat na fall nor trap I haif no dreid (89-90)

Once again we must note that the two latter characteristics I have isolated are additions by the poet and that even the first, pride,

---

1. Robert Henryson, op. cit., pp. 109-10.

is merely implied in the sources. But the additions are not meant to produce a 'well-rounded' character - either human or animal - but to portray the characteristics of the man who has placed his trust in the things of this world[1] - pride, irreligion and blind, fatal self-reliance. Cresseid exhibits these features in <u>The Testament</u>.

The mice arrive in the town 'in a mornyng or the laverok sang' (97). The only other versions mentioning the time of day are Horace's (set in the midst of the night)[2] and the LBG Romulus: 'Summo igitur diliculo viam aggressi sunt, et in meridie ad villam venerunt'. Henryson's setting is different from both and is obviously an innovation by the poet. As in the <u>Cok and the Jewell</u> the poet has used the convention in which poems are set in the morning (the time when the false world <u>seems</u> promising) to emphasize the foolishness of his characters: here, the initial foolishness of the Town Mouse, and the foolishness of the Country Mouse in letting herself be guided (94-5) by her sister. In the town they come to a 'worthy wane' (99) - not the 'semple wane' (36) of the Country Mouse - where the food is in abundance. We saw Henryson earlier in the poem using conjunctions to emphasize by accumulation; similar constructions are used to stress the amount of food available: 'bayth ... and; with ... and; and':

> bayth cheis and butter upone skelffis he
> with <u>f</u>ishe and <u>f</u>lesche ennuche baith <u>f</u>resch and salt
> and sekkis ful of groitis baith <u>m</u>eill and <u>m</u>alt (103-5)

---

1. Cf. D.W. Robertson Jr., <u>A Preface to Chaucer</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 241 ff. on medieval 'characterization'.

2. Satire II, vi, ll. 100-1; Horace, <u>Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica</u> ed. H. Rushton Fairclough (Loeb Classical Library, New York and London, 1926) p. 218.

Alliteration also intensifies adding to the sense of quantity; similarly 'full of'. The poet continues to emphasize the seeming prosperity: the mice had '<u>all</u> curis' (108):

> Motone <u>and</u> beif strikin in telyeis <u>greit</u> (109)
> <u>Till eik</u> the cheir the surharg furth scho brocht
> A plait of groitis <u>and</u> a disch of meill
> Threfe cakis I trow scho <u>sparit nocht</u>
> <u>haboundantly</u> about hir for to deill (120-3)

The Town Mouse thinks this will last forever 'and langir to' (118); for she is blind to the realities of this world, has forgotten where true values lie, has made a god of her stomach (l. 221). So 'Withottin grace thay wesche and went to meit' (107).

But this is not real, they pretend to be what they are not: 'a lordis fair thus can thay counterfeit' (110). And at the height of their joy the poet reminds us of their danger and thus of their folly (129-30); this is an addition to his sources, but an addition which is traditional both in thought and expression: we are introduced to the Boethian world of instability. At the height of Troilus' happiness Chaucer similarly warns:

> But al to litel, weylawey the whyle,
> Lasteth swich joie, ythonked be Fortune,
> That semeth trewest whan she wol bygyle,
> And Kan to fooles so hire song entune,
> That she hem hent and blent, traitour comune! (IV, 1-5)

Those who have put themselves in Fortune's power, by placing their trust in the things of this world, are sure to suffer. Henryson emphasizes the Country Mouse's suffering:

> So dussalait and will of all gud reid
> For verry dreid scho fell in swoun neir deid ... (139-40)
> ... This rurall mous lay flatlingis on the ground
> and for the deid scho wes full dreidand
> For till hir hairt straik mony wofull stound
> As in a fewer trymlit fute and hand (148-151)

It is perhaps not too far-fetched to recall at this point Troilus' condition when Fortune strikes him.[1]

Now Henryson has not only added detail to the fable, thus widening its theme, he has radically altered its structure. As we saw before, in no other extant version of the fable is there more than one episode; here there are two. The attractions of the feast of this world - and its inherent dangers - are made to seem even greater by this addition. And the poet has made the second episode much more terrifying than, say, Odo's version where the Country Mouse 'vix evasit'. Here the mouse is caught and played with: its misery is described in terms recalling, as is certainly relevant, Fortune's wheel ('Fra ... to ... to and fra; quhyle ...'):

> Fra fute to fute scho kest hir to and fra
> quhyle vp quhyle doun Als tait as ony kid
> quhyle wald scho lat hir ryn vndir the stra
> quhyle wald scho wynk and play with hir bukhid (169-72)

An interesting comparison - reminding us once again to be careful when speaking of 'personal observation' in Henryson's poetry - is with an exemplum in a fourteenth century collection in the British Museum:

> Diabolus dicitur/esse similis murelego qui
> cum mure ceperit multociens ludit dimittendo
> eam aliquantulum et postea comedit illam.
> Ita facit diabolus de peccatore et tandem in
> fine deuorat ipsum[2]

The misery of the creature suffering from Fortune, the creature who has placed its trust in the things of this world, is thus stressed.

---

1. Troilus and Criseyde, V, 217 ff..
2. B.M. MS. Harley 268, fol. 33b.

The Country Mouse has learned her lesson:

> Thy mangery is myngit all with cair
> Thy gus is gud thy ganesall sour as gall
> The sachngis of thy seruice is bot sair (183-5)

Once again Henryson has added a proverb[1] with its accumulated wisdom.

The last stanza of the fable is also an addition by the poet. We should note the introduction of the narrator here: he is similarly introduced in the final stanza of the story in The Cok and the Jewell, The Fox, Wolf and Husbandman and The Mous and the Paddock; in other fables the narrator plays an even more integral part in the action and theme - The Lyon and the Mouse and The Swallow and Othir Birdis for instance. The introduction provides a further example of the use of conventional forms in combination (the narrator had played an important rôle in Chaucer's poetry, for instance) for thematic purposes; in the present fable it serves to vouch for accuracy of the fable and thus of the moralitas. The narrator 'hard say' that the Country Mouse lived:

> As warme as wow suppois it wes nocht greit
> Full beynly stuft bayth but and ben
> Off peis and nutis benis ry and quheit
> Quhen evir scho list scho had ennuche til eit (198-201)

One should again note the 'bayth ... and ... and ... and' form and the emphasizing adverb (full).

I hope it has become obvious that Henryson has used his additions - the different types of which were enumerated at the beginning of our discussion - to emphasize the danger of putting oneself in the power

1. See Fergusson's Scottish Proverbs, ed. Erskine Beveridge (S.T.S., New Series 15, 1924) no. 145, p. 16 'A good goose indeed, but she has an ill gansell.

of Fortune by attempting to climb, to seek worldly goods (in this example, food) which, though seemingly abundant and attractive, are fatal. The Town Mouse had climbed from her original state and put herself into mortal danger: danger she did not, in her blindness realize, danger into which she attempted to draw her sister who was similarly blinded, danger which, it is implied, will eventually prove fatal to her.

In discussing the moralitas we should first note the change of form: to the eight-lined stanza which as I mentioned in my chapter on The Mous and the Paddock, is used primarily in fifteenth century poetry for overtly didactic work; this form commonly has a refrain.[1] Again we see Henryson adding a traditional form to the original story. The poet stresses his theme:

> So intermellit is aduersitie
> With erdly Ioy so that no stait is fre
> Without truble or sum vexatioun
> And namely thay that clymis vp most he
> And nocht content of small possessioun (207-11)

The Town Mouse had climbed 'vp most he' leaving her original state (she was not content with 'small possessioun'; she had put her trust in 'erdly joy'). And, in Boethian terms, when one has put one's trust in the things of this world one has voluntarily placed oneself in the power of Fortune; if one's trust is in eternal things one cannot be disappointed for they are stable (Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde, V, 1845-6); but if one puts trust in worldly

---

1. See, for instance, Ane Prayer for the Pest, The Ressoning Betuix Aige and Yowth, Prais of Aige, The Abbay Walk, Aganis Haisty Credence of Titlaris; the section of Lydgate's Minor Poems which MacCracken entitles, somewhat patronizingly, 'Little Homilies with Proverbial Refrains', The Minor Poems of John Lydgate, ii, op. cit., pp. 744 ff..

things one is sure to be disappointed for, by nature, they are transitory - Chaucer's Troilus, The Testament of Cresseid. The Town Mouse, like the foolish Cok in The Cok and the Jewell, has misplaced her values: thus she suffered from 'blind prosperite' (216) just as Chaucer's Troilus suffered from 'blynde lust' (Troilus and Criseyde, V 1824). We remember Cresseid:

> Thy lufe, thy lawtie and thy gentilnes
> I countit small in my prosperitie
> Sa elevait I was in wantones
> And clam upon the fickill quheill sa hie (547-50)

Other important passages are to be found in the Orpheus:

> Bot warldly men sumtyme ar cassin he
> upone the quheill, in gret prosperitie,
> And with a quhirle, onwardly, or thai wait
> ar thrawin doun to pure and law estait (485-8)

> ... Schawand to ws quhat perell on ilk syd
> That thai incur quhay will treat or confyd
> Into this warldis vane prosperitie
> quhilk hes thir sory propertels thre,
> That is to say, gottin with grit labour,
> Keipit with dreid, and tynt with grit dolour (547-52)

The Tyon and the Mouse:

> Quha wait how sone a lord of greit renoun
> rolland in warldly lust and vane pleasandis
> May be ourthrawin distroyit or put doun
> Throw fals fortoun, quhilk of all varians
> Is haill maistres and leder of the dans (281-5)

The Abbay Walk:

> Thy kindome and thy grit empyre,
> Thy ryaltie nor riche array,
> Sall nocht endeur at thy desyre,
> Bot as the wind will wend away;
> Thy gold and all thy gudis gay,
> quhen fortoun list will fra the fall (9-14)

We shall find much of Henryson's poetry to be concerned with this subject. Of course, it must be emphasized, this does not necessarily reflect a personal problem on his part: one can say that, almost

without exception mediaval poets did not write about individual problems but about the problems of mankind; Henryson is but one of many writers who dealt with the same problem. His importance is in the _way_ he deals with it, and this I have been attempting to describe in my analysis of the poem.

Now of course not only the rich are subject to the whims of Fortune: 'no stait is fre' (208). But those who have put their trust in this world and its riches suffer from these whims. So:

> _Blissit be_ symple lyfe withouttin dreid
> _Blissit be_ sobir feist in quiete
> quha hes ennuche of no moir hes he neid (212-4)

We may compare with Chaucer's _Balade de bon Conseyl_

> Flee fro the prees and dwelle with sothfastnesse
> Suffyce unto thy good, though it be smal;
> For hord hath hate, and climbing tickelnesse,
> Prees hath envye, and wele blent overal (1-4)

We have already seen Lydgate's lines 'Nor more assverd ... Than glad pouert with smal possessioun'. In another of his poems, _Consulo Quisquis Eris_:[1]

> Be paied with litel, content with suffisaunce,
>   Clymb not to hih, thus biddeth Socrates;
> Glad pouert is of tresours most substaunce,
>   And Catoun seith is noon so greet encres,
>   Off wordly tresours, as for to live in pees, ... (65-9)

Henryson's own _The Abbay Walk_:

> In welth be meik, heich nocht thy self,
> be glaid in wilful pouertie;
> Thy power and thy warldis pelf
> Is nocht bot verry vanitie (49-52)

---

1. _The Minor Poems of John Lydgate_, ii, _op. cit._, 750-4.

Dunbar's Of Content[1] was later to echo the same idea. It is interesting to find in Gregor's notes to the poem[2] many classical parallels for this concept. Biblical parallels can be found in Proverbs xvi, 8 and xxiii, 4-5. I Timothy vi is also relevant as we shall see.

The Town Mouse's values have been misplaced: her god is her stomach. Lines 220 ff. paraphrase Philippians iii, 19. I quote verse 18 also for context:

> Multi enim ambulent, quos saepe dicebam
> vobis, nunc autem et flens dico, inimicos crucis
> Christi: quorum finis interitus, quorum deus
> venter est; et gloria in confusione ipsorum,
> qui terrena sapiunt.

The Town Mouse loved worldly things, made her stomach her god, and, it is implied, her end will be destruction. It seems to me that in this context the cat of line 224 refers not only to Fortune but also to Death:

> The cat cumis and to the mous hewis E
> Quhat dois availl thy feist and ryelte
> With dreid full hairt and tribulatioun (223-5)

Verses 6-10 of I Timothy vi are particularly relevant here:

> Est autem quaestus magnus pietas cum
> sufficientia. Nihil enim intulimus in
> hunc mundum, haud dubium quod nec auferre
> quid possumus. Habentes autem alimenta
> et quibus tegamur, his contenti simus.
> Nam qui volunt divites fieri incidunt in
> tentationem, et in laqueum diaboli, et
> desideria multa inutilia et nociva, quae
> mergunt homines in interitum et perditionem.
> Radix enim omnium malorum est cupiditas;
> quam quidam appetentes erraverunt a fide, et
> inseruerunt se doloribus multis.

---

1. Poems of William Dunbar, 3 vols. i Introduction by Æ.J.G. MacKay, ii Poems ed. J. Small, iii Notes and Glossary by Walter Gregor (S.T.S., 1893), ii, 230-1.
2. Ibid., iii, 312-3.

Henryson's warning is expanded in <u>The Swallow and Othir Birdis</u>. So, in view of the danger of seeking worldly pleasures, dangers both in this world and the next, the 'best thing in erd', the best 'undir the hevin', the best 'erdly Ioy' is 'small possessioun'. For 'possessioun' does not matter. What does matter:

> the riches that evir sall indure
> Quhilk motht nor mwst may nocht rwst nor kot
> And to manis saull it is <u>eternall meit</u>
> (<u>The Cok and the Jewell</u> 138-40)

Henryson's poem has religious implications. And here we find the basic difference between his fable and all other literary versions, except Odo of Cheriton's where the moralitas, though religious, has a very different purpose: an attack on simoniacal clergy. Even the telling in the Isopet de Lyon, though hinting at the concept of Fortune, is not specifically religious; Henryson's is in essence religious as are some of the exampla versions: Jacques de Vitry:

> Expedit igitur ut exeat homo a Babilone et periculosa habitatione maxime, ubi fortior debiliorem consuevit opprimere[1]

Bromyard:

> Sic omnino, quando fideles simplices vident peccatores, et abundantes in seculo obtinere et iactare divitias, et victus, et vestitus, delitias et domorum et equorum nobilitatem, que omnia vel ex magna parte ex mala habent acquisitione, cum animarum periculo, et conscientiarum timore, quibus melius esset fabam comedere et aquam bibere cum conscientia letitia et securitate; dicant in cordibus cum mure campestri, malo meam ruralem paupertatem, cum securitate et laetitia quam splendidas epulas illas et vestes cum remorsu conscientie, et cum tot

---

1. Crane, CLVII, p. 69.

hominum et demonum insidiis et paenarum infernalium timore, sciens quoniam _melior est buccella panis cum gaudio, quam domus plena diuitiis cum iurgio_. S. conscientiae. Prou 17.

The _Twa Myis_ thus forms one of a group of poems which are variations on a theme, the vanity of the world and the stability of the heavenly kingdom, the general theme of the entire _Fabillis_.

(v) The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff

There can be no doubt concerning the source of The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff. In all the traditional accounts the fable is an attack on false witnesses: the judge (who is usually unnamed) asks the dog if he has witnesses; sometimes he produces three (usually the fox, the kite and the hawk), sometimes two to testify for him, and the judge is mislead by those. There are two accounts in the traditional manner which give some blame to the judge. In Jacques de Vitry's exemplum,[1] where the rabbit is the judge, we find:

> Canibus autem, miluis et coruis pro lupo
> et uolpe testimonium ferentibus dixit
> cuniculus - id est rapax prelatus -: Cum
> agnus soluere nequeat quod promisit, ego
> pellem, id est exteriorem substantiam, pro
> pignore retinebo; lupus autem et volpes
> inter se carnes diuidant ...

In Isopet I,[2] where the judge is not named, we find:

> Le Juge qui vers le plus fort
> Se tient, soit a droit, soit a tort,
> A rendre le pain li commande (14-17)

However in both these accounts the remainder of the fable is traditional.

The Isopet de Lyon[3] has diverged markedly from this traditional telling and, as will become obvious, Henryson has followed it:

> En cel plait est juges li Lous:
> Cilz juges est mout perillous. (3-4)

---

1. J. Greben, Die Exempla aus den Sermones feriales et communes de Jakob von Vitry, op. cit., no. 5, pp. 8-10.
2. Bastin, ii, 209-10.
3. Bastin, ii, 91-2.

'a frawd full [wolf][1] was iuge' (5). The dog had 'bons consoillours (5) - advocates, not witnesses; so in Henryson's fable (31-2). They were 'Lo Mieble et lo Voutour' (7) - Henryson's 'gled' and 'grip' (30). These are too corrupt: the Isopet: 'Si li uns tost, li autres amble' (8). Henryson: thay:

> wer considerit stret in to ane band
> Agane the scheip to procure the sentens
> Thocht it wer fals thay haif no conscience. (33-5)

But the sheep was without counsel:

> Consoil ne avoit ne haie
> La Berbiz; s'etoit esbaie (9-10)
> but aduocat abasitly can stand (86)

The remainder of the story is parallel: the dog accuses the sheep of keeping his bread; the corrupt court convicts:

> Li Lous es consoillours acorde,
> Quar tuit tirent a une corde
> Et il sont genz senz conscience
> Que de rapine font chevance (23-6)

Henryson likewise emphasizes the court's guilt. There are points where Henryson differs slightly from the Isopet: his dog does not mention that the sheep agreed: 'Non pais une foiz, mais sovant' (16); nor does his sheep die of cold - cf. 'muert de froit contre la bise (34) (Henryson makes use of the winter scene in a much more original way, as we shall see). But there can be no doubt that the Isopet provides his source.

Now we are in a position to see what the Scottish poet made of the fable in expanding it (from 40 to 175 lines). There are two major additions to the story itself. The first is the addition

---

1. The Bannatyne line is faulty: another syllable is necessary for the metre. All other early versions read 'wolf' which is, in any case, obvious in this context.

of detail to the court scene, the description of an ecclesiastical court. So the wolf sends out a 'strait summoun' (7):

> I mr wolf pairtles of frawd or gyle
> Vndir the panis of suspentioun
> and gret cursing and interdictioun
> Sr Scheip I chairge the straitly to compeir ... (10-13)[1]

The detail has the same effect as that in the Two Myis: it serves to localize the scene and thus to make it more applicable to the society for which the poet was writing. Besides - and the same reason applies to the introduction of technical terms in The Fox tryed before the Lyone - by their introduction the poet reminds us that he is dealing, in essence, not with animals but with human beings in their bestial state (cf. Prolog ll. 143 ff.). We should note too that, in this addition, the poet has taken every opportunity to emphasize the court's corruption; in context the wolf's denial of 'frawd or gyle' (10) increases suspicion; and our knowledge of the hopelessness of the sheep's position is also increased by recognition of the wolf's learning (a master). His prey is a 'silly scheip'. Further court detail also serves both purposes: the raven who is 'peritour' (15) 'pykot has full mony schepis E' (16):

> The Fox wes clerk And notar in that caus
> The gled the grip vp at the bar cowth stand
> As aduocatis expert in to the lawis (29-31)
> ... Lawrence the actis and the proces wrait (94)

Other fables, as the poet himself reminds us in line 134, have told of the treachery, hypocrisy and enmity of the fox towards the sheep.

---

1. For explanation of these technical terms, and evidence that this is an ecclesiastical court, see Smith, Poems, op. cit., i, 20-1, notes to ll. 1448-9.

The second major addition to the story is the sheep's protest against the court's animosity to her, and the resultant tribunal:

> ... thow scr wolf hes Ay bene odius
> To me with thyne tuskis revenus
> hes slene full mony kynnis men of myne ...
> ... And schortly of this court the memberis all
> bayth assessoris clerke and aduocat
> To me and myne ar ennemeis mortall[1]
> and ay hes bene as mony scheiphird watt (46-53)

Besides, the very time at which the court is held is unlawful ('ferial' [54] - another technical term). We note that it begins at sundown: it will be held then in the dark. Considering Henryson's other uses of the dark/light symbol[2] I think one can accept this as another sight of the court's falseness. Even the appeal judges are false; they seem virtuous:

> ... held a lang quhyle disputatioun
> Seikand full mony decretalis of the law
> and glosis als the veritie to knaw
>
> Off sewall mony volum thay rewoll
> The codys and degestis new and ald (68-72)

But in Henryson, in denying their duplicity, affirms it:

> For prys nor prayer trow ye thay wald fald (75)
> as trew lugeis I shrew thame that leis (77)

Henryson's additions to the fable have set it in a particular contemporary setting - the ecclesiastical courts - thus making the tale more relevant to his readers/hearers; and they have reinforced the corruptness of the court. So:

---

1. Bannatyne reads 'immortall' which gives an unnecessary syllable. The sense seems to demand 'mortall', which is, in fact, the reading of the other early versions.

2. Cf. the opening of The Fox and the Wolf; The Swallow and Othir Birdis, ll. 15-21; The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman, l. 64. The concept is used ironically in The Twa Myis: 'For commonly sic pykeris luvis not licht' (42). The Country Mouse does not seem respectable; in fact she is much more so than her sister.

> This cursit court corruptit all for meid
> Agane gud fayth gud law and conscience
> For this fals dog pronuncit the sentence (96-8)

But this is only the beginning of the poet's originality. The moralitas in the Isopet version is merely:

> Tost se consent a fausetey
> Hons de mavaise povretey;
> Tost porte uns mavais tesmoignaige
> Por un poul de son avantaige.
> Por mavastié sovente foiz
> Est mise au dessoz bone foiz (35-40)

But the moralitas of Henryson's fable is far more extensive. Although he does not show how the poet accomplishes his task, nor indeed, fully understand its nature (the use of the word 'personal' for instance comes, as we shall see, from a misunderstanding of the text) Stearns is certainly correct when he says: 'it is clear that Henryson is building in the course of the fable towards his personal comment in the moralitas'.[1] Now, as all the commentators have pointed out, the court present in the fable itself is a church court while the interpretation placed on it in the moralitas suggests a civil court. Lord Hailes:

> ... It is remarkable that the whole satire of the fable is aimed at the ecclesiastical judge whereas the application is to the civil. Henryson probably stood more in awe of the court spiritual than of the temporal.[2]

Surprisingly, this explanation is accepted by both Smith[3] and Wood.[4] However, Stearns is surely right in stating:

---

1. Robert Henryson, op. cit., p. 124.
2. Ancient Scottish Poems published from the MS. of George Bannatyne 1568 (Edinburgh 1770) p. 282, note to st. 18, l. 1.
3. Poems, op. cit., 1, 22, note to l. 1257.
4. Poems and Fables, op. cit., p. 241, note to l. 1265.

> This inference seems unjustified. The action would have obtained law in either court and Henryson appears to be taking the opportunity to criticize both.[1]

So Judge in Church Court and Sheriff in Justice Ayres are both like the Wolf in the fable; the apparitor and coroner are both like the raven; the characteristics of the court in the fable are those of both church and civil courts: The sheriff:

> hes with him a cursit assyis about
> and dytis all the pure men vp of land
> and fra the crowner lay on thame his wand
> Suppois he be als trew as was sanct Iohine
> Slane sall thay be or with the Iuge compone.
> The revin I likin till a fals crowner ...
> ... Bot luke gife he be of a trew intent
> To skraip out Iohine and wryt in will or wate
> and so a bud at bayth the pairteis skat (120-33)

This is a 'cursit assyis' just as the church court was a 'cursit court' (96); they are both 'corruptit all for meid' (96 cf. 133); as the dog was 'fals' (98) so is the coroner (127) and the fox (134). So in the first part of the moralitas the poet has widened his criticism (again using detail to reinforce his argument) to include falseness in the civil as well as the ecclesiastical courts; falseness, that is, in the whole system of justice. He has also in this section to some extent foreshadowed the second widening in promising hell to all types of 'tirrane men' - not only those who take the case to court but:

> ... tirrane men that settis all thair cure
> with fals menys to mak a wrang conqueist
> In howp this present lyfe sall evir lest
> Bot all begyld thay will in schort tyme end
> And efter deid to crewall panis wend (115-9)

---

1. Robert Henryson, op. cit., p. 31 n.

This warning should be compared with that in The Swallow and Othir Birdis, ll. 304 ff.

The second widening of the theme comes from the poet's encounter with the sheep. The chance hearing of the sheep's complaint[1] by the narrator passing by is a variation on the conventional opening for poems of the pastoral type where a wanderer in spring hears a love song or complaint by chance.[2] Here the poet's variation on the form implies a contrast between the harshness of the real world and the idyllic nature of that spring setting; the passer by, by chance, hears a complaint in winter, a winter to which the sheep has been made particularly vulnerable by the cruelty of others. In describing this setting Henryson, for the first time in this poem on an extended scale, uses a typical means of emphasis - intensive alliteration - to stress the sheep's suffering.

> Allace q he this cursit[3] consistory
> In middis now of winter it is maid
> quhen boreas with blastis bitterly
> with frawart frostis the flowris doun can faid
> on bankis bair now may I mak no baid
> and with that wird in till a coif he crap
> fra hair wedder and froistis him to hap
> Quakand for cald and murnyngis soir among (141-8)

---

1. It should be noted that there seems to be no justification for the punctuation in Smith's edition (and he is followed by Harvey Wood and Charles Elliott) that ends the sheep's speech at l. 153 and makes the remainder of the poem the poet's own comment. It seems to me that the whole passage (l. 150 to the end) is spoken by the sheep. Stearns too, probably from his use of Wood's edition, makes this mistake (hence his 'personal'). Laing, however, (The Poems and Fables of Robert Henryson, now first collected [Edinburgh, 1865]) edits correctly.

2. Cf. my comments on The Ressoning Betwuix Aige and Yowth, pp. 344-5 ; also Helen E. Sandison, The "Chanson d'Aventure" in Middle English (Bryn Mawr College Monographs, Monograph Series, XII, Bryn Mawr Pennsylvania, 1913).

3. This is the third time this word 'cursit' has been applied to the courts; these men too are quite literally cursed (cf. ll. 118-9).

In the typical spring setting of this convention it is often implied that this state will follow: just as the flowers fade Fortune will change.[1] And Fortune has changed for the sheep, previously protected, now exposed to a fierce winter. The sheep cries:

> ... o lord quhy slypis thow so lang
> Walk and descerne my caus groundit in richt
> luk how I am be frawd maistry and slycht
> pelit full bair and so is mony one (149-52)

As Gregory Smith points out[2] this is an echo of Psalm xliv, 23 (Vulgate Psalm xliii, 23).[3] The context of the quotation is most interesting: the psalmist recalls the nation's righteousness; yet they have been slaughtered like sheep. From verse 22 to the end of the psalm we read:

---

1. Again see my discussion of The Reasoning Betuix Aige and Yowth, pp. 344-5.
2. Poems, op. cit., i, 22, note to l. 1287. Cf. also James Moffatt, The Bible in Scots Literature (London, n.d.), p. 52.
3. Wood, ignoring Smith's note, quotes this as

> ... one of the distinguishing features that mark out the Scotsman in any company today ... he is more than disposed to address his Maker in an admonitory and chastening tone ... this peremptory note, reminiscent of the north-country pulpit (Poems and Fables, op. cit., pp. xvii-xviii).

Stearns, without acknowledgement, adopts this suggestion; he says that the passage 'has the force and flavour of a sermon by an old Scots preacher' (Robert Henryson, op. cit., p. 126). See also Wittig, The Scottish Tradition in Literature, op. cit., p. 50. In the context - especially ll. 169 ff. - it seems scarcely 'admonitory and chastening'. And a glance at the commentaries confirms this: cf. Cassiodorus, Expositio in Psalterium, P.L. lxx, cols. 316-7; Bede (the ascription is questionable), In Psalmorum Librum Exegesis, P.L. xciii, col. 713.

> ... Quoniam propter te mortificamur tota
> die; aestimati sumus sicut oues occisionis.
> Exsurge; quare obdormis Domine? exsurge
> et ne repellas in finem. Quare faciem tuam
> overtis; obliuisceris inopiae nostrae et
> tribulationis nostrae? Quoniam humiliata est
> in puluere anima nostra: conglutinatus est
> in terra venter noster. Exsurge Domine,
> adjuua nos: et redime nos propter nomen tuum.

The sheep continues in the conventional lament form:

> Se how the cursit syn of cuvatys
> exylit hes bayth lufe lawty and law
> In falt of quhome the pure man is ourthraw (155-8)
> ... Se thow nocht lord this warld our turnit is
> As quha wald chenge gud gold in leid or tyn
> The pure is pelit the lord may do no mis
> Now symony is haldin for no syn
> Now is he blyth with okir can most wyn
> gentreis is slane and pety is ago
> allace lord god quhy tholis thow it so (162-8)

The image of the world upside down is common in medieval poetry,[1] especially in this conventional lament form (the laudator temporis acti[2]); other characteristics are the repeated 'now', implying contrast with a former time, and the use of 'exylit'. The poet is looking back to the Golden Age, the Garden of Eden - before men selfishly followed their lusts seeking worldly goods - as he also does, for instance, in The Lyon and the Mous and The Cok and the Jewell. For the complaints he makes, though they are of course applicable to fifteenth century Scotland, (and were certainly meant to relate to it) are not restricted to it: the same type of complaint has been made throughout medieval literature. The poet uses universal images to expound a truth not restricted to any one

---

1. Cf. my discussion of The Want of Wyse Men, pp. 386-7; also E.R. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, op. cit., pp. 94-8.
2. Cf. Utley's review of Stearns book, op. cit., pp. 494-5.

country or period but relevant to mankind in general; he complains of exploitation, but he complains also of something more universal. His realization is that of St. Paul (I Timothy vi, 9-10):

> Nam qui volunt diuites fieri incidunt in
> tentationem, et in laqueum diaboli et
> desideria multa inutilia et nociua, quae
> mergunt homines in interitum, et perditionem.
> Radix enim omnium malorum est cupiditas:
> quam quidam appetentes errauerunt a fide,
> et inseruerunt se doloribus multis.

This evil has infected all levels of society:[1] cleric (165) and lay (164) just as we saw it before infecting ecclesiastical and secular courts.

> The sheep answers its own question (of lines 150-168):
> Thow tholis this bot for our grit offens
> Thow sendis ws truble and plaigis soir
> As hungir derth wer and pestilens
> bot few amendis thair lyfe now thair foir (169-72).

This is the reason for all evil, not only human but natural: 'plaigis ... hungir, derth, wer, ... pestilens'. The same idea is expressed in Ane Prayer for the Pest where the poet realizes (as we shall see in studying this poem it was traditional to do) that plague is a punishment for sin:

> Thow dois na wrang to puneiss our Offens (6)
> ... bot all ar puneist for thair Innobediens (62)

---

1. We should compare with the following passage in The Prais of Aire:

> False is this warld, and full of variance,
> Besoucht with syn and other sytis mo;
> Treuth is all tynt, gyle has the gouvernance,
> Wrechitnes has wroht all welthis wele to wo;
> Fredome is tynt, and flemyt the lordis fro,
> And covatise is all the cause of this; (9-14).

The Biblical commentaries are also helpful. The _Glossa Ordinaria_, commenting on the passage from Psalm xliii I quoted above, states:

> _Obdormis._ Negligere videris, Quare etsi nesciamus, tu scis quare: vel pro culpa, vel pro utilitate. Quod si pro culpa, utinam abesset; si pro utilitate, utinam adesset. Quosdam repellis, quia faciem, id est, cognitionem tuam, ab eis subtrahis: obdormis quibusdam qui gemunt de malis.[1]

Petrus Lombardus uses this passage in his _Commentarium in Psalmos_.[2]

Henryson uses a conventional ending, a prayer:[3] he ends _The Fox tryed before the Lyone_ and _The Mous and the Paddock_, for instance, similarly. So beginning with an exemplum - which provides one instance of seemingly unmerited punishment - Henryson has expanded his theme firstly to include unmerited suffering imposed by any court, then to all suffering, whether caused by man or natural. And he has provided an answer to the question of why such evil is allowed (it is caused by human sin [169], human desire for the passing pleasures of this world [116-9]), and a solution to the problem (175-7). This expansion he has brought about largely by use of conventional form - the chanson d'aventure, the complaint, the prayer ending - in a new context. And by this original use he has made a fable of limited import into a discussion of a universal problem.

---

1. _Liber Psalmorum_, _P.L._, cxiii, col. 909.
2. Psalm XLIII, Pars III, verse 25, _P.L._ cxci, col. 434.
3. It may be mere coincidence that these lines recall to me St. Matthew, v, 3: Beati pauperes spiritu (those who do not desire the things of this world) quoniam ipsorum est regnum caelorum.

(vi) The Wolff and the Lamb

The few indications we have concerning source for The Wolff and the Lamb indicate once again the Gualterus tradition, particularly the Isopet de Lyon. There are perhaps three distinguishing points. Firstly ll. 8-10 of our poem:

> Thus drang thay baith bot nocht of ane intent
> The wolffis thocht wes all in wicketnes
> The silly lame meik and Innocent ...

There is a somewhat similar passage in the Isopet de Lyon:[1]

> Au dessus boit de la fontaigne
> Li Lous, de pansee mal sainne;
> Li Aigneax de simple coraige
> Bevoit au desoz dou rivaige (5-8)

Henryson's passage reminds us, of course, of his own lines from The Mous and the Paddock:

> Than fute for fute thay lap baith in the brime
> Bot in thair mynd thay wer rycht different
> The mows thocht na thing bot to fleit and swyme
> The padok for to slay set hir intent (99-102)

Secondly, the Wolf accuses the Lamb: 'To hurt my drink and this fair wattir spill' (21). In the Isopet the Lamb exonerates itself thus:

> Avuec ce l'aigue est douce et clere,
> Ne n'est toble ne n'est amere (19-20)

Even closer here is Gualterus' own version[2] where a similar twofold complaint is made by the Wolf: 'Rupisti potumque mihi, rivoque decorem' (5). The Gualterus tradition is the only section of the versions of this fable with this twofold complaint, others, merely

---

1. Bastin, ii, 87-9.
2. Bastin, ii, 8-9.

containing the Wolf's claim that its drink was ruined. Thirdly, the Lamb's plea that it should not be blamed for its father's sins. In all other versions except the Isopet de Lyon, the Lamb's reply is merely that it was not born when the alleged crime took place. But the Isopet expands:

> 'Sire, fait il, certainnemant,
> Quar a moi n'avoit non de pere,
> - N'estoie encore nez de mere -
> Cilz qui vos fist si grant injure
> Pour çou m'en escuse droiture
> Comant doit comparer pechié
> Cil qui n'an puet estre entoichié?
> Dou mal ne doit poinne sentir
> Cilz qui no s'i puet consentir
> Ainçois que fusse nez en vie
> Ne pois consentir en folie.
> Or no me doiz tuer ne batre;
> N'a pais encor III mois ou quatre
> Que commançai simplemant vivre.
> Ignocence a droit me delivre (34-48)

There are obvious differences between this passage and Henryson's (50-5) - in the latter the Lamb bases its plea on Scripture; but the idea is very similar and the Isopet is the only other text I have been able to find with such an idea expressed at this place in the argument. As for the moralitas, I hope to show later the very common nature of Henryson's plea both in previous fables and in other types of writing. But it is interesting that the Isopet develops at some length the emphasis on extortion and plundering which Henryson will likewise develop: the Gualterus original does not do so.

I have shown then what Henryson has obtained from his specific sources and mentioned his general debt in the moralitas. Points in the fable which the poet could have taken from any source are as follows: the two animals, the Wolf above and the Lamb below,

drinking at a stream; the Wolf's first three accusations: that the Lamb spoils the water, that the Lamb threatens him:

> (... sa your fader befoir
> held me at bait als with bost and schoir [41-2];

we compare Gualterus: 'Mihi damna minaris?'; whereas the Vulgate Romulus[1] reads: 'Maledicis mihi?') and that the Lamb's father had likewise offended him; the Lamb's reply: the stream cannot flow backwards; and the Lamb's death. We are now in a position to discover what Henryson has done with his material.

The contrast between the two creatures is emphasized from the beginning: the Wolf is 'crewall ... revanus and fell' (1); he will destroy a 'silly lame' (5). The Wolf approached 'with girnand teith and angry austre luke' (15), addressing the Lamb as a 'catyve wrechit thing' (16). A detail which is not to be found in other versions is the Wolf's complaint of the Lamb's 'fowll slauering', (18) and 'stinkand lippis' (20). In the Isopet the complaint is merely:

> Vos m'avez corrociez sanz dote
> L'aigue m'avez troblee tote (13-14)

Henryson's addition here allows the addition of a further argument to emphasize the Lamb's purity and innocence:

> Also my lippis sen that I was a lame
> Twchit no thing that was contagius
> Bot sowkit mylk fra pawpis of my dame
> rycht naturall sueit and delicious (36-9)

Each additional argument in which the Wolf is obviously bettered illustrates further the flimsiness of his case - and his lack of

---

1. Steinhöwels Äsop, ed. Osterley, op. cit., p. 81.

reason. We note too the line: 'folyeis fra trewth and contrair till ressoun' (28); later (l. 78) the Wolf will openly reject reason. 'Ergo' (l. 35) - a term of learned debate - also illustrates the convincing, the reasonable nature of the Lamb's argument, as opposed to the irrationality of the cruel.

There are also differences and additions in the second accusation and reply. The Wolf does not complain that six months before (nine months in a few versions[1]) the Lamb's father had troubled him, as he does in all other versions which record this incident, but that when he had been troubled he had threatened to be revenged 'within a yeir' (44) on the father 'or on his bairne' (45). The Lamb does not complain that he was not born when the alleged crime took place - as he does in all other versions recording this incident - but quotes Scripture ('Dytit with the mowth of god almycht' [51]): Ezekiel xviii, 19-20:[2]

> Et dicitis: Quare non portavit filius iniquitatem patris? Videlicet quia filius judicium et justitiam operatus est, omnia praecepta mea custodivit, et fecit illa; vivet vita. Anima quae peccaverit, ipsa morietur; filius non portabit iniquitatem patris, et pater non portabit iniquitatem filii; justitia justi super eum erit, et impietas impii erit super eum.

We see also in The Mous and the Paddock - there ironically for the Paddock uses it to confuse the Mouse - Henryson placing Scripture in the months of his characters as their support in a debate (and this dispute between Wolf and Lamb should also perhaps be considered

---

1. Neckam (Bastin, i, 9-10) and his French derivative.
2. Cf. James Moffatt, The Bible in Scots Literature, op. cit., p. 52.

as a debate, a debate in which the Wolf refuses to accept 'ressoun'). Against the laws of 'god almycht' the Wolf sets his own will:

> I latt ye wit quhen the fader offendis
> (I)[1] will cheris none of his successioun (57-8)

The third argument of the Lamb - an adversary should not take the law into his own hands but have his cause tried before a lawful court - is not to be found in any other version I have been able to discover. We note the emphasis on the necessity for a just judge and judgement - 'leill Iustys' (72), 'unsuspect assys' (74) - and remember The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff. But the Wolf will have nothing to do with reason (78).

The effect of these additions then has been to stress the cruelty, the irreligiousness, the lawlessness and irrationality and in many ways the foolishness (his arguments are all bettered; in the end he has to neglect reason) of the Wolf; and, in comparison, the complete innocence and reasonableness of the Lamb. The magnitude of the Wolf's crime is thus increased. The fable ends with a common device - a narrator's pity for his characters:

> Off this murthor quhat sall I say allace
> Was this no rewth was this nocht grit pete
> To heir this silly lame but gilt thus de (89-91)

In his moralitas Henryson criticizes all types - 'violens', 'craft', 'sutelte' - of oppression of the poor (who try to 'wyn with lawty leving as effeiris', 95.). His fable has provided a general exemplum (details do not correspond with the instances cited later) of this type of behaviour; and he goes into the detail

---

1. Bannatyne seems inadequate here - in sense though not in metre.

of such exploitation. Firstly, false lawyers (99-105, 120-6) are criticized. There has been a misplacement of a stanza in the Bannatyne Manuscript. In the other texts, in discussion of each of the three types of extortioners we find first a stanza (or stanzas - the third type) describing the particular crime, then an apostrophe: 'O man of law'; 'O man but mercy'; 'O thow grit lord'. Bannatyne's fifth stanza - the apostrophe: 'O man of law', (ll. 120-6) - obviously refers to the type of 'wolf' described in ll. 99-105; it is out of place where it stands. The first type to be criticized obviously does not directly stem from the fable; there the Wolf neglects the laws, succeeds by rapine; Henryson criticizes here those who achieve their grasping ends by pretence of justice, 'by sutelte':

> Quhilk vndir poleit termes falset myngis
> Leitand that all wer gospell that thay schawis
> Bot for a bud the trew man he ourthrawis
> Smorand the ryt garand the wrang proceid (101-4)
> sutelte
> With nys lympis and frawdis interkat (120-1)

We are reminded of the bribery of the court in <u>The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff</u> and the scene in the same fable where the bear and the badger, after pretence of consultation of the law, dismiss the Sheep's appeal. We note too the religious element of Henryson's work (again similar to that of <u>The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff</u> ll. 116-9) not present in most of the other versions of the fable, and not in his apparent source except as a hint (l. 10)

> Off sic wolffis hell fyre sal be thair meid (105)
> ... think that god of his diuinitie
> The wrang the rycht of all thy werkis wate. (122-3)

The second type of wolf is the oppressing rich:

> Thow hes ennwch the pure husband hes nocht
> bot cote and cruse vpone a clout of land
> for godis aw how dar thow tak on hand
> and thow in berne and byre so bene and big
> To put him fra his tak and gar him thig (115-8)

Again the poet reminds us of the religious implications of the rich man's actions: 'for godis aw' (117). Thirdly, lords who despoil their tenants: their land is 'be godis lane' (128) - in trust; yet they extort more than their due,[1] force their tenants to work for them without a wage.

> Thow suld be rad for rychtous godis blame
> For it cryis vengeance to the hevin so he (145-6);

for nothing in this world may 'perpetualy indure':

> For till oppress thow sall haif als grit pane
> As thow the pure anis with thy hand had slane (153-4)

I think it important to establish that Henryson's fable is a part of a tradition of social protest, that he is one of many voices raised on behalf of the poor,[2] that he is not describing specifically Scottish problems, though of course he does refer to the problem under the guise of contemporary reference (using technical terms for instance) to make his points more relevant to his immediate audience.[3] Thus it will be valuable to survey the moral interpretation

---

1. Bannatyne's version of l. 130 (For prayer pryce and the gersum tane) seems to have been influenced by l. 124 (For prayer pryce for he no law estait). Other early versions read 'And for ane tyme Gressome payit and tane', a more satisfactory reading.
2. Cf. Stearns, Robert Henryson, op. cit., pp. 128-9.
3. For instance, for the lack of security of tenure peculiar to the Scottish economy see I.F. Grant, The Social and Economic Development of Scotland before 1603 (Edinburgh, 1930), pp. 244-64; Annie I. Dunlop, The Life and Times of James Kennedy, Bishop of St. Andrews (Edinburgh and London, 1950), pp. 338 ff..

given to our fable at varying times; and also to cite certain relevant sermon material. We shall then see exactly what is Henryson's contribution to the tradition in his moralitas.

Firstly then, I shall examine the fable tradition. Now I am not suggesting that Henryson knew all, or even many of the instances I shall quote but the traditional nature of the moralitas will become apparent. In first century Rome, Phædrus complained:[1]

> Hec propter illos scripta est homines fabula
> Qui fictis causis innocentes opprimunt.

And this moral was echoed and copied[2] throughout the following centuries. The Berne Romulus[3]: ... 'Sic dampnosi et oppraessores sine causa innocentes opprimunt'. The LBG Romulus[4]: ... 'Sic tyranni faciunt: cum innocentum res vel mortem cupiunt, sive iuste sive iniuste eos spoliant et opprimunt'. Marie de France[5]:

> Issi funt li riche seignur
> Li vescunte e li jugeür
> De ceus qu'il unt en lur justice;
> Faus acheisuns par coveitise
> Treovent asez pur eus confundre:
> Suvent les funt a pleit somundre,
> La char lur tolent e la pel
> Si cum li lus fist a l'aignel (31-8)

The mention of both rich lord and judge here is interesting - Henryson too mentions both. Jacques de Vitry[6]:

---

1. Hervieux, ii, 5-6.
2. Ademar Æsop, Hervieux, ii, 132; Wissembourg Æsop, Hervieux, ii, 157-8.
3. Hervieux, ii, 758.
4. Hervieux, ii, 565.
5. Ewert and Johnston, op. cit., pp. 2-3.
6. Crane no. CXXXV, p. 61.

> Quam miseri qui pro stilla mellis, id est, pro modica et transitoria delectatione obligant se ad hauriendum totum mare, id est, penas interminabiles gehenne, dum non serviunt Domino in timore, videlicet per potentiam suam, pauperes opprimendo calumpniantur egenis similes lupo qui, dum biberet in superiori parte fluminis et agnus in parte inferiori (lupus) cepit calumpniari ...

This version is also interesting as it introduces - as Henryson does - the relevance of religion to man's actions. However, there is no need to assume influence: the religious element is ever-present in Henryson's work. Odo of Cheriton's fable[1] is headed: 'De Lupo et Agno Bibentibus Contra Opprimentes pauperes' and his moralitas reads: Ita diuites pro nulla causa, qualitercumque respondeant pauperes, ipsos deuorant. The Isopet de Lyon:

> Si con li Lous ploins de malice
> Occist l'Aigneal simple senz vice,
> Autresi a cel exemplaire
> Soillent es bons li mavais faire.
> Il s'estuidient de trover
> Achoison por les bons grever.
> Per fausety, per felonie
> Ont cilz lous pertout signorie.
> Au dessoz est en toute place
> Mise vertuz, droiz et simplace.
> Li plus fort lo plus foible esquaiche,
> Povres hons est mort qui ai vaiche.
> Il covient que voincu se rende,
> Qui ne trueve qui lo deffende.
> Apertemant puis donc conclure:
> Ou lous raigne, morte est droiture.
> Onques vertuz ne fut segure
> Avuec genz qui de Deu n'on cure (53-70)

As I have stated earlier this was in all likelihood the source from which Henryson developed his moralitas. The version of the fable in the Speculum Laicorum[2] also blames the rich who 'devour' the poor.

---

1. Hervieux, iv, 197-8.
2. B.M. Additional MS. 11284 f. 12.

In the fourteenth century the same plea continued: John of Sheppey directed his fable:[1] 'Contra calumpniosos causam nocendi querentes; eiusmodi sunt potentes contra pauperes'. Bromyard:[2]

> Alii vero domini non solum permittunt tales iniusta facere, sed aperte eis praecipiunt; quod sit inimicus talis et noceat eis ubicunque poterit. Tales domini sunt aspides. Aspis enim dicitur ab aspergendo, quia venenum ore spargit. Sic tales spargunt venenum ab subditos et ministros et duodenam facientes iudicare et attaxare et crudeliter tractare vel incarcerare eos, qui nolunt eorum in omnibus facere voluntatem de venditione terrae vel domus quam desiderant, vel in alio quocunque negocio ... Fingentes causas sicut lupus contra agnum ...

The fifteenth century: Johannes Gutsch:[3]

> Sic reuera hodie multi lupis rapacibus ... qui pauperes uiduas et aduenas ledunt et eorum bona surripiunt et violenter sine iustitia possident.

Lydgate:[4]

> The wolfe is lykenyd to folkys rauenous
> The sely lambe resembleth the porayle (337-8)

So the same condemnation was made throughout the centuries, in Rome, in France, in Germany, in England, in Scotland. We must therefore

---

1. Hervieux, iv, 417.
2. Summa Praedicantium, A xii (Acquisitio) 45.
3. Quadragesimale (Ulm, 1475), feria tertia sermo, fol. xli Q (in the B.M. version, a later ink numbering, p. 356). A. Murith, Jean et Conrad Grütsch de Bâle (Fribourg, 1940), ascribes to Conrad Gruetsch the authorship of the sermons generally attributed to Joannes Gritsch.
4. ed. MacCracken, The Minor Poems of John Lydgate, ii, op. cit., 574-8.

be careful of identifying too closely with contemporary social conditions what Henryson has to say: it is part of a rhetorical tradition.

Secondly I shall examine sermon material. Many of the following references I owe to G.R. Owst;[1] they seem to me to be so relevant that I shall quote them at length from the original, Bromyard's Summa Praedicantium.

> Ex intimis ergo cordis sollicite cogitandum est, et à corde proprio quærendum ubi sunt mali mundi amatores, qui parum ante nos fuerunt? ubi sunt mali mundi principes, reges, comites, et alii terrarum domini, qui cum superbia, et magno apparatu, et aequitatu vixerunt, qui canes multos et multam et malam familiam nutriebant, qui magna palatia et praedia multa et terras latas, cum multis redditibus possidebant et corpora sua in delitiis et voluptatibus gulae, et luxuriae nutriebant, qui subditos pro praedictis nutriendis dure, et crudeliter regebant et excoriabant, vbi insuper sunt falsi mundi insapientes, iudices, assessores, aduocati et iuratores, atque per iuri patriae ad infernum ductores, qui pro muneribus Deum et regnum caelorum vendebant, et in infernum emebant? ... habebit anima loco palacii et aulae vel camerae, profundum inferni lacum cum his, qui descendunt in profundum laci (Isa. 14)[2]
>
> Et audaciter querimoniam suam coram Deo deponere poterunt, et iustitiam petere, dicentes cum iudice Christo, singuli nocumentum recitantes, in quo ei specialiter nocuerunt. Quorum aliqui dicere possunt, sicut subditi malorum dominorum. Esuriuimus, sed domini nostro illi ibi stantes hoc

---

1. Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England, op. cit.; Owst discusses the subject at length, pp. 287-331. He also discusses false lawyers - Henryson's first type of wolf - pp. 63, 231, 293, 306, 317-8 and, especially, 338-49. For criticism of false lawyers see also Caxton's Game and Playe of Chess, ed. Axon, op. cit., pp. 36 ff. and 92 ff..
2. G ii (Gloria) 41-2.

secerunt; quia labores nostras et bona nostra abstulerunt. Alii, esuriumus et fame mortui sumus, et illi bona nobis debita detinuerunt. Alii, situimus et nudi fuimus, quia illi ibi stantes ex aduerso quilibet modo suo ita nos excruciauerunt, quod potum, vel vestes emere non potuimus. Alii, infirmi fuimus, illi hoc fecerunt, qui nos verberauerunt et plagis affecerunt. Alii, sine hospitio eramus, sed illi hoc fecerunt, de domo, et terra nostra nos expellendo, diues vix dimittit sine cupiditate terram pauperis iuxta suam positam vt suam ampliet, vel quia nos non receperunt in hospitiis suis ... Alii in carcere eramus, sed illi hoc fecerunt per falsas causas non indictando, et, in compedibus ponendo ... Iuste iudex fac nobis iustitiam de illis, quia omnia praedicta mala nobis intulerunt, et labores nostros et bona modis suis abstulerunt, vt cupiditatem suam satiarent, nos fame, et laboribus affecerunt, ut ipsi delicate de laboribus nostris et bonis viuerent. Nos laborauimus, et duram vitam duximus, in tantum quod in dimidio anno vix bonam habuimus satietatem nisi vix panem, et pulmentum et aquam, immo (quod peius est) fame mortui fuimus. Et illis de bonis nostris, quae scilicet à nobis in modo suo acceperunt vel quae nobis in necessitate nostra negauerunt, de tribus vel quatuor ferculis ministratum fuit ... Iuste Deus: iudex fortis, ludus non fuit bene partibus inter illos et nos. Illorum satietas, nostra fames fuit, illorum laetitia, nostra miseria, illorum hastiludia et torneamenta nostra fuerunt tormenta, quia nostris auenis et expensis illa fecerunt, illorum copiae nostrae fuerunt inopie, illorum festa, delectationes, pompae, vanitates et excessus et superfluitates, nobis fuerunt ieiunia paenilitates, defectus, calamitates, et spoliationes ... 1

---

1. P viii (Furtum) 11-2. With this passage Owst (p. 301 n) compares certain lines (The ryche make mery/Sed vulgus collachrimatur) in a Poem on the Times (1388) ed. T. Wright, Political Poems and Songs, 2 vols. (Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores, XIV, London, 1859), i, 272. See also J.W. Blench, Preaching in England in the Late Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, op. cit., pp. 228 ff. Blench stresses that the themes of complaint are conventional (he provides examples and compares with Owst) with almost no specifically contemporary reference. See also pp. 321 ff. where he parallels these themes in contemporary literature.

We find the same complaints in other literature: Chaucer's _Parson's Tale_:

> Of Coveitise comen thise harde lordshipes, thurgh whiche men been distreyned by taylages, custumes and cariages, moore than hire duetee or resoun is. And eek taken they of hire bonde-men amercimentz, whiche myghten moore resonably ben cleped extorcions than amercimentz ... Wherfore I seye that thilke lordes that ben lyk wolves, that devouren the possessiouns or the catel of povre folk wrongfully, withouten mercy or mesure, they shul receyven, by the same mesure that they han mesured to povre folk, the mercy of Jhesu Crist, but if it be amended (751-2 and 774-5 Robinson pp. 252-3)[1]

Henryson's complaints then are by no means original. In this literary fable context, however, the extent of the detailed criticism is new, as is the religious dimension of which we are reminded by the prayer ending (a further example of the addition of a conventional form).

1. Cf. also Hoccleve's _Regement of Princes_, _op. cit._, st. 403-5.

(vii) The Lyon and the Mous

Although I do not think it possible to isolate the actual source of The Lyon and the Mous - the poet combined several versions of the fable or used some source I have been unable to discover or, and this is most probable, expanded to suit his own argument from a source which we may have but whose distinguishing characteristics do not appear in Henryson's version - I think we shall be able to see what is traditional to the fable and what has been added by Henryson. Of course, the basic story is always the same: the Lion lying asleep in a forest is disturbed by a Mouse (or mice) which he captures; after argument (or the Lion's consideration of the issues involved) the Mouse is freed; later, when the Lion is trapped, the Mouse arranges its release. But there are certain points at which Henryson can be shown to be closer to some parts of the tradition than to others. I shall deal with the more distinctive first.

It is more common for the Lion to have doubts concerning the worthiness of his prey than for the Mouse to arouse such doubts in him as in Henryson. So Gualterus:[1]

> Haec tamen ante movens animo: "Quid Mure perempto
> Laudis erit? summos vincere parva pudet ... (5-6)

However there is a group of fables similar to Henryson. Neckham:[2]

> Ille gemens tali voce rogat veniam
> "Parce, precor, misero, fortissime; non ego tantis
> Praeda tuis videor viribus apta rapi ... (8-10)

1. Bastin, ii, 20-1.
2. Bastin, i, 29-30.

The Isopet de Chartres[1] follows Neckham closely. The story in the versions of Jacques de Vitry,[2] Nicole Bozon[3] and Johannes Gobi[4] is similar.

Secondly, in the traditional version the Mouse rescues the Lion unaided; however, in Henryson's version the Mouse calls his companions to help him. There are parallels for this too: the Romulus of Nilant:[5] [the Mouse]

> Cognouit terram fod[i]endam esse et humo replere lacum; ad hunc laborem cohortes sociorum suorum aduocauit. Tunc Leo et mures communem subiacuere laborem, dentibus et ungûibus rodentes terram, et laxantes ingenia artis illius ...

Marie de France:[6]

> Gratez la tere a vostre pé
> Tant que afermer vus i pussez,
> E puis Amunt bien vus sachiez
> Que si pussez ça hors eissir;
> E jeo ferai od mei venir
> Autres suriz pur mei aider
> As cordes, que si sunt, (de) trencher
> E as resels ki sunt tenduz
> Ne serez mie(si) retenuz (32-40)

Nicole Bozon:

> Et assembla ses compaignons, e rongerent les cordez de la reye doñt la fosse fust covert, e lui enseignerent coment devoit romper la corde e eschaper.

---

1. Bastin, i, 173-5.
2. Crane, CXLV, p. 65.
3. Les Contes Moralisés, op. cit., pp. 152-3.
4. Scala Celi, op. cit., fol. 56b.
5. Hervieux, ii, 523-4.
6. ed. Ewert and Johnston, op. cit., pp. 15-16.

It will be noted that these three tellings have a different setting from Henryson's: the Lion has fallen into a pit; the escape is effected not merely by gnawing through the ropes. And the addition is quite likely to be Henryson's own innovation: he discusses the Commons as a whole and the group is thus more satisfactory than a single mouse for his moralitas.

The contents of the Mouse's speech may also help to distinguish sources. He states: 'Unhelsum meit is of a sary mous' (173). I have been able to find only one parallel to this, in the <u>Scala Celi</u>: 'non decet ut nutriamini tam vili et tam parvo cibo'. Again, in the Mouse's argument pleading his weakness in comparison with the Lion's strength, we read:

> Also ye knaw the honor triumphall
> Off all victor vpone the strenth dependis (155-6)

Gualterus:

> De pretio victi pendet victoria; victor
> Tantus erit, victi gloria quanta fuit (13-14)

In the Gualterus text too the Mouse promises to return the favour (15-16) as he does in Henryson (177 ff.), a promise which is made in only a few other texts.[1]

I wish to examine three major additions in the fable itself, the purpose of which will become apparent when the moralitas is discussed later: the first is the poet's emphasis on the licence the mice took with the king's person: they

---

1. Jacques de Vitry; mixed Romulus of Berne, Hervieux, ii, 303; <u>Dialogus Creaturarum</u>, ed. Grässe, <u>op. cit.</u>, dial. 24, pp. 164-5.

> ... to and fra attour him tuke thair trais
> Sum tirlyt at the campis of his berd
> Sum sparit nocht to claw him on the fais
> Myrry and glad thus dansit thay a spais (93-6)

The second major addition is the dialogue between Lion and Mouse. In earlier versions there had been merely a statement by the Mouse,[1] or a plea by the Mouse followed by the Lion's debate with himself.[2] In Henryson's poem we are given a fully developed dialogue, the Mouse advancing four reasons: one of these at least (the Mouse's plea that she thought the Lion to be dead) seems new to the tradition. The matter of major importance to be discussed here is the immense care the poet has taken to emphasize the contrast between the miserable Mouse and the kingly Lion: in other versions little had been made of the Lion's traditional place as king of beasts, as ruler; the contrast between the creatures had been almost exclusively shown by indicating their relative sizes and strengths. The Lion speaks:

> Thow catyve wreche and wyle unworthy thing
> Our malapert and our presumpteous
> Thow was to mak our me thyne tripping
> Knew thow nocht weill I wes baith lord and king
> Of all beistis (107-11)

The 'wreche', the 'thing' is compared with the 'lord', the 'king': rhetorical balance (our ... our'; 'baith ... and') rhyme ('thing' and 'king' are significantly rhymed), double adjectives (wyle unworthy) emphasize the contrast. We see it again in the Mouse's plea:

> Lord I beseik thy kingly ryalte ...
> ... Considdir first my semple pouerte
> and syne thy michty he magnificens (113-6)

---

1. Cf., for example, Neckham's version.
2. Cf., for example, Gualterus Anglicus' version.

The adjectives, particularly kingly, may seem redundant: but they form an important part of the contrast we are examining. Again the poet has used rhyme, this time to emphasize contrasting phrases: 'thy kingly ryalte ... my semple poucrte'. Even if he had been slain and stuffed, the Lion maintains the Mouse should have knelt before him (129-33): there is no excuse: 'My noble person thus to vilipend' (135). In the following quotations - which must be long to give some idea of the emphasis the poet gives to the contrast - I shall underline once those words and phrases emphasizing the greatness, the royalty of the Lion, and twice those emphasizing the vileness of the Mouse and the vileness the Lion would take upon himself if he killed the Mouse:

> A mercy lord at thy gentrice I as
> as thow art king of beistis corronat ... (141-2)
> ... I grant offens is done to thyne estait
> Thairfoir I wirdy am to suffer deid
> Bot gife thy kingly mercy reik remeid (145-7)

There is, of course, some description of the differences in strength of the two creatures; but even here this is not the only difference:

> A thowsand mys to keill and eik devoir
> Is littill manheid untill a strong lyoun
> Ffull littill wirschep haif ye won thairfoir
> To quhois strength is no compareeoun
> It will degraid sum pairte of your renoun
> Till slay a mows quhilk may mak no defens
> Bot askand mercy at your excellens
>
> Also it semys to your celsitud
> quhilk vsis daylie meitis delicius
> To fyle your teith or lippis with my blude
> quhilk to your stomok is contagius
> Vn helsum meit is of a sary mous
> and namely till a noble strang lyoun
> wont to be fed with gentill venysoun
>
> My lyfe is littill and my deid far les
> Yit and I leif I may peruentour
> Supple your hienes beand in distres (162-78)

Henryson has stressed the contrast by characteristic means: we have noted earlier his use of double and emphatic adjectives (here, for instance, 'noble, strong'); also interesting are his use of emphatic adverbs ('and eik; full littill; far les') and the use of oblique means, as well as direct statement, to emphasize the Lion's gentility ('daylie' he eats delicious foods; he is 'wont to be fed' with the best meat).

The third major addition is the Lion's lament: ne 'murnand maid his mone' (210) just as others in Henryson's poems who had made themselves subject to Fortune, and suffered the results, made theirs: Cresseid: '... weiping, scho maid her mone' (*The Testament of Cresseid*, 406); Orpheus: 'maid his mone' (*Orpheus and Eurydice*, 133). The Lion's complaint shows many of the formal devices of other complaints: a heavy and emphatic alliterative pattern; the 'ubi sunt' motif; the rhetorical devices ('but ... or ... but ... or'). And here, as in all the complaints, there is expression of utter hopelessness:

> O lamit lyoun liggand heir so law
> quhair is the mycht of thy magnificens
> off quhome all brutall beist in erd stud aw
> and dred to luke unto thy grit excellens
> But howp or help but succour or defens
> In bondis strong heir mone I byd allace
> Till I be slane I se none uthir grace.
>
> Thair is no Ioy that will my harmis wraik
> Nor creatur do confort to my croun
> Quhay sall me put fra pane of this presoun (211-20)

Again then we see the poet using traditional forms in a new context.

These additions to the story itself are of great importance in the understanding of the different - and wider - emphasis Henryson

has given to the moralitas. The usual application of the fable may be illustrated from Gualterus Anglicus:

> Tu qui summa potes, ne despice parva potentem,
> Nam prodesse potest, si quis obesse nequit (23-4)

The first addition to this is the criticism of the Lion not carrying out his functions as a ruler: he seemed to be dead (125). We can understand now the stress on the royalty of the Lion in the story itself. The criticism is of course not only of the king but of all rulers:

> ... a prince or empriour
> A potestat or yit a king with croun (254-5)

They have not governed well because they have been too concerned with worldly pleasures (259-66; 281 ff.). Previous additions in the poem have prepared for this, particularly the setting. Of course all previous versions had mentioned a forest setting; but in none had thematic use been made of it. I think it is implied that the fable takes place in exactly the same type of setting as the Prologue: the dream convention itself - where the narrator's external circumstances often form part of his dream - implies this. Besides, the mice say they rejoice for 'The sueit sessoun prowokit ws to dans' (122); in the first line of the prologue we are told that it is a 'sueit sessoun'. The Lion lies in the sun, in a 'fair forrest' (88); the setting of the prologue was also in a forest (7, 10, 23). The moralitas interprets the forest of line 88 thus:

> The fair forrest with levis loun and le
> With fowlis song and flouris ferly sueit (260-1);

and the prologue lays great emphasis on the birds and flowers (6-9, 13-21). The fact that this is a conventional setting, and

opening, in medieval poetry scarcely needs mentioning. However, as I try to show in my discussion of the shorter poems, particularly The Reasoning Betuix Aige and Yowth,[1] this setting almost always serves a purpose emphasizing the poem's theme. As in other uses of this setting Henryson employs heavy alliteration, and other characteristic devices (all the land, rycht delicius, all plesans) to stress the apparent beauty:

> In myddis of Iune that Ioly sueit sessoun
> Quhen that fair phebus with his bemis brycht
> Had dryit up the dew fra daill and doun
> And all the land maid with his lemys lycht ... (1-4)
> ... Sueit was the smell of floris quhyt and reid
> The noyis of birdis rycht delicius
> The bewis bred blumyt abone my heid
> The grund growand with gres gratius
> Off all plesans that place was plenteus
> With sueit odour and birdis armony
> The mernying myld my mirth wos mair forthy
>
> The rois red arrayeit rone and rys
> The prumros and the purpour viola
> To heir it was a poynt of paradys
> Sic myrth the mavis and the merle couth ma
> The blosummis blyt brak up on bank and bra
> The smell of herbis and of fowlis cry
> Contending quha suld haif the victory (8-21)

The elements of this description are, of course, standard: if we compare with a similar description in The Fox tryed before the Lyone we find Phebus (reminding us of pagan gods; for this is essentially a pagan, a worldly setting); the sun drinking up the moisture; the alliteration on 'gr' with 'gres'; the sweetness of the bird's singing. In Chaucer's Legend of Good Women Prologue we also find the flowers 'whyte and rede' (F. 42), the emphasis on the word sweet (used three times in our passage, three times in ll. 118-20

---

1. pp. 344-5.

of text F of _The Legend_) and on the 'odour' and the singing of the birds. Henryson's passage is scarcely one of 'personal observation'; it is conventional, yet it is of utmost importance to the theme of the poem; we note the way in which the scene is described: it is of supreme beauty: 'Ioly', 'sueit' (used three times), 'fair', 'brycht', 'lycht', 'delicius', 'gratius', 'plenteus', 'myld' - it is indeed a 'poynt of paradys': it seems like heaven, and it actually takes the place of heaven in worldly minds. But, as we know by implication from this convention, and as the author explicitly states, these joys are transitory, false:

> ... Rycht as the ros with frost and winter weit
> faidis so dois the world and thame dissavis
> quhilk in thair lust confidens havis (264-6)

The Lion is deceived by the world - he enjoys its passing pleasures. So he:

> Bekand his breist and belly at the son
> Vndir a tre lay in the fair forrest (87-8)

We are reminded of the Fox who, utterly blind to reality, having deceived himself:

> Vndir a busk quhair that the sone cowth beit
> To beik his breist and bellye he thocht best.
> (_The Fox and the Wolf_, 143-4)

So the setting reminds us of the Lion's subjection to the world's values. Perhaps too much should not be made of the fact that the Mouse succeeds in his plea by methods (belittling himself, praising the greatness of his King) very similar to those used by the Fox to deceive Freir Wolf Waitskath, though worldly creatures are subject to flattery and there may be some irony intended. It is interesting to find too that many of the phrases applied to the Lion in _The Fox tryed before the Lyone_ - where he represents the

world - are applied to him here: in both they are lords of 'all brutall beist' (The Lyon and the Mous, 213; The Fox tryed before the Lyone, 60 and 62). The Prolog (43-56) has already informed us of the connotations of 'brutall beist' in the Fabillis, representing those who have subjected themselves to this world. In both we find mentioned their 'celsitud' (The Lyon and the Mous, 169; The Trial, 64 and 141), and 'his magnificence' (The Lyon and the Mous, 116, The Trial, 64). And in both the greatest possible contrast is made between powerful king and base subjects. The Lion's complaint also reminds of his subjection to Fortune; likewise the Net - but that I shall discuss further when dealing with The Swallow and Othir Birdis. The Lion has fallen because it has placed its trust in passing pleasures; Fortune has thus power over him: a lord (or any man):

> rolland in warldly lust and vane plesandis
> May be ourthrawin distroyit or put doun
> Throw fals fortoun quhilk of all varians
> Is haill maistres and leder of the dans
> Till lusty men and bindis thame so soir
> That they no perrell can provyd befoir (282-7)

The second widening is the interpretation of the game of the mice: they are: 'wantoun unwys without correctioun' (268). I think there is no question here of Henryson championing the poor, as Stearns suggests:[1] they too are blinded by this world's delights (120-6); the phrase 'myrry and glad' (96) is interesting: the poet used it of the Fox in The Fox and the Wolf; he was, 'mery and glad that cummyn was the nycht' (14), night in which he could do

1. Robert Henryson, op. cit., pp. 117 ff..

more evil. Stearns provides a parallel between the fable and a contemporary event: the capture of James III by Sir Alexander Boyd in 1466.[1] However, the commons did not loose the king on this occasion; and surely Stearns misunderstands the conventions within which Henryson was writing. He states:

> Henryson is emphatic on the subject of treason, exorting the lords to keep faith with their King, and it may be added that treason among the nobles was particularly frequent during the reign of James III. The poet's mysterious statement that he will not explain any more at the time, but the king and lords may well know what he means since examples have been seen hereabouts (ll. 1612-4) reinforces the impression that Henryson is alluding to contemporary events. And, finally, it should be noted that in this fable alone Henryson goes to extravagant lengths to keep himself in the background: not only is the vehicle for this criticism a dream vision from which the poet wakes at the conclusion of the _moralitas_, but also criticism itself is placed in the mouth of Æsop. In view of the despotic power of the feudal lords, Henryson's precautions may have been quite necessary[2]

Now the rebellion Henryson complains of is not that of the lords - he complains of their worldliness - but that of the commons. Besides, it is debatable whether disturbances were more rife under James III than at any other time. Stearns takes no account of the fact that such complaints were part of a long tradition: rebellion was similarly criticized in thirteenth and fourteenth century poems. The poet's 'mysterious statement' is a rhetorical convention for implying that there was a great deal more wrong.

---

1. _Robert Henryson_, _op. cit._, pp. 15-18.
2. _ibid._, pp. 17-18.

And Stearns has misunderstood here as elsewhere the rôle of the narrator in medieval poetry: for he, as far as I can see, is seldom meant to represent the author alone, but mankind in general (I shall discuss the narrator's rôle in this poem a little later). The dream convention is not a means of putting the author in the background but a means of extending the theme of the poem. Besides, I fail to see that Henryson need hide himself for fear - he criticizes openly in other poems. Now I am not denying that there is probably some criticism of contemporary Scotland; but I do deny that the action refers to any particular event - or at least to any particular event that Stearns has pointed out - and I think the poem has a far wider reference than to one particular fifteenth century society. For the poet is referring to all lands; the Lion does not merely represent James III (even if it does represent him) but all rulers who are worldly:

> ... a prince or empriour
> A potestat or yit a king with croun (254-5)

The one way for the country (Scotland? the world?) to be returned to order - the order it has lost since the Fall in fact, for this, it seems to me, is what this tradition of complaint often implies[1] - is for rulers to turn their backs on worldliness (that is why the 'kirkmen' are urged to pray constantly [296], for this is a religious matter: as we saw in <u>The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff</u> sin is the cause of all misrule) and lead their people righteously: we should parallel ll. 267 ff. with <u>Ane Prayer for the Pest</u> ll. 57-9:

---

1. Cf. the discussion of time and "reflections of contemporary life" in medieval religious allegory in D.W. Robertson, Jr., <u>A Preface to Chaucer</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 300-2.

> Bot wald the heiddismen that sowld keip the law
> Puneiss the peple for their transgressioun
> Thair wald na deid the peple than owrthraw

All are worldly. And Æsop complains of all - in conventional constructions ('Now ...'; 'rycht few or nane') certainly,[1] but providing thus another example of Henryson's creative use of conventional forms -

> Now in this warld me think rycht few or nane
> Till godis word that hes deuotioun
> The eir is deiff the hairt is hard as stone
> Now oppin Syn without correctioun
> The E inclynand to the erd ay doun
> Sua rowstit is the warld with canker blak ... (71-6)

We should compare with Ane Prayer for the Pest line 52: 'for oppin syn thair is set no remeid' (this whole fable deals with uncorrected sin - 'without correctioun') and Orpheus and Eurydice l. 453: 'Thair foir dounwart we cast our myndis E'. Æsop is complaining of the world as a whole and in this connection we must examine the rôle of narrator.

But before doing this I shall examine briefly the third addition the poet makes in his moralitas. He states:

> oft tyme is sene a Man of small degre
> hes quyt a commoun baith for gude or ill
> as lordis has done rigour or grace him till (278-80)

Not only do the seemingly unimportant repay good, but evil. In the Fable, Henryson showed us how the Lion 'slew baith tame and wyld' (192), making in the land 'a grit dirray' (193) until the people found the means of capturing him (194-5). The people, the poet interprets:

1. Cf. my work on The Want of Wyse Men, pp. 386-8 ; The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff, p. 106

> Waitit alway amendis for till get
> For hurte men wrytis in the marble stane (290-1)

Men repay evil - which is constantly remembered - with evil, good with good. There are other fables carrying similar ideas: that of the old Lion being attacked by those he had attacked[1] and that of the Mouse rescuing the Lion who had helped her but neglecting the Fox who had refused to do so.[2]

The largest single addition to the poem is, of course, the Prologue. We have already seen the ways in which two of its parts (the setting and Æsop's complaint) have helped to express the theme of the poem; we must now examine the remaining parts: the narrator and the portrayal of Æsop. At the beginning of the poem the narrator is shown as overcome by this world's delights; and he is as slothful as the Lion: he rises late (at least that is what I take 'in a mornyng betwix midday and nycht' [5] to mean) from '<u>sl</u>ewth and <u>sl</u>eip' and goes out into the forest where, under a tree, like the Lion, he falls asleep. He too seems worldly and subject to Fortune (just as the narrator in many of Henryson's poems appears in the same plight as the central character) and the dream setting emphasizes and extends this. Chaucer, following Macrobius,[3] writes of dreams:

> The wery huntere, slepynge in his bed,
> To wode ayeyn his mynde goth anon;
> The juge dremeth how his plees been sped;

---

1. Vincent of Beauvais, Hervieux, ii, 237; vulgate Romulus, i, 16, <u>Steinhöwels Æsop</u>, ed. Osterley, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 99; Jacques de Vitry CLXXXIV, pp. 77-8; <u>Dialogus Creaturarum</u>, ed. Graesse, <u>op. cit.</u>, dial. 110, p. 263; Bromyard, <u>Summa Praedicantium</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, H iv (Honor) 8.

2. <u>Speculum Sapiencie</u>, i, 18, ed. Graesse, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 24-5.

3. Cf. <u>Commentary on the Dream of Scipio</u>, tr. with introduction and notes W.H. Stahl (Records of Civilization, Sources and Studies, ed. Austin P. Evans, XLVIII, New York, 1952) pp. 88-9.

The cartere dremeth how his cartes gon;
The riche, of gold; the knyght fyght with his fon;
The syke met he drynketh of the tonne;
The lovere met he hath his lady wonne.

Can I not seyn if that the cause were,
For I hadde red of Affrican byforn
That made me to mette that he stod there;[1]

The dream is of subjects previously occupying the dreamers' minds (so the narrator in The Book of the Duchess dreams of what he has been reading; but what he has been reading concerns his own affairs: love; it has been implied that he cannot sleep for love). In our poem the narrator - who, I think we are to presume, has already told some of Æsop's fables - dreams of Æsop; but the dream concerns his life also - his slothfulness, his trust in the pleasures of this world. So the indictment of worldliness and sinfulness applies not only to those within the fable but to all men without: to us in fact.

The portrait of Æsop is both interesting in itself and interesting in connection with the theme of the poem. It recalls the description of Mercury, the god of rhetoric, in The Testament of Cresseid as Gregory Smith was the first to point out.[2] But the resemblances are perhaps only superficial. In the Testament Mercury comes 'with buik in hand' (239), 'with pen and ink to report al reddie' (242). Here, of Æsop,

A roll of paper in his hand he bair
A swannis pen stickand undir his eir
Ane ynkhorne with a pretty gilt pennair (36-8)

---

1. The Parliament of Fowls, ll. 99-108.
2. Poems, op. cit., 1, 23, note to ll. 1343-1345.

Both are dressed in academic robes: but Mercury has a scarlet gown with a red hood which he is wearing over his head, it seems: 'Lyke to ane Poeit of the auld fassoun' (245). Herbert Norris writes:

> A hood ... was used from this time [i.e. the reign of Edward II] onwards as a mark of distinction for university graduates. Originally they were always worn on the head, but later, after the fifteenth century, they were worn on shoulders and hanging down the back[1]

It is to the earlier style that Henryson seems to refer when he speaks of 'the auld fassoun' in his description of Mercury; he portrays Æsop, however, wearing his hood back '... In heckle wys vntill his girdill doun' (32). And it is the bonnet (conceivably the pileus) which is of 'the auld fassoun' (33). Æsop wore white gown, purple brown chimere and scarlet hood, differing thus from Mercury. C.A.H. Franklyn writes:

> '... from a comparatively early period several types of over gown, cloak or habit appear to have been worn viz. the _cappa clausa_ (closed cloak or cape); the _pallium_, a dignified cloak, probably sleeveless; the _chimaera_ (chimere), a long sleeveless gown with a side slit for each arm and cassock sleeve to come through; the _cappa manicata_, a cape with sleeves ...; and the _taberdum_ or tabard, which could be sleeved or sleeveless. The ceremonial dress of Doctor was the _cappa clausa_ or _pallium_ but by 1463, as the unique manuscript of New College shows (that of Thomas Chauncelor prepared 1461-5) it is clear that the favourite academical dress of Doctors ... was the chimere, doubtless a sleeveless tabard, with two side slits for the arms, the round bell-shaped academic cape and hood and short liripipe, and the tight round skull-cap type of pileus[2]

---

1. _Costume and Fashion_, ii, Senlac to Bosworth 1066-1485 (London, 1927), p. 213.
2. 'Academical Dress: A Brief Sketch from the twelfth to the twentieth centuries with especial reference to Doctors', _Oxford_, IX, ii (Winter, 1946-7), pp. 78-85.

So Æsop is portrayed, it seems, as a learned man, as a near contemporary, appealing to fifteenth-century society to reform: his fables are relevant to all times. The actual degree ascribed to Æsop is more difficult to determine. It could be that of Doctor of Divinity: at Oxford at any rate, Doctors of Divinity wore at this time, scarlet hoods and were thus distinguished from doctors of other faculties;[1] however, colours differed from university to university: doctors of all superior faculties at Paris wore red, for instance.[2] If the degree be that of Divinity emphasis is given to the essentially religious nature of the fable. The narrator in his dream envisages Æsop as having something to say directly to his own condition: as Laing has shown[3] the portrait of Æsop is not traditional: it is a creation of the dreamer's imagination, bearing on his own circumstances.

So Henryson has taken a fable of limited significance - illustrating how an unimportant man can repay a powerful man for his mercy - and, by original use of conventional material (the spring setting, the dream vision, the complaint against the abuses

---

1. C.A.H. Franklyn, 'Academical Dress', op. cit., pp. 82-3.

2. H. Randall, The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages, ed. F.M. Powicke and A.B. Emden, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1936), iii, 389, n. 3.

3. The Poems and Fables of Robert Henryson, op. cit., pp. 292-3. 'In the words of Caxton's versions of the Fables, and as represented in the woodcut, Æsop was "deformed and evil shapen, for he had a great head, large visage, long jaws, sharp eyes, a short neck, curb-backed, great belly, great legs and large feet - and yet that which was worse, he was dumb and could not speak."'

of the age, a dialogue, the complaint against Fortune) has made its restricted theme more universal: a plea for good government which can only be achieved when rulers and people see human life in its proper perspective and purpose and desire the general good in forgetting the passing pleasures and temptations of the world, pleasures and temptations which lead to disappointment and destruction both personal and national.

The six fables we have studied so far form a group in the Bannatyne Manuscript. And I think it is possible to see them as a study of one theme, that of the dangers of worldliness. In the first three fables this was examined at a personal level: the examples being gluttony, avarice in The Cock and the Jewell and the Twa Myis, the perhaps fatal struggle in man between sensuality (worldliness) and spiritual values in The Mous and the Paddock. The dangers both in this world and the next are portrayed and the remedy shown. In the second group of tales the danger of worldliness on a national scale are shown - when men forget that this world's pleasures are passing, put their trust in them, then they use oppressive and illegal means to obtain them. This leads to suffering amongst the poor and the breakdown of civil order. For all disruption is the result of sin, of misplaced values. But those whose greed leads to national disaster will find that their trust in this world's transitory pleasures has been vain: they will bear the consequences in this world (The Lyone and the Mous, 281-7) or the next (The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff, 115-9; The Wolf and the Lamb, 105, 148-54).

(viii) The Swallow and Othir Birdis

As in the previous fable discussed, so in The Swallow and Othir Birdis, Henryson has taken a fable of limited significance

> (Qui ne prant lo consoil dou saige
> Lo fol croit, si l'en vient domaige[1])

and by additions (the introduction; chanson d'aventure setting; expansion of the tale itself by 'realistic detail' and in the speeches; a much wider interpretation in the moralitas; the prayer to end), many of them conventional in form and thought, many used elsewhere by Henryson himself, made of his original a fable of much wider application: it portrays, as do most of Henryson's other poems, the folly of trusting this world's pleasures, of blindly neglecting eternal values.

We must see first what the poet has taken from his sources, then discuss his additions. The tale in most of the previous tellings is very similar: a swallow warns the other birds (usually twice - once when they see the seed being sown; again when it is ripening) of the danger to come. They laugh at her but are eventually caught in snares made from the flax. As with several of the other fables I do not think it will be possible to isolate the exact source; but there are two interesting points. Firstly, the nature of the reply to the Swallow's admonitions; in Henryson's poem the Lark speaks on behalf of all the birds (ll. 120; 141). In all previous tellings of the tale, except Isopet I, the reply

1. Isopet de Lyon, ll. 21-2; Bastin, ii, 118-9. Unfortunately a large portion of the beginning of this version is missing making discussion of sources of our poem somewhat tentative.

had been made by all the birds: so Gualterus:[1]

> Turba fugit sanos monitus, vanosque timores
> arguit
> ... Rursus Hirundo monet instare pericula; rident
> Rursus Aves (5-8)

But in Isopet I[2] we read:

> Dame Arondelle, dit d'Aloe
> Il n'est pas mout saiges qui loe
> A faire dommaige au predomme; (19-21)

Now Isopet I, if it can be a source, cannot be the only version Henryson knew: there is but one warning to the birds, for instance; other versions, like Henryson's, have more. Besides, the argument advanced by the Lark cannot be paralleled in Henryson:

> Aler en convendroit a Romme
> S'il en vouloit estrē absouls.
> Le villain, pour draps en son dos
> Faire, a semce la semance
> Non pas pour nous faire grevance (22-6)

But the second part of the moralité of the Isopet does remind us of Henryson's emphasis on foresight:

> Cils qui se vuelt bien gouvrener,
> Le tamps present doit discerner,
> Du preterit avoir memoire,
> Ne soit bobancier de grant gloire,
> Et doit le tamps a avenir
> Pourvēoir, conseil retenir (45-50)

The second point concerning detailed sources is the nature of the ending. In all versions of the fable preceding Henryson's the Swallow, finding that the birds will not listen to her, goes to live with the man. Thus Isopet I:

> "... Chiés le villain m'en yrai ores,
> Avecques lui demoureré
> Et de mon chant le deduiré" (32-4)

---

1. Bastin, ii, 26.
2. Bastin, ii, 242-4.

Even Bromyard's version,[1] which is closest to Henryson's in interpreting the snares as the nets of the Devil, contains this detail

> Exemplo hirundinum que secundum fabulas societatem auium dimiserunt, nidificando et cum hominibus et in domibus conuersando, quia illarum consilio noluerunt linum in flore destruere, antequam ex eo fierent laquei ad aues capiendum. Ita nolentes uti consilio ad euitationem laqueorum diaboli, derelinquant.

However Henryson, consistently, for one would hardly imagine him wishing to show the preacher living with the Devil, omits this incident and provides another: his Swallow gives a third warning, just before the birds fly to the corn laid in the traps thinking that the 'churll' had 'pietie' (234) on them. The scene is very like that in another version of the fable which is to be found in the Vulgate Romulus[2] and in some of the versions deriving from it.[3] I quote from the LBG Romulus:

> Congregacio magna Avium facta est in campo uno et concoderunt universe. Quo viso, Auceps recia sua aptavit, ut eas caperet. Visumque est Avibus, quod ille homo pro eis faceret eisque vias pararet. Dixerunt quoque inter se: Tam pium et misericordem hominem numquam plus vidimus. Ecce, quantum conpat[it]u[r] nostre miserie, vias nobis preparet, et, cum nos respicit, de pietate lacrimatur. Erat enim ille lupus (sic pro lippus) et lacrimosos habuit oculos; inde putabant eum habere pias lacrimas. Tunc una, multis periculis instructa, sepe enim laqueos et recia evaserat, tali voce

---

1. _Summa Praedicantium_, _op. cit._, C xi (Consilium), 20.
2. _Steinhöwels Aesop_, ed. Österley, _op. cit._, p. 179.
3. Vienna-Berlin Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 448; Florence Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 506; Romulus of Nilant, Hervieux, ii, 542; LBG Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 620.

> ceteras increpiut: Misere et minus provide, cantus hominis quos diligenter auscultatis, iam super nos recia ducent, et nisi cicius recedatis, iam in saccum trudemini.

We must now examine the additions made by the poet: the first is the long introduction (ll. 1-91) the purpose of which is to show man and the world in their true perspective as ignorant in comparison with God's foresight and complete knowledge, a perspective which man in his blindness, often neglects; the Fable will show us such neglect and its consequences. The poem begins with a statement of the nature of God; the means of emphasis are typically Henrysonian:

> The he prudence and wirking mervellus
> The profound wit of god omnipotent
> Is so perfyt and so ingenis
> Excelland fer all mannis argument (1-4)[1]

Almost from the beginning, the contrast is made between man and God: 'all' man's argument is 'fer' less than God's. This contrast is maintained - is widened and emphasised - throughout the next few stanzas. To God everything is present (this concept was examined at length by Boethius[2]). He can see (the sycht, 7) everything clearly: this concept of seeing (and its opposite, blindness - ignorance as opposed to knowledge and foresight) is the central thematic contrast of the poem. But we cannot see or understand Him for He is pure spirit, our souls are tainted by our bodies:

---

1. In Orpheus and Eurydice (l. 55) Henryson again uses the phrase 'profound wit' - it is one of the gifts Talia gives to man. I mention this reference as a minor example of what we shall find about many phrases and images in the poem, that they are part of Henryson's common stock of vocabulary and imagery.

2. De Consolatione Philosophiae, Bk. V, Prosa 6. In Chaucer's translation Robinson, pp. 381-4.

> We may nocht cleirlye undirstand nor see
> God as he is a thing celestiale
> Our mirk and deidlye cors materiale
> Blindis the spirituall operatioun
> Lyke as man war bundin in presoun (10-14)

The poet stresses his point by his rhyme (corporale [9] ...., celestiale ... materiale), by a typically repetitive statement 'undirstand nor see (ignorance and blindness); 'mirk' again refers us to the blindness of our natural state; 'deidlye' - we shall see this literally in the fable itself. These statements and images are of course conventional: Boethius:[1]

> and if that in sensible bodies, as I have seid, our corage nis nat ytaught or empriented by passioun to knowe thise thinges, but demeth and knoweth of his owne strengthe the passioun or suffrance subject to the body moche more than tho thinges that ben absolut and quit fro alle talents or affecciouns of bodyes (as God or his aungelis) ne folwen nat in discernynge thynges object fro withoute - forth, but thei accomplissen and speden the dede of hir thought.

The concept of the soul as prisoner was common: it is found elsewhere in Henryson, in The Bludy Serk. The concept is seemingly Platonic in origin; Biblical commentators often interpreted Biblical passages mentioning prisoners with the idea in mind, though often referring rather to sin as the captor (as in The Bludy Serk) than specifically to the flesh: the following extract from Cassiodorus interprets it thus and is also interesting in referring to the concept of man as blind which we shall discuss next. He comments on Psalm cxlv, 7-8 ('... Dominus solvit compeditos: Dominus illuminat caecos):

---

1. Book V, Prosa V; Robinson, p. 380.

> Solvit utique compeditos Dominus Christus sicut in Evangelio dictum est: '_Nonne oportebat hanc filiam Abrahae, quam alligaverat Satanus decem et octo annis solvi ab infirmitate sua_' (Luc xiii, 16)? Sed hoc non solum de vexatione immundi spiritus potest intellegi, sed etiam de omnibus vitiis, quibus mens nostra quasi quibusdam funibus illigatur ... Sequitur, _Dominus illuminat caecos_. Omnes vitiosi caeci sunt, quia peccatorum obscuritatibus implicantur[1]

St. Augustine, however, speaks of the body as a prison: commenting on Psalm cxli, 8 ('Educ de carcere - some texts read 'custodia' - animam meam ad confitendum nomini tuo') he writes: 'Aliqui autem dixerunt carcerem istum et speluncam corpus hoc esse'.[2] Man as naturally blind was also a common medieval image: Henryson's own use of it in _The Fox and the Wolf_ and, especially, in _Orpheus and Eurydice_ I shall discuss further a little later; Boethius makes much of the blindness, of the worldly;[3] Chaucer speaks of 'the blynde lust ...',[4] and, of course it is another Biblical image: Rupertus, writing on St. John ix, 1 (Et praeteriens Iesus vidit hominem caecum a nativitate), comments: 'earum utique scilicet gentium, caecitatem originalem, homo iste a nativitate caecus significat'.[5] The attitude towards the flesh is of course Platonic; but it is also Biblical[6] and was common in medieval theology: in

---

1. _Expositio in Psalterium_, Psalm cxlvi; _P.L._ lxx, col. 1032.
2. _Enarratio in Psalmorum clxi_: Sermo ad Populum, _P.L._ xxxvii, col. 1843.
3. Bk. III metri 8 and 10; Robinson, pp. 347-8 and 352-3.
4. _Troilus and Criseyde_ V, 1824.
5. _In Evangelium S. Joannis Commentariorum_, _P.L._ clxix, col. 587.
6. Cf. Galatians v, 16 ff. for instance.

sermons,[1] in mystical writing,[2] in the concept of the world, the flesh and the devil as mankind's greatest enemies.[3]

The third stanza continues the emphasis on the darkness of our state - our ignorance. The paraphrase of Aristotle:[4]

> That man saule is lyke ane bakkis ee
> quhilk lurkis still as lang as lycht of day is
> And in the gloming cumis furth to flee (16-18)

reminds us of the Fox's actions in The Fox and the Wolf: he

> ... durst no more with miching Intermell
> Als lang as leme and lycht was of the day
> But bydand nycht full still lurkand he lay (5-7)

Further similarities of vocabulary and idea between the second and third stanzas of our poem and other of Henryson's poems must be noted. Orpheus ('the pairte intelletyfe') is:

> ... separat fra sensualitie
> Euridices is our effectioun
> Be fantesy oft movit up and doun (430-2)

Orpheus 'blindit was with grit effectioun' (388); the mind governed with sensuality is 'Blindit with lust and may nocht vpwartis fle' (454). In The Fox and the Wolf, the poet speaks of those 'Vincust with carnall sensualitie' (170). In The Fox tryed before the Lyone we find:

---

1. W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., pp. 73, 267.
2. The Cloud of Unknowing, ch. 66; ed. Phyllis Hodgson, op. cit., pp. 118-9.
3. W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., pp. 111, 270.
4. Metaphysics II, 1, 3 (α 993). It reads, in Cardinal Bessarion's translation (Paris, 1515)

> quemadmodum enim vespertilionem oculi ad lumen diei se habent: ita et intellectus animae nostrae ad ea que manifestissima omnium sunt (p. 15a)

There is of course no religious connotation here; Henryson has expanded the image.

> This wolf I likkin unto sensualitee
> As quhen like brutall bestis we accord
> Our mind all to this warldeis vanitee
> Liking to tak and loue him as our lord (309-12)

These references help us to see the unity of Henryson's work. But such similarities should not blind us to the fact that, he uses this vocabulary and imagery differently according to context; here he speaks of man's soul, when coarsened by the flesh, as perpetually blind to the nature of God; in Orpheus and Eurydice and The Fox and the Wolf and, to some extent at least, later in our poem he implies that man is blind when serving the things of this world, not when he is acting in a truely Christian fashion and scorning the world. But of course this is not a contradiction: man is completely blind when following this world; but even when following the true way he is still blind, restricted by his own place in space and time, to the true nature of God. (Dante, while ascending Mount Purgatory and the Heavens, following the true way, is still ignorant of much concerning the truths of God.) Man must realize his ignorance compared with God: indeed we might say that he is blind when he does not recognize his blindness, as the birds will not recognize theirs.

The poet continues to stress the difference between God and man:

> Ffor god is in his power infinyte
> And mannis saule is febill and owir small
> Off undirstanding waik and unperfyse
> To comprehend him that contenis all (22-5)

We note again the use of two adjectives ('febill' and 'small'; 'waik' and 'unperfyse'), the stress given by the adverb 'owir', the use of rhyme to point to the contrast (small ... all). The

word 'small' reappears throughout the fable, reminding us of its context here.

In the first three and a half stanzas then man has been shown to be pitifully ignorant compared to God who is omniscient. This will be illustrated by the tale:[1] the Swallow, preaching the word of God (and thus able to expound God's knowledge) has foresight; the birds (mankind) are ignorant and doomed unless they 'trow ferslie and lat dirk ressounis be' (29). Again the advice is traditional. We compare with a mystical treatise:

> Bot sith alle resonable creatures, aungel and man, hath in hem, ilchone by hemself, o principal worching might, the which is clepid a knowable might, and another principal worching might, the whiche is clepid a louyng might; of the whiche two mightes, to the first, the which is a knowyng might, God, that is the maker of hem, is euermore incomprehensible[2]

> For haue a man neuer so moche goostely vndirstondyng in knowyng of alle maad goostly thinges yit may he neuer bi the werk of his undirstondyng com to the knowing of an unmaad goostly thing, the which is noght bot God[3]

Sermon material:

> And therfore we that beleve thus, lat vs not be to inquisitiff in oure wittis, for God forbedeth it and seyth to eueryche of vs thise wordes, "Com thou no nere hidurward. For tho thinges" seyth oure Lord, "that beth aboven kynde, seche not to knowe hem naturally, but rather," seyth God, "doth of thi shoes of thi feete" - that is to sey, the sotell coueryngus of thin affeccion for this erthe that thin affeccion stondeth on in this - "dowtynge it is an holy grounde: Solue calciamenta pedum tuorum quia locus in quo

1. Cf. Denton Fox, 'Henryson's Fables', op. cit., p. 349.
2. The Cloud of Unknowing, ch. 4; ed. Phyllis Hodgson, op. cit., pp. 18-19.
3. ibid., ch. 70, p. 125.

> stas terra sancta est" ... Do we than
> as Moyses enformeth us in ys obeynge
> vnto God. First, lat us keuer the
> face of oure undirstonding with the
> sudare of feyȝthe, that we wauere not
> in non article of oure feyȝth but
> fully beleve hem[1]

Poetry: Hoccleve's Regement of Princes:[2]

> ... Ffor mannes reson may not preue oure fey,
> That they wole it dispreuen or denye.
> To oure lorde god that sytte in hevenes hye,
> Schal they desgre for to ben egal?
> Nay, that was neuer, certes, ne be schall (332-6)

Similar parallels - for this and for all other passages for which parallels have been found - could be multiplied almost indefinitely, but no useful purpose would be served in doing so: we are not looking for definite sources for such a search would be fruitless; we are examining how Henryson draws his material from a common stock of image and thought, and how, by combining it freshly - for instance with this fable - he gives it new life and power.

Reason, then, cannot bring knowledge of God, but some knowledge of Him can be gained by examination of Creation. Again, we can perhaps see here an apparently Biblical source, Job xii, 7:

> Nimirum interroga jumenta, et docebunt te;
> et volatilia caeli, et indicabunt tibi.
> Loquere terrae, et respondebit tibi; et
> narrabunt pisces maris. Quis ignorat quod
> omnia haec manus Domini fecerit?

Wisdom xiii, 1 and 4-5:

> Vani autem sunt omnes homines in quibus
> non subest scientia Dei; et de his quae
> videntur bona, non potuerunt intelligere
> eum qui est, neque operibus attendentes
> agnoverunt quis esset artifex; ... Aut si

---

1. W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., p. 223.
2. ed. F.J. Furnivall, op. cit., p. 13.

> virtutem et opera eorum mirati sunt,
> intelligant ab illis quoniam qui haec fecit
> fortior est illis; a magnitudine enim
> speciei et creaturae cognoscibiliter poterit
> creator horum videri.

St. Paul echoes this in Romans i, 20:

> Invisibilia enim ipsius, a creatura mundi,
> per ea quae facta sunt, intellecta,
> conspiciuntur; sempiterna quoque eius
> virtus et diuinitas

Petrus Lombardus comments on St. Paul:

> Et attendite quod ait: Ipsa invisibilia
> intellecta per ea quae facta sunt, quia
> per coelum et terram et alias creaturas,
> quas immensas et perpetuas esse intellexerunt
> ipsum conditorem incomparabilem, immensum,
> aeternum mente conspexerunt[1]

We might also note Psalm xviii, 1: 'Caeli ennarunt gloriam Dei, et opera manuum eius annunciat firmamentum'; however the commentators, at least until the time of Petrus Lombardus, tended to take this allegorically.[2] But the idea expressed in the first three passages quoted was widespread in medieval commentary, particularly in the concept of the two revelations - Scripture and creation.[3] It influenced literature too: I quote at length the preface to Mayno de Mayneri's Dialogus Creaturarum which is of particular interest:

---

1. Collectanea in Omnes D. Pauli Apostoli Epistolas: In Epistolam ad Romanos, P.L. cxci, col. 1327.
2. Cassiodorus, Expositio in Psalterium, P.L. lxx, col. 138, interprets 'caeli' as the stars guiding the Magi and as the prophets; Bede, In Psalmorum Librum Exegesis, P.L. xciii, cols. 579-80, as the prophets; St. Augustine, Enarrationes I et II in Psalmum XVIII, P.L. xxxvi, cols. 154 and 157, as the evangelists and the saints; Petrus Lombardus, Commentarium in Psalmos, P.L. cxci, cols. 206-7, as the apostles.
3. Henri de Lubac expounds this at length in L'Exégèse Médiévale: Les Quatre Sens de l'Ecriture, i (Aubier, Collection "Théologie" XLI, Paris, 1959), pt. i, pp. 121 ff.. See also D.W. Robertson Jr., A Preface to Chaucer, op. cit., p. 296.

> Quoniam sicut testatur Ysidorus in libro de summo bono, libro primo capite quarto dicens, quod ex pulchritudine circum scriptae naturae ostendit nobis deus pulchritudinis suae partem aliquam. Qui circumscribi nequit et intellegi, ut ipsis eisdem vestigiis homo revertatur ad deum, quibus aversus est a Deo, et qui per amorem pulchritudinis creaturae a creatoris forma se abstulit, rursus per creaturae decorem ad creatoris sui pulchritudinem revertatur. Quae quidem creaturae etsi nobis, sicut liber iste fingit, dyalecticae voce formata non loquantur, inclinatione tamen et naturalis institutionis proprietate nos docere nostrosque mores corrigere, si bene pensamus, non desinunt. Quod illud gloriosum lumen doctorum sanctus Augustinus optime intellegebat cum dicebat: o domine deus, omnes creaturae tuae, quas fecisti, ad me clamant et clamare non desinunt, ut te solum deum creatorem meum super omnia diligam ... [1]

The description of the objects in the natural world shows us further examples of the poet's recreation of form and image. But first two points should be noted concerning the first part of the list: firstly, the order in which the objects are described is that of Creation: the flowers (Genesis 1, 11-12), the firmament (Genesis 1, 14 - the same word: firmamentum: is used in Henryson and in Genesis), the fish and the birds (Genesis 1, 20), man made in God's image with all things subject to him (Genesis 1, 26 ff.:

> ... Faciamus Hominem ad imaginem, et similitudinem nostram; et praesit piscibus maris, et volatilibus caeli, et bestiis universaeque terrae, omnique reptili, quod mouetur in terra. Et creavit Deus hominem ad imaginem suam ... [2])

---

1. ed. J.Th. Graesse, _op. cit._, p. 127.
2. W.O. Ross, _Middle English Sermons_, _op. cit._, p. 313.

Once again we find that Henryson's so-called 'personal observation' has been inspired by a literary source. The second point to note is the emphasis on the fact that they reveal God:

> Thus distribute the gift of his godheid (35)
> Till understand it is anuch I wis
> That god in all his warkis wittie is (41-2)
> Be thir we knaw that god is fair and gude (42)

These lines come - emphatically - at the end of three successive stanzas. Now normally in Henryson's poetry - in mediaeval poetry - the things of this world are seen as things distracting man from God, becoming false gods; here they are His revelation. And this is how they should be when viewed in their proper perspective: they are good unless misused. In this connection the use of images is most interesting:

> Exemple takis be thir lolye flouris
> Rycht sweit off smell and pleasand of colouris
> Sum grene sum blew sum purpure quhyte and ride (32-4)

The 'sum ... sum ... sum' rhetorical device (used several times in this fable; we have seen it also in The Lyon and the Mous) emphasizes both number and variety: the immensity of God's creation. We have seen before this image used to remind us of the fading pleasures of this world (the white and red flowers, for instance in The Lyon and the Mous); Henryson has not stereotyped his image, however; and the contrast in usage adds to the meaning: when the things of this world are used properly, they are good; when used wrongly they, because they have been trusted, been worshipped, lead to distress and destruction. The order, the fitness, and the immensity of creation are stressed: the stars are 'cleir' (36); every planet is in its 'propir sphere' (38); there are 'all kynd' of animals.

> The foulis fair so forcelye thay flee
> Scheddand the air with pennis grite and small (45-6)

In the description of the seasons which follows we have several of the same emphases: we note the order for instance:[1] summer - autumn - winter - spring. This is the order when the seasons, the world, are looked upon in their proper perspective; the order in the fable itself is however different - the more conventional spring - summer - autumn - winter, with the worst and most disastrous season last - the season in which the birds are killed. This latter is the fatal order when man puts his trust in the things of this world, not taking them for their true purpose. Time passes, natural things change (the pageant of the seasons) but when looked at in their proper perspective this change (the natural order) is not disastrous; when they are trusted the change proves disastrous (ending in winter and death) - an unnatural order. Henryson uses his typical means of stress: alliteration, intensifying adverbs (note here 'everye'):

> The somer with his Iolye mantill grene
> With flouris fair furrit on everye fent
> Quhilk fflora goddes of everye flouris quene
> Hes to that lord as for his seasoun lent
> And phebus with gowdin beames gent
> Hes purfillit and paintit plesandlie
> With heat and moisture stilland fra the skye (57-63)

I shall examine the function of the gods later; but we notice that in the description of June in The Lyon and the Mous (l. 2), and in the setting of the court in The Fox tryed before the Lyone (l. 71) Phoebus is mentioned: in this latter too, green and gold are specifically mentioned. In the description of autumn the emphasis

---

1. Cf. Denton Fox, 'Henryson's *Fables*', *op. cit.*, pp. 350 and 352.

is again on pleasure: the abundance of 'wynis wicht and liccour of pleasaincce' (68), again emphasis is given by alliteration ('Hir barnis benit hes with abundance', 65). But the winter destroys all pleasure:

> Syne winter wan quhen austeme Eolus
> God off the wind with blastis boriall
> The grene garmont of symmer glorious
> Hes all torent and revin in peices small
> The flouris fair faidit with frost moist fall
> And birdis blyth changeis thair notis sweit
> Intill murning neir slane with snaw and sleit (71-7)

Alliteration ('grene garmont, glorious' ... 'rent and revin'), emphatic adjectives and adverbs (all to rent; peices small) emphasize the picture of destruction; joy is turned into mourning; and the birds (a hint of the fable to follow) suffer. Again comparison with other poems by Henryson is interesting: The Testament of Cresseid portrays the effect of the north wind (stanza 3); in The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff the portrayal is very similar:

> quhen boreas with blastis bittirly
> with frawart frostis the flouris doun can faid (143-4)

There are two stanzas devoted to the terrors of winter, one only to each of the other seasons: we may perhaps interpret this as a warning against the transitoriness of earthly beauty which is made to help man, not to be worshipped by him:

> Baith hill and holt heilit with frostis hair
> And bewis bene are bethit bare of blis
> Be wickit windis of the wintare wair
> All wyild beistis than fra the bentis bair
> Drawis for dreid vnto thair dennis deip
> Couchand for cauld in cowis thame to keip (78-84)

The emphasis is on suffering ('bare of blis'; 'dreid'; 'wair'; 'couchand for cauld') and the immensity of that suffering ('baith ... and'; 'all'). These two stanzas have led to some misguided criticism.

Speirs speaks of them as 'the sudden assertion of the poet's locality ... the actuality of this points forward to the Scottish winter of the _Prologue_ to Book VII of Douglas' _Aeneid_'.[1] To Wittig the descriptions:

> of winter (ll. 1692 ff.) and spring (ll. 1706 ff.) are based on genuine observation of the Lowland scene. The bleak picture of winter, with the wild animals (ll. 1703 ff.) creeping together for warmth in sheltered places, is wonderfully suggestive;[2]

By contrast Pauline E. Knight writes:

> In other passages where Henryson uses regular alliteration, it is obvious that he uses it because of its association with a strong and onomatopoetic traditional vocabulary [lines 213-4, also winter description are then quoted]. This is also the source from which Gavin Douglas was later to draw the forcefulness of his winter description in the prologue to the seventh book of the Aeneid, and which is part of a tradition stretching back to the famous natural descriptions in such poems as _Sir Gawain and the Green Knight_. The strongly traditional character of such passages in Henryson is indicated by the sudden regularity and consistency of the alliteration, each line having at least three alliterating stressed syllables.[3]

One particular passage of _Sir Gawayn and þe Grene Knyȝt_ comes to mind:

> þe hasel and þe haȝþorne were harled al samen
> With roȝe raged mosse rayled aywhere,
> With mony bryddeȝ vnblyþe vpon bare twyges,
> þat pitosly þer piped for pyne of þe colde (744-8)[4]

There is little 'personal observation' in Henryson's winter descriptions; nor in his description of spring:

---

1. _The Scots Literary Tradition_, _op. cit._, p. 40.
2. _The Scottish Tradition in Literature_, _op. cit._, p. 37.
3. _The Alliterative Tradition in Mediaeval Scottish Poetry_, _op. cit._, pp. 156-9.
4. ed. J.R.R. Tolkein and E.V. Gordon (Oxford, 1925).

> Syne cumis wer quhen winter is away
> The secretare of somer with his seill
> Quhen columbie vp kikis throw the clay
> Quhilk fleit was before with frostis feill
> The maviss and the merle beginnis to meele
> The lark on loft with uthir birdis smale
> Than drawis furth fra darne on down and daile (85-91)

Everything has changed: 'syne' (rhetorically this follows the 'syne' introducing the previous two seasons); 'away'; 'before'; 'beginnis'; 'drawis furth'. The 'maviss' and the 'merle' were in the description of June in The Lyon and the Mous (l. 18). The mavis, the merle and the lark were the only three birds mentioned in the spring setting of The Fox tryed before the Lyone (l. 76)[1]

> Bot þenne þe weder of þe worlde wyth wynter hit þrepeȝ
> Colde clengeȝ adoun, cloudeȝ vplyften,
> Schyre schedeȝ þe rayn in schowreȝ ful warme,
> Falleȝ vpon fayre flat, flowrez þer schewen,
> Boþe groundeȝ and þe greueȝ grene ar her wedeȝ,
> Bryddeȝ busken to bylde, and brealych syngen
> For solace of þe softe somer þat sueȝ þerafter (504-10)

In our poem the description serves a double purpose: it is the culmination of the seasons when they are seen in true perspective. It is also, we should note, the typical spring introduction to a poem of worldly things and Fortune. Once again we see Henryson using his imagery creatively. The use of classical gods is also interesting in this connection: elsewhere in Henryson they are used to suggest a pagan materialistic culture: in the introduction to The Testament of Cresseid the narrator - blinded, like Cresseid, by this world - speaks of Phoebus and Venus; in The Fox and the Wolf, the Fox's blindness is shown by reference to Thetes, Phoebus and Hesperus; again, Phoebus is introduced in the spring setting of The Fox tryed before the Lyone.

---

1. The whole description is, of course, conventional as I have shown in my discussion of these poems.

The introduction to the fable, then an addition by the poet, immediately places the fable in a different class of poetry from its originals by showing it to be a religious poem. It shows (by use of conventional thought and image, images, however, that have often been given additional meaning by the way in which the poet has used them) the way in which man should see himself completely ignorant compared to God. When he realizes this the things of this world show themselves as revelation of God; if however, when he trusts in his own 'dark ressounis', they take the place of God, are worshipped in His stead, as it were, they become destructive (cf. ll. 296-301). The true way has been stated, the false will be shown in the fable itself when the ignorant birds claim to know better than God (His word is preached by the Swallow) and suffer the consequences.

The fable begins with another addition by the poet of a conventional form: the chanson d'aventure setting with the narrator wandering out into the spring fields, the conventional opening for a poem dealing with worldliness, with false values; more specifically, it is the conventional opening for the rhetorical debate form - and such Henryson makes the first dispute between the Swallow and the Lark. I have examined the common opening for this form in my discussion of The Ressoning Betuix Aige and Yowth[1] - several parallels will be found there; that of The Owl and the Nightingale[2] is perhaps of particular interest to us:

> Ich was in one sumere dale
> In one suþe diȝele hale
> Iherde ich holde grete tale
> An Hule and one Niȝtingale (1-4)

1. pp. 334-5.
2. ed. E.G. Stanley (London and Edinburgh, 1960).

The narrator's position in the poem is equivocal: he seems overwhelmed by spring (another example of the 'blind' narrator we so often find in Henryson) as was the narrator in The Lyon and the Mous; he has gone to see 'the flouris spring' (94) like the narrator in Chaucer's Prologue to the Legend of Good Women. But his joy in the natural world may be in proper perspective - he also insists on his joy at seeing the corn sown, a scene which, it seems to me, has allegorical meaning. The narrator looked:

> To se the guyll that was richt sessonable
> Sappie and to ressave all seidis hable (97-8)

The hard work of the labourers is stressed: 'the besynace' (100); they laboured 'ay at evin and morne' (105)

> Sum makand dike and sum the pleuch can wynd
> Sum sawand sedis fast fra place to place (101-2)[1]

The reason for the busyness (at least of those who sow the linen seed), is explained in the moralitas (ll. 278-80). The scene reminds us of that at the opening of Piers Plowman:

> A faire felde ful of folke fonde I there bytwene
> ... Some putten hem to þe plow pleyed ful selde
> In setting and in sowing swonken ful harde[2]

And just as there is an allegorical meaning in Piers Plowman, I am sure there is one in our poem: in the moralitas the author interprets the linen seed as sin sowed in the heart; the corn is the word of God (as in the Parable of the Sower: St. Matthew xiii) or perhaps good deeds. But the birds know so little of the corn that later they will mistake the chaff for it (225-6). The narrator, rejoicing

---

1. It is interesting to note that the only discussion by Stearns of The Swallow and Other Birds concerns 'realistic' detail: the sowing and the treatment of the flax (pp. 11 and 38-9).

2. B text Prologue, ll. 17 and 20-1; The Vision of William Concerning Piers the Plowman, ed. W.W. Skeat (Oxford, 1886 - 1961 reprint), pp. 2 and 4.

in the landscape stands under 'a hawthorne grene' (108; 160). The narrator in <u>The Lyon and the Mous</u> lay in the shadow of 'an awthorne grene' (23).

The tone of the Swallow's warning is sermon like ('It is grite wisdom ...' 118):

> O ye birdis on bowis here me by
> Ye sall well knaw and wyisely vndirstand
> Quhair danger is and perell appeirand
> It is grite wisdom to prowdye before
> It to deuoid or drede it hurt yow more (115-9)

She quotes a Latin proverb (133) and quotes the advice of learned men (for clerkis sayis ... 134).[1] This type of argument - giving support and emphasis to one's own argument - is a characteristic of the debate form.[2] It is also used by the Lark (lines 141-6[3]). It is noticeable however that she uses the more homely, rural proverb of natural reason, rather than the authority used by the Swallow - mankind's trust in its own reason instead of that of God perhaps. The Swallow argues for foresight (134-40); she insists too on the shortness of time for which the present happiness will last: the seed will grow 'in lytill tyme of dede' (124). But the other birds laugh at the preacher (120, 141, 147), despising 'hir hailsum document' (148).

In the Swallow's second warning many of the same characteristics can be seen:

> The Suallow suyft put furth a piteous pryme
> Said wois him can nocht be war in tyme

---

1. In l. 134 'nocht' is required before 'sufficient' to complete the sense; it is found in all other early versions.

2. For the use of proverbs in the debate form see E.G. Stanley ed., <u>The Owl and the Nightingale</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 33-4. On the use of proverbs and other forms of argument in this extract see also Denton Fox, 'Henryson's <u>Fables</u>', <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 351-2.

3. See the list of proverbs in Gregory Smith's glossary, <u>Poems</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, 1, 146-7.

> O blind birdis and full of negligence
> Unmyndfull of your prosperitie
> Cast up your sycht and tak guid aduertence ... (167-71)

The 'woe is' is, of course, a common Biblical construction[1] and preaching formula; we have already seen the significance of 'blind' (contrasted with 'sycht') - blinded by the things of this world to their sinful state in which they trust their own reason. On this occasion the birds do not only neglect the Swallow's warning but actually plan to use and enjoy the linen seed (to 'mak ws feyst and fill ws of the seid', 184): they not only neglect sin but positively enjoy it:

> Proceding ffurth be vse and consuetude
> Syn rypis and schame is sett on syde (288-9).

The Swallow threatens the spit of the churl (189): a reference of course to the fires of hell. The subtlety of the fowler (the Devil) is stressed: he is 'Rycht cawtelous and full of subteltye' (191). So 'God keip me fra him and the hellie rude' (196) is a prayer of eternal significance:

> Thir small birdis haifand bot litill thocht
> Off perrell that mycht fall be aventoure
> The counsale of the swallow sett at nocht (197-9)

We note 'small' birds and remember the clause 'And mannis saule is febill and owir small' (23). They have blindly trusted themselves and their sin - thus they are at the mercy of Fortune. (aventoure 198). All these details - contributing to the expression of the theme of the poem - are, of course, additions by Henryson.

A further addition - and one which has been noticed often - is the detailed description of the preparation and spinning of the

---

1. Cf., for example, Luke vi, 24-6.

flax. It performs the function I discussed in writing on The Twa Myis: contemporary detail makes the story and its theme more relevant to its readers/hearers. But this craft is not specifically Scottish, as Wittig would have us believe:[1] Gregory Smith pointed out the widespread existence of the terms used.[2] Again - another addition - Henryson stresses the horrors of winter; the same objects, the same destruction are emphasized; and the methods of emphasis are similar to those in the earlier description of winter (ll. 71-84):

> The winter cam the wickit wind can blaw
> The woddis grene war wallowit with the weit
> Bayth firth and ffell with frostis war maid ffaw
> Slonkis and slak maid sliddérie with the sleit
> The foulis fair ffor falt thaj ffell off feit
> Quhen bewis bair it was na bute to byde
> Bot hyit on in hous thame to hyde (211-7)

The Fowler sets the nets 'with diligence' (222) for 'thir small birdis' (225); again, as at lines 109, 182, 197, the emphasis is on their smallness for reasons we have already discussed. Once more, the birds lack of foresight is stressed (227-8).

The Swallow's third speech - another addition by Henryson as we have seen - has the same characteristics as its previous two speeches:

> Grit ffull is he that puttis in danger
> His lyfe his honour ffor a thing of nocht
> grite fule is he that will nocht glaidlie heir
> Counsale in tyme quhill it availl him nocht
> Grite ffule is he that na thing hes in thocht
> Bot thing present and eftir quhat may fall
> Nor of the end has na memoriall (239-45).

It is perhaps worth recalling here verses like Proverbs 1, 7:

---

1. The Scottish Tradition in Literature, op. cit., p. 41.
2. Poems, op. cit., 1, 27-8, note to ll. 1817-23.

'Timor Domini principium sapientiae. Sapientiam atque doctrinam stulti despiciunt'. And Proverbs xii, 15: 'Via stulti recta in oculi ejus: qui autem sapiens est, audit consilia'. And sermon material:

> Dreddes som men haue so gret delectacion in ther synne that nothur for the dred of the peynes of hell, nothur for drede of losse of heven, nothur for shame and unkendnes aneynst God thei cesse not to synne. And trewely this is a gret merveil ... Bot wold God of is good grace that such pepull wold take hede to a shorte word of Seynt Gregore, the wiche word, thogh it be shorte in language it owes euer to abyde in remembraunce. The worde is this 'Momentaneum est quod delectat, sed est eternum quod cruciat.' He seis the delite of synne is shorte and litell while abidynge, but the payn dew therfore abideth foreuer. Now trewly he that for the lust of the moment will les is soule foreuer, he is not wurthy to bere the name of a resonable creature, for he is turned into a beest by is bestyall condicioun.[1]

The poet stresses the sorrow, the different types of death and the number of those who suffer:

> Alare it was <u>rycht grite</u> hertis sair to see
> That <u>b</u>ludye <u>b</u>ouchure <u>b</u>eit thai <u>b</u>irdis doun
> And for to heir quhen thai wist weill to dee
> Thair cirfull sang and Lamentatioun
> <u>Sum</u> with ane staffe he straik to erd in soun.
> <u>Sum</u> offe the heid off <u>sum</u> he brak the craig
> <u>Sum</u> half on lywe he stappit in his bag (253-9)

The Swallow too is sorrowful ('Now ar thaj deid and wo is me thairfore,' 265), another addition by the poet.

Once again then we have seen Henryson adapting his source markedly - adding new forms (the chanson d'aventure, the debate, the preaching), expanding the tale ('realistic' detail), omitting

---

1. W.O. Ross, <u>Middle English Sermons</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 275.

an incident that does not suit his purpose (the Swallow does not live with the Fowler). In his hands the fable becomes something quite different - something, as we have so often noticed, of much wider application. And this is to be seen in the interpretation he has given to the moralitas. His work is taken from that of 'a clerk' (276), like the Swallow's. The 'reasoun' (272) here is presumably in accordance with God's; not the 'dirk ressounis' of mortal man.

Henryson interprets the Fowler as the devil, the net as being made of sins. We have seen something of this in Bromyard but it is not necessary to postulate that as a source for it was a common concept, though one not introduced before Henryson to the literary fable form, and bringing with it new implications to that form. A somewhat similar interpretation of the net is implied in _The Lyon and the Mous_ and _The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman_ (214-5). The Bible and Biblical commentary provide its ultimate source. I Timothy iii, 7: 'Oportet autem illum et testimonium habere bonum ab iis qui foris sunt, ut non in approbrium incidat et in laqueum diaboli'. I Timothy vi, 9: 'Nam qui volunt divites fieri incidunt in tentationem et in laqueum diaboli, et desideria multa inutilia et nocuia, quae mergunt homines in interitum et perditionem'. II Timothy ii, 26: 'et resipiscant a diaboli laqueis, a quo captivi tenentur ad ipsius voluntatem'. Hrabanus Maurus:

> Laqueus est suggestio, ut in Psalmis: "Ipse liberavit me de laqueo venatoris," id est, de suggestione daemonum tentantium. Per _laqueum_, deceptiones, ut in Psalmis "Pluet super peccatores laqueos," id est, effundet super impios deceptiones[1]

1. _Allegoriae in Sacram Scripturam_, _P.L._, cxii, col. 982.

Bede on Psalm xxx, 4: (Educes me de laqueo hoc; quem absconderunt mihi: quoniam tu es protector meus):

> Enutries me, inquam, et enutriendo educes me, id est, expedies me de laqueo illo, quem absconderunt, id est, absconse paraverunt mihi diabolus et ministri ejus. Laqueum vocat deceptionem omnem et insidias diaboli, in quo laqueo parat nobis et occultat duo implicamenta, errorem scilicet et terrorem[1]

Bede on Psalm xc, 3 (Quoniam ipse liberauit me de laqueo venantium, ea verbo aspero):

> ... de laqueo venantium, et ab insidiis et deceptionibus diaboli et suorum. Venantes vel venatores sunt diaboli; quia mille artes habent nocendi, quibus seducunt miseras animas illorum qui de se praesumunt, nec in Domino spem suam ponunt: qui cito est et illecebra capiuntur, et timore franguntur. Hi venatores, id est, diaboli laqueos et pedicas suas tendunt non in via, sed juxta viam, ut si quis a via exorbitaverit, illaquetur[2]

There are several interesting commentaries on Job xviii, 8-10 which reads:

> "Immisit enim in retes pedes suos, et in maculis eius ambulat." Tenebitur planta illius laqueo, et exardescet contra eum sitis. Abscondita est in terra pedica eius, et decipula illius super semitam.

St. Jerome:

> "Immisit enim in retes pedes suos, et in maculis eius ambulat." Retis nomine atque macularum ejus, inevitabile malum significatur: quod volens quisque exuere, ipso conamine impeditur, atque implicatur ut corruat.

---

1. In Psalmorum Librum Exegesis, P.L. xciii, col. 631.
2. Ibid., col. 971.

"Tenebitur planta illius laqueo, et exardescit contra eum sitis." Laqueus hic ipse diabolus non absurde sentitur, quia ad supplantandum calcaneum, peccatores observat, et ipse nihilominus sitis nomine appellatur; eo quod velut in aliquo bono aestuans sitiat hominem mortem.[1]

Walafridus Strabus:

Vers 8. "Immisit enim in rete" (Ibid.). Qui pedes in rete mittit, non cum voluerit ojicit. Sic qui in peccatis se dejicit, non mox cum voluerit, surgit "Et in maculis ejus ambulat." (Ibid.). Qui in maculis retis ambulat, gressus suos ambulando implicat: et cum se expedire ad ambulandum nititur, ne ambulet obligatur.

Vers 9. "Tenebitur planta illius" etc. Quia videlicet stringetur finis in peccato "Et exardescet contra eum". Quia quo se malis obligatum pensat, eo de suo reditu desperat; et ipsa desperatione acrius ad hujus mundi concupiscentias aestuat.[2]

Rupertus:

Vers 9: "Tenebitur planta illius laqueo", videlicet quia stringitur finis in peccato, juxta illud: "Peccatum cum consummatum fuerit, generat mortem" (Jac 1) cujus, subaudi peccati, consummatio per plantam, quae finis corporis est, exprimitur. Planta ergo laqueo tenetur, dum peccatum consummatum non facile evaditur, quia vitiosa consuetudine tenetur peccator dum effugere conatur. Unde et sequitur, "et exardescet", subaudi, per ipsam obligationem, "contra eum sitis", id est, diabolus, qui sitit ut bibat mortem peccatoris vel ita "exardescet contra eum sitis", id est, ex consuetudine peccati magis ac magis accenditur desiderium peccatoris, videlicet,

---

1. Commentarii in Librum Job, P.L. xxvi, col. 663.
2. Glossa Ordinaria, Liber Job, P.L. cxiii, col. 805.

> quia delectationem sitit, quamvis mortem
> metuat quae posita est secus introitum
> delectationis.[1]

The clause 'ex consuetudine peccati magis ac magis accenditur desiderium peccatoris' is of particular interest for our poem:

> And carnall lust growis full grene and gay
> Throw consuetude hantit fra day to day
> Proceding furth be vse and consuetude
> Syn rypis and schame is set on syde (286-9)

Henryson's thought in these lines and in the lines immediately surrounding (ll. 281-301) is not new,[2] and many of the phrases in which it is expressed are common in his work - as I shall show shortly. But well worthy of comment (and characteristic of his method of creation through fusion) is the way in which it is fitted perfectly to the imagery of growth in the tale. Rather similar use is made of the chaff - another element of the original fable. The birds are blinded to such an extent that they mistake it for corn, the valueless for the life-giving, that which seems (291) to be good for that which is, the transitory for the eternal. Commonplaces expressed in new context take on new life.

---

1. Super Job Commentarius, P.L. clxviii, col. 1040. The idea can be found in many places; I cite a very few: Helinandus Frigidi Montis, Sermo XXV, P.L. ccxii, cols. 689-90; Humbertus de Romanis, Expositio Regulae S.P. Augustini, ed. M. de la Bigne (Maxima Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum et Antiquorum Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum XXV, pp. 567-653, Lyon 1677), pp. 592 E, 604 D and De Dono Timoris, op. cit., pars septima: de timore, periculorum; La Tabula Exemplorum Secundum Ordinem Alphabeti, ed. Welter, op. cit., p. 25. Dan Michel's Ayenbite of Inwyt, ed. R. Morris (E.E.T.S.O.S. 23, 1866), p. 254; Bromyard, Summa Praedicantium, op. cit., O vii (Ornatus), 7; W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., p. 212; See also B.O. Koonce, 'Satan the Fowler', Mediaeval Studies, xxi (1959), 176-84, and D.W. Robertson Jr., A Preface to Chaucer, op. cit., pp. 94-5. Cf. also Denton Fox, 'Henryson's Fables', op. cit., p. 353 n. where he points out that Hrabanus Maurus states the swallow to be a figure for 'assiduitas orationis' (P.L. cxii, col. 954).
2. A Preface to Chaucer, op. cit., pp. 65 ff..

The low social position of the fowler is stressed:

> This carll and bond of gentrice spoliate
> Sawand this caff thir small birdis to slay (274-5)

His fall ('spoliate'[1]) is emphasized further in lines 276-7. Once again we see the emphasis on the smallness, the insignificance and weakness of the birds. We saw in the commentaries emphasis on the devil's thirst for man's damnation; I tried to bring this out in my analysis of the fable itself; and the moralitas interprets it directly:

> Quhilk day and nycht nevir werye to ga
> Sawand poysoun and monye wickit thocht (278-9)
> ... our wickit ennemye
> Quhilk slepis nocht bot evir is reddye (305-6)

Once again we must note the similarity between the vocabulary and the theme of the passage under discussion (especially lines 281-301) and that of other works by Henryson, particularly Orpheus and Eurydice. There man is advised:

> That he bakwart cast nocht his myndis E,
> gifand consent and delectatioun,
> Off fleschly lust and for the affectioun; (621-3)

In our poem the soul 'Giffis consent in delectatioun' (282), the chaff is vanity 'off fleschlye lust' (294), and 'Reasoun is blindit with affectioun' (388). In both poems we have the phrases: 'this warldis vane pleasaunce' (603 and 246) and 'vaine prosperitie' (549 and 626; 294).[2] The phrase 'grene and gay' can also be paralleled

---

1. Bannatyne reads poliate, which is meaningless. Other versions supply spoliate.

2. The reoccurrence of such phrases and words as 'this warldis vane pleasance', 'blinding of the spreit', and 'effectioun' in other portions of Henryson's work provides further evidence for the belief that ll. 570-615 of Orpheus and Eurydice, found only in the Bannatyne Manuscript, are Henryson's own.

in Henryson's work: Jupiter 'his gyis ful gay of grene' (The Testrment of Cresseid 178). To compare with lines 286-9, two lines from The Fox and the Wolf may be quoted:

> Sum bene also throw consuetude and ryte
> Vincust with carnall sensualitie (169-70)

The poem ends in a prayer: again we see the use of a conventional form:

Henryson then has taken a fable of limited application and by addition of conventional forms, images and phrases (which he has often used himself elsewhere) has made a fable of much wider application, a religious poem which reflects the attitude to life omnipresent in his poetry:

> Best is be war in maist prosperitie
> Ffor in this warld thair is no thing lestand
> Is na man waitt quhow lang his stait will stand
> His lyfe will lest nor how that he sall end
> eftir his deid nor quhidder he sall wend (318-22)

(ix) The Fox and the Cock

The story of *The Fox and the Cock* had been sketched several times in fable collections[1] before Henryson's telling. None of these versions can be proved to have influenced Henryson: the mere sketch of the story they give varies little and in the few places in which they do differ - the setting and the moralitas - there is no evident influence. We shall discuss the moralitas later; as for setting, the versions in the Munich Romulus and Steinhöwel's *Äsop* are set in a town ('villam quandam'), that in the LBG Romulus and that of Marie de France on a dungheap. Certainly Henryson's Fox 'unto the toun him drest' (30), but I assume the meaning of 'toun' to be 'dwelling house', 'farm-house' as was common in Northern usage,[2] or perhaps village (cf. 'drope' l. 15); and although a 'midding' is mentioned (the Cock's father sent the Fox 'mote fra middingis to the muris', 46), there is no evidence that the central episode of the fable is set there.

There were two extended versions - that in the *Roman de Renart* branche II[3] and Chaucer's *Nonnes Prestes Tale*. It will become

---

1. Munich Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 274-5; mixed Romulus of Berne, Hervieux, ii, 308; LBG Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 598-9; *Steinhöwels Äsop*, ed. Oesterley, *op. cit.*, p. 196 - and, in Caxton's translation, ed. Jacob, *op. cit.*, ii, 132-3; Marie de France, ed. Ewert and Johnston, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-2; Bromyard, *Summa Praedicantium*, *op. cit.*, I xiii (Iustitia) 28. There are also several versions related to the story but differing in essentials from it: B.M. Add. 27335, fol. 24b; *Speculum Sapiencie*, ed. Graesse, *op. cit.*, bk. ii, cap. 15, pp. 51-2; Caxton's *Reynard*, ed. Arber, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10.

2. Smith, *Poems*, *op. cit.*, i, 10, note to l. 418.

3. Roques, *Le Roman de Renart*, *op. cit.*, III a, ll. 4065-4458; vol. ii, pp. 26-38. There is a rather similar episode (Renard advises Chantecler to pray, then seizes him as he does so) in *Renard le Contrefait*, ed. Raynaud and Lemaître, *op. cit.*, ll. 31089-33260; vol. ii, pp. 90-112.

obvious that Henryson certainly knew and used Chaucer's tale and perhaps the Roman when compiling his own. In the Roman de Renart the farm is owned by:

> ... messires Coutenz des Noes,
> Uns vilains qui mout iert garniz,
> Manoit mout pres dou plaissaiz (4072-4)

Chaucer tells how the farmyard was owned by 'A povre wydwe, somdeel stape in age' (VII 2821) and Henryson has seemingly been influenced here for I know of no other version with this detail.[1] It is probably mere coincidence that Henryson's widow earns her food 'with spynnyng on hir rok' (16) and that Malkyn chases 'with a dystaf in hir hand' (3384). In both Chaucer and Henryson the Cock's time-telling abilities are mentioned (2853-8; 21). In all three versions the Cock 'stert bakward' (39) at the approach of the Fox (cf. Nonnes Prestes Tale 3276 ff.; Roman de Renart 4337 ff.) though in the Roman he does so because the Fox attempts to seize him, in the others through natural fear. We may compare the techniques of flattery ('schir', 'gentil', self-deprecation, use of religion, praise of family) and the irony in the Fox's speeches in both Chaucer and Henryson.

Chaucer:

> Gentil sire, allas! wher wol ye gon?
> Be ye affrayed of me that am youre freend?
> Now, certes, I were worse than a feend
> If I to yow wolde harm or vileynye (3284-7)
> My lord youre fader - God his soule blesse!
> And eek youre mooder, of hire gentillesse,
> Han in myn hous ybeen to my greet ese;
> And certes, sire, ful fayn wolde I yow plese (3295-8)

---

1. Harvey Wood however has noted (Poems and Fables, op. cit., p. 229) l. 1088 of The Kingis Quair which reads 'The wyly fox, the wedowis inemye'. He comments that this gives evidence that 'the central theme of this fable had passed into proverbial use'.

Henryson:

> Schir be my saull ye neid nocht be affraid
> Nor yit for me to drede nor flee abak (40-1)
> Sald I nocht serve yow ser I wer to blame
> As I hawe done to youre progenitouris
> Your fader oft fulfillit hes my wame
> And send me mete fra middingis to the muris (43-6)

The similarities are very obvious; the differences (particularly of emphasis) I shall discuss later. In the Roman de Renart, but not in Chaucer, the Cock sings twice as in Henryson:

> lors chanta Chanteclor un vers;
> un oil ot clous et l'autre overt,
> Car mout forment cremoit Renart;
> Sovent regarde cele part.
> "Ce, dit Renart, ne fait noant
> Chanteclins chantoit autrement
> A un lonc trait a jeux clingniez,
> l'on l'oist bien de. xx. plaissiez"
> Chanteclés quide que voir die;
> lors lait aler la melodie (4383-4392)

In Henryson's poem too the Cock is accused of not being like his father (66 ff.) though there the comment comes before any attempt at crowing and between the two efforts the Cock is praised (73 ff.). In both the Nonnes Preestes Tale and The Fox and the Cock there is direct, critical comment by the narrator at the moment of crisis (3322-30; 78-80) - the nature of Chaucer's comment I shall discuss later in dealing with Henryson's moralitas. The episode in which the hens discuss Chanteoler, in The Fox and the Cock, is distantly related, in its revelation of the pretensions of humans though their rhetoric, to the mock-epic effect of the Nonnes Preestes Tale though of course details are very different. Henryson's 'Partlot' (99) whose name is perhaps adapted from the name 'Pertelote', shows the courtliness of Chaucer's hen. In Henryson and Chaucer, but in no other version, the Fox asks the Cock to come down from the tree to

which it has fled; different pretexts are used in each poem however:

> "O Chauntecleer, allas!
> I have to yow" quod he, "ydoon trespas
> In as muche as I maked yow aferd ...
> ... But sire, I dide it in no wikke entente
> Com doun, and I shal telle yow what I mente (3419-24)
> gude chantecler
> Cum doun agane and I but mete or fee
> Sal be your man and servand for ane yeir (177-9)

Having seen what Henryson has taken from earlier versions of the story we are now in a position to examine his own version, to see how he has modified the tale to his own purpose. He spends two stanzas reminding his readers of the philosophical basis of his Fabillis: 'brutale bestis' are 'Irrationale, ... lakking discretioun' and have merely an 'inclinatioun' (D.O.S.T. 'A natural disposition towards some kind of action or behaviour') - perhaps several - according to their kind. These kinds are infinite in number and therefore the number of characteristics ('inclinatioun') is infinite: the poet stresses these latter points by his use of a combination of the inexpressibility and the humility topoi (8-11).[1] He will describe one example only ('A cas I fand quhilk fell this hinder yeir'[2] 13). We have been told earlier that man is often like the beasts: in him:

> throw the custome and the dayly ryte
> Syn in the mynd is sa fast radicat
> That he in brutall beist be transformat (Prolog 54-6)

---

1. Cf. E.R. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, op. cit., pp. 83; 159-62; 407-13.
2. Cf. the opening of The Bludy Serk:

> This hindir yeir I hard be told
> Thair was a worthy king.

The infinite number of beasts (men acting as animals) is also stressed in The Fox tryed before the Lyone (ll. 90-126). We may recall too the importance of well-governed reason in Orpheus and Eurydice and The Swallow and the Othir Birdis. So Henryson has begun by reminding us, in an addition, of the philosophical basis of his fable.[1] In doing so he has given us some idea of the nature of the protagonists of the story: the 'fox fenyeit craftye and cautelous' (6) and 'gentill chanteclere' (14) - presumably, as we realize later 'gentill' of birth or from present importance (cf. 'Off kyn or good quhilk is presumptuous', 196) rather than gentle in nature.[2]

In the next two stanzas Henryson sets the scene of his fable. We have already seen that this is to some extent modelled on Chaucer's Nonnes Preestes Tale but there are interesting changes. Henryson's widow is made to appear poorer and more dependent on her Cock and hens than Chaucer's - there is a very similar change from source in The Wolf and the Wedder. Chaucer's widow has two daughters to help her and other livestock apart from her hens:

> Thre large sowes hadde she, and namo,
> Three keen, and eek a sheep that highte Malle (2830-1)

---

1. The above is the meaning I take from two very difficult stanzas - difficult in syntax: the poet says that 'ilkane ... hes monye diuers inclinatioun' (3-4) yet the examples show but one (in the case of the Wolf none) such 'inclinatioun'; to what antecedent does 'thay' in l. 8 refer? And, to some extent at least, difficult in meaning: are these 'inclinatioun' praiseworthy or evil or neutral? The 'Thoucht ... yit' antithesis seems to impute some good qualities to the 'inclinatioun' and l. 7 is scarcely condemnatory yet those illustrated in the fable are surely evil. Perhaps we are to assume that such 'inclinatioun' are neutral in 'brutale beatis' but evil in men who should not be 'irrationale', who should not be 'lakking discretioun'.

2. Cf. the distinction drawn in Chaucer's Franklins Tale and Squires Tale.

Henryson:

> And no moir guidis as the fable sais
> Except of hennis scho had a Ioly flok (17-18)

So this 'joly cok' (19) who kept the hens was of the utmost importance to the widow: '<u>Rycht</u> curageous vnto this wedow ay' (20) especially as the hens were constantly threatened: a Fox: ('craftye and cawtelous', 24: his 'inclinatioun' is repeated - cf. l. 6)

> to this wedow did <u>grete</u> violence
> In piking of hir pultry <u>day and nycht</u>
> And <u>oe no more</u> reuengit on him scho mycht (26-8)

The Cock's importance provides reason for its pride and, perhaps, further implied condemnation of its pride which divided it from its proper task.

And so to the incident itself. The major change from Chaucer's poem (and also, though to a somewhat lesser extent, from the <u>Roman de Renart</u>) is the more emphatic position given to the Fox in this fable; for Henryson's poem is concerned with flattery and pride equally and with their interaction; in Chaucer the major emphasis is given to the Cock as a symbol of human vanity. Thus whereas in <u>The Nonnes Preestes Tale</u> the Fox's flattering speech takes up only about one-twentieth of the poem (ll. 3284-3321), in Henryson's poem it takes up nearly a quarter (ll. 36-77) of the fable - and half of the moralitas is concerned with condemning flattery. From the beginning there is emphasis on the Fox's craftiness: we have seen something of this already in the introductory stanzas; it is continued. The Fox was wily (29); he was named 'Lowrence' (Chaucer has 'Russell') - probably an extension of Lowrie (lurker, skulker, croucher);[1] he pondered:

---

1. Smith, <u>Poems</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, i, 10 note to l. 421.

The Iuperteis the wayis and the wile
Be quhat menis he mycht this cok begile (34-5)

Emphasis is brought by accumulation of synonyms and corroborating rhyme. So

Dissimuland thus in countenance and chere
On knees fell and smyland thus he said (36-7)

On several occasions Henryson portrays foxes falling on their knees before those they wish to flatter and deceive.[1] The Fox's techniques of flattery can also be paralleled in other of the Fabillis. There are five techniques noticeable. Firstly, the Fox proclaimed himself Chantecler's servant (ll. 38, 42-43, 55, 61-3). The last instance (ll. 61-3) is most interesting with its apparent utter subservience yet ambiguity; the 'yow' is emphasized by its unusual position:

Yow for to serve I wald crepe on my wame
In frost and snaw in wederis wan and wete
And lay my lyart lokkis undir your fete.

Secondly, Lowrence addressed the Cock as Schir (40, 43, 59). Thirdly, he hinted at self-deprecation ('Wald I nocht serve yow sor I wer to blame', 43). Fourthly, he praised directly: 'gentill Chantecler' (38);

yor fetheris fair and gent
Youre breste your beke your hekill and your came (57-8)

And fifthly he used pseudo-religious oaths (40, 59). As I mentioned earlier many of these techniques (all indeed except the first of those I analyzed) are to be found in The Nonnes Preestes Tale. There are differences however, differences which, it seems

---

1. Cf. The Fox and the Wolf l. 58; The Fox, the Wolf and the Cadger, st. 2.

to me, give greater emphasis to flattery: the first technique (not used by Chaucer) is perhaps the most important in the fable; Henryson adds the emphasis brought by alliteration and the repetition of the possessive pronoun 'yor'; and one technique (the use of 'schir') is more extensively used here. It is noticeable too that Lowrence did not straight away introduce his desire to hear the Cock sing: he ingratiated himself with the Cock first.

The Cock was obviously impressed: 'Knew thow my fader q the cok and leuch' (50). We may compare The Fox and the Wolf l. 71 where the Wolf reacted similarly to praise: 'A silly lowrance q the wolf and leuch'. Henryson comments directly echoing terms used before:

> This feynit fox fals and dissimulate
> Maid to the cok a cauillatioun (64-5)

We have already noticed that Henryson's portrayal of the Cock's tactics in enticing the Cock to sing is closer to that in the Roman de Renart than to that in the Nonnes Preestes Tale. But there are differences too. Henryson's Fox made the contrast between Chantecler and his father before the Cock had sung; then, after his first attempt, encouraged him ('ye ar your faderis sone and air vp rycht', 74) suggesting means of improvement. So the Cock was 'inflate with the wind of fals vane gloir' (78) - the moralitas criticizes 'A nyce proud man void and vane glorious' (195).

Henryson introduces the widow's sorrow portraying it by the terms of literary sorrow used commonly to describe great misfortunes:

> As scho war wod with monye yell and cry
> Ryvand hir hair upoun hir breist can bete
> Syne paill of hew half in ane extasye
> Ffeldoun for cair in swoning and in swete (92-5)

We may compare the sorrows of Emelye in The Knight's Tale (IA 2817 ff.) and the parody of the convention in The Nonnes Preestes Tale (ll. 3338 ff.) where Chaucer describes the hen's reaction to the loss of Chantecler. Henryson replaces this parody by a dispute among Chantecler's three wives, 'Partlot', 'Coppok' and 'Sprowtok', their names seemingly taken from literary tradition.[1] Bird disputes

---

1. As Smith pointed out (Poems, op. cit., i, 10 note to l. 475) the names occur in The Tale of Colkelbie Sow, a poem in the Bannatyne Manuscript (I quote from the S.T.S. edition, op. cit., vol. iv; the relevant passages are to be found on p. 307). The author lists the cocks and hens born from the eggs Colkelbie purchases as a gift for his godson:

   > The first wes the samyn chantecleir to luke
   > off quhome chaucer treitis in to his buke
   > and his lady partlot Sister and wyfe ...
   > The tuthir bruthir was clipit cok cademan
   > he tuke to wyfe his fair trew sistir toppok
   > Kok crawdoun was the thrid and his wyfe coppok (Pt. III, 99-105)

   Bannatyne reads 'Coppok' other early versions 'Toppok'. As Wood (Poems and Fables, op. cit., p. 230 note to l. 483) points out 'Coppok' has the 'support of alliteration' (in l. 134) and is closer to the Reynardian form Coppe. However, as we see above, both are mentioned in The Tale of Colkelbie Sow - either reading is possible in Henryson.

   > ... Cok coby the tent and sprutok his speciall (117)

   The Tale of Colkelbie Sow has been ascribed to various dates in the mid and latter parts of the fifteenth century - for a mid fifteenth century dating see D. Laing, Select Remains of the Ancient Popular and Romance Poetry of Scotland, 2nd edn. rev. J. Small (Edinburgh and London, 1885), pp. 254-5; Professor Denton Fox tells me that Mr. J. Aitken of the Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue dates the poem c. 1490. I find it impossible to know if it influenced Henryson's poem or vice versa. There is a possibility too that both were drawing independently on a tradition of which we know little - the fact that the three names used by Henryson occur unevenly dispersed in The Tale of Colkelbie Sow may support such a contention; besides, Partlot has an obvious affinity with Chaucer's Pertelote; and, as Diebler first pointed out (Henrisone's Fabeldichtungen, op. cit., pp. 44-5), the name Sprotinus is to be found in a precursor to the Roman de Renard, the twelfth century Isengrimus - Diebler refers to the abridgement published by Grimm in his Reinhart Fuchs, op. cit., ll. 539-40; in Mone's complete edition, op. cit., the relevant lines are Bk. III, ll. 17-18.

now, knowing she had support, she expressed her true thoughts and desires. Thus far it seems to me, the poet has <u>implied</u> that the Cock was blind both to his own capabilities and to the true attitudes of others towards him. Coppok's speech is used to condemn directly: he was 'sa loweous and so licherous' (136):

> Prydefull he was and Ioyit of his syn
> And complit nowther of goddis falvour nor feid
> Bot traistit ay to rax and sa furth rin (141-3)

Pretentious, proud, self-confident yet easily deceived, the Cock is a figure (191) of:

> A nyce proud man void and vaneglorious
> Off kyn or gude quhilk is presumpteous
>
> Ffy pompous pryd thow art rycht poysonable
> Quha fauoris the of force man haue a fall
> Thy strenth is nocht thy stule standis vnstable (195-9)

The considerable addition to the fable has added to our knowledge of the type of person likely to succumb to flattery.

In lists and in the chase Henryson characteristically uses alliteration (we may compare his use in the chase in <u>The Wolf and the Wedder</u>):

Bannatyne may be correct in reading 'Sprowtok' - then the 'feynyeit fayth' would presumably refer to Sprowtok's pretended allegiance to Chantecler, providing further evidence of Chantecler's blind pride, for he, it appears, had been duped by her pretence. Such a reading is, however, a little strained. The Bassandyne reading 'Pertok' (Partlot) seems more natural (and provides an additional irony) - she had 'feynyeit fayth' to the other hens in pretending to mourn Chantecler. We have too an example of Bannatyne misreading names in l. 87 though there the mistake is easily explicable by dittography. I have provisionally accepted the Bassandyne reading. But l. 128 of Bassandyne does not make any real sense: Partlot's (or Sprowtok's) tone is critical; and from the tenor of her speech it would scarcely appear likely that she would criticiz e one who 'In luste but lufe ... sett all his delyte'. The line should presumably refer to Partlot herself - as it does in Bannatyne - and her speech begin at l. 129. My suggested reading for these two lines is this

> Than Partlot spak that feynyeit fayth befoir
> in luste but luif that sett all hir delyte.

This agrees with Professor Denton Fox's suggested emendation in his forthcoming edition of Henryson's poems.

How birkye burrye bell balaye broun
Rypenchaw ryn weill courteous cutt and clyid
Togidder all but gruncheing furth ye glyid (150-2)
With that but bade[1] breddit our the bent
As fyre of flint that our the feildis flaw
Wichtlye I wis throw woddis and watteris went
And seissit nocht ser lowrence till thay saw (155-8)

The Cock too showed subtlety: he pretended to care about the Fox's condition (162) and suggested that the Fox should tell his pursuers that the two animals were friends: in other versions the suggestion is merely that the Fox abuse its pursuers. The narrator comments:

This Fox thocht he was fals and friuelous
And hes fraudis his quarrellis to defend
Discauit was throw mynis marvellous
Ffor falsheid failyeis at the latter end (169-72)

Henryson uses this proverb elsewhere: in <u>The Fox, the Wolf and the Cadger</u> the Wolf advised the Fox, who was attempting to escape him: 'Falset will failye ay at the latter end' (47). Our Fox, characteristically, fell on his knees offering again to serve the Cock (177). But his flattery did not succeed; the fable ends with the traditional mutual recriminations (183-7).[2]

The moralitates of earlier tellings of the fable have generally a rather limited application. The mixed Romulus of Berne reads merely: 'Docet non multum loqui'. The Munich Romulus, and the version in Steinhöwels <u>Fabulae Extravagantes</u>, reads: 'Sic multi homines, cum multa locuntur, dampnum non effugiunt'. Caxton: 'And therfor ouer moche talkyng letteth and to moche crowynge smarteth therfore kepe thy selfe fro ouer many words to the ende

1. A syllable - and a subject for 'breddit' - is obviously missing here. Bassandyne supplies 'thay'.

2. The Bassandyne reading of l. 186 (Quair throw to put my pray in to pleid) seems rhetorically sounder than Bannatyne's - paralleling the 'Quairthrow' of the Cock's speech (l. 184).

that thow repentest the not'. The LBO Romulus: 'Non est exigua res suo tempore loqui, et suo tempore reticere; mors enim et vita in manibus lingue sunt'. Marie de France:

> Ceo funt li fol: tut li plusur
> Parolent quant deivent taiser
> Taisent quant il deivent parler (36-8)

Bromyard: 'Sic mali mutuo se decipiunt, multaque loqui, et fieri suadent et rogant quae ad animarum pertinent deceptionem'. A more interesting comparison can be made with a very distantly related version of the story to be found in the _Speculum Sapiencie_: 'Contra tumentes ex scientia: De gallo et uulpe'. The Cock, proud in its knowledge of the heavens, flies on to a branch and there sings exultantly. A Fox comes to ask why and, having heard, flatters:

> quippe gaudeo, frater mi, eo quod liberalissima bonitas, quae conditis omnibus participium perfectionum suarum gradiatione pulchrifica, exundantissima fontana diffundit, etiam nobis brutis in - aestimabilis donum sapientiae dedit. O galle! tu es gloria nostra, tu es bestiarum laetitia, te nunc, quaeso, porrige, si dignaris, ut osculer mirum intelligentiae caput tuum, rogo, comple gaudium meum! At ille quidem adulationis dolosae molli lingua mollitus statim vitale caput improvidus ori famelico obtulit, quod avida stringens deorsum miserum rapuit et subjunxit: galle, galle ubi est sapientia tua? concepisti sapientiam, perdidisti prudentiam et dedisti pro nihilo vitam tuam. Cui gallus: quid gloriaris in malitia? At illa respondit: non est malitia, humiliare superbum, sed ars vera, namque novi, quod, cum sapientia inflat, mox tumefactioni ruptura succedit.

There is of course no possibility of influence. Chaucer's _Nonnes Preestes Tale_ again provides the closest parallel: it is a condemnation of human pretentiousness which, though more subtly

expressed and perhaps less extended in application (as I shall suggest later), is similar to Henryson's denunciation of pride. It contains too, warning against flattery: Chantecler beat his wings:

> ... So was he ravysshed with his flaterie.
> Allas! ye lordes, many a fals flatour
> Is in your courtes, and many a losengeour
> That plesen yow wel moore, by my feith,
> Than he that soothfastnesse unto yow seith ...
> ... Beth war, ye lordes, of hir trecherye (3324-30)

But this condemnation is of less importance in The Nonnes Preestes Tale than the mocking of the Cook's pretentiousness. Henryson has altered this balance in his poem.

The moralitas can be specifically related to the themes of Henryson's other works. For those who trust in themselves, or in the things of this world (who are 'presumptuous ... off kyn or gude'), those who 'climb vp most he' (Twa Myis, 210), who 'in pryde ... clym sa hie' (Wolf and the Wedder, 145), will surely fall. Henryson emphasizes his point by the implications of his metaphor (flattery is fatally poisonous 197, 213 - a fatal disease, 209) and by heavy alliteration:

> Ffy pompous pryd thow art rycht poysonable
> quha fauoris the of force man haue a fall
> Thy strenth is nocht thy stule standis vnstable
> Tak witnes of the feindis infernall
> Quhilk huntit war doun fro the hevinly hall[1]
> To hellis hole and to that hidous hous
> Becaus of pryd thaj war presumptuous (197-203)

Notable examples of the effect of alliteration are to be seen in ll. 198 and 200 where the 'f' stresses the inavoidability of the fall ('of force ... fall') and carries over to link with an example

---

1. Bannatyne reads 'all' which is obviously wrong.

of such a fall; and in ll. 201-2 where the 'hevinly hall' is contrasted with 'hellis hole' and 'hidous hous'. Line 199 reminds of the proverb[1] used in The Wolf and the Wedder: 'Bewar in welth, for Hall benkis ar rycht slidder' (154). The thought is of course Biblical: for instance Proverbs xvi, 18: 'Contritionem praecedit superbia, et ante ruinam exaltatur spiritus'. Sermons:

> This is the firste of the vij dedely synnes, for ye shall vndirstond that pride is a wicked loue of mans hyghnesse for he holdeth hym not a peyd of the hyghnesse that God hath ordeynd hym in, but desireth to be more hyghere than good mesure hasketh. And so the synne of pride is like to the synne of Lucifere, that is the worste dewell of hell.[2]
>
> The iij maner of men that breke this Commaundement [i.e. thou shalte not haue non false goddes ...] and that folowith the feende be tho that settis here hertes most on wordely worshippe, veynglorie, an highnes on themselfe. This maner of worshippe covetid the feende to haue had of Crist when that he wold haue hade hym to haue fall downe and to haue worshipped hym. And in this synne of pride synned Lucifere, the highe angell in heven, when that he thowthe in is herte, Ysaye xiiij, "In celum ascendam super astra Dei; exaltabo solium meum et ero similis Altissimo - I shall goy vp to heven," said Lucifere, "and I shall enhaunce my-selfe a-boven the sterres of God and be like to hym-selfe so hie." Therefore he fell downe in-to the deppest pitt of hell. And ther-fore seis Seynt Gregore in libello Conflictu Viciorum et Virtutum, "Si ille Lucifere per superbiam de celo descendit, quomodo tu superbiendo in celum ascendes?" ... Trust well ther-to, itt will not be. For as sicur as God is in heven, the hiere that thou maketh thi-selfe thorowe pride, but thou amend the here be-tyme in this liffe, thou shalte sone aftur be depe in hell.[3]

---

1. Fergusson MS. 508; ed. Beveridge, op. cit., p. 41.
2. W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., pp. 49-50.
3. ibid., pp. 107-8; cf. also G.R. Owst, Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England, op. cit., pp. 43, 308-15, 365-70, etc..

Henryson's use of the comparison with the Devil perhaps brings to the poem the suggestion that pride is dangerous not only for its present consequences but for the afterlife,[1] an extension from Chaucer's poem.

---

1. This suggestion is perhaps supported by biblical allegory in which the Fox is the devil or evil spirits tempting man to neglect his soul. Hrabanus Maurus, De Universo, Lib. viii, cap. 1:

   > Vulpes enim mystice diabolum dolosum, vel hæreticum callidum, sive peccatorem hominem significat. Unde de Herode Dominus ait in Evangelio: Ite, dicite vulpi illi (Luc. xiii). Et alibi: Vulpes, inquit, foveas habeant: et volucres coeli nidos (Matth. viii); in vulpibus haereticos ... Item vulpes diabolus vel daemones, ut in psalmo: Tradentur in manus gladii, partes vulpium erunt (Psal. lxii). Et in Jeremia: Propter montem Sion quia disperiit (Tren. v.) Vulpes ambulaverunt in eo. (P.L. cxi, col. 225)

   Allegoriae in Sacram Scripturam: Vulpes

   > ... Per vulpes, persecutores, ut in libro Judicum. "Samson vulpes cum facibus ardentibus fecit discurrere per sata Philistinorum," quod Christus nonnunquam fideles permittit persecutores bona destruere impiorum. Per vulpes spiritus maligni, ut in Psalmis: "Tradentur in manus gladii, partes vulpium erunt," id est, damnabuntur in judicio; "et ibunt in ignem æternum, qui præparatus est diabolo et angelis ejus." (P.L. cxii, col. 1084)

   Other writers interpret similarly: S. Hilarius (Tractatus in LXII Psalmum, P.L. ix, col. 406); S. Eucherius: vulpes hæreticus vel diabolus vel peccator callidus (Liber formularum spiritalis intelligentiae, P.L. l., col. 752); Rupertus: Sicut vulpes occultecubant in foveis ... ita maligni spiritus propter malitiam vulpeculae (Super Matthaeum, Lib. VII, P.L. clxviii, col. 1468); also St. Bernard in his Sermones in Cantica LXIII-LXVI (P.L. clxxxiii, cols. 1080-94).

   However, such evidence must be treated very cautiously. The absurdity of applying biblical allegory too rigidly is illustrated by the fact that the traditional interpretation of 'gallus' is 'vir sanctus; ordo doctorum; prædicator sanctus (Hrabanus Maurus, Allegoriae in Sacram Scripturam, P.L. cxii, col. 939; Garner of St. Victore, Gregorianum, P.L. cxciii, cols. 73-5). See however the application of such an interpretation to The Nonnes Preestes Tale by Mortimer J. Donovan, 'The Moralite of the Nun's Priest's Sermon', J.E.G.P. lii (1953), 498-508; and the attack on this by E. Talbot Donaldson, 'Patristic Exegesis: The Opposition', Critical Approaches to Mediæval Literature - Selected Papers from the English Institute, 1958-9 - ed. Dorothy Bethurum (New York and London, 1960), pp. 1-26.

The emphasis on the dangers of being deceived by flattery can likewise be paralleled in Henryson's other work. Lines 209-14 especially provide interesting comparisons. The Mous and the Paddock:

> It pass far alkynd of pestilens
> a wickit mynd with wirdis fair and sle (136-7)
> ... Grit folly is thairfoir to gife credence
> our sone to all that speikis fair to the
> a silkin tong a hairt of crewelte
> smytis mair soir than ony schot of arrow (144-7)

Aganis Haisty Credence of Titlaris:

> It is the grund of stryf and all distance,
> moir perrellus than ony pestillence,
> Ane lord in flatterris to haif plesance,
> Or to gif lyaris hestely credence (29-32)
> O wickit tung, sawand dissentioun
> of fals taillis to tell that will not tyre
> Moir perrellus than ony fell pusoun,
> The pane of hell thow sall haif to thi hyre (41-4)

I have shown in my analysis of this poem some of the literary precedents for such advice.[1]

It is perhaps legitimate to ask why this change of emphasis took place. Stearns' book is based on the assumption that specific contemporary events influenced Henryson's poetry; is there any such influence here?[2] One group of events is perhaps of importance.

---

1. Cf. also - examples are numerous, my selection is a random one - Malachy, Libellus septem peccatorum mortalium venena, op. cit., fol. 17; Dan Michel's Ayenbite of Inwyt, ed. R. Morris, op. cit., pp. 60 ff. and 256-7; Dialogus Creaturarum, ed. Graesse, op. cit., dial. 49, pp. 192-3, dial. 61, pp. 204-5, dial. 80, pp. 224-6, dial. 118, pp. 272-4; Jacob's Well, ed. A. Brandeis (E.E.T.S.O.S. 115, 1900) pp. 149-50; Chaucer's Parson's Tale, Robinson, p. 247; Hoccleve's Regement of Princes, ed. F.J. Furnivall, op. cit., stanzas 274 ff., 420 ff., 442 ff., 703 ff., 751 ff..

2. The following discussion will take into account the moralitates of The Twa Myis, The Wolf and the Wedder, and The Mous and the Paddock as well as the poem under discussion. These raise similar points and it is as well to confine the discussion of these points to the one place.

The Historie and Cronicles of Scotland of Robert Lindesay of Pitscottie[1] are particularly interesting in their account of the career of the architect Cochran:

> ... ane new courteour start wpe callit Couchren quho had at that tyme great preheminence and autorietie in court, and credence witht the King and reullit all matteris and actiounis as he pleissit to thame that wald giue him buddis or geir for his labouris.[2]
>
> Quhill at the last, thair grew sic mortall feid withtin the kingis breist towartis his bretherine that he could on nawayis be contentit to lat his brether leif in peace and rest to haue godlie charatie witht them as he aught to haue witht his awin bretherin, bot saikles in his awin heart condemnit them baitht to deith and that be persautioun of this fallis flatterar Couchrin and the intysement of the Homes and Hepburnes quhilk was the fortifficris of Couchrane in that cause be thair persuatioun gewin to him great giftis of gould and silluer.[3]

It is worth noting that this action - allegedly caused by Cochran - helped to foster that distrust of the king which was later to lead to his arrest.

> In this tyme this Couchrane grew sa familiear witht his maister the kingis grace that nathing was done in court butt by him and all men that wald haue had thair bussienes drest witht the kingis grace come to Couchrin and maid him forspeiker for them and gaif him large money to dress thair bussienes thairthrow and he became so riche and potent, of sic substance that no man might stryue witht him. Bot he knawand the kingis natur that he was covatous wpoun money and lowed him better that gaif him nor they that tuik fre him for the quhilk cause the said Couchren gaif the king lairge sowmes of money quhair throw he obtenit the Earledom of Mar

---

1. ed. Æ.J.G. MacKay, 3 vols. (S.T.S. 1899, 1899, 1911).
2. ibid., i, 165.
3. ibid., i, 157.

> frome tho king and was possest in the samin and ever clame heigher and heigher to the court till that he had no peir nor compariesone of no lord of Scottland spirituall nor temporall into the kingis favour.[1]
>
> ... Couchrane the earle of Mar came frome the king to the consall ... himself was clad in ane ryding pie of blak wellvet, ane great chenzie of gould about his hallis to the awaillour of v^c crounes, ane fair blawing horne, witht ane baitharage of gould and silk sett with pretious stanis. His horne was typit witht fyne gould at everie end, and ane pretious stane callit ane burriall hingand in the midst. This Couchrane had his humelt borne besyd him ower gilt with gould and so was all the rest of his harnes and all his paillzeouns was of fyne cammes of silk and the cordis thairof of fyne twynit silk and the chains wpoun his paillzeounis was doubill owergilt with gould. This Couchrane was so proud in his consait that he contit no lord to be marrow to him ...[2]
>
> ... and for dispyt they tuik ane hardin tedder and hangit him ower the brige of Lawder abone the laif of his complecesj and maid ane proclie-matioun and cryit done all his cunsie, quhilk fullfillit his awin prophesie forsaid.
>
> This correctioun and punishment foresaid was done at lather [Lauder] the year of God ane thousand four hundredth four score and ane years that he might be ane exampill to all simpill persouns nocht to climb so hie and proceid in so great thingis in ane realm as he did. For at his beginning he was bot ane printis to ane maisone and withtin few zeiris become werie ingeneous into that craft and bigit money stain house witht his hand into the realme of Scottland: and becaus he was conning in that craft nocht efterlang thai maid him maister maisone and ewer this Cochran clam heigher and heigher quhill he come to this fyne as is rehearssit.[3]

We note the alleged effect of Cochran's flattery on the king - he was deceived and as a result he was 'taine captiue him self and lede to the castell of Edinburgh.[4]

---

1. ed. Æ.J.G. MacKay, 3 vols. (S.T.S. 1899, 1899, 1911), i, 168-9.
2. ibid., i, 174.
3. ibid., i, 175-6.
4. ibid., i, 176.

Bishop Leslie likewise complains of how the king was misled:

> with counsel of Cochran, Rodger and James Hommil, impudent and schameles persones vpon the kings counsel, nother of any dignitie of calling, bot of the lawest degrie of the peple, now promouet to goldechaynes; al ar tane and in their goldechaynes hangt ouer the brig of Lauder, to thair greter sclander.[1]

These accounts were written a hundred years or so after the events described;[2] Pitscottie's at least shows a certain literary flavour (the exemplum and the moral elements are stressed); neither are free from bias. Yet it seems clear that there was very real hatred of the upstarts even though, according to Professor Dickinson, 'in effect the King and his favourites were blamed for much for which they had little responsibility'.[3] And these events were taking place about the time The Fabillis seem to have been written (Lauder Bridge, 1482). There seems at least a possibility that the events had some effect on Henryson's poetry. However, against these arguments we must place the fact that all the failings condemned (pride, flattery, social climbing) - and the way in which they are condemned - are part of a continuing rhetorical tradition: I am attempting to prove this in my thesis; that they are all examples of the type of moral failing (self-blindness in trusting oneself or the things of this world instead of the everlasting wisdom) with which Henryson seems above all concerned in the Fabillis, and indeed in almost all his work. Besides, Stearns'

---

1. Jhone Leslie, The Historie of Scotland, tr. Father James Dalrymple (1596), ed. E.G. Cody and W. Murison, 4 vols. (S.T.S. 1884-95), ii, 97.
2. For Pitscottie's sources see his preface (i, 2) and MacKay's discussion (Introduction, i, pp. civ-cxxi).
3. W. Croft Dickinson, Scotland from the Earliest Times to 1603, op. cit., p. 228.

attempts to provide historical parallels for several of the Fabillis have failed as I intend to show.

It is impossible to be certain whether Henryson is referring to these events. But of one point I think we can be certain - if he is doing so he is merely instancing them as examples of the type of behaviour he is criticizing, not shielding political comment with 'fenyeit fables'. The moral purpose is paramount.

(x) The Fox and the Wolf

As far as I have been able to find there is no specific source for The Fox and the Wolf - there are parallels to most of the incidents in the tale but Henryson's contribution is to combine them into one narrative and to emphasize them in a different way.

Reynard has been known as an astrologer. In the Roman de Renart le Contrefait[1] he confesses:

> Puis je faisoie le devin
> Et avec le phisicien
> Faisoie l'astronomien
> Je nommoie signes et poins
> Et des constellacions les poins
> Les planettes et les figures ... (25090 ff.)

The very fact that he considers it necessary to confess this as a sin shows something of the attitude to astrology we shall find in Henryson's poem. In Le Couronnement de Renart[2] Renart tells the king he has heard that a star has been seen foretelling the king's death (648-75). This is merely a ruse to frighten the Lion but the fact that the Fox believes in astrology is more evident elsewhere: he tells Isengrim on no account to inform the king of the star that has been seen prophesying the rise of a monarch - himself - who will rule all kings (864-71). There are other evidences of his superstition - he hears the cuckoo cry thirteen times and believes he has thirteen years to live (212-35); he has studied magic at Toledo (2948-57).

---

1. ed. G. Raynaud and H. Lemaître, op. cit., ii, 28.
2. ed. A. Foulet, op. cit.

Although I know of no other occasion on which the Fox confesses to a wolf, the Wolf is often shown as a bad monk (he is a bad friar in our poem). There is the wolf who cannot keep his vows and returns to the wood;[1] there is the wolf who, when learning his a.b.c., continually repeats 'agnus';[2] in branche III of the Roman de Renart[3] Isengrim receives the tonsure and is received into Renart's 'order' expecting to obtain a large supply of fish.

There are many stories of the Fox making a bad confession. In branche VIII of the Roman de Renart[4] we are shown Renart, grown old and temporarily without desire for mischief, deciding that he should confess. He is taken to a hermit:

> Sire, ce dist Renart, merci.
> Que que j'aie fait or oui ci:
> de qant que j'ai vers vos mespris
> et vers mes autres anemis
> Vos cri ge merci et pardon"
> Au pié li chiet a croison,
> mais l'ermite l'a redrecié:
> "Biaux amis, dist il, or te sié
> Ci devant moi, si me descruevre
> tot de chief en chief la male ovre.
> - Sire, dist Renart, volantiers (8891-8901)

In our poem too the Fox falls on his knees, addresses his confessor as sir. The hermit, on hearing the immense number of sins of which the Fox is guilty (in our poem Lowrence apparently spends a whole night confessing), decides that only the Pope can absolve him and sends him on a pilgrimage - the pilgrimage, however, soon ends in

---

1. from a late twelfth century Manuscript: HS.I.Q. 267, Bibliothek des Domes zu Neiße, ed. J. Klapper, Exempla aus Handschriften des Mittelalters, op. cit., no. 113, p. 77.
2. Speculum Laicorum, B.M. MS. Add. 11284, fol. 16v; Odo of Cheriton, Hervieux, iv, 195-6.
3. ed. Roques, op. cit., XII, 13164 ff.; vol. v, pp. 7 ff..
4. ed. Roques, op. cit., IX, 8791 ff.; vol. iii, pp. 100 ff.. The same story is told in Renard le Contrefait, op. cit., ll. 24643 ff..

theft and slaughter. Again, in branche I,[1] Grimbart persuades Renart to confess to him as they journey to the Lion's court, for, the badger explains, he will probably be put to death there. Renart confesses, makes a superficial atonement; but his resolves are soon forgotten when he sees hens in a farmyard. The same story occurs in Caxton's Reynard,[2] and in various shortened forms. In the Scala Celi the Wolf is the protagonist:

> Consuetudo mala peccandi multa mala inducit in nobis ... Secundo est associancium nocius. Fingitur fabula quod lupus semol considerando mala que fecerat penitenciam voluit facere de forefactis suis et cum confitebatur de rapinis et maleficiis suis vidisset gregem ouium et infestabat confessorem ut expediret eum. Cumque reprehenderetur respondit Consuetudo dedit mihi hoc.[3]

The power of sin to form an unbreakable habit is also to be seen in Henryson (ll. 169-75). Jacques de Vitry's version is interesting for its parallel with the moralitas of Henryson's poem:

> Quidam autem sicut Absalon semel in anno tonduntur, quia tamen semel peccata confituntur, sed statim capilli crescere incipiunt, quia statim ad peccata redeunt, et ita sacerdotibus illudunt. Hec est confessio vulpis, que solet in Francia appellari confessio renardi. Cum enim debuisset suspendi et taxus eum duceret ad curiam leonis, facta confessione de omnibus peccatis, eodem die vidit gallinas juxta domum cujusdam hominis, et taxo ait: "Illa est via qua incedere debemus, scilicet juxta domum illam quam videmus." Cui taxus respondit: "Miser, hodie confessionem mihi fecisti de cunctis peccatis tuis, et confessus es quod multas gallinas deuorasti, et promisisti Deo in manu mea quod de cetero abstineres." Cui renardus ait: "Verum dicis, sed ego tradideram oblivioni".[4]

---

1. ed. Roques, op. cit., I, 1035 ff.; vol. i, pp. 35 ff..
2. ed. Arber, op. cit., pp. 25-9.
3. op. cit., fol. 171b.
4. Crane CCXCVII, p. 125.

In his confession Lowrence complains: 'Neid causs me to steill' (96). In Renard le Contrefait the Fox muses at length on this theme (ll. 30673-730 ii, 85; 33280 ff. ii, 112-3).

Various versions of the salmon story also occur, though in all the texts I have been able to discover, the characters are a wolf and a sheep. A representative version is that in the Romulus of Robert:

> Lupus quondam, de malefactis suis penitere disponens, uouit se non comesturum carnes a Septuagesima usque Pasca. Post modum uero uidens quemdam pinguem Multonem solem in (h)ora nemoris gradientem, dicebat: O quam libenter de hoc Multonem comederem, nisi essem uoto ad contrarium obligatus! Verumptamen ex quo solus est, nisi ego de eo curauerim, aliquis forte hac parte transiens eum tollet. Expedit ergo ut loco unius salmonis eum comedam, cum salmo sit cibus delicacior et hoc quadragesimali tempore carius uendi possit. Multonem itaque rapuit et comedit.
>
> Sic est de quibusdam, qui malorum assuetudine animum habent ita peruersum, ut contra suarum illecebrarum desiderium neque iuramentum ualent, neque uotum, quin imo, nacta qualibet occasiuncula, protinus recidiuant.[1]

In the LBG Romulus the Wolf is actually on his way to fish when he meets the sheep ('Cui ad mare piscacionis studio properanti pinguis Aries occurrit in nemore'); our poem is rather similar in this detail. After his feast Lowrence basks in the sun (143-6). In Caxton's Reynard, when Bruin came to fetch the Fox to court, 'Reynart laye within the gate as he ofte was wonte to doo for the warmth of the sonne ...'.[2]

---

1. Romulus of Robert, Hervieux, ii, 557; LBG Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 594; Marie de France, ed. Roquefort, op. cit., pp. 310-12; Gualterus Anglicus, (Additional Tales I), Hervieux, ii, 365-6; Isopet I, Bastin, ii, 289-90; Isopet III, Bastin, ii, 419.
2. ed. Arber, op. cit., p. 12.

The way in which Henryson has moulded the fragments into a coherent tale, the changes and the additions he has made, will become obvious as the tale is analyzed. The only previous attempt to analyze it - that by Stearns in his Robert Henryson[1] - seems to me completely misguided. He states:

> Of the few sympathetically described protagonists of the Fables who are not peasants, the character of the Fox, in the tale of The Fox and the Wolf, is of particular interest. In a sense, the "wylie tratour Tod" is out of character as, for the space of one fable, he appears to be simply an imaginative but confused person with an honest impulse to do the right thing. The poet, of course, is occupied with his trenchant criticism of the Church, and the fable is Reynardian rather than Æsopic.

Stearns has been mislead by his own preconceived attitude to Henryson, whom he sees primarily as a champion of the people against the tyranny of the aristocracy and the Church, into thinking that the poem is basically an attack on the Church; I shall show that there may be a hint of such criticism - criticism of one false friar, certainly not criticism of the Church as a whole - but that, far from such criticism being the basic purpose of the poem, it is merely incidental to an examination of the wickedness and folly of the Fox, a wickedness Stearns denies. For the Fox's character is developed in terms of the preceding The Fox and the Cock (and of the whole Reynard tradition): falseness, flattery, wickedness. This is the same Fox as Henryson makes plain in the first four lines of our poem; he is certainly not out of character, nor is he sympathetically described.

---

1. Robert Henryson, op. cit., pp. 114-7.

Henryson leaves us in no doubt, from the first few lines of the poem, of the end of the Fox's story:

> And speke we of the fatal aventure
> And destenye that to this Fox befell (3-4)

We find immediately the characteristic devices Henryson uses to stress his theme: the alliteration, the synonymous phrases 'fatal aventure', 'destinie'. There is no suspense: the poem will illustrate why the Fox deserved his fate by showing throughout his utter moral degradation and folly. This is shown, first of all, in his attitude to light: he

> ... durst no more with miching intermell
> Als long as leme and lycht was of the day,
> But bydand nycht <u>full</u> still lurkand he lay (5-7)

The Fox's intention was certainly to do more evil; but he dared not in the daylight so waited ('<u>full</u> still') for the night; then he would, it is implied, seek evil again. The alliteration stresses his intentions ('more ... miching intermell') and his fear of light ('lang ... leme ... lycht ... lurkand ... lay). So, the poet stresses, Lowrence was pleased when night fell: 'Mery and gled that cummyn was the nycht'(14). Repetition by a synonym stresses the Fox's reaction. He was a creature of the night, of blackness, of evil. The same characteristic is found elsewhere in the <u>Fabillis</u>: in <u>The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman</u>, when the Fox represents the devil, we read: 'Lowrence came lourand, for he lufit never licht' (64). In <u>The Swallow and Othir Birdis</u>:

> In metaphisik aristotle sayis
> That man saule is lyke ane bakkis ee
> quhilk lurkis still as lang as lycht of day is
> And in the gloming cumis furth to flee
> Hir eine ar waik the sun scho may not see
> So is oure saule with phantesye opprest
> To knaw the thingis in nature manifest (15-21)

Line 17 is very similar indeed to lines 6-7 of our poem and we shall see that the blindness of man's soul in this passage has certain similarities to the condition of the Fox.

In our discussion of the Fox's character the next point of interest is his attitude towards astrology. The state of the heavens he sees is shown in the accompanying diagram.[1] The moon is in the ascendant: but though, according to medieval astrology, a beneficent planet (Benevoli sunt ut Iupiter, Venus et luna'[2]) it is in the mansion of Saturn ('Capricornus et Aquarius, domus Saturni[3]; Malivoli sunt ut Saturnus et Mars et dicuntur infortunati[4]'). Besides, it is in opposition to the sun, a dangerous situation:

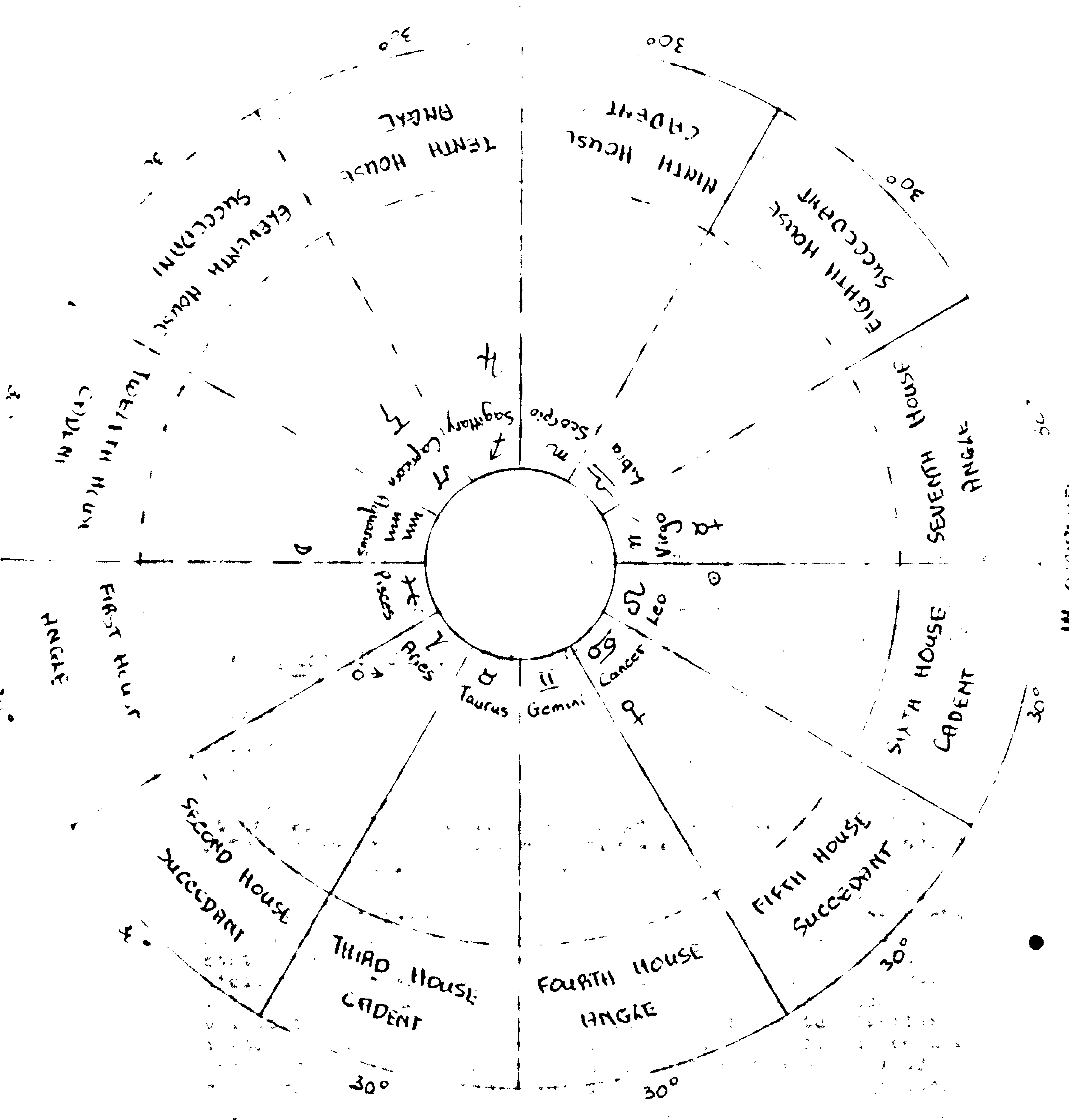
> Et semper quando tu debes aliquid facere, sit luna in ascendente fortunata. Et cavendum est summo opere quod luna non sit impedita. Et sunt modi plures impedimenti eius secundum Dorotheum ... Secundus modus est ut sit in oppositione solis.[5]

Saturn is in its own mansion ('Et primo sciendum est quod quilibet planeta habet virtutem fortiorem in domo quam potest habere in celo[6]'); the most malevolent planet is thus in its strongest position. Venus, beneficent, is not in one of its own mansions; more important, it is in opposition to Saturn which, as we have seen, is in its strongest position:

> Aspectus oppositionis est ratione oppositionis, unde omne signum oppositum alteri in zodiaco respicit ipsum ex oppositione, et stelle similiter existentes in signis

---

1. The diagram is based on those in W.C. Curry, Chaucer and the Medieval Sciences (New York, 1926).
2. 'The Commentary of Robertus Anglicus', _The Sphere of Sacrobosco and its Commentators_, ed. Lynn Thorndike (Chicago, 1949), pp. 155-6.
3. _ibid._, p. 169.
4. _ibid._, p. 155.
5. _ibid._, p. 171.
6. _ibid._, p. 169.


IN MEDIO COELI
TENTH HOUSE
ANGLE
NINTH HOUSE
CADENT
EIGHTH HOUSE
SUCCEDANT
ELEVENTH HOUSE
SUCCEDANT
TWELFTH HOUSE
CADENT
SEVENTH HOUSE
ANGLE
IN OCCIDENTE
FIRST HOUSE
ANGLE
SIXTH HOUSE
CADENT
SECOND HOUSE
SUCCEDANT
FIFTH HOUSE
SUCCEDANT
THIRD HOUSE
CADENT
FOURTH HOUSE
ANGLE
IN IMO COELI
Sagittary
Capricorn
Aquarius
Scorpio
Libra
Virgo
Leo
Pisces
Aries
Taurus
Gemini
Cancer
30°

> oppositis aspiciunt se isto aspectu ...
> Item inter istos aspectus aspectus per
> coniunctionem est fortior. Item aspectus
> oppositionis est aspectu inimicitie[1]

Again, Mars, a malevolent planet, is in its own mansion ('Aries et Scorpio sunt domus Martis[2]'). The one redeeming feature of the election seems to be that Jupiter, benevolent, is in its own mansion ('Sagittarius et Pisces, domus Iovis[3]'). So:

> My destany and eik my werd I watt
> Myn evintour is cleirly to me kend (36-7)

The Fox's certainty about his prediction is stressed by the poet: by repetition of synonyms (destany, werd, evintour), by rhetorical patterning of the possessive adjective, by the use of adverbs (eik, cleirly) and by alliteration. The poet has earlier placed stress on the Fox's ability in this matter. In stanza three we are shown his familiarity with technical terms;[4] besides, Lorrence

---

1. 'The Commentary of Robertus Anglicus', The Sphere of Sacrobosco and its Commentators, ed. Lynn Thorndike (Chicago, 1949), pp. 175-6.
2. ibid., p. 169.
3. ibid., p. 169.
4. Sum retrograde and sum war stationere (19).

   Quilibet etiam planeta preter solem habet epiciclum, et est epiciclus circulus parvus per cuius circumferentiam defertur corpus planete, et centrum epicicli semper defertur in circumferentia deferentis.

   Si igitur due linee ducantur a centro terre ita quod includant epiciclum, una ex parte orientis, reliqua ex parte occidentis, punctus contactus ex parte orientis dicitur statio prima, punctus vero contactus ex parte occidentis dicitur statio secunda. Et quando planeta est in alterutra illarum stationum, dicitur stationarius. Arcus autem epicicli superior inter duas stationes interceptus dicitur directio, et quando planeta est in illo, dicitur directus. Arcus vero epicicli inferior inter duas stationes dicitur retrogradatio, et planeta ibi existens dicitur retrogradus.

   The Sphere of Sacrobosco, ed. Thorndike, op. cit., pp. 114-5.

knew - he not only knew, he could teach (21) - what sign of the zodiac each one (ilkane) of the stars was in (20-1). Again,

> Bot astrolab, quadrant or almanak,
> Techit of nature be instructioun,
> The moving of the hevin this tod can tak
> quhat influence and constillatioun
> Was lyk to fall vpone this erd heir doun (29-33)

The Fox, then, has a quite extraordinary knowledge of the art of astrology. Before commenting on this fact I think it worthwhile to examine what Henryson elsewhere and what other authors have to say about this art. In Orpheus and Eurydice Henryson, after interpreting the crime of Titius in an unusual way - that he desired all knowledge through astrology - condemns the art: men should dread to seek 'quhilk nane in erd may knaw bot god allane' (576). Men should avoid 'superstitioun of astrology' (599) for

> This vgly way, this myrk and dully streit
> Is nocht ellis bot blynding of the spreit
> With myrk cluddis and myst of Ignorance,
> affetterrit in this warldis vane pleeance,
> And bissines of temporalite;
> To kene the self a styme it may nocht se,
> Ffor scammeris on eftir effectioun,
> Ffra Ill to war ale thus to hale gois doun,
> That is wan howp throw lang hanting of syn
> and fowll dispair that mony fallis In (600-9)

In The Testament of Cresseid Cresseid attributes her unhappiness and, later, her leprosy to the gods, whom the poet portrays to a considerable extent in astrological terms. But eventually she realises that her unhappiness and illness have been caused by her own actions: before she was blinded by selfishness and by love of the world. Such passages I think must be taken into consideration in dealing with our fable. Other works of the period convey much the same impression. As we have seen Renard in Renard le Contrefait

thinks it necessary to confess his astrology as a sin. Deguileville, too, criticizes astrology,[1] although, like Henryson in Orpheus and Eurydice, he considers astronomy a worthy subject. The pilgrim prays for discretion

> My wordys so, for t expresse,
> That ffynally I may represse
> Thyn errours and thyn ffolye,
> Groundyd on Astrologye,
> Wych ne be nat vertuous,
> Ffor they be superstycious. (20231-6)

And, later, he abuses Geomancy

> ... thow art ryht vnhappy,
> And dygne (to myn oppynyoun)
> Off shame and off confusioun,
> That, so myche off thy ffolye
> Trusteth in astrologye ... (20774-8)

Chaucer's view of astrology is very similar: he uses it in the pagan settings of The Knight's Tale and Troilus and Criseyde, in the latter as a symbol of man's enslavement to the things of this world; writing in A Treatise on the Astrolabe of 'fortunat' and 'infortunat' ascendants, he states 'Natheles these ben observaunces of judicial matere and rytes of payens, in whiche my spirit hath no feith, ne knowing of her horoscopum'.[2] In these works, then, we have astrology associated with superstition, with paganism, with shame, with blindness and, in Henryson's own works, with 'lang hanting of syn', 'ignorance' and 'this warldis vane plesance'. In our poem we have noted the particular emphasis the poet places on the Fox's extraordinary knowledge of the art and his obvious belief in it. Indeed the poet has been careful, from the beginning, to

---

1. Le Pélérinage de la Vie Humaine tr. John Lydgate; ed. F.J. Furnivall (E.E.T.S.E.S. 71, 83, 92; 1899-1904).
2. Pt. II, section iv; Robinson, p. 551.

place Lowrence in a world governed by astrological conceptions, reflecting his attitude to life: thus, in the first stanza, we find the astrological terms 'aventure' and 'destenye' used to forecast the Fox's death; the same purpose explains the introduction of the pagan gods in the second stanza. Now, the prediction of the stars is correct: the Fox does die. But this, it seems to me, is part of the irony of the poem and, as we shall see as we proceed, irony plays a very important part in the expression of the poem's theme. For, in essence, the death is not caused by the stars but by the Fox's belief in the stars: his belief in what they tell him sets in motion the train of events leading to his death, a train of events impelled by his evil nature. And here we have again the double strand of the Fox's nature already implied by his attitude to light: he is evil and blind; the two characteristics go together - the evil leads to the blindness of false belief. Similarly, in his attitude to astrology we see him blinded by his own evil: in Orpheus and Eurydice astrology is also seen to be a 'blynding of the spreit' (601). Henryson has seemingly taken the astrologer-fox from Reynardian tradition but he has adapted the character markedly to express the theme.

The Fox's attitude to confession is further evidence of his nature. For this is not true confession: he is not sorry for his sins - if he had not thought this to be the one way of escape[1]

---

1. This at least is the reading I take from a very difficult stanza, stanza 6. It does not appear to me that the Fox is thinking of the after-life even though l. 38 might suggest it: one might perhaps read it as saying that his death (mortall fait) would be 'myngit with mischeif' (i.e. the punishment of hell) unless he repented (l. 39). But, to my mind, such a reading does not fit the poem: the Fox must believe that confession, in this case at least, will prevent death for otherwise we cannot explain his behaviour after his "penance" (his attitude of self-satisfaction scarcely implies that he thinks death to be imminent). Besides, the eventual punishment of the Fox is the end of this life. Of course there is an allegorical significance which I shall discuss later

from the stars' prediction he would not have considered confession:

> With mischeif mynget is my mortall fait
> My mysleving the soner bot I mend
> Deid is reward of syn and schamefull end
> Thairfoir I will ga seik sum confessour
> And scryfe me clene of all synnis to this hour (38-42)

Line 40 is a paraphrase of St. Paul's words in the Epistle to the Romans vi, 23: 'Stipendia enim peccati, mors'. Ironically, the Fox is foretelling his own doom; for he does not act correctly upon his realization - once again he misunderstands the truth. His 'confession' is to be a charm against impending circumstances: there is no true repentence or confession in his mind; he thinks, wrongly, that a priest can give him absolution even if he is not contrite, that once he has received external absolution he will be safe. We can compare with what Walter Hilton has to say of penance:

> And what cristen man or woman þt has lost þe
> liknes of god þorw dedly syn brekand godis com-
> andementes: if he þorw touchyng of grace
> soþfastly forsake his synne with sorow and
> contricion of hert and be in ful wil for to
> amende hym and torne hym to god and to goode
> lifyng and in þis wil he ressaynes þe
> sacrament of penaunce if he may or if he may
> not he is in wil þerto soþly I say þt þis mannes
> soule or wommanes þt was forschapyn first to
> þe liknes of þe deuil þorw dedly synn is now
> be þe sacrament of penaunce restored and
> schapen agayn to þe ymage of oure lord god ...
> He abides not grat penaunce doyng ne pynful
> fleshly[1] suffryng or he forgife it. Bot he
> askes a loþyng of synne and a ful forsakyng
> in wil of þe soule for þe luf of hym and a
> turnyng of þe herte to hym ... And þan when
> he sees þis wiþoutyn ony delayng he forgifes
> þe syn and reformes þe soule to his liknes.
> þe syn is forgifen þat þe saul sal not be
> dampned. Neuerþeles þe payn dettid for þe
> syn is not ȝit fully forgifen bot contricion
> and luf be þe more and þerfore schal he go

1. MS. flesthly.

> and schewe hym and schryfe hym to his gostly fadir and resayne penaunce enioyned for his trespas and gladly fulfille it so þat boþ þe syn and þe payn may be don away or he passe heþen.[1]

The passages I have underlined show the true attitude to confession; by contrast the Fox's is false. And this the poet stresses. The Fox excuses himself and his like: he is not sorry that he has stolen, he regrets the outcome of theft: each night thieves' lives are risked in this 'cursit craft' yet

> For evir we steill and evir alyk ar pure:
> In dreid and schame our dayis we indure
> and widdy nek and crakraip callit als
> and syn till our hyre ar hangit be the hals (46-9)

Their reward is hanging (emphasized by the alliterating 'h's) after a life of perpetual ('evir ... evir') dread (emphasized by the alliterating d). The Fox's attitude to confession is further illustrated by his attitude towards the priest: it is scarcely that of a sincere penitent:

---

1. Scala Perfectionis, Bk. 2, ch. 7 B.M. MS. Harl. 6579 fols. 67b-68a. The teaching is widespread: cf., for example, Helinandus Frigidi Montis, Sermo XXVIII, P.L. ccxii, cols. 713-4; Caesarius Heisterbacensis, Dialogus Miraculorum, ed. J. Strange, 2 vols. (Cologne, 1851), Distinctiones II and III (De Contritione et De Confessione), i, 55-170 - the work was translated by H. von C. Scott and C.C. Swinton Bland as The Dialogue on Miracles (Broadway Mediaeval Library, ed. G.G. Coulton and Eileen Power, London, 1929) where the relevant sections are pp. 61 ff.; Robertus de Sorbona, 'De Tribus Dietis', De Consciencia et De Tribus Dietis, ed. F. Chambon (Collection de textes pour servir à l'étude et à l'enseignement de l'histoire, Paris, 1902), p. 38; Cursor Mundi, ed. R. Morris (E.E.T.S.O.S. 57, 59, 62, 66, 68, 1874-8), ll. 25790 ff.; Bromyard, Summa Praedicantium, op. cit., C v (Contritio) and C vi (Confessio); Dan Michel's Ayenbite of Inwyt, op. cit., pp. 172-80; Jacob's Well, ed. Brandeis, op. cit., pp. 168-96; Chaucer's Parson's Tale, Robinson, p. 230.

> Seand the wolf, this wylie tratour tod
> on kneis fell, with hud in to his nek
> Welcome, my gaistly fadir undir god
> q he, with mony binge and mony bek (57-60)

The Fox's insincerity is shown by the poet's direct comment ('wylie tratour tod') and by the exaggerated actions described in a typically Henrysonian phrase: 'mony binge and mony bek' - emphatic adjective repeated in balance, synonyms linked by alliteration.[1] It is impossible to agree with Stearns that the Fox has 'an honest impulse to do the right thing' or that 'the Fox's complete, immediate faith in the Wolf, whom he is traditionally supposed to outwit is almost touching'[2]. Stearns' misjudgement becomes even more apparent as we read on and find the Fox's pretence at self-denigration ("Fadir", quod he, "I haif grit caus to dude"'63) and flattery even more heavily emphasized:

> Ye ar the lanterne and the sicker way,
> Suld gyde sic sympill folk as to me grace;
> Your bairfeit and your rousset[3] coull of gray,
> Your lene cheikis, your paill and petous face,
> Schawis full weill your perfyt halynace;
> for weill war him that anis in his lyfe
> had hap to yow his synnis anis to schryfe (64-70)

The Fox is a master flatterer: we note the emphasis given by the repetition, and balance, of the personal pronouns and possessive adjectives Ye, Your, and Yow, appealing to the Wolf's vanity; the use of adjectives emphasizing the monk's holiness ('bair', 'rousset', 'lene', 'paill', and 'petous' - these linked and reinforced by

---

1. The devices to be found in this passage of The Fox and the Wolf are also used by the flattering Fox in The Fox, the Wolf and the Cadger, The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman, and The Fox and the Cock; in discussing the latter we saw how some at least of these devices are to be found in The Nonnes Preestes Tale.

2. Robert Henryson, op. cit., p. 114.

3. MS. ousset.

alliteration - leading to the climax, alliterating with the previous two, 'perfyt'); the use of adverbs ('full' and 'anis', twice used - one would need to confess once only to such a holy man: again the wrong emphasis in penance not repentance but the virtues of the priest; again appealing to the Wolf's vanity); and the false humility: 'sic sympill folk as me' implying, of course, that, by contrast, the friar is learned. Stearns' comment on 'the novelty of a Fox who not only cannot see through the Wolf's disguise but who has also convinced himself that he is one of the "sempill folk"'[1] seems singularly inappropriate. The Fox's plan has succeeded: the Wolf believes (or pretends to believe) him penitent (l. 72). The Fox continues his pretended self-denigration:

> of reif and stowth, schir, I can tell ennewch,
> that causis me full sair for till repent;
> Bot Fader byd still heir on this bent
> I yow beseik, and heir me now declair
> my conscience that prikis me so sair (73-7)

The Fox interpolates expressions of subservience ('schir', 'fader') - expressions which perhaps are used at normal confessions but here used to an exaggerated extent; he stresses his sorrow ('full sair' 'so sair'). And so he kneels 'bairheid', 'full humly' (79). The Fox is not repentant (86-90): he rejoices in his sins. This is one of the few times in the poem that the Fox tells the truth; but even here he uses the flattering and deferential 'schir' (86); and when he is asked whether he will repent he returns to his wiles, excusing himself: how else can he live? Need is the cause. Besides:

> I schame to beg I can nocht wirk ye wat
> Yet wald I fane pretend a gentill stait (97-8)

---

1. Robert Henryson, op. cit., p. 115.

These excuses have some measure of validity, if only to one who is prepared to believe what the Fox tells him: and the Fox has prepared the Wolf for this by his flattery, and by the truth of his lack of repentance. There is nothing whatsoever wrong with being ashamed to beg or even with pretending to the 'gentill stait' (the Wolf, himself a hypocrite, should have great sympathy with this last excuse). The Fox appeals to the Wolf's judgement ('ye wat'), another form of flattery. His skill is further shown in his acceptance of penance:

> A, ser considdir my complexioun,
> And seikly and waik and of my natur tendir
> Lo will ye se I am baith lene and sklender.
>
> Yit nevir the les I wald, sa it wer lycht
> and schort nocht grevand to my tendirnes
> tak pairte of pane, fulfill it gife I micht,
> To sett my silly soule in way of grace (103-9)

We find again the Fox appealing to the Wolf's judgement and knowledge ('ser', 'considdir', 'will ye se'); and synonymous adjectives ('seikly', 'waik', 'tendir', 'lene', 'sklender') stressed by repetition of conjunctions ('and ... and ... and'; 'baith ... and') emphasizing the poor state of the Fox's health (the poem's audience, however, knew this to be quite satisfactory, judging from his previous actions). Lowrence is determined to gain absolution; so, he claims, in spite of ('Yit, nevir the les' - again a repetition) his parlous state he is prepared to take some penance: but it must be 'lycht', 'schort', only a 'pairte', 'nocht grevand'; and he does not promise to fulfil it. Even the penance he is given he causes to be modified by his subtlety:

> I grant thairto sa ye will gife me leif
> to eit puddingis or laip a littill blude,
> or heid and feit or penchis lat me preif
> In cais I fant of flesche in to my fude (113-6)

First he accepts; <u>then</u> asks for relief (we note: 'so <u>ye</u> will gife me leif': again a type of deference), trying to make this relief seem very small: his use of 'or' suggests alternatives - 'and' would have been accumulative; he wants only a 'littill' blood; he wishes merely to 'preif' the paunches. And, of course, he supplies an apparently valid excuse for wishing to do so. And he ends with another speech of deference and flattery - it has undertones of irony as well: 'god yeild yow ser, for that text full weill ye know' (119). The Fox, with masterly flattery, has succeeded in blinding, or thinks he has succeeded in blinding, the Wolf to his true nature. But also, by his sheer skill as a flatterer, just as by his sheer skill in astrology, he has shown his own blindness to truth, has contributed to his own downfall. Henryson has taken the Fox at confession, and the flattering Fox from Reynardian tradition, but he has combined them and adapted them markedly to express his theme, the Fox's self-deception.

Before dealing with the Fox's attitude to penance I shall digress briefly to discuss the character of the Wolf. He is presented as:

> A worthy doctour of diuinite
> Ffreir wolf waitskath in science wondrous sle
> To preche and pray was new cum of clostir
> With beidis in hand sayand his paternoster (53-6)

The name waitskath (one who waits or watches for a chance to do harm) gives an immediate clue to the Wolf's character; as was early pointed out[1] it was taken from Caxton.[2] It is interesting

---

1. Diebler <u>Henrisone's Fabeldichtungen</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 46.
2. Reynard is off to Rome on pilgrimage and threatens all who have sent him with the Pope's curse for 'Ther [in Rome] is prentout, wayte scathe and other of my frendis and alyes', Arber, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 70.

that the other occasion on which Henryson uses the word 'sle' is also in a derogatory context:

> It pass far alkynd of pestilens
> a wickit mynd with wirdis fair and sle
> (The Mous and the Paddock, 136-7)

And the Wolf is 'wondrous sle' (the 'w' linking, by alliteration, with worthy - thus stressing the sarcasm of the use of 'worthy' in this context - and with 'Wolf waitakath'). So we are certain that his telling his beads and his saying of the paternoster are mere show, designed to attract attention. This impression is strengthened by his reaction to the Fox's flattery: he laughs (71), obviously for pleasure,[1] and is taken in by the Fox's tricks. So, eventually, he gives him 'full remissioun' (112) and excuses himself in a facile, but apparently learned, way, using a proverb: 'for neid may haif no law' (118).[2] There is another possible interpretation of the friar's character, an interpretation perhaps more consistent with his name which seems to imply that he is actively seeking to do harm. It is possible that the Wolf understands the Fox's tactics but lets him continue deceiving himself in order that he might make a bad confession and suffer the consequences. Now the character of the Wolf is the only evidence in the poem for what Stearns calls the poet's 'trenchant criticism of the Church'. But not only does such criticism play an insignificant part in the poem's action, but also it is criticism not of the Church, but of one friar.

---

1. Cf. The Fox and the Cock, l. 50.
2. Fergusson (1641 edition), 649.

Lowrence's attitude to penance is as false as his attitude to repentance and confession. We have already seen Hilton saying that the sinner must 'ressayne penaunce for his trespas and gladly fulfille it so þat boþ þe syn and þe payn may be don away or he passe heþen'. Similarly, in a fifteenth century sermon, we find:

> For in certayn case thi shrifte is not vailable, and therfore it were well don that thou gouernest the wisely in thi shrifte. Sir I sey the ther be foure case in the wiche a monnes shrift is not vaileable ... And the fourte case is when that a man is necligent and ewill wild to fulfill is peynaunce that the prest hath geue hym. In anny of thise foure case a man most shryve him ageyn, for is confession is not vaileable. On than, to shrift, and loke thou be so sett that every thinge that thi goostely fadur woll sett the and bid the do resonable, loke that thou wilfully take vppon the and do itt.[1]

The Fox would not carry out the penance given him, when he found it difficult ('the walterand wawis wode', 123; he had 'nowdir net bottis nor bate', 128); his scheming mind worked out a plan intended to overcome his vows (again we see an example of Henryson markedly adapting an earlier story for his own use). In the humour of lines 134-40 we catch some of the Fox's pleasure and humour at the brilliance of his plan. It is quite probable that the episode is intended as a parody of the sacrament of baptism ('ga doun ser kid cum vp ser salmound agane', 138) in the Fox's mind. It would be fitting that a perversion of a sacrament which should be the means of grace is the means by which the Fox is finally brought to judgment for his own perversion of.

---

1. W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., p. 278.

another sacrament, means of grace. And we see his extreme self-satisfaction when he imagined his plan had succeeded:

> Thus fynaly fillit with tendir meit
> Unto a den for dreid he hes him drest
> Vndir a busk quhair that the sone cowth beit
> To beke his breist and bellye he thocht best
> And rakleslye he said quhair he coud rest
> Strakand his wambe agane this sonnes hete
> Vpoun this bellye ware sett a bolt full mete (141-7)

And it is part of the irony of the poem that Lowrence's jesting words - his self-satisfaction in the success of his plan, the extreme self-deceit - are acted upon. For the Fox throughout, in achieving his false purposes, has been deceiving himself; and, at the height of his self-deceit, when he thinks he has got both a good confession and a good meal and life seems perfect (l. 146), his own jesting words are fulfilled in earnest. One looks in vain for evidence to support Stearns' contention that the Fox represents 'a group of people with whom the poet might well have sympathized - the dispossessed gentry'.[1]

I have not been able to find any parallels for the story of Lowrence's death: there are accounts of Renart's death[2] and the death of Renart's father[3] in the tradition but these are very different from the incident told in our fable. We may perhaps find a reason for the means of death in the interpretations of arrows by Biblical commentators. St. Bruno commenting on Psalm xxxvii, 3 (Quoniam sagittae tuae infixae sunt mihi) states:

---

1. Robert Henryson, op. cit., p. 117.
2. Roman de Renart, br. XVII, ed. Martin, op. cit., ii, 197-242. Unedited as yet in Roques' edition.
3. Caxton's Reynard the Fox, ed. Arber, op. cit., p. 39.

> Vel quod dicit sagittae tuae infixae sunt ec., sic legitur ut per sagittas plusquam in superiori sententia intelligatur. Superius enim per sagittam solummodo mortalitas et passibilitas intelligebantur, quae bene sagittae dicuntur, eo quod de longe per eas Deus Adae comminatus est antequam peccaret, sicut sagittae de longe trahendae comminantur: vel quia per eas genus humanum afficitur, ad modum illius, qui sagittarum vulneribus affligitur. Aliter autem sagittae latius accipiuntur sic: Sagittae tuae infixi sunt meis, id est mortalitas et passibilitas et fomes peccati.[1]

Hrabanus Maurus interprets the arrows as being, amongst other things, the punishment of God: '... Per sagittas vindictae Domini, ut in Cantico Deuteronomii "Et sagittas meas" id est, vindictas meas, "complebo in eis"'.[2] Now, the punishment of God is generally thought of in connection with the after-life; this is implied in the moralitas (181-2) and also by the Biblical quotation ('Stipendia enim peccati, mors') used earlier by the Fox. The traditional interpretation of the verse refers to eternal death: Abelard: 'Merito finem dicit tam vitam quam mortem animae aeternam...';[3]

---

1. Expositio in Psalmos, P.L. clii, col. 793.
2. Allegoriae in Sacram Scripturam, P.L. cxii, col. 1044. Cf. also Bromyard, Summa Praedicantium, op. cit., M xi (Mors) 2; La Tabula Exemplorum Secundum Ordinem Alphabeti, ed. Welter, op. cit., p. 49 Mors.
3. Expositio in Epistola Pauli ad Romanos, Liber III, P.L. clxxviii, col. 881. Cf. also Primasius Adrumentanus, In Epistolam ad Romanos Commentaria, P.L. cviii, col. 448; Haymo Halberstatensis, Expositio in Epistolas S. Pauli - in Epistolam ad Romanos, P.L. cxvii, col. 416; Petrus Lombardus, Collectanea in Epistolas D. Pauli - in Epistolam ad Romanos, P.L. cxci, col. 1412; Walafridus Strabus, Glossa Ordinaria, P.L. cxiv, col. 489.

We can perhaps take the poem on two levels: the one a portrait of the Fox's self-deceit; the other allegorical, an examination of the dangers of false confession. The moralitas deals with the latter only - there is no attempt at a point by point explanation of the events of the fable nor of the characteristics of the Fox. Besides, it adds material for which no parallel can be found in the fable itself, expanding the meaning to all types of false confession: the Fox's action had been an exemplum of one type - a person believing that one need merely have external confession without contrition. Other types:

> Suppose thaj be as for the tyme contryte
> Can nane forbere nor fra thair synnis fflee
> Ws drawis nature so in propertie
> Off beist and man that nedis thaj mon do
> As thaj of lang tyme hawe hantit thame to (171-5)[1]

The Fox in our fable has never been 'contryte'. Again there is nothing in the fable to parallel:

> Do wilfull pennance here and ye sall wend
> Eftir your deid to Ioy witthouttin end (181-2)

The poet, then, in the moralitas has not explained the fable so much as taken the central situation and expanded it. His work is creative here, as we have seen it to be throughout the poem in his handling of traditional stories.

---

1. The power of sin which has become a habit is also examined in The Swallow and Othir Birdis, ll. 286 ff. and the Prolog, ll. 54-6.

(xi) The Fox tryed before the Lyone

A story common to many medieval fable collections[1] tells of a lion who, seeing a horse in a field, approached it with intent to kill boasting of its abilities as a doctor. The horse, recognizing the trick, complained of a thorn in its foot and the lion, stooping to pull it out, was kicked. The moralitas usually castigates the folly of the treacherous and the false. A rather similar story in branche XIX of the _Roman de Renard_[2] tells how Isengrim asked a mare to be his companion; the mare agreed to go with him on condition that he removed a thorn from her hoof. The Wolf bent down to do so and was kicked. Again, in Caxton's _Æsop_,[3] one of the Fabulae Extravagantes tells of a wolf's adventures on a day he thought would be fortunate for him. He approached a mare stating that he would eat her foal; she agreed to allow him to do so after he had pulled a thorn from her foot; he was of course stunned by a blow and unable to catch mare or foal.

---

1. Vulgate Romulus, _Steinhöwels Äsop_, ed. Österley, _op. cit._, p. 141; Caxton's _Æsop_, ed. Jacob, _op. cit._, ii, 65-6; Wissembourg Æsop, Hervieux, ii, 173; Corpus Christi Oxford Æsop, Hervieux, ii, 256; Vienna-Berlin Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 435; Florence Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 493; Romulus of Nilant, Hervieux, ii, 532; LBG Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 583-4; Neckam, Bastin, i, 17-18; Gualterus Anglicus, Bastin, ii, 39-40; Isopet de Lyon, Bastin, ii, 155-7; Isopet I, Bastin, ii, 273-5; Isopet III de Paris, Bastin, ii, 413-4; B.M. MS. Harl. 2851, fol. 178; B.M. MS. Harley 268, fol. 44; B.M. Add. MS. 27336, ff. 74b-75a. Isopet II de Paris, Bastin, i, 76-8; Isopet de Chartres, Bastin, i, 142-3.
2. ed. Roques, _op. cit._, XVI, ll. 14981-15070; vol. v, pp. 60-2.
3. ed. Jacob, _op. cit._, ii, 157-8.

These stories, however, are but distant analogues to Henryson's The Fox tryed before the Lyone. Much closer parallels exist. In Caxton's Reynard[1] the Fox confesses to Grymbert that, when out walking with Isegrym, he saw a red mare with a black colt. 'Isegrym was almost storuen for hunger And prayd me goo to the mare and wyte of her yf she wolde sell her fool.' The Mare replied that she would sell it for a price 'wreton in my hyndre foot. Yf ye conne rede and be a clerke ye may come see and rede it.' The Fox recognized the Mare's plan and, having confessed itself unable to read, ran to tell Isegrym whom he deceived. Isegrym:

> oy neuew ... what sholde me lette I can wel frenshe latyn englissh and duche. I haue goon to scole at oxenford I haue also wyth olde and auncyent doctours ben in the audyence and herde ploes and also haue gyuen sentence I am lycensyd in bothe lawes what maner wrytyng that ony man can deuyse I can rede it as perfyghtly as my name I wyl goo to her and shal anon vnderstonde the prys.

She agreed to allow the wolf to read it and 'lyfte vp her foot whiche was newe shood wyth yron and vj stronge nayles and she smote hym wythout myssyng on his head that he fyl doun as he had been deed.' The mare and her foal trotted away unharmed and Reynard proved his usual consoling self:

> Sir ysegrym dere eme how is it now wyth yow. haue ye eten ynowh of the colte ... I pray yow telle me what was wreton vnder the mares fote what was it. prose or ryme. metre or verse. I wold fayn knowe it. I trowe it was cantum. for I herde you synge me thoughte fro ferre. for ye were so wyse that no man coude rede it better than ye

1. ed. Arber, op. cit., pp. 62-3.

> Alas reynart alas said the wulf I pray yow to leue youre mockyng ... The hore wyth her longe legge had an yron foot I wende the nayles therof had ben lettres and she hytte me at the fyrst stroke vj. grete woundes in my heed that almost it is clouen. suche maner lettres shal I neuer more desire to rede.
>
> Dere eme is that trouthe that ye telle me I haue grete meruaylle I heelde you for one of the wysest clerkes that now lyue Now I here wel it is true that I long syth haue redde and herde that the beste clerkes ben not the wysest men.

Gregory Smith[1] argues that this last phrase proves that Henryson knew - and used - Caxton for, in Henryson's fable, the Lion, to whose court the Fox and the Wolf return after their adventure, remarks on seeing the Wolf's bloody head

> This tale is trew quha tent vnto it takis
> The grettest clerkis ar nocht the wysest men (254-5)

Now Smith may be correct but there are conflicting pieces of evidence. In Chaucer's <u>Reeves Tale</u> the Miller, planning to outwit Aleyn and Symkyn, remarks

> 'The grettest clerkes been noght wisest men'
> As whilom to the wolf thus spak the mare. (I[A] 4054-5)

The proverb seems to have been taken from a version of the fable current in Chaucer's time which Henryson too may have known. True, here the proverb is attributed to the mare, in Henryson to the Lion; but a similar difficulty exists with Caxton's version where the proverb is attributed to the Fox. Smith also adduces as evidence for Henryson's use of Caxton's <u>Reynard</u>

> the use of the word Parliament ... for the Court held by the Lion. The term is generally 'Court' or 'Council', as in the heading of the first and thirteenth chapters of Caxton; but in the fourteenth chapter we have the calling of a 'parlament' for the trial of Reynard.[2]

---

1. <u>Poems</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, i, xli-xlii.
2. <u>ibid.</u>, p. xlii.

The use of the word can however be paralleled elsewhere. For instance, Gobi speaks twice of 'aquila rex auium [quae] semel congregauit perlamentum suum'.[1] And in a very important text, which we shall discuss later at length, Odo of Cheriton speaks 'De asino nolente venire ad Parliamentum Leonis'.[2] There are other difficulties in accepting the thesis that Caxton has influenced Henryson in this fable. The setting is very different: in Henryson the Lion has sent the Fox and the Wolf to the grey mare to summon her to court; she claims that her respite is written on her foot. In Caxton the Fox and the Wolf walking together see a red mare whose foal they wish to eat - she claims that the price is written on her foot. More, in Henryson's fable the Mare does not at first tell the "ambassadors" where the respite is written. Thus the Fox's plea that he 'can nocht spell a word' (201) and suggestion that the Wolf read it seem to be made to avoid responsibility ('of this message he is principall', 203) rather than as a malicious attempt to injure the Wolf. Nor are there parallels in Caxton for the Mare's offer of her foot to the Fox after the Wolf had been laid low and his reply 'Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum' (224). In fact the whole emphasis of the episode seems to be somewhat nearer the 'sentence' of the fable describing the Lion, the Wolf and the Fox sharing the spoils after a hunt. But this we must discuss later. For the moment at least, then, we must recognise as unproven the case for Caxton's influence on Henryson, realising of course that the latter's fable must have

---

1. <u>Scala Celi</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, ff. 83ª and 115ª.
2. Hervieux, iv, 365-6.

been taken from a story very similar to Caxton's, and that Henryson himself could have made the modifications we have examined.

A somewhat similar story occurs in several medieval fable collections.[1] It seems however to be no nearer to Henryson's version than Caxton - more distant perhaps for the tale concerns a mule. I quote from the shortest version, the mixed Romulus of Berne:

> Vulpes, videns Mulum, quaesiuit cuius generis erat et quod nomen est. Qui ait quod ignoravit quod nomen sibi fuit imponitum (sic), quia nimis iuvenis, et ideo pater suus fecit ei scribi sub pede. Quod fraudum avertens Lupo nuntiavit; qui, veniens et videre volens, interfectus est. Quem deridens, Vulpes ait: Iusto iudicio hoc pateris: volebas legere et litteras nesciebas.
>
> Et docet hoc non nimis inquirere nec omni spiritui credere.

The moralitas in the Munich Romulus and Steinhowel reads 'Taliter omnes insipientes, dum docti videri appetunt, frequenter labuntur in mala.'

We are, I believe, in many ways much closer to the Henryson fable with a seemingly unique version by Odo of Cheriton which I mentioned before. I quote in full:

> Leo edixit vt omnia animalia coram eo comparerent, et, illis congregatis, pecìit si quod animal abesset. Cui responsum erat quod quidam Asinus aberat, in quodam prato

1. Baldo, Fabulae Superstites, Hervieux, v, 375-7; Munich Romulus, Hervieux, ii, 272-3; Steinhöwels Äsop, ed. Österley, op. cit., pp. 192-3; Caxton's Äsop, ed. Jacob, op. cit., ii, 128-9; mixed Romulus of Berne, Hervieux, ii, 304; Jacques de Vitry, Crane XXXIII, pp. 13-14. In the latter version the Fox himself is fooled. The story is also to be found in exempla collections in B.M. MS. Add. 18347 ff. 121b-122a and B.M. MS. Arundel 506, fol. 47.

> viridi et delectabili nimis se depascens delicate. Pro quo producendo, Lupum tanquam fortem et Vulpem tamquam prudentem, suorum poscente consilio, transmittebat. Qui accedentes ad Asinum memoratum, sibi nunciarunt ut more aliorum coram domino suo compareret, illius edictum humiliter auditurus. Qui respondens dixit se tali preuilegio tutum, quod ab omnibus bannis et edictis qualitercumque emergentibus fuerat exemptus. Nuncij iam dicti, ut eius priuilegium legerent, pecierunt; quod Asinus concedebat. Altercacione quidem exorta inter Lupum et Vulpem quis eorum legeret, sors cedidit super Vulpem, que peciit preuilegium sibi demonstrari. Cui Asinus dixit: Sub pede dextro leuato lege confidenter. Et Vulpis accedentis oculos percutiendo auulsit. Unde Lupus precauens dixit: Qui clerici probantur periciores, non sunt in opere cauciores.
>
> Mistice. Per Leonem moraliter intelligo racionem que de omnibus que fecerat homo disponit, per Lupum fortitudinem, per Vulpem prudenciam, per Asinum carnem ponderosum (sic) et delicias appetentem, que racioni contempnit obedire et prudenciam nimis appropinquantem excecat et confundit etc (sic).

There are differences of course - the attitude of the moralitas towards the animals is reversed, the creature summoned is an ass not a mare, the Fox is injured and the Wolf can seem wise - but Henryson's fable must have been based on this story or at least one like it.[1] Leaving aside this latter possibility as we must leave aside, but always remember, such possibilities in our

---

1. The occurrence of this fable in written form in a fourteenth century collection would seem to make unnecessary Bauman's contention ('The Folk Tale and Oral Tradition in the Fables of Robert Henryson,' op. cit., p. 121) that Henryson's fable is derived from a folk-tale source. Bauman provides a parallel for Henryson's fable from the Aarne-Thompson classification. It is similar to Odo's version but, even if it could be proved to have been existent in folk-tale tradition in medieval times, I would judge it more characteristic of Henryson (from evidence adduced in this thesis) to work from a literary than from a folk-tale source.

discussion of the sources of all The Fabillis, we might take this version as our base and see how Henryson has changed it by addition from other sources. It seems as if Henryson combined into it the ending suggested by the other version of the story of the hoof: the Wolf's pretentiousness is punished. But, as was shown before in our discussion of the version of the tale in Caxton's Reynard, there are striking differences between this combination and the original story (taken from Caxton or elsewhere). The Fox seems to learn from his 'friend's' mistake, unless we are to assume that he is being ironical and that he has known all along that the Wolf will be kicked, assumptions that I cannot find supported in the text. As it stands this portion of the fable is in some ways similar to another common fable[1] in which the Lion, the Wolf and the Fox share out the spoils of their hunting. The Wolf suggests an equal sharing at which the Lion rips off its scalp. Turning to the Fox, the Lion asks how it would share - the Fox suggests that only the scraps should be left for itself and the Wolf; the Lion should have all that is best. In answer to the Lion's question of how it has learned to share so well the Fox answers: 'Domine, ille rubens capellanus socii mei, demonstrato capite excoriato'(Odo of Cheriton).[2] We might suggest tentatively then

---

1. Jacques de Vitry, Crane CLVIII, p. 69; Odo of Cheriton, Hervieux, iv, 193-4; Stephanus de Borbone, Tractatus de diversis materiis praedicabilibus, ed. A. Lecoy de la Marche, Anecdotes historiques, légendes et apologues, op. cit., pp. 332-3; Speculum Laicorum, B.M. Add. MS. 11284, fol. 83; Bromyard, Summa Predicantium, op. cit., D xii (Dominatio) 25-6; John of Sheppey, Hervieux, iv, 418-9; Gritsch, Quadragesimale, op. cit., ff. 448b-449a.

2. A somewhat similar moral is drawn from fables in the Dialogus Creaturarum, dial. 44, ed. Graesse, op. cit., pp. 186-7.

that Henryson's fable again shows his method of creativity - combination. The relationship between moralitas and fable I shall discuss later.

So far we have discussed but one, though seemingly the principal, episode in the fable. Other episodes seem also to have been combined from different sources. There is some sort of parallel for the Fox's attitude to his father in Caxton's _Reynard_. The Fox, being tried before the king, argues that once he had saved the king's life: his father was part of a plot to overthrow him, a plot which was to be furthered by bribery - the old Fox had discovered a treasure. But Reynard had removed the treasure and when his father found this 'for grete anger and sorowe he wente and hynge hymself ... And I poure reynart haue no thanke ne reward I haue buryed myn owen fader by cause the kynge sholde haue his lyf.'[1] In our fable too the Fox buries his father, is pleased to be his heir.[2]

The parliament is held in a spring setting (71-7) like that in the _Roman de Renard_:

> Ce dist l'estoire es premiers vers
> que ja estoit passez yvers
> et l'aube espine florissoit
> et la rose espannisoit
> et pres fu de l'Acension,
> messires Noble le lyon
> toutes les baistes fist venir
> en son palais por cort tenir.[3]

---

1. Arber, _op. cit._, pp. 39-40.
2. The life story of Renard in _La Roman de Renard_ is very different. Eve, continuing to spoil creation after the Fall by summoning forth evil creatures, brings up the fox from the sea (branche XXIV; Roques, III, ll. 3733 ff. - vol. ii, pp. 16 ff.); Renard's death, brought on by a quarrel with Isengrim, is accompanied by the utmost pomp and ritual; he is wept for by King and Queen (branche XVII; Martin, _op. cit._, ii, 197-242. Unedited as yet by Roques.)
3. Roques, I, ll. 11-18; vol. i, p. 1.

The beginning of Caxton's Reynard is also interesting in this connection:

> It was aboute the tyme of penthecoste or whytsontyde that the wodes comynly be lusty and gladsom And the trees clad with leuys and blossoms and the ground with herbes and flowris swete smellyng and also the fowles and byrdes syngen melodyously in theyr armonye That the Lyon the noble kynge of all bestis wolde in the holy dayes of thys feeste holde on open Court at stade whyche he dyde to knowe ouer alle in his lande And commanded by strayte comyssyons and maundements that euery beest shold come thyder in suche wyse that alle the beestis grete and smale cam to the courte sauf reynard the fox for he knew hymself fawty and gylty ...[1]

In our fable the Fox comes to court but he too is guilty and afraid.

The peace decree (148-51) is also part of the tradition. In the Roman Renart tells a titmouse

> Or a danz Nobles li lions
> novelement la pes juree,
> se Dieux plaist, qui avra duree;
> par sa terre l'a fait jurer
> et a ses barons afier
> qui soit gardee et maintenue.
> S'en sont mout lié la gent menue,
> car or charront par plusors terres
> plaiz et noises et mortés guerres,
> et les bestes granz et petites,
> la merci Dieu, seront bien quites.[2]

And in the Roman the Fox is several times tried for his crimes before the court;[3] as in our fable he uses his cunning in his defence, but in the Roman this succeeds, here not so.

---

1. ed. Arber, op. cit., p. 5.
2. Roques, III, ll. 4482-92; vol. ii, pp. 38-9. Cf. also the fable of Odo of Cheriton (Hervieux, iv, 361) beginning 'Rex animalium conuocauit omnia animalia bruta et constituit vt oscularentur adinuicem, vbicunque obuiarent, in signum federis, pacis et amoris.' And Bromyard, Summa Predicantium, I vii (Ipocris), 8.
3. Cf. Roques, I, ll. 1209 ff.; vol. i, pp. 41 ff. Also (in the Fox's absence) VII, ll. 6111 ff.; vol. iii, pp. 18 ff..

Having seen as far as possible what Henryson has taken from the tradition we can now examine what he has done with his material. But first, to remove confusion, I must comment on Stearns' only reference to the fable. It concerns the account of the ingratitude of Lawrence's son, an account which, he maintains, 'has little relevance to the fable itself'.[1] I hope to show that such a judgement is misguided but first I wish to question the interpretation he puts on the passage. He says 'This passage contains many details which appear to refer to some specific person';[2] no reason is given for this assumption and, in my opinion, there can be none: the 'characters' of both father and son are certainly closely observed; but so are the 'characters' of many of the animals in the Roman de Renard, for instance. Stearns goes on to point out parallels between the situation as described in the poem and the struggle between John, fourth lord of the Isles, and his son Angus. The difficulty is, however, that many of the points that Stearns quotes as parallels are not so at all. Angus was illegitimate, certainly, just as Father War is; but nowhere in our poem does Father War lead a revolt against his own father and defeat him; nor is there any parallel for the fact that 'the motive which had led Angus to revolt against his father was a resentment of the fact that John had subjected himself to James III'[3] or for the conclusion 'Thus, having defeated his father, Angus was free to violate the boundary treaties between John and the king.'[4] The Fox had not

1. Robert Henryson, op. cit., p. 18.
2. ibid., p. 19.
3. ibid., p. 20.
4. ibid., p. 20.

given away authority over his land; his son is merely pleased that now he will have possession of the lands - the natural transference of ownership from father to son on a father's death. Stearns continues: 'The rebellion of Angus against his father is an exception to the code of clan loyalty for which the age is noted, and makes it difficult to find any other historical analogy for Henryson's allusions.'[1] There is no question of clan loyalty in the poem and I fail to see that there are any allusions for which to find an historical analogy. Once again Stearns, presuming that Henryson is a political allegorist and satirist, has been mislead by his own preconceptions into falsifying the nature of the poetry which he claims to be discussing.

The action of the poem centres largely around the king's parliament and I wish therefore to discuss the Lion first of all. Henryson stresses both his grandeur and the utter subjection of the beasts to him. The Lion commands:

> We noble lyoun of all beistis king
> Greting to god ay leatand but ending
> To brutall beistis and Irrationall
> I send as to my subiectis grete and small.
>
> My celsitude and hie magnificence
> Lattis yow witt furth with incontinent
> Thinkis to morne with riall diligence
> Vpoun this hill to hald a parliament
> Straitlye thairfore I geve commandiment
> Ffor to compeir befoir my tribunall
> Vnder all pane and parrell that may fall (60-70)

We see stressed his royalty ('We' - the royal plural; 'king'; 'celsitude'; 'hie magnificence';[2] 'riall') and his authority

---

1. Robert Henryson, op. cit., p. 20.
2. Henryson uses similar phrasing to describe the majesty of the Lion in The Lyon and the Mouse (cf. ll. 116 and 169).

('subiectis'; 'straitlye ... I geve commandiment'; 'vnder all pane and parrell'); for those who place themselves in the world's power - the Moralitas (l. 295) tells us that the Lion represents the world[1]-, believing it to be sovereign, become completely subject to its sway.[2] In fact they are blinded by its seeming impressiveness and beauty (and by its pretended devotion, l. 61); they are 'brutall beistis' and 'irrationall', irrational in having given up their reason by following the world (an interesting comparison is with the second epistle of St. Peter ii, 12 where those 'qui post carnem in concupiscentia immunditae ambulant' (v. 10) are called 'velut irrationabilia pecora'), 'brutall' in being slaves to sin and their bodies (Prolog, 43-56), to the world:

> This Wolf I likkin unto Sensualitee
> As quhen lyke brutall beistis we accord
> Our mynd all to this warldeis vanitee
> Liking to tak and love him as our lord (309-12)

The poet continues his emphasis on the Lion's royalty and power:

> Thre leopardis come A crouin of massy gold
> Berand thaj brocht vnto that hillis hicht
> With Iaspis Iunyt and riall rubies rold
> And monye diuers dyamantis wele dicht
> With pollis proud a paljon doun thai picht
> And in that trone thair sat a wild lyon
> In rob riale with ceptur suerd and croun (78-84)

---

1. Although I discuss here the poem in relationship to the moralitas I fully realize that one's reaction while reading the poem for the first time may suggest a very different interpretation. I shall discuss this problem later.

2. We might compare with the following from Chaucer's translation of Boethius, Book IV, Prosa 6 (Robinson, p. 368): 'ryght so, by semblable reson, thilke thing that departeth ferrest fro the firste thoughte of God', (one might say, into this world) 'it is unfolden and summittid to grettere bondes of destyne'. We shall examine the linkage between the Lion and the idea of Fortune in our poem shortly.

Henryson's heraldic reference (a conflation of the royal arms of England and Scotland[1]) gives some indication of the power and sway of the Lion. (The fact that he is served by three leopards - aristocrats in the animal hierarchy - may remind us that the renowned of this world serve him; cf. ll. 295-8). More typically Henrysonian devices - alliteration; the use of adjectives and adverbs such as 'divers', 'mony', 'wele' - also contribute to the stress. The world *seems* magnificent, *seems* sovereign to its subjects; but the adjective 'wild' perhaps links him to the irrational beasts he rules reminding of the reality behind the façade. I shall return to the catalogue of beasts in a little while. Suffice it to emphasize now that the animals came 'for dreid of deid' (122), hurrying (124). They were afraid of the King and utterly subservient to him: 'Befoir thair lord ilkane thai lowtit law' (126). 'thair lord' - they belonged to him, accepted his values; there were none who refrained (ilkane):

> Seand thir beistis at his bidding boun
> He gave a braide and blenkit all about
> Than flattingis to his feit thai fell *all* doun
> Ffor dreid of deid thay drowpit *all in* dout (127-30)

Again their unanimity ('all', repeated) in fear, in complete submission, is stressed. The Lion is pleased:

> And bad thaim with ane countenance *full* sweit
> Be nocht afferit Bot stand upoun your feit
>
> I lat yow wit my mycht is merceabill
> and steris none that ar to me prostrat
> Angrye austerne and als vnameabill
> To all that standis aganis myne estait

---

1. Bruce Dickens, 'Contributions to the Interpretation of Middle Scots Texts', a letter in *T.L.S.* 21st February, 1924, p. 112. It does not seem to me that this device is used to accuse specific kings of worldliness; rather it is used to show the apparent respectability, the apparent magnificence and power of the world and its passing pleasures.

> I rug I ryve all beistis that makis debait
> Aganis the mycht of my magnefecence
> Se none pretend to pryde in my presence (132-40)

This is the speech of a tyrant: we note the constant recurrence of the personal pronouns and possessive adjectives ('I', 'my', 'me', 'myne'); the demand for absolute obedience and the threat of punishment (the alliteration on 'st' through lines 135-7 links, and heightens, a contrast: those who obey completely are left alone; those who disobey or oppose are severely punished; the alliterating, balanced 'I rug, I ryve' emphasizes this as does the repeated threat 'angrye, austerne and als vnmeabill'). Only those who give complete obedience are tolerated. He is a tyrant and he is the figure of Fortune:

> The lawest heir I may rycht sone vp hie
> And mak him maister ouer yow all I may
> The Dromadair gif he will mak deray
> Or the greit camell thocht thai be neuer sa crous
> I can thame law as litill as ane mows (143-7).

Henryson gives us a sense of the king's unlimited power: the repeated 'I may'; 'I can'; in spite of all opposition ('thai be neuer sa crous) he can do his will 'rycht sone'. There is implied, I am certain, a comparison with Fortune's ability to make high or low at will. The concept of Fortune, and her instability, is introduced into the poem in two other ways: by the setting and by the catalogue of beasts:

> The morowing come and phebus with his bemys
> Consumit had the mysty cloudis gray
> The ground was grene and as the gold it glemis
> With gresis growand gudelie grete and gay
> The spice than spred to spring on euery spray
> The lark the mauis and the merle so hee
> Swetlye can sing trippand fra tre to tre (71-7)

Henryson, like most other late mediæval writers, always uses this traditional setting iconographically,[1] to remind us of the vanity of the world; it appears beautiful now (just as the Lion's apparel _seems_ beautiful), but the beauty of Nature fades - it is transitory, changing, like Fortune, like the world. The significance of the imagery is made explicit in _The Lyon and the Mous_:

> The fair forrest with levis loun and le
> With fowlis song and flouris ferly sueit
> Is bot the warld and his prosperite
> as fals plesandis myngit with cair repleit
> Rycht as the ros with frost and wintir weit
> faidis so dois the warld And thame dissavis
> quhilk in thair lust confidens havis (260-6)

The introduction of Phebus (l. 71) may also be of significance, with its suggestion of paganism - the idolatry, and futility, of worshipping this world.

A comparison of the beast catalogue in our poem with others - it is a common device in mediæval literature - is also interesting in our consideration of the similarities between King Lion and his subjects and Fortune and her servants. There is a similar catalogue in _The Kingis Quair_,[2] stanzas 155-7. Gregory Smith states that 'The correspondence between Henryson and the author of _The Kingis Quair_ may be only accidental'.[3] This seems unlikely for of the thirty animals mentioned in _The Kingis Quair_ catalogue only five (the lioness, the elk, the sable, the 'foynȝee' - beech martin - and the ermine) are not mentioned in Henryson's fable. Whatever the relationship between the texts may be, in

---

1. Cf. _The Lyon and the Mous_ ll. 8-20, 260-6; _Orpheus and Eurydice_ ll. 90-5.
2. _Kingis Quair_, ed. W.W. Skeat (S.T.S., 1884)
3. _Poems_, _op. cit._, i, 16 note to l. 878.

both Fortune is presented in connection with the catalogue. Of course there is a different attitude to Fortune: in The Kingis Quair the narrator has come to terms with it[1] while in our poem Fortune represents the values of this false world which must be avoided. Other places where a catalogue of animals is used in conjunction with the concept of Fortune occur in The Book of the Duchess (ll. 427 ff.) and The Parliament of Fowls (ll. 323 ff.); again, this interpretation has different emphases[2] but the corresponlences are noteworthy, reinforcing our conception of the animals in our poem as under the power of the world, of Fortune. The catalogue itself provides several points of interest. Firstly, in its composition. Henryson begins his list of animals with a group which illustrates

> how mony men in operatioun
> ar lyk to beistis in thair conditioun (Prolog 48-9)

- men who have become animals or who are, in nature, part man part beast. Thus the Minotaur, the offspring of Pasiphae, Minos' queen, and a snow-white bull - the unnatural product of lust. The werewolf too fits his theme perfectly - a man becoming a wolf. The other two monsters provide some difficulty. The Bellerophant that 'beist of bastarde' (93) cannot be Bellerophans, who refused to commit adultery with Anteia[3] - scarcely the action of a brutal beast. Charles Elliott suggests:

---

1. Cf. John MacQueen, 'Tradition and the Interpretation of The Kingis Quair', op. cit., p. 124.
2. ibid., pp. 122-4.
3. Harvey Wood quotes a sixteenth century version of the story (Poems and Fables, op. cit., pp. 234-5, note to l. 888). It is to be found, in varying forms, in medieval exempla collections, e.g. B.M. MS. Royal 12 E xxi, fol. 47b; B.M. MS. Harl. 7322, fol 99a.

> Presumably Bellerophant is the Chimaera, slain by Bellerophan by the devising of Iobates, King of Lydia, acting on the request of Proteus, King of Ephyra, whose queen Anteia had played Potiphar's wife to Bellerophan. It is a beast of bastardrie because it is of 'mixed' form, with heads of lion, goat and dragon.[1]

The Chimaera's parents are also of interest: it was the child of Typhon (an earth-born monster of many heads, hands and feet from different types of animals) and Echidna (half-woman, half serpent).[2] The description of Pegasus is also perhaps a little puzzling. Henryson describes it as

> the pegas perolus
> Transformit be assent of socerre (94-5)

Charles Elliott writes

> Pegasus was perillous to the Chimaera, being instrumental in its slaying. The assent of sorcerie probably refers to the effects of the golden bit, given by Minerva to Bellerophan, whereby the steed assumed a tractable nature for the enterprise of killing the three headed beast.[3]

There is another possibility - perhaps Henryson is referring to the origin of the Pegasus, which sprang from the trunk of the Gorgon Medusa, with whom Poseidon (Neptune) had had intercourse in the form of a horse or bird, when her head was cut off by Perseus. If this suggestion is accepted we again find the theme reinforced: the evil mortal changed (transformit) into an animal: the man in whose mind sin is so fixed that he 'in brutall beist be transformat' (Prolog, 5, 6). Perhaps the fact that special mention is made of

---

1. *Poems*, op. cit., p. 137 note to l. 888.
2. See *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, s.v. Chimaera, Typhon, Echidna.
3. *Poems*, op. cit., p. 138 note to ll. 889-90.

the mole's blininess (120-1) is significant reminding as it does of the attitude of the worldly to light.[1] The second point of interest in the catalogue is the poet's stress on the large number and variety of animals who hasten in obedience to the Lion (the World). The animals selected are of all kinds, the common (aiss, mwll, hors, gait, scheip), the foreign (oliphant, dromodare, leopard, panther, aip) and all ranks. Number and variety are stressed: the 'hors of everye kind' (104); 'bayth ottour aip and pennyt porcupyne' (109); with 'doggis all dyvers and deferent' (114); 'eik the lerron' (119). Unbroken lists also convey the impression of large numbers:

> The Iolye Ionet and the gentill steid
> The aiss the mwll the hors of everye kind
> The da the re the hornit hart the hynd
>
> The bull the beir the bugill and the bair
> The wodwys wildcat and the wild wolfyne (103-7)

The whole catalogue is marked by most intensive alliteration which, it seems to be, through its repetitive emphasis, gives an intensely cumulative effect. We may note too the role of the narrator intensifying this stress:

> And quhat thai ware As tod Laurence me lerd[2]
> I sall rehers a pairt of every kynd
> Als far as now occurris to my mynd (89-91)

Similarly:

> And mony ane kynd of beist that I nocht knaw
> Befoir thair Lord ilkane thai lowtit law (125-6)[3]

---

1. Cf. my discussion of ll. 1-14 of The Fox and the Wolf, pp. 195-6 and of the opening stanzas of The Swallow and Othir Birdis, pp. 143-7.

2. Henryson is seemingly using 'Lowrence' as a generic name. This Fox was named 'Father were' (6); his father was named 'Lowrence' specifically but he had been killed before the action of this fable begins.

3. This means of expressing large numbers was common in medieval poetry. Some form of it is to be found, for instance, in the other beast catalogues referred to earlier. Smith (Poems, op. cit., i, 16 note to l. 878) points out the very close resemblances between the use of this device in our poem and its use in The Kingis Quair, ed. Skeat, op. cit., stanzas 154 and 158.

The third emphasis in the catalogue is the speed with which the animals came in obedience to and in fear of their king ... So 'the sparth furth culd hir speid' (100); the reindeer overcame many difficulties to be present: 'The rayndeer ran throuch rever ron and reid' (102). And:

> The musk the litill mows with all hir mycht
> In haist haykit vnto that hillis hycht (123-4)

So the catalogue of animals plays an important part in the thematic development of the poem - it suggests the concept of Fortune and the complete subservience of all animals (i.e. man in his degenerate state) to the King (the World). Its importance is far greater than Wood's 'the interest of things seen and noted';[1] indeed one may doubt whether it can be said to have this interest for the description seems iconographic rather than realistic.

To return to the King. After his threats he demands that the animals cease from preying upon each other (148-51). In the context of the complete poem this passage may seem to provide a difficulty: in the moralitas Henryson interprets the Lion as the world, something evil, to be avoided: for instance monks are 'Abstrackit fra this warldis wretchidnes' (306). We have seen how details of the fable have been moulded by the poet to fit this interpretation. But the law of ll. 148-51 seems commendable, calculated to gain the reader's sympathy. There are, however, reasons why it is perfectly appropriate to the King and to the poem as a whole: it fits, of course, the action of the poem for later the Fox will be convicted for this very offence. The World and worldly rulers do have certain acceptable standards.

---

1. Poems and Fables, op. cit., p. xvii.

There is another possible intended effect: in our first reading of the poem (I can only record my own initial reaction which may, of course, have been produced by an incomplete response, especially to the iconographic nature of some of the imagery) we immediately sympathize with the King; few of the details given will lead us to question this reaction for many of them are, perhaps intentionally, ambiguous - for instance, the Lion's apparent recognition of God and the law; his power and majesty: 'brutall beistis' may need such a king to guide them. The Fox's attitude to the Lion[1] and his final punishment reinforce our first impression; thus we criticize the mare (which, after all, is merely 'ane grey stude meir', 182, a pitiful creature in comparison with the handsome and powerful King) for failing to come to court. But the moralitas causes us to look at the poem in a completely new way, at least as far as the King and the mare are concerned - the Fox is condemned whatever way we look at the poem. The poet has shown us our own predicament: we too esteem the world as important and consider those who oppose it wrong; the shock of the unexpected interpretation

---

1. In Bannatyne this is shown by the Fox's thought and action (ll. 160-75). The other manuscripts provide two additional stanzas, following l. 175, of direct condemnation by the author (Wood, stanzas 139-40, ll. 971-84). The alliterative pattern seems Henrysonian though the metre is very rough indeed. For instance:

   'Fairweill thy fame, now gone is all thy grace
   The Phisnomie, the favour off thy face
   For thy defence is foull and diffigurate
   Brocht to the licht, basit, blunt and blait (974-7)

   It is strange to find the author praising the court explicitly (ane Roy Renyeit with richteousness, 972); this may be intended to present a blind narrator, unaware of the implications of his actions; it is perhaps intentionally misleading. In any case it is offset by l. 981: 'The worship of this warld is went away' - even the 'brutall beistis and irrational' of this world cannot abide the Fox's misdeeds.

is perhaps an important part of the poem. We have seen this device used in The Cok and the Jewell and shall see it in The Wolf and the Wedder: in dealing with the latter fable I argued that Henryson had manipulated his source to secure this very effect. Perhaps he has done likewise in The Fox tryed before the Lyone for Odo provides the expected moralitas:

> Mistice. Per Leonem moraliter intelligo racionem que de omnibus que fecerat homo disponit ... per Asinum carnem pondorosum (sic) et delicias appetentem, que racioni contempnit obedire ...

It is interesting that the Lion appears to be even more imposing and praiseworthy in our fable than in Odo's - this could be Henryson's own change to mislead us, a change made in very much the same way as that in The Wolf and the Wedder. There is however, a serious objection to the contention that such an effect was intended. It would require the audience to be oblivious to the iconographic nature of much of the imagery: the setting, the Fortune figure, the procession of beasts. It seems scarcely likely that any intelligent contemporary reader would have been so.

Such is the setting of the Fox's actions; we must next examine his 'character'. As I said earlier I believe Stearns to be wrong when he states that the introductory section to the poem 'has little relevance to the fable itself'. In fact it provides an interpretation for the Fox's 'character' that explains his action in the rest of the poem. The Fox's nature is shown by comparison with his father's; Fader Were was to be still more adept at similar crimes. He too 'lufit wele with pultry tig and tere'(7). And:

> Dreiand nothing that samin lyife to lede
> In stowth and reif as he had done before
> Bot to the end entent he tuke no more (27-9)

In the previous fable (l. 73) his father had confessed to 'reif and stowth'. Fader Were intended to follow his father's example, neglecting the warning of his death - he was as blind as his father to the realities of life; he would suffer similar punishment as a result. So as Lowrence 'deid for his misdede' (1) ... 'Be suddane schote for deidis odious' (24),[1] Father Ware too was to die a criminal's death. The enormity of his baseness is shown in his attitude to his father: he

> Tuke vp his hede ayne on his kneis ffel doun
> Thankand grete god of that conclusioun (18-19)

And, his cheerfulness shown by his use of an almost meaningless proverb ('Ay rynnis the fox als lang as he fut hais,' 32), commending the body to the devil's care, he threw it into a peat hole; a sign, ironically, of 'faderlye pitee'.[2] The narrator comments:

> O fulich man ploungit in warldlynes
> To conqueist wrangwis guidis gold or rent
> To put thy saule in pane and hevynes
> To riche thyne air quhilk efter thow be went
> Haue he thy gude he takis small entent
> To sing or say for thy saluatioun ... (36-41)

The passage of course contains thoughts commonly expressed;[3] but

---

1. I adopt the reading of all the other texts here; the Bannatyne reading - 'for dede is odious' - seems indefensible, an easy mistake for an unthinking scribe to make.

2. The reading of the other early versions - 'naturall pietie' - is interesting; such an action is perhaps natural to a natural son, the product of unlicensed lust ('a brutall beist and irrational').

3. Many examples might be cited from classical times downward. I shall restrict myself to a sermon parallel, from W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., p. 86. Though not exact it is of interest:
(Continued overleaf)

the poet certainly uses his material in an uncommon way for it is here, in one sense at least, ironic. The Fox was certainly 'ploungit in warldlynes'; he put his 'saule in pane and hevynes'. But, as far as the reader can see, he has not done so in trying to enrich his heir; he has done so in trying to fulfil his own worldly desires. Even by normal worldly standards - trying to enrich one's heir - Lowrence was culpable; his son was to be even worse.

Fadar Were is next shown at the court of King Noble afraid of recognition yet afraid of the consequences of absence for he is, of course, a subject of this world, the world of bestial humanity. The Fox wondered how to save himself 'with falsheid' (170); before so pleased with himself, rejoicing in his possessions, now he pulled his hood over his eye 'for dreddour' (174), hiding behind the other animals. He has inherited another of his father's characteristics: self excuse through flattery:

> A lord mercye lo I have bot ane E
> Hurt in the hanch and crukit ye may se
> The wolf is bettir in ambassadry
> And mair cunning in clergye than I (186-9)

He showed his respect (A lord), appealed to the King's judgement ('ye may se'), stressed his injuries, assumed ignorance and modesty - all techniques his father used to deceive Chantecler and Friar Wolf

---

And on this wise Crist had many folowers whils that he fedde hem; but ther were but fewe that wold die for hym ne with hym. Like one the same wize it fareth be frendes of this world when that thei com to the a-counte of dethe and shall rekene. Ther euery man taketh of othur what that thei may stell and hent awey; and anon as thei be dede and passed owt of this world than thei be putt owt of mynde ... But the cause of frenshippe is richesse. Than cesaynge the cause of rychesse cessesse the effecte of frenshippe.

Waitskaith. Fader here also flattered the Wolf in order to avoid responsibility (202-5). He was 'a fraudfull fox' (232), 'this traytour tod this tyran and this tike' (236), breaking the newly made laws yet returning to kneel before the king (240). Kneeling is the position taken by all the subjects; the Lamb's mother also adopts it when she comes to complain (260) of 'This harlot here this hursoun hund of hell' (262). The description is particularly appropriate: these are obviously words of abuse, but they are also literally correct: the Fox was, as we have seen a 'hursoun'; his father had gone to hell: he, worse, was to follow presumably. Again we are shown the Fox's mastery of flattery and self-excusing (269-73). But his flattery failed as, in the final analysis, had his father's; and he, like his father was punished by death; and, as his father was 'naikit' (17), so the Judge commanded those who bound him to 'tak of all his clathis' (282). The Fox was worthy of death even by the standards of this world.

We have examined the King and his court, and the 'character' of the Fox. The other 'characters' worthy of mention are the Wolf and the mare. The Wolf too has characteristics similar to those of the Wolf in the previous fable: he succumbs easily to the Fox's flattery (211-12). In our present fable he suffers for his pride (225-7). The attitude of the court to the Wolf is of some interest. He seems to be a source of amusement to them (255-8), yet he becomes a Doctor of Divinity ('new maid' 283) - another similarity with the previous fable - surely a reflection on the nature of the court. The mare's importance is twofold:

firstly, in appearance she is merely 'ane gray stude meir' (182) in comparison with the noble and finely arrayed Lion (for worldly things are often externally attractive, those of spiritual value often repellent). Secondly, the mare is clever enough to outwit the ambassadors of the World - in Henryson's poetry learning is usually allied with correct values (cf. The Swallow and Othir Birdis).

The moralitas opens with an interesting statement of intention:

> Rycht as the mynoure In his mynorall
> Ffaire gold with fyre may fra the lede wele wyn
> Rycht sa vnder a fable figurall
> A sad sentence may seke and efter fyne
> As daylie dois thir doctouris of dyvyn
> Apertly be oure leving can applye
> And preue thare preching be a poesye (288-94)

Gold (the moral) is won from lead (the fable), the image is seemingly taken from alchemy - what is precious is won, with difficulty, from what is mere dross - just as the husk is pierced to reach the kernel within (Prolog, 15-21). He who does this is like the preacher: the fable becomes an exemplum ('preue thare preching be a poesye')[1] the lessons of which we may apply to our own lives. The fourth line of the stanza is perhaps a reminiscence of part of St. Matthew vii, 7: 'quaerite et invenietis'.[2] As I

---

1. We may recall the phrase ending the previous fable in the Bannatyne version: 'Explicit exemplum veritatis et falsitatis'.
2. Bede's comment (in his Matthaei Evangelium Expositio) on the verse is interesting:

> Petite et dabitur vobis et reliqua. Petitio pertinet ad impetrandam sanitatem firmitatemque animi, ut ea quae praecipiuntur implere possimus; inquisitio autem ad inveniendam veritatem. Cum quis autem veram viam invenerit, perveniet ad ipsam possessionem, quae tamen pulsanti aperietur. (P.L. xcii, cols. 36-7).

have already explained I believe the second stanza - with its interpretation of the Lion as the World - to be central to our understanding of the poem as a whole. We note how the poet suggests the huge numbers following the World (heavy alliteration; the 'Sum ... sum' construction we have noticed before):

> To quhom lowtis bayth Emperour and King
> ... Sum for to reule and sum to rax and regne
> Sum gadderis gere sum gold sum vther gude
> To wyn this warld sum wirkis as thay wer wode (296-301)

The remainder of the moralitas is, however, of a rather different kind. Henryson isolates one particular episode - the mare's hoof episode - and gives it a particular treatment. One could perhaps say that what we have been discussing is the literal - perhaps the moral - level. At this level the interpretation of the mare's hoof episode would be that sinful men tempt the virtuous into the service of this world. But, in the moralitas, Henryson discusses the episode on the allegorical level: the mare represents contemplatives,[1] her hoof the thought of death, the Wolf sensuality, the Fox temptation.[2] This interpretation certainly does not apply to other parts of the poem: it would be vain to say, for instance, that the world laughs at sensuality and kills temptation. The final stanza is not an interpretation of the poem but a prayer arising from that interpretation - such an ending is, of course, found in several of the Fabillis.

I think it can be fairly claimed then, that Henryson, again, has used his sources in a highly creative manner.

---

1. Fables giving advice to remain in the cloister are also to be found in the Dialogus Creaturarum, dial. 15 and 16, ed. Graesse, op. cit., pp. 152-7. They are not directly relevant, being stories of precious jewels and from the Vitae Patrum, but it is interesting to find this subject dealt with in a collection of animal stories apart from Henryson's.

2. Warnings against sensuality, worldliness, sudden death are of course recurring themes throughout Henryson's poetry.

(xii) The Fox, the Wolf and the Cadger

Gregory Smith, writing of The Fox, the Wolf and the Cadger, stated: 'the source of this fable has not been traced.'[1] Harvey Wood, in his first edition, repeated this assertion adding 'Professor Bruce Dickins suggests that it may be an elaboration of the Bestiary story of the Fox feigning death in order to catch carrion crows or raven.'[2] Gavin Bone pointed out hints of our story in Caxton's The History of Reynard the Fox and suggested that Henryson merely needed such hints to inspire him.[3] Lately David K. Crowne has accepted this suggestion.[4] In his second edition[5] Wood claimed that Henryson's story is a combination of two episodes from the Roman de Renard: that in which the Fox lay down as dead on the road, was thrown on to the merchant's cart and there ate the fish - there is no mention of a Wolf - and that in which the Wolf seized a bacon dropped by a labourer chasing the Fox, who had feigned death; the Wolf later refused the Fox his share.[6] But as early as 1885 Diebler[7] noted what seems to be the

---

1. Poems, op. cit., i, 30, note to l. 1944.
2. The Poems and Fables of Robert Henryson (Edinburgh and London, 1933), p. 245, note to l. 1952.
3. 'The Source of Henryson's Fox, Wolf and Cadger', R.E.S. x (1934), 319-20.
4. 'A Date for the Composition of Henryson's Fables', op. cit., p. 584.
5. Poems and Fables, op. cit., p. xli.
6. Roques III, ll. 12933-13096; vol. v, pp. 1-6. Roques XVII, ll. 15220 ff.; vol. v, pp. 67 ff.. In Martin's numbering of the branches these stories occur in branches III and V. Wood's reference to 'huitième aventure' and 'vingt quatrième aventure' appears to be derived from the numbering in the modernized Roman de Renart, texte de Paulin Paris revu, augmenté et annoté par J. de Foucault (s.l., 1949).
7. Henrisone's Fabeldichtungen, op. cit., pp. 64-70. He referred to 'branche X' for this is the tenth episode in Méon's edition. Throughout this chapter I shall use Méon's edition for this branche (see ll. 3919 ff.; vol. i, pp. 147 ff.) since it is the only edition to contain the full version: as yet Roques

(Continued overleaf)

main source - branche XIV of the Roman de Renard - where the story is told in full. Janet Smith noted Diebler's reference[1].

But before I go on to examine Henryson's poem in relation to the Roman de Renard story, I must make three provisos. Firstly, in at least one place Henryson is closer to branche III than to branche XIV. Diebler pointed out these similarities.[2] Henryson:

> And with ane swak he [the Cadger] swang him
> [the Fox] on the creillis (126)
> ... And with his teith the stoppell or he [the Fox] stint,
> Pullit out, and syne the hering ane and ane
> Out of the creillis he swakkit doun gude wane (129-31)

Branche III:

> Sor le panier se jut adenz,
> Si en a .1. ouvert par senz
> Et si en a, bien le sachiez,
> plus de xxx harans sachiez (13017-20)

In several manuscripts 'par senz' (13018) appears as 'as (or 'au') dens',[3] providing a parallel for Henryson's version. At this point Branche XIV reads:

> Et li charretier l'a chargié
> Si l'a covert d'une banastre, ...
> ... Et si i avoit un panier
> Où il avoit bien deus millier
> De harens frès: à bone estraine
> Mengié en a une dozaine
> Tant que tot ot le ventre plain; (3982-9)

Secondly, though the hint from Caxton cannot be regarded as the sole source - if it be a source at all - it poses several important problems. Isengrim had complained to Noble of Reynart's behaviour towards him and asked for punishment. But Grymbart the Dasse,

---

has not published branche XIV and the manuscript used by Martin contains the latter half only of the story - he adds the first in his textual notes from MSS. used by Méon (iii, 529 309 ff.).

1. The French Background of Middle Scots Literature, op. cit., pp. 60-1.
2. Henrisone's Fabeldichtungen, op. cit., p. 66.
3. See 'Notes Critiques et Variantes', Roques, v, 80.

Reynart's nephew, defended him telling of Isengrim's behaviour towards Reynart:

> Yet wil I telle some poyntes that I wel knowe
> know not ye how ye mysdeled on the plays whiche
> he threwe doun fro the carre whan ye folowed
> after fro ferre And ye ete the good plays
> allone and gaf hym nomore than the grate or bones
> whyche ye myght not ete yourself.[1]

We have here the same situation as in Henryson's poem: the Fox on the cart throwing down fish to the Wolf. Now in the Roman de Renard versions the Fox had eaten his fill (une douzaine, 3988 and 4008; plus de xxx, 13020) and carried away one (3998) or several (13024 ff.) fish - there is no mention of him throwing fish from the cart, nor of the Wolf following behind. Caxton's version is as we have seen a translation of the Middle Dutch Reinaert Historie; the section in which we are interested occurs in the first part, taken from Van der Vos Reinaerde, which is based on branche I of the Roman de Renard. However, though Grymbart's speech defending his uncle is to be found in the Roman de Renard there is no mention of this incident there and I have been unable to find its origin. If there were an original story which the writer of Van der Vos Reinaerde used did Henryson know it? If he did he has modified it considerably: the fish are plaice, not Henryson's herring (or the herring of branche XIV); the Wolf retains the fish which Reynard had 'earned' - Henryson presents the Fox as nominally 'earning' the fish for the Wolf but eventually taking it all. If Henryson knew this postulated original he has changed it to resemble more closely branche XIV of the Roman de Renard in which the second trick allows the Fox, not the Wolf,

1. ed. Arber, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

to abscond with the fish. Alternatively, has the story as hinted at in Caxton 'inspired' Henryson in his reworking of the Roman de Renard story? Which leads to the third proviso I wish to make. As we shall see Henryson's account merely follows the outlines of the story told in branche XIV of the Roman de Renard. Many of the details are different, some even of the most important events.

A study of these three provisos forces us to one of two conclusions: either Henryson used some source which I have been unable to find or he has, consciously or unconsciously - for the story may have been written by recall rather than by working with a text - reworked the story considerably, using material from other versions. We are faced with a similar problem as when dealing with The Twa Myis. With Henryson's undisputed talent for 'recreation' in mind I should probably suggest the second alternative to be more likely but I must stress the very tentative nature of this suggestion.

There is another point which must be raised before we compare Henryson's poem with the Roman de Renard. Bauman points out that this fable is very like a folk tale, 'which has been in European oral tradition since before the Saxons settled in Germany'.[1] But again we have literary evidence which is as near Henryson's poem as the folk-tale tradition. The question must be left open of

---

1. 'The Folk tale and Oral Tradition in the Fables of Robert Henryson', op. cit.. The tale is type 1 in A. Aarne The Types of the Folk tale, a classification and bibliography tr. and enlarged by S. Thompson, 2nd revision (F.F. Communications Vol. 75, no. 184, Helsinki, 1961).

course but, as I have constantly implied, one of the chief impressions of Henryson is that of a cultivated literary artist of wide reading. The wish to ally his work with folk-tale sources (as that to see it as popular, rustic poetry) would seem to be part of a recurrent romantic tradition in nineteenth and twentieth century European criticism - we see it for example in the study of Beowulf and the Roman de Renard - which would wish to democratize mediæval society, which is basically anti-intellectual in outlook: a study of the psychological basis of such criticism would prove of great interest.

We can now proceed to examine Henryson's poem in relation to branche XIV of the Roman de Renard. Our story there is part of a general episode concerning the relationship between Renart and Isengrim's brother Primaut. Renart discovered a box of communion wafers dropped by a priest. He enjoyed eating them and gave some to Primaut who happened to come up. Primaut wanted more so the two animals planned to celebrate mass at a local church - Renart tonsured his confrère, dressed him in mass vestments and suggested that he ring the church bells. Then the Fox escaped before the priest came and summoned his parishioners to waylay the 'devil'. Primaut was beaten and blamed Renart but he, as ever, convinced the Wolf of his innocence. The two animals sold the vestments to a priest who gave them a gosling in exchange. When Primaut refused Renart his share he came away disconsolate but, seeing the fish merchants, he saw how to ease his great hunger and so the story as retold by Henryson begins.

The first seventy-seven lines, which are not to be found in this context in the _Roman de Renard_, seem to be made up from a composite of episodes in the _Roman de Renard_ and characteristics of the Fox used in other fables by Henryson. The episode obviously exemplifies the moralitas:

> And as the Foxe with dissimulance and gyle
> Gart the Wolff wene to haif worschip for ever,
> Richt swa this warld with vane glore for ane quhyle
> Flatteris with folk, as thay suld failye never ... (267-70)

The nearest parallel is to be found in branche V of the _Roman_. Isengrim meets Renart and threatens vengeance for the way the Fox had treated his family. So:

> Renart entent c'on li promest,
> la queue entre les gambes met,
> Ver son oncle mou s'umilie
> et doucement merci li crie:
> "Oncles, fait-il, l'an dit au plait:
> Nus n'amande s'il ne mesfait;
> S'a amande m'en loist venir,
> ferai la vos a vos plaissir (15187-94)

But Isengrim rebuffed his plea, attacked and almost killed him. The Wolf, thinking him dead, became sorry for his action; Renart, soon recovered, rebuked his enemy for oppressing the innocent. Seeing a man carrying bacon, flattering and crafty as ever, he appealed to Isengrim's greed:

> "Oncels, dist-il, laissier m'aler,
> car miaus vos porroiz saouler
> dou grant bacon a ce vilain,
> Onquenuit et ore et demain,
> Que vos ne feries de moi
> et je vos en afi ma foi,
> Se orendroit ne le vos rant,
> Ci revandrai a vos presant
> dont porriez faire vos plaisir,
> de mon cors et tot vo desir. (15227-36)

So the Fox went off to feign death as I described earlier. We have here perhaps the germ of the idea; but Henryson portrays

also a long verbal dispute between the two animals - this dispute has many similarities with other passages in The Fabillis as we shall see in analyzing the flattery and deceitfulness of the Fox and the Wolf's response to these tricks. The poet shows us the Wolf living in 'ane wildernes' (1). Perhaps there is some significance in the interpretation in The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman:

> The wodds waist quhairin wes the Wolff wyld
> Ar wickit riches, quhilk all men gaipis to get (211-2)

He was a 'revand Wolff' (3), thriving ('maid him weill to ffair', 4) on what he could thieve ('purches', 3), strong and merciless ('Wes nane sa big about him he wald spair', 5). And he enjoyed being flattered. The first characteristic of the Fox - we should perhaps constantly remember that in the moralitas he is the world - to be mentioned is that he is an imposter ('fenyeit to be schent', 9). He 'bad the Wolff gude day', we notice, with 'ane bek'. The Wolf was glad to see him (12) - to see the world. And, in princely condescension he:

> Syne loutit doun and tuke him be the hand
> 'Ryse up, Lowrence, I leif the for to stand' (13-14)

We must compare with the behavious of the Fox in The Fox and the Wolf:

> Seand the wolf this wylie tratour tod
> on kneis fell with hud in to his nek
> welcome my gaistly fadir vndir god
> q he with mony binge and mony bek (57-60)

There too, the Wolf enjoyed being flattered (ll. 71-2). The Fox in The Fox and the Cook also fell to his knees to flatter (37 and 177). In both these fables, too, the Fox constantly addressed the Wolf as 'Schir'; in our fable he adopted the same practice

(ll. 19, 26, 31, 38, 50, 61, 73, 92, etc.). A good instance of the method of 'debate' - which, it must be stressed, has many similarities to that in the Roman de Renard - is provided by the fifth stanza:

> 'Yis' (quod the Wolff) 'throw buskis and throw brais,
> Law can thow lour to cum to thy Intent.'
> 'Schir' (said the Foxe), 'ye wait well how it gais;
> Ane lang space ffra thame thay will feill my sent,
> Then will thay eschaip[1] suppois I suld be schent;
> And I am schamefull ffor to cum behind thame
> In to the feild thocht I suld sleipand find thame (29-35)

We may note, first, the literary nature of the argument: the phrase 'throw buskis and throw brais' is found several times in Henryson;[2] heavy alliteration is another characteristic. We note the Fox's technique of flattery - the 'Schir', the appeal to the Wolf's own reason (ye wait well how it gais), the attempt to show himself virtuous (I am schamefull ffor to cum behind thame). Again, the two latter techniques are found elsewhere: the first in, for instance, The Fox and the Wolf (ll. 97, 105, etc.), the second in, for instance, The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman (ll. 89, 118-9). But, in this case, the Wolf realized the Fox's plans (le, ginnes, senyes, falset); later he was blind to the most deceitful, most harmful trick of all. He, like many of Henryson's 'characters' - often blameworthy - resorted to proverbs:

> Bot all thy senyes sall not availl the,
> About the busk with wayis thocht thow wend;
> Falset will failye ay at the latter end[3]
> To bow at bidding and byde not quhill thow brest ...[4] (45-8)

---

1. The original reading here may have been 'schaip' allowing perfect scansion and effective alliteration.
2. Cf. The Twa Myis, l. 5, The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman, l. 147.
3. Henryson uses this again in The Fox and the Cook, l. 172. L. 46 too, although I know of no other parallel in Middle English literature, was almost certainly proverbial as it is now. We should note the frequency of alliteration in such proverbs: this feature was part of their memorableness.
4. Wood (Poems and Fables, op. cit., p. 245 note to l. 1998) notes the occurrence of a similar proverb in Fergusson (1641 edition) 184.

The Fox used religion for his own ends (50-2)[1]: the World often <u>seems</u> religious. Of course, he emphasized, if it were not Lent he would serve to the best of his ability: 'To beir your office than wald I not set by' (56). But the Wolf was not to be fooled - not as yet, anyway; again he found a proverb to help him to attain his ends:

> 'Than' (said the Wolff), in wraith 'wenis thow with wylis
> And with thy mony mowis me to mat?
> It is ane auld Dog, doutles, that thow begylis
> Thow wenis to draw the stra befoir the Cat[2] (57-60)

But the Fox's feigning, and pretended subservience did not fail him: he claimed that if he had meant to trick the Wolf he deserved to be hung (61-3), a statement which both flatters and pleads innocence. Again he professes subservience and apparently capitulates:

> Bot now I se he is ane fule perfay
> That with his maister fallis in ressoning (64-5)

Here the Fox was using a valid point for his illegitimate purposes as the Wolf did in <u>The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman</u> (ll. 36 ff.). We compare the moralitas of <u>The Wolf and the Wedder</u>:

> Thairfoir I counsell men of everilk stait
> To knaw thame self, and quhome thay suld forbeir,
> And fall not with thair better in debait (155-7)

So the Fox, feigning, promised complete service (ll. 68-9: 'in all, ... quhat ever, ... on nichtis or on dayis'). The Fox pretended

---

1. Wood (<u>Poems and Fables</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 245, note to l. 2001) compares the passage with an extract he quotes from Heywood's <u>Proverbs</u>; with Fergusson (1641 edition) 904; with Chaucer's <u>Hous of Fame</u>, ll. 1783-5; and with lines he quotes from a MS. in Trinity College, Cambridge (c. 1260). Such comparison reinforces the concept of Henryson as a 'literary man', adapting his material from other literary sources rather than from 'observation' or 'imagination'.

2. Wood (<u>Poems and Fables</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 245, note to l. 2010) refers to Fergusson (1641 edition) 519.

annoyance at being required to take an oath; he swore truth till death, by Jupiter - he had earlier been talking of Lent. In _The Mous and the Paddock_ the Paddock also, after earlier using Biblical examples to support his 'reasoning', swore by 'Jupiter of Nature god and king' (93). And the Fox again used proverbs to further his interests:

> For he that will not laubour and help him selff,
> In to thir dayis, he is not worth ane fle; (94-5)

So in this added introduction Henryson has shown us the wickedness, the self-importance and the self-deceit of the Wolf, the flattery, the pretence, the tricks of the Fox.

We join here the tale as told in branche XIV of the _Roman_. Some of the descriptive details are similar:

> El chemin se met de travers
> Si s'estoit couchiez à envers;
> Et prent les denz à rechinier
> Por plutost la gent enginier.
> Si a son balevre retret
> Les eulz clot et la langue tret:
> En l'ardille s'est toollies
> Tant que il estoit toz soillies.
> A merveille ressemble mort, ... (3951-9)

Henryson mentions the Fox's tongue hanging out ('ane hand breid off his heid', 104) and his apparent death. But many details are different - in Henryson's poem the whites of the eyes are turned up rather than the eyes closed, there is no mention of rolling in the mud. In Henryson's version there is but one merchant, in both branche XIV and branche III, two. In the account of the theft of the bacon, and in a rather similar story in Jacquemart Gieléé's _Renart le Nouvel_,[1] in which Renart finds himself, after feigning death, tied onto a horse next to the heron he desired

---

1. ed. H. Roussel, _op. cit._, ll. 3234 ff..

there is one man only. But at this point these two stories are so far removed from Henryson's - and from the two closest versions in the *Roman* - that I think there is no question of influence. Perhaps it may be suggested that Henryson changed his source to suit his moralitas; there is but one Death. To continue comparison with Branche XIV, some of the merchant's speech has similarities with that in the *Roman*:

> At the nixt bait, in Faith, ye sall be flane (108)
> Nos osterons sempres la pel
> A la pointe de mon coutel
> Qant nos seromes herbergié (3979-81)
> Et dient ja n'en feront el,
> Mes enquenuit, a lor ostel
> li reverseront la gonele (13011-3)

But, again, much is different - the merchants in branche XIV considered the Fox's fur good 'à metre en surcot' (3968); they planned to sell it - 'trois sols ou quatre de deniers' (3970); much the same price is suggested in branche III (13001) - to pay for their night's lodging. In Henryson's poem the Cadger wished to make of the fur 'mittennis tway' (109) and was adamant that he would never sell:

> Thair sall na Pedder, for purs nor yit for gluifis,
> Nor yit ffor poyntis pyke your pellet ffra me;
> I sall of it mak mittennis to my lufis,
> Till hald my handis hait quhair ever I be;
> Till Flanderis sall it never saill the se (120-4)

Detail - local trading custom - makes the story more relevant to Henryson's contemporaries; I have already discussed this feature of Henryson's style in connection with *The Twa Myis* and *The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolf*. There is no specific mention of the merchant's happiness in the *Roman* branche XIV; in branche III

we find the general: 'li uns a l'autre en fait grant joie (3010).
Henryson, characteristically, is much more specific: the Cadger:

> ... lap full lichtlie about him quhair he lay,
> And all the trace he trippit on his tais;
> As he had hard ane pyper play, he gais (110-2)

Henryson portrays the Cadger thinking of reasons for the Fox's death (115-9), reasons which emphasize the Fox's evil nature.

We have already noticed the difficulties provided by one difference between Henryson and the Roman in the description of what happened on the cart. There is another difference - in the other versions the Fox ate his fill, then left to the merchant's astonishment; Henryson's Fox was surprized in action (134). Lowrence's speech has several differences from Renart's in the Roman versions: there is no mention of the fact that he had dined well (cf. XIV 4003-10). The Fox boasts that his fur will not be made into mittens (142-3). The Fox's advice to the Cadger to sell what he has left (145-7) may be compared with Renart's: 'Je vos lez tot le remanant' (4011; cf. also 13048).

In branche XIV the Fox returned to Primaut who proclaimed himself repentant for his wrongs to Renart, and hungry because he had been robbed of the gosling by Moflart. Renart gave him the one herring he had brought away and this whetted the Wolf's appetite: he asked Renart how he had obtained the fish; the Fox informed him without flourish. In our poem the Fox found the Wolf by the hoard of fish and employed the same flattering tactics as previously. So 'Schir' (ll. 157, 164, 166, 169, 174, 181, 199); proverbs or proverbial type expressions:

> Ane wicht man wantit never, and he wer wyis;
> Ane hardie hart is hard for to suppryis (158-9);

appeals to the Wolf's judgement: '"Schir' (said he than)"maid I not fair defend?"' (157); appearance of reliance upon the Wolf:

> 'Schir' (said the Foxe), 'God wait, I wischit you oft,
> Quhen than my pith micht not beir it on loft (174-5);

apparent righteousness: he claimed that the one herring would 'be fische to us thir fourtie dayis' (170) and promised to say 'In principio' on the Wolf and to make the sign of the cross over him (204-5). The Fox also had talent for appealing to the Wolf's greed:

> It is ane syde off Salmond, as it w.ir,
> And callour, pypand lyke ane Pertrik Ee;
> It is worth all the hering ye have thair,
> Ye, and we had it swa, is it worth sic thre (176-9)

We remember the Fox's description of the 'cheese' to the Wolf in <u>The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman</u> for similar purposes. Again the Fox took oath to achieve his ends: he swore 'suithlie' (201), he guaranteed that the Wolf 'sall de na suddand deith this day' (206-7) for, as the moralitas explains

> The warld, ye wait, is Stewart to the man,
> Quhilk makis man to haif no mynd of Deid,
> Bot settis for winning all the craftis thay can; (260-2)

In the <u>Roman</u> the Fox described his own actions, in our poem the Fox gave advice, for the Wolf was completely subject to him (he worked after his 'counsell', 180-1); Lowrence's advice was of course related to what he knew would happen: 'clois weill your Ene tway' (186) and 'luke your Ene be clois', (192); 'thocht ye se ane staf, have ye na dout' (190). The Wolf did 'as the ffoxe him bad' (213); later he forgot 'the Foxe and all his wrinkis' (217) as the thought

of 'the Nekhering' (216), the huge amount of 'gold sa reid' (263), blinded him (274) to all dangers.

In branche XIV of the Roman the merchants saw the Wolf lying and debated amongst themselves, and with others who came up, whether he were dead or not. A blow was struck. The Wolf did not move but whimpered slightly and one of the merchants hearing this drew his sword the sight of which put the Wolf to flight (4168 ff.). But our Cadgear was thinking how to be avenged on the Fox so 'Bot giff he lichtit doun, or nocht, God wait!' (224). Henryson stresses the Wolf's suffering, the trials of those who are blinded by the world. The Roman:

> Moult est iriez, moult est dolenz,
> Bien est batus por les harenz
> Dont il cuida avoir sa part (4231-3)
> ... Quhill neir he swonit and swelt in to that steid
>
> Thre battis he bure, or he his feit nicht find,
> Bot yitt the Wolf wes wicht and wan away.
> He mycht not se, he wes sa verray blind
> Nor wit reddilie quhether it wes nicht or day.
> ... Baith deif and dosinnit, fall swonand on his kneis (231-8)

The blindness is of course symbolic as well as literal.[1] As we are told later: 'The micht of gold makis mony men sa blind'(274). Henryson again stresses the Wolf's suffering:

> The Wolff wes neir weill dungin to the deid
> That uneith with his lyfe away he wan,
> For with the Bastoun weill brokin wes his heid (246-8)
> ... The utheris blude wes rynnand over his heillis (252)

Our Fox laughed, characteristically,[2] and made away with the fish; the Fox in the Roman had welcomed back Primaut and eventually

1. Cf. Chaucer's Merchant's Tale.
2. Cf. The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman, ll. 99 and 115.

flattered him in to acknowledgment that he had not caused the mishap. The poet's moralization of ll. 239-40 is of course conventional in nature: it echoes for instance the traditional interpretations of The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman story I quote when discussing that poem.

Henryson then has used the story very freely, if we allow that the versions discussed are his sources. He has changed details, made some considerable additions and rounded out his 'characters' in ways which are characteristic to him, ways which exemplify the moralitas: the apparent goodness, but the real fickleness and transitoriness of the world which brings blindness and pain to those who trust it. Thus we see how the story reemphasizes what we have come to see as the underlying theme of The Fabillis: the folly of worldly goods, the reliance on which brings pain in this world and the next.

The moralitas seems to be Henryson's own though the interpretation by Odo of Cheriton[1] of a rather similar story is interesting:

> Diabolus est similis uulpi, que finxit se mortuum (sic) et eicit linguam Descendens auis, credere capere linguam, et capitur a uulpe
>
> Sic Diabolus, quasi fingens se mortuum, quia fraudes eius non uiderimus, pulcram mulierem, uel aliud illicitum nobis (h) ostendit; quam qui illicite capit et a diabolo capitur.

And of course every detail is traditional - the emphasis on the fact that all must die; the folly of trust in this world. Chaucer,

---

1. Hervieux, iv, 303. There is a copy of this in the collection of exempla in B.M. MS. Harl. 3244 fol. 60b.

in Troilus and Criseyde, speaks of 'the blynde lust, the which that may nat laste' (V, 1824); in The Swallow and Othir Birdis Henryson speaks of 'Reasoun ... blindit with affectioun (285) and in Orpheus and Eurydice of worldly men 'blindit' (388, 454, 601). The Twa Myis speaks of the 'blind prosperitie' of our poem (l. 278):

> grit haboundance and blind prosperitie
> oft tymis makis ane evill conclusioun:
> The suetest lyfe thairfoir in this cuntre,
> Is of sickerness with small possessioun (216-9)

The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman warns against 'wickit riches' (212), for 'Quha traistis in sic trusterie ar oft begyld' (213); The Cok and the Jewell warns against worldly riches and points to true riches: 'science' (137):

> It is the riches that evir sall indure
> Quhilk motht nor mwst may nocht rwst nor ket
> and to manis sawll it is eternall meit (138-40)

(xiii) The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman

The origin of the story of The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman, at least in the West, is the Disciplina Clericalis of Petrus Alfonsi. This work, written in Spain at the beginning of the twelfth century, comprises tales told by a father for his son's instruction; it achieved a wide popularity in the following centuries.[1] There is a thirteenth century French translation, Le Castoiement d'un père à son fils;[2] its version of our fable is close to Petrus' original and most of the differences are of no significance for us. Steinhöwel included many of the stories in his collection despite the fact that most do not concern animals. His version[3] varies considerably in detail from the original text, but as far as our story is concerned there seem to be no differences which would suggest that Henryson used one rather than the other. Caxton's version,[4] coming from Steinhöwel through Machaut's French, has several differences from other versions of the tale. Similarities between these alterations and Henryson's text suggest that Caxton is a probable source for our poem.

The best evidence concerns the episode in which the Fox, ascending, and the Wolf, descending, meet and speak in mid-well:

---

1. See, for details, references cited on p. 11. n. 1.
2. Published by E. Barbazan, Fabliaux et Contes des Poëtes François des XI, XII, XIII, XIV, et XVe Siècles, 2nd edn., augmentée et revue M. Méon, 4 vols. (Paris, 1808), ii, 40-183. The story in which we are interested, Du Vilein qui dona ses bues au loup, is printed on pp. 144-8.
3. Österley, op. cit., pp. 318-9. I quote the original Petrus from Hilka and Soderhjelm's edition, op. cit., pp. 34-5.
4. ed. Jacob, op. cit., ii, 276-8.

> Than angerlie the Wolff upon him cryis:
> 'I cummand thus dounwart, quhy thow upwart hyis?'
> 'Schir' (quod the Foxe), 'thus fairis it off Fortoun:
> As ane cummis up, scho quheillis ane uther doun' (186-9)

Caxton:

> and whan the wulf sawe the Foxe comynge vpward
> he sayd to hym My godsap ye goo hens thow
> sayst trew sayd the Fox For thus hit is of the
> world For when one cometh doune the other goth
> vpward.

There is no equivalent passage either in Steinhöwel or in Petrus' original;[1] the French reads:

> Ainsi com il s'entr 'encontrent
> Dont li dist li gopilz, beax frere
> Alez vos fromaiges menger
> Dont vos avez tel desirrer (99-102)

---

1. Cf. the story in *Le Roman de Renard* branche IV (Roques II; vol. ii, pp. 1-15) in which Renard, trapped in a well, tells Isengrim of the fish in his paradise. He confesses the wolf who gets into the bucket. In mid-well they meet:

> Isengrin l'a araisoné:
> "Renart, biau frere, ou va tu?"
> Et Renart li a respondu:
> "N'en faites ja chiere ne frume;
> bien vos en dirai la costume:
> quant li uns va, li autres vient,
> c'est la costume qui avient (3602-8)

This point was first noticed by Diebler, *Henrisone's Fabeldichtungen*, *op. cit.*, pp. 74-5; he also pointed to a similarity between Henryson ll. 222-3 and

> Ce vois en paradis laisus
> tu vas ou puis d'enfer lajus (3609-10)

There are several less positive points of evidence. In Henryson's version the Labourer becomes angry because his oxen, who were 'unusit, young and licht' (10) 'for fersnes' did 'the fur fforfair' (11); Caxton: a labourer 'wgiche unnethe myght gouerne and lede his oxen by cause that they smote with theyr feet'; Petrus: 'boves illius recto tramite nolent incedere';[1] the French: 'Li buef ne volrent droit aler' (3); Steinhöwel: 'boves ... arando recto incessu proficerent'. Caxton's explanation of the reason for the Husbandman's anger seems somewhat nearer Henryson's than those in other versions. Again, in Henryson's version the Husbandman asked for a witness (48); Caxton: 'I promysed to the nought at al in the presence of whom I am oblyged or bound'. In no other version is there any hint of a witness - even Caxton's version is merely a hint as we shall see. Again, Henryson states that 'The schadow of the mone schone in the well' (162); Caxton: [the Foxe] 'shewed to the wulf the shadowe of the mone'; Petrus: 'Cui super puteum stanti formam lunae semiplene in ima putei radiantis ostendit et inquit ...; the French:

> Li gopilz le leu apela,
> Et dedenz le puis li monstra
> La forme de la lune plaine, (67-9)

Steinhöwel: 'at super puteo stans [uulpus] lupo lunam in puteo reflectentem radios ostendit'. The use of the phrase 'schadow of the mone' perhaps gives further evidence for a link between Caxton and Henryson.

---

1. Smith, Poems, op. cit., i, 34 note to l. 2233 points to this difference.

There are however points to be found in other texts and in Henryson but not in Caxton:

> Than lychtlie in the bukket lap the loun;
> His wecht but weir the uther end gart ryis (183-4)

Steinhöwel: 'Lupus intrans, quia gravior erat vulpe, descendendo alium fecit urceolum cum vulpe ascendere'; Caxton: '[the Wulf] entryd wythynne the other boket and as faste as he wente dounward the Foxe came vpward'. Though this point may suggest that Henryson knew Steinhöwel's version (or Petrus' original which has the same detail) as well as Caxton's there can be no certainty as the Wolf's greater weight is a logical explanation which Henryson may have inserted himself. Again, there is one interesting detail - which Diebler[1] was the first to notice - where the French is closer to Henryson than any other version. Henryson describes the Fox leading the Wolf away in search of the imaginary cheese: 'Than hand in hand thay held unto ane hill' (141). The French:

> Li leus a gerpi le Vilein
> Si s'en vont andui main à main. (55-6)

Again, there are interesting parallels between Henryson's version and a rather similar story in branche IX of the Roman de Renart,[2] a branche which obviously derives ultimately from Petrus' original. It tells of a labourer, Liétard, who, cursing, offers the best ox of his ploughteam to a wolf or a bear. The bear Brun, near at hand, takes him at his word. Liétard obtains a day's respite and Renart, who has overheard all, promises him help if he will give his rooster. Renart plans that when Brun comes he will

1. Henrisone's Fabeldichtungen, op. cit., p. 72.
2. Roques X, ll. 9254 ff.; vol. iv, pp. 1 ff..

imitate the sound of a hunt at which Brun, frightened, will run and be easily caught. The plan succeeds and the bear is killed; but when Renart comes to claim his reward he is chased by the labourer's dogs. Diebler pointed out the parallels.[1] His first can be easily explained for it is a common topos:

> Un boens contierres, c'est la vroie
> Nos tesmoigne l'estoire a vraie (9260-1)
> Il avint encienement
> Se l'aventure ne nos ment
> qu'il aferme le conte a voir (9267-9)

Henryson: 'In elderis dayis, as Esope can declair' (1). But there are more interesting parallels: the ploughman

> His use wes ay in morning to ryse air;
> Sa happinit hym in streiking tyme off yeir
> Airlie in the morning to follow furth his feir (3-5)
> mes vis li est que il soit tart
> venuz a tant an son essart;
> et s'estoit il au point dou jor.
> Mes repos, aise ne sejor,
> Ne duit a vilain ne ne plait
> n'a cure qu'en son lit arest
> puis que poist le jor veoir:
> que vilains ne set aise avoir,
> ainz iroit en autre euvre fere,
> Que mout par puet vilains mal traire (9277-86)

Also, in a passage found only in the manuscripts used for Méon's edition;

> Et un gars qui avec lui fu
> Qui les buez chacoit de vertu (Méon, 15465-6)

Henryson also talks of a helper (a gadman, 6), who cried 'how, haik, upon hicht' (8) and 'broddit thame ffull sair' (9). And as the Wolf, and the Fox lay in the bushes (16-17) so 'Brun li Ors':

> En un buison avoit boté
> Le col et les pates devant (9334-5)

---

1. Henrisone's Fabeldichtungen, op. cit., p. 73.

Now the background of the two versions is very different (and Henryson's emphasis can perhaps be explained by the allegorical significance of the passage) but the parallels are striking.

From the above discussion it seems fairly certain that Henryson used Caxton's version; he may have known other versions as well. In the following examination of the use of source material I shall compare Henryson's work with Caxton's keeping in mind additional points from other versions mentioned in the previous discussion. The first addition sketches the background: we are given a more 'realistic' portrayal of the scene. Caxton had begun: 'Sumtyme was a labourer wgiche unnethe myght gouerne and lede his oxen'. Henryson describes him rising early (perhaps this comes from the <u>Roman de Renart</u>) 'in streiking tyme of yeir' (4); 'his stottis he strauccht with Benedicite' (7). Further detail is added - the oxen were 'unusit, young and licht', (10); when the 'Husband' became angry he threw his pattle and stones at the beasts. More detail, a more thorough portrayal of the background, leads to greater involvement of the reader/hearer in the action of the tale, an interest which can be exploited to emphasize the moral implications of the work: this is a common preaching technique. Possibly the emphasis on ploughing has also an allegorical significance: I shall discuss this further when dealing with the moralitas.

There follows an important change: in the original the Wolf alone heard the curse and decided to keep the labourer to his word; at the day's end he challenged the labourer, they argued, then decided to seek arbitration. They met the Fox who, after

hearing their story, offered himself as judge. In Henryson's version the Fox was with the Wolf when the threat was uttered and it was he who suggested that the Wolf should claim the promise: 'To take yone bud' (quod he), 'it wer na skaith' (19). The reason for the change is explained by the moralitas: the Fox is the Fiend:

> Actand ilk man to ryn unrychteous rinkis
> Thinkand thairthrow to lok him in his linkis (202-3)

Henryson adds further details: during the day the oxen grew more ruly (22) - the 'Husband' thus realized their true value to him; and he was afraid when he saw the Wolf come 'hirpilland in his gait' (25) and wanted to turn back (27-8).

The speeches are also extended to form a dialogue. The Wolf at first offered no explanation for his demand; replying the 'Husband' claimed never to have harmed the Wolf (35) - the wicked rich seeks to oppress the innocent poor (cf. ll. 197-200; and _The Wolf and the Lamb_). The original reads: 'O thow labourer many tymes on this day thow dydest gyve to me thyn oxen and therfore hold thy promesse to me'. Henryson's Wolf uses proverbial expressions (ll. 40, 42, 53, 55-6), he appeals to the 'Husband's' own judgement (l. 38); these devices are also characteristics of the Fox's speeches in _The Fox and the Wolf_ and later in our poem. A general tone of apparent reasonableness, of moral virtue is added: the wicked often pretend to act reasonably, virtuously, within the law (cf. _The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff_; _The Wolf and the Lamb_):

> ... Carle, gaif thou not me this drift
> Airlie, quhen thou wes eirrand on yone bank?
> And is thair oucht (sayis thou) frear than gift?

> This tarying will tyne the all thy thank
> Far better is frelie for to giff ane plank
> Nor be compellit on force to giff ane mart.
> Fy on the fredome that cummis not with hart (36-42)
> 'Carll' (quod the Wolff), 'ane Lord, and he be leill,
> That schrinkis for schame or doutis to be repruvit,
> His saw is ay as sickker as his seill
> Fy on the leid that is not leill and lufit.
> Thy argument is fals and eik contrufit,
> For it is said in Proverb:[1] 'But lawte,
> All uther vertewis ar nocht worth ane fle' (50-6)

Henryson indicates the different social ranks of his characters (cf. ll. 297-9) by this form of address. The Wolf (the wicked rich) addresses the 'Husband' as 'Carl', is familiar with him ('thou'). The 'Husband' (the poor man) is subservient to his lord ('Schir', 'ye', 'your').

So the witness was called: 'Lowrance come lourand for he lufit never licht' (64). I think such reference must be taken symbolically - the moralitas states that the Fox is the Devil; in The Swallow and Othir Birdis man's soul is likened to a bat which 'lurkis still as lang as lycht of day is' (17); the Fox, in The Fox and the Wolf hated the light (stanzas 1 and 2); Henryson sets the evil court in The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff at night. The Devil rejoices in the works of darkness; and man is afraid of him: 'The man leuch na thing quhen he saw that sicht' (66). The Devil had already begun to betray his follower - he could have acted as his witness; but he wishes to destroy man not help him. The oath (80-4) is a further addition.

---

1. Wood, Poems and Fables, op. cit., p. 248, note to ll. 2285-6 states 'I have been unable to identify this proverb with any in Scripture.' Stearns, Robert Henryson, op. cit., p. 120 states 'Needless to say, this praise of loyalty is not in the Bible, as the Wolf would have the Husbandman suppose.' But there is no proof that the Wolf's proverb was meant to be of biblical origin.

The Fox's conversation with the Wolf is considerably expanded.

Caxton:

> And the Foxe wente and told to the Labourer thou shalt gyve to me a good henne And another to my wyf And I shalle hit soo make that thow with alle thyn oxen shalt frely goo vnto thy hows wherof the Labourer was wel content.

Henryson shows us the Fox's craft: the Fox stressed the hopelessness of the Husbandman's case but proclaimed his readiness to help him: '<u>Yit</u> wald myself fane help the, and I mocht' (88). He carefully created a favourable impression: 'Bot I am laith to hurt my conscience ocht' (89). He treated the 'Husband' without subservience ('thy') but his tone was one of familiarity, helpfulness ('Friend') rather than the superiority of the Wolf ('Carll'). And even when suggesting bribery he was careful to make it with appeals to the Husbandman's judgement (ll. 92-3) and proverbial expressions (95). Here the Fox did not ask for a hen for his wife, for obvious reasons; the Husbandman offered several of the best hens (cf. l. 207: 'The hennis ar warkis that fra ferme faith proceidis'), but wanted to keep the cock - there is perhaps an allegorical reason for this detail too which I shall discuss later.

> ... For God is gane to sleip; as ffor this mycht
> Sic small thingis ar not sene in to this sicht;
> Thir hennis' (quod he) 'sall mak thy querrell sure,
> With emptie hand na man suld Halkis lure[1] (102-5)

Again through a proverb, through apparent reasonableness, the

---

1. Wood, <u>Poems and Fables</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 248 note to l. 2335 notes the occurrence of this proverb in Fergusson (1641 edition) 877. It is also used, as Diebler noted (<u>Henrisone's Fabeldichtungen</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 75) by Lydgate (<u>Isopos Fabules</u>, l. 330 [ed. MacCracken, <u>The Minor Poems of John Lydgate</u>, ii, <u>op. cit.</u>, 577]) and by Chaucer (<u>Reeves Tale</u>, I[A] 4134).

plausibility of wrong and the wiles of the Devil are shown.

But the Devil is false to all creatures, even to those who serve him. The Fox adopted somewhat similar tactics towards the Wolf as towards the Husbandman, though he adapted himself to the Wolf's superior social position ('Schir', 'ye') pretending to be his servant rather than the experienced mentor and friend, he pretended to be to the 'Husband'. He 'plukkit him be the sleiff' (108), an expression of confidence - and an addition by the poet. Again a considerable change has been made: Caxton's Fox says 'I haue wel laboured and wrought for the For the labourer shall gyve to the therfore a grete chese and lete hym goo home wyth his oxen.' Again we are shown the Fox's cunning: he had maintained that the labourer had no chance of winning his case; he advised the Wolf similarly, claiming even to doubt the Wolf's seriousness in pursuing his claim (ll. 109-118). He had maintained to the labourer that he could not act against his conscience; so here:

> Wald I tak it upon my conscience
> To do sa pure ane man as yone offence? (118-9)

But in spite of these difficulties he had done what he could ('Yit haif I'... 120; cf. 'Yit wald myself fane help the'... 88). The Fox stressed the value of the cheese. Caxton: ' a grete chese'. Henryson:

> ... That sic ane sall not be in all this land;
> For it is Somer cheis, baith fresche and ffair
> He sayis it weyis ane stane, and sumdeill mair (124-6)

Replying to the Wolf's further questioning the Fox repeated earlier additions:

> For gang ye to the maist extremitie
> It will not wyn yow worth ane widderit neip;
> Schir, trow ye not, I have ane Saull to keip (131-3)

It is interesting to note that May, in the Merchant's Tale, when planning to commit adultery, uses the same expression as the Fox in line 133.[1] Still the argument continues - such capitulation was against the Wolf's will (134-5); but the Fox assured him (by my Saull) that he was to blame (136) and the Wolf agreed to his advice. In the Wolf's speech to the Husbandman, and in the Fox's speeches to both Husbandman and Wolf Henryson has shown us, by his additions, the persuasiveness of evil men - their 'honied words', their apparent reasonableness, their wiles, their treachery. Ironically the Devil outwits his followers - the deceitful - by their own methods.

Again we find expansion by addition of detail - though it is not all 'realistic' detail. Caxton: 'And thenne he ledde hym to and fro here and there unto the tyme that the mone shyned full bryghtly And that they came to a welle.' Henryson:

> Than hand in hand thay held unto ane hill;
> The Husband till his hors[2] hes tane the way,
> For he wes fane; he schaipit from thair ill,
> And on his feit woke the dure quhill day
> Now will we turne unto the uther tway
> Throw woddis waist thir freikis on fute can fair
> Fra busk to busk quhill neir midnycht and mair (141-7)

The literary quality of this 'description' must be remarked upon - the heavy alliteration, the phrase used elsewhere in Henryson (fra busk to busk), the Chaucerian device (Now wil we turne unto

---

1. IV (E), 2188-9.
2. Smith, Poems, op. cit., 1, 36 note to l. 2364, comments 'This is a scribal error for hous'.

the uther tway[1]). The addition of 'woddis waist' is important for the moralitas (cf. l. 211 ff.); the time too has certainly an allegorical significance - the Fox loved darkness, the darkness of this world in which illusory and fleeting pleasures are attractive. A further addition: in Caxton it is at least implied that the Fox knew from the beginning that he was to show the Wolf the Moon's shadow. In Henryson's version he did not (ll. 150-1). The poet takes the opportunity to stress his resources of cunning:

> Lowrence wes ever remembring upon wrinkis
> And subtelteis the Wolff for to begyle (148-9)

Having thought of a trick to play the Fox allowed himself a self-congratulatory smile (152) - earlier he had laughed at the thought of being judge, at successfully obtaining a bribe (99). Henryson adds the Wolf's suspicion and the detail 'ane Manure place' (157). We are told immediately of the two buckets (160-1). In the original these were not described till the Fox had been told to go down: 'And the Foxe was content by cause two bokettys were there of whiche as the one came upward ...'. The significant part of the well of Covetousness, where Fortune rules, is emphasized. The Fox was fulsome in his praise of the cheese - and ingenious in his explanation of its presence. Caxton:[2] 'loke now godsep how that the chese is fayre and grete and brode'. Henryson:

> '*Schir*' 'said Lowrence) 'anis ye sall find me leill;
> Now se ye not the Caboik weill your sell,
> Quhyte as ane Neip, and round als as ane seill?

---

1. *Knichtes Tale*, I(A) 1449-50, 1488-9; *Troilus and Criseyde*, II, 687.

> He hang it yonder, that na man suld it steill:
> Schir, traist ye well, yone Caboik ye se hing
> Micht be ane present to ony Lord or King (163-8)

The Fox's flattery is noticeable here: 'schir' has been used several times previously (again we must compare with similar usage in The Fox and the Wolf); the 'ony Lord or King' of l. 168 also pandered to the Wolf's pleasure at being flattered. And, by an addition, the Wolf's essential covetousness is brought out: 'Yone wer mair meit for sic ane man as me' (173).

An omission: in Caxton the Fox suggests:

> Hye the now and goo doune and after take
> that chese. And the wulf sayd to the
> Foxe thow must be the fyrste of us bothe that
> shalle go doune And yf thow mayst not
> brynge hit with the by cause of his
> gretenesse I shall thenne goo doune for to
> help the.

Here the Fox's suggestion is omitted; the Wolf merely told him to go down (174-5). An interesting example of the type of addition of detail made by Henryson can be seen in the Fox's appeal for help. Caxton: ... 'godsep come hyther and helpe me For the chese is so moche and soo grete that I maye not bere it up'. Henryson:

> 'It is sa mekill' (quod Lowrence) 'it maisteris me,
> On all my tais it hes not left ane naill; (178-9)

There is a further omission, the reason for which it is difficult to understand: 'And thenne the wulf was aferd of that the Foxe shold ete hit entryd wythynne the other boket ...'. Typically, the fable ends with addition of detail: 'And left the Wolff in watter to the waist' (192). Typical too is the method of transition from fable to moralitas:

> Quha haillit him out I wait not, off the well.
> Heir endis the Text; thair is na mair to tell.
> Yit men may find ane gude moralitie
> In this sentence, thocht it ane Fabill be (193-6)

In the Fable then we have seen three types of changes: firstly, changes in the story itself (particularly the early introduction of the Fox), for allegorical purposes; secondly, the addition of details - these serve two purposes, which are often intertwined: they increase the immediacy of the work and, particularly, add to the allegory; thirdly, the rounding out of the speeches which come to provide full portraits of the "characters" and thus a revelation of the moralitas - the wicked picking quarrels with the poor 'Be Rigour reif and uther wicketness' (200), and the Devil with his wiles.

The moralitas presents many points of interest. Caxton's moral is neglected entirely:

> And thus the wulf lost bothe the oxen and the chese wherfore hit is not good to leue that which is sure and certayne For to take that whiche is uncertayne. For many one ben therof deceyued by the falsheed and decepcion of the Aduocate and of the Juges.

Steinhöwel's is much the same: 'Et ita, quia lupus pro futuro bono incerto dimisit presens certius, boves cum caseo perdidit. Noli ergo certius pro incerto dimittere.' Petrus' original again has had no influence:

> Castigauit Arabs filium suum dicens: Accipe consilium ab eodem, de quo requiris experto, quod sic leuius habere poteris quam si tu ipse periculose probaueris - Alius castigauit filium suum dicens: Ne credas omni quod audies consilio, donec prius an sit utile probatum fuerit in aliquo ne contingat tibi sicut latroni contigit qui consilio domini domus cuiusdam credidit ...

But there are some very interesting parallels in fables which tell somewhat the same story as *The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman*.

Joannes Gobi[1] tells the well-known fable of the dog carrying a piece of meat over water and, seeing its reflection, jumping in thus losing his meat; Gobi moralizes: 'Sic auari ... bona ... perdunt propter umbram bonorum temporalium que nec possidere possunt semper.' The Speculum Laicorum[2] tells the same story - substituting a piece of cheese for meat - under the heading "De amore mundi et fallacius eius". A fable in the LBG Romulus[3] relates how a fox, wandering by waters at night, saw the moon's reflection and, thinking it to be a cheese, began to drink the river dry: he suffocated himself in the process: Moralitas: 'Sic cupidus omnis tanto labore lucro insistit, quod seipsum ante tempus perdit.' Marie de France[4] tells the same story moralizing:

> Meint humme espeirě, utre dreit
> E utre ceo qu'il ne devreit,
> Aver tutes ses volentez
> Dunt puis est morz e afolez (15-18)

The two most interesting parallels are to be found in the works of Odo of Cheriton and Nicole Bozon. Odo[5] tells how a fox by chance fell into a well; a wolf finding him asked what he was doing, was told that he had found a great deal of fish and was advised to come down. The Wolf was duped. Odo moralizes:

> Vulpecula significat Diabolum qui dicit homini: Descende ad me in puteum peccati et inueniens delicias et multa bona. Stultus adquiescit et descendit in puteum culpe, et ibi nullam inuenit refeccionem. Tandem ueniunt inimici et extrahunt impium, percuciunt et perimunt. Diabolus multa bona Ade promisit; sed multa mala persoluit.

---

1. Scala Celi, op. cit., fol. xvi^a.
2. B.M. MS. Royal 7 Cxv, fol. 15a; B.M. Add. MS. 33957, fol. 84.
3. Hervieux, ii, 598.
4. ed. Ewert and Johnston, op. cit., p. 41.
5. Hervieux, iv, 192-3.

Nicole Bozon[1] writes

Contra Cupidos

En la tiere de Ethiopie si est trovée
un piere qe est appellé crisopaz. E
ceste piere lust trop cler tant com la
nuyt dure. Mès si tost com vynt a
cler jour, meyntenant perde sa biel colour.
Auxint est de coveitise de ceste monde.
Ele piert bele quant a plusours qe ne ont
mye dreit conisance de la volentee
Dampnedieu. Mès quant vendra a cler jour,
ou toux verront la verité, lors ert tenu
pur folie, e folye ert tenu pur graund sen.
Seint Pool le tesmoigne e dit: "Le sen de
ceo mond est folie quaunt a Dieux"[2] Dont
plusours sont deceüs, com avynt jadis.

Fabula ad idem

Le lou dist al gopil: "Jeo ay trovee un
furmage bon e bel, sicom or resplendisant;
si jeo le pusse aver jeo serroye hoité." -
"Bien" fet le gopil, "moustrez moy le
furmage e vous le averés." L'autre va e
lui moustre la lune resplendisant e un servour.

In this version the fox, taking advantage of the wolf's foolishness, suggests that the wolf pull the cheese out with its tail: the tail is frozen into the water and the wolf, pulling, loses it:

"Allas!" dit le lou, "ore ay perdu ma cowe e
mon furmage, e sui hony; ore ne ose mès
apparer entre la gent. A mal houre desiray
chose qe ne fust pas pour moy!" Auxint
moutez des gentz desirent sen e saver de
ceo monde, qe est semblable a la lune e al
umbre de la lune qe lust en la ewe, qar
quant vous le guidez happer vous en fauderez.
Tant com sont en purchaceant, le gopil lur
demande: 'Coment vous est?" - "Bien font
ils," nous sentoms la bourse auques graunde
e pesaunte." - "Veir," fet l'autre,
"entendez uncore a tiel miestier: vous
averez le furmage tot enter, ceo est a dire
tot la ville od la manere." Mès quant
quident meux happer, lors s'en vont sanz
cowe de terrien aver ...

1. Les Contes Moralisés, op. cit., pp. 64-5.
2. I Corinthians iii, 19.

Biblical interpretation has, too, some points of interest: the interpretation of the ploughman as 'ane godlie man', and the stress given to his activities, can be linked with Piers the Plowman and the tradition of interpretation which influenced it.[1] Perhaps the ploughman's desire to retain the Cock (from which, to interpret, his good works spring) is explained by Garner of St. Victore's interpretation:

> De Gallo
> Galli nomine praedicator sanctus designatur ...
> Sapientia quippe diuinitus inspirata in
> visceribus hominis ponitur, quia nimirum
> quantum ad electorum numerum spectat, non
> in solis vocibus, sed etiam sensibus datur,
> ut juxta quod loquitur lingua, vivat
> conscientia, et lux ejus tanto clarius
> resplendeat insuperficie, quanto verius
> inardescit in corde[2]

Hrabanus Maurus' interpretation of 'puteus' is also interesting:

> ... profunditas vitiorum, ut in Psalmis
> "Neque urgeat super me puteus os suum,"
> id est dominetur mihi profunditas vitiorum,
> ut in Psalmis: "Deduces eos in puteum
> interitus," id est, demerges eos in
> profunditatem aeternae perditionis.[3]

We must examine the relationship of the moralitas to the fable itself and to the Fabillis as a whole. Firstly, it must be pointed out that there is here again an instance of the device of surprize I have discussed when dealing with other parts of Henryson's work:

> The Husband may be callit ane godlie man,
> With quhome the Feynd falt findis (as Clerkis reids),
> Besie to tempt him with all wayis that he can.
> The hennis ar warkis that fra ferme faith proceidis:
> Quhair sic sproutis spreidis, the evill spreit thair
> not speidis,

1. Cf. D.W. Robertson, Jr. and B.F. Huppé, Piers Plowman and Scriptural Tradition (Princeton Studies in English, 31, Princeton, 1951), pp. 17-19.

2. and 3. See over.

Bot wendis unto the wickit man agane
That he hes tint, his travell is full unfane (204-10)

In the fable we had been led to believe that the 'Husband' was tricked by the Fox, had given in to the temptation to bribe, a temptation furthered by the argument that 'God is gane to sleip' (102). Again then our expectations are defeated by the moralitas. I must say, however, that I am not at all certain that we have Henryson's own moralitas in this fable: the basis of it is almost certainly his, but how far details have been changed by Protestant revision it is impossible to tell as, unfortunately, the Bannatyne Manuscript has no copy of this poem. Details which lead me to doubt the manuscripts we have are largely to be found in the stanza I have just quoted: line 207 for instance - which seems thoroughly Protestant in spirit - and the impossible scansion of line 208.

Secondly, the relationship between our fable and the Fabillis as a whole: in detail we may compare The Swallow and Othir Birdis:

The Feynd plettis his nettis stark and rude
And vnder plesaunce priuelye dois hyde (290-1)

our poem:

For Mammon may be callit the Devillis Net
Quhilk Sathanas for all sinfull hes set
With proud plesour quha settis his traist thairin,
But speciall grace, lychtlie can not out win (214-7)

But further, the moralitas stresses what may be seen to be the basic theme of the Fabillis - the transitoriness of this world's

2. Gregorianum, P.L. cxciii, col. 73. But cf. my discussion of the care needed in using such Biblical exegesis in literary criticism with reference to The Fox and the Cock, p. 184 n. 1.

3. Allegoriae in Sacram Scripturam, P.L. cxii, col. 1035; also Garner of St. Victore, Gregorianum, P.L. cxciii, cols. 300-1.

illusory pleasures which give no reward here or hereafter:

> The Cabok may be callit Covetyce,
> Quhilk blomis braid in mony mannis Ee;
> Wa worth the well of that wickit vyce!
> For it is all bot fraud and fantaisie,
> Dryvand ilk man to leip in the buttrie
> That dounwart drawis unto the pane of hell -
> Christ keip all Christianis from that wickit well (218-24)

The poem ends with the conventional prayer ending, as always moulded by Henryson to fit the particular fable.

So once again we find Henryson taking a straightforward tale, remoulding and revivifying it and adding to it a new moralitas: a moralitas which though new to the context is not new in its thought; a moralitas which again stresses the underlying theme of Henryson's work.

(xiv) The Wolf and the Wedder

I have been able to find only four versions of The Wolf and the Wedder story apart from Henryson's. The story seems to have come from the East through Baldo's Fabulae Superstites.[1] There is an expanded, but incomplete, version in a British Museum Manuscript of the twelfth century.[2] The important versions for our purposes are, however, the prose account in Steinhöwel's collection[3] and Caxton's translation.[4]

Although Henryson has made many important changes in his version I think it can be proved that his source was Caxton rather than Steinhöwel. Firstly, in Steinhöwel - in Baldo and the Manuscript version too - the protagonist is a ram (aries). Henryson follows Caxton in describing a wether. Secondly, Steinhöwel specifically describes the Wolf evacuating itself in three different places:

> Cumque lupus respiciens videret ipsum insequentem a propriis stercoribus est inquinatus, cepitque velocius fugere et aries eum persequi instantius. Intuensque eum lupus agiliter venientem, iterum a propriis stercoribus est inquinatus. Denuo autem intuens lupus iam iamque videns comprehendi se ab ariete pre valido timore iam vice tertia propriis fecibus fortiter est pollutus.

And later the version describes how the Wolf took the ram to each of the three places to accuse him. Caxton, in describing the chase, reads:

---

1. Hervieux, v, 368-70.
2. MS. Add. 8166, ff. 41b-42b.
3. ed. Österley, op. cit., pp. 231-2.
4. ed. Jacob, op. cit., ii, 180-2.

> And thenne the sayd wether ranne after hym And the wulf whiche supposed that it had ben the dogge shote thryes by the waye for the grete fere that he had.

Later, Caxton's version implies that this happened at one place:

> And thenne the wulf ledde hym unto the place where as he had shyte sayenge thus to hym loke hyther callest thow this a playe.

Henryson describes during the chase one evacuation only (86); and the Wolf brought him back to one place only (109) - his accusation of l. 113 would appear to apply to that one place only, as Caxton's.

The first departure Henryson makes from his source is to specify the place where the Shepherd lived: 'be ane Forrest neir' (2). His danger - the proximity of the Wolf's haunt - is thus immediately emphasized. He was alone too whereas the shepherd in Caxton's account was 'a fader of a famylle' who had several to help him: 'the sheepherdes were sore troubled and wrothe and sayd to one another we shall no more slepe at oure ease'. And in this lonely situation the Dog was our Shepherd's only help. Caxton:

> [he] had a greete dogge for to kepe them which was wel stronge And of his voys all the wolues were aferd wherefore the Sheepherd slepte more surely.

Henryson:

> ... ane Hound that did him grit comfort;
> Full war he wes to walk his Fauld but weir,
> That <u>nouther</u> Wolff <u>nor</u> Wildcat durst appeir,
> <u>Nor</u> Fox on feild, <u>nor</u> yit no uther beist,
> Bot he thame slew, or chaissit at the leist (3-7)

The details are more specific: the Dog attacked all types of animals; he killed them or chased them, not merely barking at them. The poet has focussed attention on the Dog's effectiveness

by his typical devices ('grit' comfort'; 'full war'; 'nouther ... nor ... nor ... nor'; alliteration). So the loss of the Dog in Henryson's poem appears more disastrous despite the fact that the poet reminds, in an addition, that 'euerilk beist man de' (8; he is already pointing to the folly of trusting this world - cf. l. 160 'Nor clym so hie, quhill he fall of the ledder'). And the death is sudden (l. 9) and thus, in its unexpectedness, more disastrous than that in the original: 'this dogge for his grete age deyde'. The poet stresses the Shepherd's suffering, using the traditional lament form:

> Bot than (God wait) the keipar off the fe
> For werray wo woxe wanner nor the weid:
> 'Allace' (quod he), 'now se I na remeid
> To saif the selie beistis that I keip,
> For wit(h) the Wolff weryit beis all my scheip'
>
> It wald haif maid ane mannis hart sair to se
> The selie scheiphirdis lamentatioun (9-16)

Such an appeal to the reader's emotions is, of course, a common late medieval rhetorical device.[1] But it is certainly in keeping with the other changes we have already seen: an extension of the portrayal of the Shepherd's reliance on the Dog, and his utter

---

1. It is used elsewhere in Henryson: in The Testament of Cresseid the narrator several times excuses Cresseid. The Wolf and the Lamb:

> Was this no rewth was this nocht grit pete
> To heir this silly lamb but gilt thus de (90-1)

Chaucer also used the device: The Legend of Good Women:

> Al hadde folkes hertes ben of stones,
> Hyt myght have maked hem upon hir rewe ... (1841-2)

Troilus and Criseyde:

> Therwith his manly sorwe to biholde,
> It myghte han mad an herte of stoon to rewe;
> And Pandare wep as he to water wolde ... (113-5)

helplessness without him. The passage quoted is certainly more effective in this way than Caxton's: 'we shall no more slepe at oure ease by cause that oure dogge is dede for the wulues shall now come and ete our sheep'. And Henryson adds the lament:

> 'Now is my Darling deid allace' (quod he);
> 'For now to beg my breid I may be boun
> With pyikstaff and with scrip to fair off toun;
> For all the beistis befoir bandonit bene
> Will schute upon my beistis with Ire and tene' (17-21)

This was the end of his livelihood - he must now beg in '<u>fair off</u> toun'. Henryson then has made the loss of the Dog far more important to the Shepherd - and thus more affecting for us - than his source had done. The reason for this can be explained in connection with the change in the portrayal of the Wether. Caxton describes: 'a <u>grete</u> wether <u>fyers and prowd</u>'. At once our sympathies are alienated; doubly so for the fable began with a moral prejudicing our attitude to the Wether: 'Grete folye is to a fool that hath no myght that wylle begylle another stronger thā himself as rehereeth this fable ...'. We soon realize that this criticism refers to the Wether. But Henryson's fable begins without a moral pointed and his Wether is presented sympathetically:

> With that ane Wedder wrechitlie wan on fute
> 'Maister' (quod he) 'mak merie and be blyith;
> To brek your hart ffor baill it is na bute' (22-4)

The Wether - and there is no suggestion of pride here as yet, it shared its master's grief - offered to comfort and succeeded in comforting its master; and, as we are personally involved here, we adopt his point of view, we are grateful to the Wether. This then, I feel to be another example of the device I discussed in dealing with <u>The Cok and the Jewell</u> - it is to be found also in

The Fox tryed before the Lyone - where the reader is purposely involved in sympathy with the fool, only to be shown his folly in the moralitas; the reader then returns to the tale finding hints of criticism which, because of his initial sympathy he had not recognized. Thus the Sheep's speech perhaps contains hints of over confidence, of misplaced belief in its own abilities - because it will be externally like the Dog it believes itself to have the Dog's abilities (cf. ll. 141-7); it does not know its own limitations (cf. l. 156):

> All haill, the cure I tak it upon me,
> Your scheip to keip at midday, lait and air.
> And he persew, be God, I sall not spair
> To follow him as fast as did your Doig
> Swa that, I warrand, ye sall not want ane hoig (31-5)

In essence this is an addition to the original which merely states: 'And whanne the wulues shalle see me they shalle haue grete fere of me.' At first reading we take the Wether's speech to be merely an expression of his desire to help - we are duped, like the Shepherd as shown in another addition:

> 'Than' said the scheiphird, 'this come of ane gude wit;
> Thy counsall is baith sicker, leill and trew
> Quha sayis ane scheip is daft, thay lieit of it' (36-8)

Such an unmotivated denial of the Wether's folly leads us eventually to question the Shepherd's judgement; and, in essence, the Wether was a fool - it did not know itself or its capabilities (cf. l. 155). A further addition adds to our understanding of the true nature of the Wether: 'Than worth the Wedder wantoun off his weid' (41). At first reading perhaps we neglect the implication of 'wantoun', despite the alliterative stressing, but it is brought out by the moralitas:

> Heir may thow se that riches of array
> Will cause pure men presumpteous for to be;
> Thay think thay hald of nane, be thay als gay
> Bot counterfute ane Lord in all degre (145-8)

Henryson illustrates this counterfeiting in a further addition:

> In all thingis he counterfait the Dog;
> For all the nycht he stude, and tuke na sleip,
> Swa that weill lang thair wantit not ane Hog.
> Swa war he wes and walkryfe thame to keip ... (43-6)

The Wether had taken not only the Dog's clothing but his manners, 'all thingis' (cf. l. 144). Again the poet expands his original: Caxton's: 'And whan the wulues came and sawe the wether clothed with the skynne of the dogge thay beganne all to flee and ranne awey', becomes:

> Wes nowther Wolff, Wildcat nor yit Tod
> Durst cum within thay boundis all about,
> Bot he wald chase thame baith throw rouch and snod.
> Thay bailfull beistis had of thair lyvis sic dout,
> For he wes mekill and semit to be stout
> That everilk beist thay dred him as the deid
> Within that woid, that nane durst hald thair heid (50-6).

Again 'semit' is the important word, a word perhaps not fully understood at first reading but paralleling 'counterfait'. Everything seemed to be working out well for the masquerading Wether, but the moralitas reminds: 'Bot yit nane wait how lang that reull will ring' (151).

In the initial portraits of the Shepherd and the Wether, then, Henryson's additions have caused sympathy and admiration for the Wether. But he has also added words and phrases which when read in conjunction with the Moralitas, show the Wether's folly - because it is dressed as one of its betters it thinks it has the abilities of that better; it does not know itself.

Many of the later additions serve the same purposes. The Wolf's action (it is portrayed partly through its own speech here, not so in Caxton) did not harm one lamb only as in Caxton; for 'the laif start up, ffor thay wer all agast' (62) - our sympathies are further engaged with the Wether, the sole protector of the flock. The poet stresses the action of the chase. Caxton states merely:

> And thanne the sayd wether ranne after
> hym And the wulf whiche supposed that it
> had ben the dogge shote thryes by the waye
> for the grete fere that he had And ranne
> euer as fast as he coude and the wether
> also ranne after hym withoute cesse tyl
> that he ranne thurgh a busshe full of
> sharp thornes.

Henryson involves us in the chase, we sympathize with the Wether's efforts to catch the Wolf. But he does so not merely to entertain or to create a 'realistic picture' - our involvement makes the effect of the moralitas even more startling. So:

> Bot (God wait) gif the Wedder followit fast
>
> Went never Hound mair haistelie fra the hand,
> Quhen he was rynnand maist raklie at the Ra
> Nor went this Wedder baith over mois and strand,
> And stoppit nouther at bank, busk, nor bra
> Bot followit ay sa ferslie on his fa,
> With sic ane drift, quhill dust and dirt over draif him
> And maid ane Vow to God that he suld have him (63-70)

Heavy alliteration, rhetorical emphases ('baith ... and'; 'nouther ... nor'; 'sa'; 'sic') bring out the hectic nature of the chase in which the Wether has completely forgotten its real capabilities. In fact it *seems* as if the Wether *has* the Dog's capabilities (64). And we, at this stage thinking the Wether to be on God's side, second its vow (70). Added details too make the chase more 'realistic', involve us further: the Wolf stretching out its

tail (71), night drawing on (72), the Wolf's constant fear (73-5)

> Thairfoir he spairit nowther busk nor boig,
> For weill he kennit the kenenes off the Doig (76-7)

The Wolf threw the Lamb aside, to lighten its load (78), '<u>Syne</u> lap ouer leis and draif throw dub and mire' (79). But the Wether insisted on proving its strength (80-2), another addition illustrating the extent to which the Wether has 'lost' himself in his part: it thinks it is a dog or that it can do all a dog can do. This folly had begun through its assuming the 'clothes' of the dog. The poet introduces an element of excitement: will the Wether catch the Wolf?:

> The Wolff ran still quhill ane strand stude behind him
> Bot ay the neirar the Wedder he couth bind him (83-4)

There is something of the same suspense in the Steinhöwel version though details are very different:

> [lupus] tulitque agnum ac fugit. Aries autem insequebatur eum instantius, Cumque lupus respiciens videret ipsum insequentem a propriis Stercoribus est inquinatus, cepitque velocius fugere et aries eum persequi instantius. Intuensque eum lupus agiliter venientem, iterum a propriis stercoribus est inquinatus. Denuo autem intuens lupus iam iamque videns comprehendi se ab ariete pre valido timore iam vice tertia propriis fecibus fortiter est pollutus. Cumque instantius fugeret lupus consulens sue vite, et aries insequetur casu evenit iuxta viam spine ...

> Sone efter that he followit him sa neir
> Quhill that the Wolff for fleidnes fylit the feild;
> Syne left the gait, and ran throw busk and breir
> And schupe him ffra the schawis for to scheild
> He ran restles, for he wist off na beild

> The wedder followit him baith out and in
> Quhill that ane breir busk raif rudelie off the skyne
> (85-91)[1]

All is changed suddenly: the chase had been long (63-90); the unmasking swift (91) and final immediately reversed the rôles of the animals.

The exchange of speeches between the animals also shows certain additions; so the Wolf's first speech where it vowed to God (98). It seized the Wether by the horn (100). The ensuing conversation stresses, as does the original, the true relation between the beasts - 'Maister' (104), says the Wether; the Wolf complained that it is wrong 'To set your Maister in sa fell effray' (111). But the Wether still had argument to advance - argument not in the original - in which it used some of the devices used by the Fox in other fables (the Fox "successfully" flatters in The Fox and the Wolf; its son unsuccessfully in The Fox tryed before the Lyone) - deference ('schir' l. 120); proverb quoting (l. 122), promise to serve (ll. 125-6). But the Wether too was unsuccessful. The Wolf 'it in schunder schuke' (133).

Again then we have seen Henryson using traditional forms and common rhetorical devices and the use of detail to make of his fable something new: a tale which, through its sympathy and suspense, seems to engage our sympathies for one character, but

1. Elements in the description can of course be paralleled in other passages of The Fabillis: the 'buske and breire' alliterative grouping can be found, for instance, in The Twa Myis (l. 5) and in that fable too, as in many places throughout The Fabillis, the 'baith.... and' technique and the use of a heavy alliterative pattern can be paralleled. (One interesting occurrence is the chase in The Fox and the Cock, ll. 149-61).

contains undertones which, in the light of the moralitas will show our sympathies to be mistaken. The device of narrator in medieval poetry engages the readers in the action of the poetry, emphasizing its applicability to the readers' own lives; the device used in our poem achieves the same effect for we have been misled with the Shepherd, with the Wether itself. Like it we must learn to know ourselves (l. 155).

The moralitas has been considerably expanded. I quoted earlier the opening of Caxton's version; at the end he translated: 'And therfore he that is wyse muste take good hede how he playeth with hym whiche is wyser more sage and more stronge than hym self is.' Henryson discusses the folly of social climbing - not merely one's actions towards one of higher rank, but attempts to be equal with, even to rule, that person. Social climbing shows blindness on two levels: failure to know oneself, to recognize the limits of one's capabilities; and failure to recognize that the respect and power one strives for in putting such an emphasis on bettering oneself are but passing anyhow - like all things in this world.

Stearns[1] argues that the fable applied to the favourites of James III - Roger, Hommyle, Cochrane and others - whom the nobles despised and against whom they eventually acted. If this is so Henryson must have wished merely to remind of the lesson of their fall - the poem can hardly have been directed against them

---

1. Robert Henryson, op. cit., pp. 20-2. See my more extended discussion of this type of comment in my chapter on The Fox and the Cock, pp. 185-9.

for when it was written (Caxton's Esope appeared in 1484) these favourites had been overthrown and Cochrane killed (1482). Such a reference may have been intended though it is impossible to prove. And, it must be noted, such criticism is part of a tradition. Other fables deal with the same problem: thus, in Caxton's edition, the Ass in the Lion's Skin,[1] The Jay and the Peacock:

> None ought to were and putte on hym the gowne
> of other wherof Esope reherceth to vs suche
> a fable of a Jaye full of vayne glory which
> toke and putte on hym the fethers of a pecock ...[2]

Hoccleve's Regement of Princes[3] is even more explicit on this subject: the Beggar criticizes those wearing wide scarlet gowns, with long sleeves and an abundance of fur:

> 'Nay sothely, sone it is al a-mys me þinkyþ;
> So pore a wight his lord to counterfete
> In his array, in my conceyit it stynkith ... (435-7)
> "Som tyme, afer men myghten lordis knowe
> By there array, from oþer folke; but now
> A man schal stody and musen a long throwe
> Whiche is whiche; ... (442-5)
> "Let euere lord, his ownẽ men deffende,
> Swiche gret array and þan, on my peryl,
> This land within a whilẽ schal amende (456-8)

Sermon material too, as Owst has shown,[4] discussed the same subject:

> Nouȝ also the comyn peple is hie stied
> unto the synne of pride. For now a wrecchid
> cnave, that goth to the plouȝ and to carte,
> that hath no more good but serveth fro ȝer to

---

1. Jacob, op. cit., ii, 219-20.
2. ibid., pp. 52-3. Cf. also Jacques de Vitry, Crane, CCXLIX, p. 105 and Dialogus Creaturarum, op. cit., dial. 54, pp. 196-7.
3. ed. F.J. Furnivall, op. cit., pp. 16-17.
4. Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England, op. cit., pp. 369-70. Cf. also Blench, Preaching in England in the Late Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, op. cit., p. 243.

> ȝer for his liflode, there -as sumtyme a white curtel and a russet gowne wolde haue served suchon ful wel, now he must have a fresch doublet of fyve schillynges or more the price;[1]

Most such descriptions bewail the decay of order in society; Henryson warns against such social climbing because of its dangers:

> Out of thair cais in pryde thay clym sa hie,
> That thay forbeir thair better in na steid,
> Quhill sum man tit thair heillis over thair heid (145-7)
> ..., Bot yit nane wait how lang that reull will ring;
> Bot he was wyse that bad his Sone considder
> Bewar in welth, for Hall benkis ar rycht slidder (152-4)

Again we find Henryson using a proverb;[2] here its accumulated wisdom gives added weight to the argument. It can hardly be imagined that Henryson thought that such social climbers always came to grief in <u>this</u> world: the tale is, too, a spiritual exemplum. A comparison must be made here with the situation in <u>The Twa Myis</u>: there 'a lordis fair thus can thay counterfait' (110). And:

> So Intermellit is aduersitie
> With erdly Ioy so that no stait is fre

---

1. B.M. MS. Add. 41321, fols. 101b-2 quoted by Owst, <u>Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 369. Owst has also translated two other interesting passages: John Waldeby (B.M. MS. Royal 7 E ii, fol. 17b):

   > Whatever vanity or finery can now be found amongst lords and ladies in clothing and adornment, their servants and maids usurp for themselves. And this is a great sign of this world ... As the servant so also is his lord.

   Rypon (from B.M. MS. Harl. 4894, fol. 27b):

   > The garments, I say, of the proud and those who were once noble are now divided as spoil ... Hardly anyone now is satisfied with his status, but pants after a higher and inanely affects to be reputed better than he is by other people.

2. Noted by Smith, <u>Poems</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, i, 37 note to l. 2600. Wood, <u>Poems and Fables</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 249, note to l. 2608 notes its occurrence in <u>The Thre Prestis of Peblis</u>, l. 614 and Fergusson (1641 edition) 335.

> Without truble or sum vexatioun
> And namely thay that clymis vp most he
> And nocht content of small possessioun (207-11)

I noted in dealing with The Twa Myis the conventional nature of this advice. In these two fables then Henryson has discussed the same problem using differing examples (food and power). In both, his warning, implicit or explicit, is against trust in the things of this world (wealth, position). His positive recommendation is to be found elsewhere in the Fabillis: 'Science':

> It is the riches that evir sall indure
> Quhilk motht nor mwst may nocht mwst nor ket
> and to manis sawll it is eternall met.
>
> (The Cok and the Jewell, 138-40)

D: CONCLUSION

Little need be said by way of conclusion to this study of The Fabillis. The central argument has been repeatedly stressed: Henryson, by the use of traditional forms, the addition of detail (much of it literary in character) has expanded a genre previously limited in scope to the consideration of isolated ethical problems into an examination of man as a beast, man whose bodily desires so compel him that he loses sight of the spiritual element in himself and trusts to transitory 'pleasures' of this world.

This is the central point of my argument but from it arise two further aspects to the work: firstly, Henryson's Fabillis are, on the whole, very sophisticated poetry requiring perhaps a sophisticated audience (for instance, the inverted use of the chanson d'aventure form in The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff would seem to require of its audience a knowledge of the original form) - this is not the poetry of a rustic. Neither is it - and this is the second aspect - the poetry of a Scot specifically. True, as we have seen occasionally Henryson would seem to have directed his criticisms at Scottish society. But generally the poetry (in form and content) shows thorough acquaintance with techniques and ideas which were European wide in application - one would scarcely expect otherwise from a man reared in a mediæval Catholic environment.

There remains but some brief statement of evaluation. All such statements are of course, to some extent at least,

subjective (perhaps excessively so from one who has spent nearly three years immersed in the one subject) but, from the evidence presented, I would suggest that Henryson was more creative within the fable form, extended its possibilities and scope far wider, than any writer since the inventor with the possible exception of the writer or writers who founded the *Roman de Renard* tradition. His achievement must rank as a major one yet it would appear to have been completely neglected.

PART II: THE SHORTER POEMS

A: INTRODUCTION[1]

Henryson's shorter poems have been almost completely neglected.[2] The only work to have received serious critical attention has been Robene and Makyne; and Gregory Smith's study[3] still forms the only attempt at examination of most of the poems.

At the outset it must be recognized that Henryson's shorter works are genre poetry. To understand the characteristics of these genres requires a great deal of effort, for romantic and post-romantic poetry has largely been written with very different assumptions as to the nature of art. But the effort is of value, for two reasons.

Firstly, several of the poems are of considerable merit. As their merit lies largely in the fact that they have revivified genres by using them for ideas hitherto expressed elsewhere, or by altering some of their characteristic features, or by combination, we must be able to recognize these genres.

Secondly, some of the poems, though formally very conventional, are of interest in so far as they use genres which Henryson has adapted in his major works to suit his artistic purposes. A study of the shorter poems adds to our appreciation of the artistic merits of the major works.

---

1. Satisfactory study of this type of poetry would be well nigh impossible without the help of C. Brown and R.H. Robbin's Index of Middle English Verse (The Index Society, New York, 1943).
2. There is scarcely need to list the 'surveys' of these shorter poems which exist, occasionally taking up a whole paragraph, in the various histories of Scottish Literature. They are but 'appreciations' of the briefest and most subjective kind.
3. Poems, op. cit., i, lv-lxxvii.

Before we proceed to analyze the works separately something must be said about the difficulty of ascription of several of the poems. The tendency to ascribe poems to well-known authors was, of course, widespread - many poems were falsely attributed to Chaucer for instance.[1] And the fact that the earliest extant copy of several of our poems was written eighty or ninety years after their probable date of composition raises further doubts. But, of course, where there is no contradictory manuscript evidence we must accept the attribution; for, the poems being genre poems, there is no possibility of being able to distinguish characteristic styles or tones which might suggest an author;[2] and the works are too short to allow grammatical or linguistic analysis to set up valid distinguishing characteristics.

There are three poems for which the manuscript evidence leads us to doubt the ascription to Henryson. Obey and Thank thy God of All is attributed to Henryson by Bannatyne;[3] the Maitland Folio records 'authore incerto'.[4] The Thre Deid Pollis

---

1. See W.W. Skeat, ed., The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, 6 vols. (Oxford, 1894-7), vi (Chaucerian and Other Pieces.).

2. Priscilla Preston to some extent spoils her discussion of the authorship of King Hart ('Did Gavin Douglas write King Hart?', Medium Aevum xxviii [1959], 31-47) by relative neglect of this factor when comparing the work with The Palice of Honour. On the other hand her grammatical and linguistic analysis is quite convincing.

3. fol. 47a.

4. P. 297. The manuscript has been edited by W.A. Craigie, The Maitland Folio Manuscript, 2 vols. (S.T.S. New Series 7 and 20, 1919-27).

is attributed to Henryson by the Maitland Folio;[1] the Bannatyne Manuscript records 'ffinis q. patrik Iohinstoun'.[2] No other poems by Patrick Johnston are extant but Dunbar records him in his Lament for the Makaris,[3] l. 71 amongst the dead poets. The Want of Wyse Men, which occurs in the Chepman and Myllar tracts,[4] and in the Bannatyne Manuscript has no attribution whatever. Smith argues for its inclusion in the Henryson canon thus: 'The collocation of the piece with Orpheus and Eurydice in Chepman and Myllar, not only in a single tract but with a run-on title, must have some weight as evidence of contemporary opinion on the authorship.'[5] The assumption in itself appears doubtful but when we look at the Chepman and Myllar text we find it to be even more so; for this is not the only case of 'a single tract with a run-on title'. The last line of p. 133 seems to finish, with no editorial indication of this fact however, The Mayng or Disport of Chaucer; another poem, beginning 'O when by dyvyne delibratioun,' follows, without editorial indication, at the top of p. 134. At the end of this poem the editors comment 'Explicit. Heir endis the mayng and disport of Chaucer Imprentit in the south gait of Edinburgh be Walter Chepman and Androw myllar the fourth day of aperille the yhere of god M.CCCCC and viii yheris' - there is no mention

---

1. P. 238.
2. fol. 58b.
3. Works, op. cit., ii, 48-51.
4. Porteous of Noblenes and Ten Other Rare Tracts (Edinburgh, 1508), pp. 166-8. The Chepman and Myllar Prints together with the poetry from the Makculloh and Gray MSS. have been edited for the S.T.S. by G. Stevenson (1918).
5. Poems, op. cit., i, lxxvii.

of another poem. Again, between the extract from The Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedy and The Prais of Aige (p. 144) there is merely one line space; the Prais of Aige has no title and begins with a small capital - no one has suggested on this evidence that Dunbar wrote The Prais of Aige. Nor has it been suggested that Henryson wrote Devise Prowes and Eke Humilitee which follows The Prais of Aige (p. 145) without a space and without title.

Obey and Thank thy God of All and The Thre Deid Pollis must certainly be retained in the canon. But there is, as far as I can see, no valid reason for retaining The Want of Wyse Men. I shall not discuss it in my text and include it as an appendix only because it illustrates the common use of a topos Henryson uses skilfully in his Fabillis.

B: THE INDIVIDUAL POEMS

(i) Robene and Makyne

Robene and Makyne illustrates Henryson's ability in revivifying conventional forms. It is a composite of pastourelle and ballad forms with allusion to other conventions which make its tone very different from either.

Gregory Smith attributed Henryson's inspiration in the poem to the French pastourelle;[1] W. Powell Jones, accepting this attribution, pointed out a pastourelle which has many similarities in plot to Henryson's poem.[2] His claim has been attacked by Arthur K. Moore who maintained that 'Robene and Makyne bears superficial resemblances to both pastourelle and ballad, but it is uncritical to describe it as either ... Henryson's poem resembles the typical pastourelle in that the setting is rural and the characters answer to the name of Robene and Makyne ... But further the comparison cannot be legitimately extended.'[1] It seems to me that Mr. Moore has rather overstated his case. One of the questions which we must ask is whether the poem could have assumed its present character without the influence of the pastourelle form. I think not for there are many resemblances, resemblances which are far more fundamental than Mr. Moore seems to think. It seems inconceivable that Henryson would have chosen the name

---

1. Poems, op. cit., i, lvi.
2. 'A Source for Henryson's Robene and Makyne', M.L.N. xlvi (1936), 457-8.
3. 'Robene and Makyne', M.L.R. xliii (1948), 400-3; and further in his The Secular Lyric in Middle English (Lexington, 1951), pp. 188-94.

Robene if he had no acquaintance with the type; besides the name Makyn shows some resemblance - an obviously intended resemblance - to the common pastourelle name Marion, Marot.[1] A cursory glance at Karl Bartsch's collection of pastourelles[2] shows that almost all pastourelles quoted contain a Robin and that, more often than not, they also contain a Marion, or some variant on that name. Again, as Moore himself mentions, 'there is the fact that the setting is rural', a fact that Henryson stresses; most of the characters in the 'pastourelles' are shepherds ('bergiere', 'pastorel', 'pastorelle') and there is constant mention of sheep and of the countryside. And in this setting the sole preoccupation is with love, as it is in Henryson, and very often with unrequited love: the refusal of the shepherd to love the maiden is a common starting point for the poems and often too the ending is unhappy. Frank expression of emotion is common. Now all these factors are very important in Henryson's poem. An examination of the

---

1. Makyne is a diminutive of Matilda or Mald; a woman with such a name is not of noble rank. Henryson's change could have been made merely because of difference of nationality - Makyne itself is not, as Smith contends (*Poems*, *op. cit.*, i, 59), 'a common name for a woman or girl in the *pastourelles*.' But he goes on to note: 'Like the name Kittok or Kit it was, at an early stage in its history, sometimes used in the deteriorated sense of slut, or wanton'. The extent of 'deterioration' can be seen by reference to Lindsay's use of it as a popular name for the female pudenda (*Ane Supplicatioun in Contemptioun of Syde Taillis* ll. 89-92, *The Works of Sir David Lindsay of the Mount*, ed. Douglas Hamer, 4 vols. [*S.T.S.* 3rd series, 1931-4] i, 120; *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* l. 1920, *Works*, *op. cit.*, ii, 191). Henryson's change makes Makyne's use of the terms of 'fine amour' even more surprizing and meaningful.
2. *Altfranzösische Romanzen und Pastourellen* (Leipzig, 1870).

'pastourelle' pointed out by Jones,[1] and a comparison of it with _Robene and Makyne_ will illustrate all these general points. Robin is present in both; there is a 'Marot au cors mignot' (8-9) as of course Makyne. The setting is rural:

> Ier main pensis chevauchai
> lez une saucoie
> Pastorel chantant trovai (1-3)
> ... si va tes bestes guarder (69)

Henryson's poem begins 'on gud grene hill', (1) and there are many references to sheep. In both poems the preoccupation is with unhappy love: both show the woman's unhappiness at rejection, in both the women express their feelings frankly:

> 'O! que ferai?
> d'amer morrai
> ja nen vivrai
> se toi nen ai que j'aim si bien,
> trop m'avra s'amors greve,
> se tot li mal en sont mien (30-35)

> 'my dule in dern bot gif thow dill,
> Dowtless but dreid I de' (7-8).

And, as in Henryson's poem, the ending is unhappy. These points occur in most 'pastourelles'. The 'débat' characteristic of argument and counter argument is also found in many 'pastourelles', as in these two. But there are also several points of close resemblance belonging more exclusively to the two poems: the happiness of the shepherd before being assailed for instance:

> pastorel chantant trovai,
> demenant grant joie: (3-4)

> The weddir is fair and I am fane (29)

The difference in attitude between the characters is made explicit

---

1. _Altfranzösische Romanzen und Pastourellen_ (Leipzig, 1870), pp. 303-5. The poem is by Baudes de la Kakerie.

in both poems by the differing actions of the characters:

> Que qu'ele plore, et cil c'en rit
> de tot son dit li est petit. (29-30)
> vers soi l'estraint mout doucement:
> cil se desfent trop durement, (40-41)
>
> Robene murnit, and Malkyne lewche;
> Scho sang, He sichit sair (123-4)

And there are resemblances between the plots - Robin will not take the maiden when she offers; later she rejects him. Now I am not suggesting that Baudes de la Kakerie's poem is Henryson's source: the introduction of the third figure, Marot, in that poem changes its whole tone - Robin is deservedly rejected by the maiden when he returns to her after Marot has rejected him; and as Jones has pointed out, there are no real verbal similarities. Neither am I suggesting in this discussion that there are no differences between Henryson's poem and the 'pastourelle' type: the absence of the narrator, and of the riding out motif, is an oft quoted example of the differences; again, Henryson has constantly stressed certain elements, especially the sheep which are normally little more than decorative trappings in line with the rural scene in the 'pastourelles'; for reasons we have noted, he has changed the name applied to many of the maidens of the French poems from 'Marot' (or its variants, 'Marion', 'Mariotte', 'Maroie') to 'Makyne'. But these differences do not destroy the contention that Henryson's basic source of inspiration was the pastourelle which dealt with the same subject in the same setting and could give rise to a similar plot, as in Baudes de la Kakerie's poem. Robene and Makyne would not have been written in its present form without the 'pastourelle' tradition.

Ballad elements in Robene and Makyne have been pointed out before. There are both resemblances to particular ballads and to the ballad form in general. Moore[1] has pointed to the fact that the opening of our poem recalls that of the ballad Lord Thomas and Fair Annet[2] and that the proverb used by Henryson as his "moral" is found also in the concluding stanza of the Baffled Knight.[3] More generally, both the alliterative formulae which recur constantly throughout the poem[4] and the verse form are related to ballad technique.[5] The directness and simplicity with which the story is told are also reminiscent of the ballad form.

But this is a literary ballad form - we have already seen that the poem is radically influenced by the pastourelle form. It is also heavily alliterative in nature, not merely in its use of alliterative formulae but in its very structure. One may cite for instance, the first stanza in which the first five lines each contain two alliterating syllables; the stanza ends with two lines in which the cumulative use of alliteration for emphasis reminds us of similar use in the Fabillis:

> my dule in dern bot gif thow dill,
> Dowtless but dreid I de (7-8)

---

1. 'Robene and Makyne', op. cit., p. 402.
2. ed. F.J. Child, English and Scottish Popular Ballads, 5 vols. (Boston, 1882-98), no. 73A, ii, 182.
3. ibid., no. 112D, ii, 488.
4. Many are pointed out by Smith in his notes to the poem (Poems, op. cit., i, 59-61).
5. Cf. Moore, 'Robene and Makyne', p. 403 and note.

Henryson imports into his work a surprizing tone with his use of the terms and concepts of 'fine amour' in the third stanza.[1] We have already seen that Henryson has emphasized the earthy nature of his characters by the very implications of the name Makyne; the same element can be seen in Makyne's open expression of her desires (7-8; 21-2; 36-40). The fact that the characters are shepherds also would seem to remove them from the world of 'fine amour'. In essence, Henryson's addition suggests that all love is of this kind no matter how refined it may seem. For, if the poem can be said to have a theme, it is that human love is fickle and destructive, never fulfilling, breaking down the order and happiness of creation. While Robene fed his sheep, and cared nothing for love he was happy; in harmony with nature: he sat on a 'gud grene hill' (1), knowing nothing of love (10); his sheep symbolize his order and that of the universe about him: he

> ... Keipis my scheip undir yone wid,
> Lo quhair thay raik on raw: (11-12)

It seemed to him that Makyne was 'marrit' in 'mude' (13)

> The Weddir is fair, and I am fane
> my scheip gois haill aboif;
> And we wald play us in this plane,
> They wald us bayth reproif (29-32).

---

1. For the term 'fine amour' and its preferability to the nineteenth century coinage 'courtly love' see D.S. Brewer's introduction to his edition of <u>The Parlement of Foulys</u> (London and Edinburgh, 1960) pp. 5-6. For notes on the previous occurrence of the terms used by Henryson see Wood, <u>Poems and Fables</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 267 and Moore, 'Robene and Makyne', <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 402 notes 4 and 5.

His main concern was that his sheep should not go astray (43-6). He went away: 'als licht as leif of tre'; (66). By contrast Makyne had suffered: she had thought she would die (8; 39-40; 54[1]); had been extremely unhappy ('reivis me roif and rest', 49; '<u>full</u> sair', 58). But love is fickle: love left Makyne and attacked Robene - and her characteristic became his. So whereas at first:

> Robene on his wayis went
> als licht as leif of tre;
> mawkin murnit in hir intent (65-7)

later:

> Malkyne went hame blyth annewche,
> Attour the holttis hair;
> Robene murnit, and Malkyne lewche;
> Scho sang, He sichit sair; (121-4)

Now he lived in 'holttis hair' (122, 128) - not the 'gud grene hill' of his original state.

1. In this context I cannot see how 'bone' (54) can mean merely 'woe' as Smith and Wood suggest in their glossaries; it must have the meaning given in D.O.S.T. (bane n²; bone n³) of either a. 'slayer or destroyer' or b. 'death or destruction'.

(ii) Sum Practysis of Medecyne

Henryson's poem can be fully understood only by an examination of the traditions in which it was written. There seem to me to be four traditions which have important bearing on the work.

The first is that of attack on medical men of all types: physicians, surgeons, apothecaries. This tradition was widespread in the Later Middle Ages. We find it in poetry. _Le Roman de la Rose_, presents the customary attack: that the physician's actions are tainted by greed for gold.[1] _A Poem on the Times of Edward II_[2] shows a similar attack; but here the greed for gold is matched by incompetence for the physician 'can noht don his werk':

> And bring rotes and rindes bret ful a male
> off noht;
> Hit shal be dere on alek, whan hit is al i-wrouht.
>
> He wole preisen hit i-nohw, and sweren as he were wod,
> For the King of the lond the drink is riche and god;
> And yere the gode man drinke a god quantite;
> And mak him worsse than he was; evele mot he the!
> that clerk
> That so geteth the silver, and can noht don his werk
>
> (226-34)

Gower, in his _Mirour de l'Omme_[3] also attacks physicians (ll. 25621-80) coupling them with apothecaries who are merely money makers:

---

1. ll. 5091-5118; ed. E. Langlois, 5 vols. (S.A.T.F., 1914-24) ii, 244-5.
2. _Political Songs of England from the Reign of John to that of Edward II_, ed. T. Wright, _op. cit._, pp. 323-45.
3. ed. G.C. Macaulay, _The Complete Works of John Gower_, 4 vols. (Oxford, 1899-1902), i (The French Works), 3-334.

> Car cil qui de leur ordinance
> User voldra d'acoustumance
> Le cirimp et le lettuaire
> Trop peut languir en esperance
> D'amendement, car tiele usance
> Est a nature trop contraire (25639-44)

Langland urges diet on his readers: then physicians will have to sell their furred hoods and precious possessions

> For morthereres aren mony leches lorde hem amende!
> Thei do men deye thorw here drynkes ar destine it wolde[1]

Chaucer's portrait of the Physician in the Prologue also contains satirical references - among which is a hint of his mercenary nature - as W.C. Curry[2] and Muriel Bowden[3] have shown. Brant[4] berates the Fools who know nothing of medecine yet practise, in his chapter 'Of folysshe Fesycyans and unlerned that onely folowe paractyke knowynge nought of the speculacyon of theyr facultie':

> Who that assayeth the craft of medycyne
> Agaynst the seke and paynfull pacyent
> And hath no insyght, cunnynge nor doctryne
> To gyue the seke, helth and amendement
> Suche is a fole, and of a mad intent
> To tak on hym by Phesyke any cure
> Nat knowynge of man, nor herbe the right nature;

The poet complains that:

> A herbe or wede that groweth upon a wall
> Beryth in it these folys medycyne.
> None other bokes haue they nor doctryne.

1. Piers the Plowman B Text, Passus VI, ll. 275-6; ed. Skeat, op. cit., i, 218.
2. Chaucer and the Mediaeval Sciences, op. cit., pp. 27-36.
3. A Commentary on the General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales (New York, 1949), pp. 199-213.
4. The Ship of Fools, tr. A. Barclay, ed. T.H. Jamieson, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1874), i, 260-4.

They rely on legends concerning herbs, often using the same preparation for all diseases, and not reading medical textbooks. These Physicians are like lawyers: with no knowledge they attempt to beguile and rob the public:

> Thus thou that of Phesycian hast the name
> If thou nought knowe of perfyte medecyne
> It is forsoth to thy rebuke and shame
> To boste the scyence;

There is perhaps too a hint of criticism of doctors elsewhere in Henryson's own poetry: the portrait of Mercury in _The Testament of Cresseid_ probably contains overtones of criticism:

> Doctour in Phisick cled in ane Skarlot goun,
> And furrit weil, as sic ane aucht to be,
> Honest and gude, and not ane word culd le (250-2)

The denial of untruthfulness and dishonesty is an indirect way, perhaps, of hinting that all was not well: all was attractive and proper on the outside but we are left wondering about the motives of the doctor.[1]

Criticism of physicians is not to be found in poetry only. John of Salisbury[2] complains:

> They speak aphorisms on every subject and make their hearers stare at their long, unknown and high-sounding words. The good people believe that they can do anything because they pretend to all things. They have only two maxims which they never violate: 'Never mind the poor: never refuse money from the rich'.

1. For later Scottish criticism of a particular "doctor" see Dunbar's _Ane Ballat of the Fenyeit Freir of Tungland_, ll. 17-48, _Works_, _op. cit._, ii, 139-43.
2. tr. John Flint South, _Memorials of the Craft of Surgery in England_, ed. D'Arcy Power (London etc., 1886), p. 7.

Petrarch, too, wrote criticism: Invective Contra Medicum.[1] Owst[2] gives several examples of sermon material containing criticism of doctors.

We have found then quite a considerable tradition of criticism of physicians in the Later Middle Ages. The criticism is, of course, not aimed at medecine as such but against fraudulent practitioners: against ignorant, against pretentious, against mercenary physicians; even against individual physicians showing these characteristics. We must next discover what relation Henryson's poem has to this tradition. There is the accusation of ignorance: the narrator's words, though aimed at another, are really a reflection on his own character - the poet here uses a modification of the technique common in later medimval poetry to incrimate the narrator along with the principal characters. Thus ll. 7-9, and 14-17, maintaining the ignorance of his opponent serve to illustrate his own pretentiousness and basic ignorance. Further:

---

1. ed. Pier Giorgio Ricci (Rome, 1950). We should note however Thorndike's point:

> He [Petrarch] might write to Boccaccio on the nonsense of astrologers just as he wrote to him on the audacity and pomp of physicians. He might assure Francesco Bruno that astrologers tell many lies and he might compose four books of invective against one of the papal physicians. But he numbered amongst his esteemed correspondents such prominent medical men of the century as Tommaso del Garbo of Florence and John de Dondis of Padua ... Thus his attitude seems to have varied with mood, circumstance and the person addressed.
>
> (History of Magic and Experimental Science, 8 vols. [London and New York, 1923-48] III, 220-1.)

2. Literature and Pulpit in Medimval England, op. cit., pp. 349-51.

> Is nowdir fevir, nor fell, that our the feild fure,
> Seiknes nor sairnes, in tyme gif I ceid,
> Bot I can lib thame and leiche thame fra lame and lesure,
> With salvis thame sound mak ... (18-21)

There are also hints of the narrator's mercenary motives:

> The ferd feisik is fyne, and of ane felloun pryce (66)
> ... Ye may clamp to this cure, and ye will mak cost ... (74)

There is a hint too perhaps of that collusion between apothecary and physician which Gower and Chaucer denounce:

> on your saule beid,
> That ye be sicker of this sedull I send yow,
> With the suth fast seggis
> that glean all egeis } of malis to mendyow
> With dis and dreggis (21-25)

We might note in passing that Henryson's physician is breaking all contemporary ideals of a good physician:

> Pore men helpe he bi his myȝt and of þe riche men axe he good reward/ Preise he nouȝt himsilf wiþ his owne mouþ, ne blame he nouȝt scharpliche oþere lechis; love he alle lechis and clerkis, and bi his myȝt make he no leche his enemye. So cloþe he him wiþ vertues, þat of him mai arise good fame and name; and þis techiþ etik. So lerne he fisik, þat he mowe wiþ good rulis his surgerie defende and þat techiþ fisik/ Neþeles it is nessessarie a surgian to knowe alle þe parties, and ech sengle partie of a medicyn ...[1]

For this poem - just like those I have quoted - is not an attack on medicine as such but an attack upon the ignorance, pretentiousness and mercenary motives of some of its practitioners: perhaps even of an individual - as Dunbar's poem abused an individual - though this cannot be ascertained now. Henryson's poem, then, shows affinity with the tradition of attack on medical men for their failings.

The second tradition to which Henryson's poem is related is

---

1. Lanfrank's "Science of Cirurgie", ed. R. von Fleischhacker (E.E.T.S.O.S. 102, 1894), p. 9.

that of the versification of medical prescriptions. Lydgate shows something of this in his Dietary and a Doctrine for Pestilence:[1]

> For holthe of body keep fro cold thyn hed,
> Ete no rawe mete, take good heed herto,
> Drynk holsum wyn, feede the on lyht bred,
> With an appetite ryse from thi mete also ... (25-8)

But actual prescriptions wer versified too:

ffor ye gowte Take jws of rubarbe ful aney,
And as mekyl of eysyl I ye sey,
And yt ye eysyl be sharp ꝉ sowre
And mege it wt a porcion barly flour,
And on a flaxene clout spred it clene
And bynd it yer ye gowte is most sene
Tak olye of rubarbe ꝉ alemad
ffor ye gowte festyr Yt wel togedir bā tēperid ꝉ me ȳgd
Wt yis playster of flaxen clowth
Bynd ye soor festeryd wel abowte;
... And as good lechys alle seyn
Men xul yer to nō oyer thyg lēy (169-82)[2]

This example is taken from a fourteenth century manuscript which contains almost 1500 lines of prescriptions. Henryson's poem was written with such a treatise in mind as we shall see more clearly shortly. His poem is not the only work in which such prescriptions are burlesqued:

---

1. The Minor Poems of John Lydgate, ed. MacCracken, ii, op. cit., 702-7. Cf. also two poems in the Bannatyne Manuscript 'Quha wald thair bodyis hald in heill' and 'for helth of body couer weill thy heid', The Bannatyne Manuscript, ed. W. Tod Ritchie, op. cit., ii, 175-80.
2. ed. G. Stephens, 'Extracts in Prose and Verse from an Old English Medical Manuscript preserved in the Royal Library at Stockholm,' Archaeologia xxx (1844), 349-418. The article contains a long poem (cited by line numbers only in my notes) and prose extracts (which I shall cite by the page numbers of Stephen's article).

A good medycyn for sor eyen

For a man that is almost blynd
Let him go barhed all day agayn the wynd
Tyll the soȝne be sette;
And than wrap hym in a cloke,
And put hym in a hows full of smoke,
And loke that every hol be wel shett.
And whan his eyen begyne to rope,
Fyll hem full of brymston and sope,
And hyll hym well and warme.
And yf he se not by the next mone,
As wel at mydnyȝt as at none
I shal lese my ryȝt arme[1]

Though the aim of the two poems is similar Henryson's poem is nearer the actual prescriptions. He uses the same wording and constructions: the use of 'dia' is common in prescriptions as Gregory Smith has shown[2]. The construction 'Cape cukmaid ...' (27), 'Tak sevin sobbis ...' (54-5) is a normal way of beginning a prescription - we compare with 'Tak Jws of rubarbe'[3] or 'Tak thre hanful of ye ton'[4] or 'Tak the Iuse of þe herbes',[5] examples from actual prescriptions. Similarly, 'Recipe, thre ruggis of the reid ruke ...' (40) and 'Recipe, thre sponfull of the blak spyce' (63) is a common prescription beginning as in, for instance, '_Recipe_ - þe Iuyse of smalache or merch ...'.[6] The assurance of Henryson's narrator concerning the efficacy of his medecines -

---

1. _Songs and Carols of the Fifteenth Century_, ed. T. Wright (Percy Society 23, London, 1848), p. 23.
2. _Poems_, _op. cit._, i, 73 notes to l. 25 and ll. 26-7 _et seq._
3. Stockholm Medical Manuscript, ed. G. Stephens, _op. cit._, l. 169.
4. _ibid._, l. 297.
5. John Ardenne, _Treatises of Fistula in Ano, Haemorrhoids and Clysters_ from a fifteenth century manuscript translation, ed. D'Arcy Power (E.E.T.S.O.S. 139, 1911), p. 30.
6. _ibid._, p. 30.

This dia is rycht deir and deinteit in daill,
Causs it is treat and trew ... (52-3)
The ferd feisik is fyne, and of ane felloun pryce,
Gud for haising, and hosting, or heit at the hairt; (66-7)

- can be paralleled too, though Henryson's use is perhaps exaggerated: exaggeration was part of his satirical technique, as we shall find. Thus:

<u>For ye brennand feetre good medicine</u> ...
... Anoyer medycyne I fynde wrete also
Yat to ye cold dropesye is good to doo ...
... Afayre medycyne 3et telle I can ...[1]

A similar parallel may be found at the end of prescriptions: 'is gud for the host', (78) and its exaggerated form 'Is nocht bettir' (38, 49) has similarities to the assurance of the prescription ending: 'he schall hawe helpe full sone'.[2] Henryson's prescriptions too make use of herbs: 'colleraige ... sowrokis, the sop of the sege ... lawrean and linget seid' (27-31) and so on: just as the prescriptions do. And these must be gathered at the right time:

Bot luk quhen ye gaddir thir gressis and gerss
outhir sowrand or sour ...,
That it be in ane good hour (87-9)

We compare with:

In ye monyth of august allwyse
It mwste be gaderyd or sone ryse; ...
... Who so well on lamesse day
Erly on morw or sone splay
Gadere celydony wt his roote[3]

---

1. Stockholm Medical Manuscript, ed. G. Stephens, <u>op. cit.</u>, ll. 201, 381-2, 291.

2. <u>ibid.</u>, l. 444.

3. <u>ibid.</u> ll. 473-4 and 645-7.

and with 'and þe same wole þe sede doo, if it be gadered at morwe / before þe sun rist and ley under þe pacient hede'.[1] Again 'Ser, minister this medecyne at evin to sum man' (83) and 'Myng all thir in ane mass with the mone cruke' (46). For the physicians, just as the surgeons, must know the 'hours' as Curry has shown.[2] So: 'Sicunt volunt Astrologi summi videlicet Ptolomaeus, Pythagoras, Rhasis, Haly etc, non debet cirugus incidere vel urere in aliquo membro corporis humani nec facere phlebotomiam dum Luna fuerit in signo regnante, illud membrum ...'.[3] Once again, then, we find Henryson making use of a tradition: he makes use of the form and content of typical medical prescriptions (the very versification of these prescriptions was a tradition) and he uses them for his own purpose exaggerating them to pour scorn on false doctors and their false prescriptions. But we must notice that it is an exaggeration not quite as great as we might think. We consider such prescriptions as:

> 'Also of þam þat restreyneþ blode bene
> þise: Mumme, bole ammoniac, sang dracon,
> thure, aloe, vitriol combust, puluer of
> heres of ane hare, brent or noȝt brent;
> puluis of henneȝ feþers brent, medled with
> white of ane ey'[4]

or:

---

1. A Middle English Translation of Macer Floridus de Viribus Herbarum, ed. G. Frisk (The English Institute in the University of Upsala: Essays and Studies of English Language and Literature, ed. S.B. Liljegren, 3, Upsala, 1949), p. 126.
2. Chaucer and the Mediaval Sciences, op. cit., pp. 3 ff..
3. Ardenne, Treatises of Fistula in Ano, op. cit., p. 16.
4. ibid., p. 66.

For ye gowte gayne + ffallynge ewyll	Take Rouynys bryddys all quyke owte of here neste + loke yat yei towche noȝt the erthe nor yat yei comy in non howe, + brēne hem in a new potte all to powdir + ȝif it ye seke man to drynkyn[1]

Or, for leprosy:

> three black serpents are caught, their heads and tails to the measure of three fingers are cut off and their middle portions burned in a new pot; white soap and oil are added and they are rubbed up in a mortar until thick like honey. The material is applied for three days and the part is washed. If any of the infirmity is left on the patient cut off the head of a tortoise, collect its blood and anoint the affected parts with a feather.[2]

But unless we realise that Henryson is using this tradition we miss much of the poem's meaning: such misunderstanding has led to the statement that this poem belongs to a class of poems which are 'no more than occasional exercises in sheer fun' whose sole merit is that they have 'perhaps a touch of protest against the more orderly and derivative style imposed by the ruling fashion in verse'.[3]

The third tradition that must be examined in relation to the poem is that of verse form. The form Henryson uses is the common form for the alliterative tradition in Middle Scots. F.J. Amours[4] describes the form: the stanza is

---

1. Stockholm Medical Manuscript, ed. G. Stephens, op. cit., p. 397.
2. Translated from B.M. MS. Add. 26622, fol. 130r by J.D. Comrie, History of Scottish Medecine, 2nd edn., 2 vols. (Wellcome Historical Medical Museum, London, 1932), 1, 87.
3. Smith, Poems, op. cit., 1, lxxiv.
4. Scottish Alliterative Poems (S.T.S., 1897), pp. lxxxii-lxxxiii.

> 'composed of thirteen lines, and is divided into two parts. The first part consists of eight lines riming alternately; the last five lines form the second part, technically called the "wheel", the first and last lines of which rime together, the three intermediate lines running on a fourth rime. The rime scheme is represented by the following letters: ababababcdddc.
>
> The first eight lines have four accents or strongly stressed syllables, and so has the ninth ... the last four lines have two accents. The long lines are divided in the middle by a pause, there being two accents in each half-line. The number of weak or unstressed syllables in a line is undetermined ...'

As Amours shows this scheme is used by the five alliterative poems in his collection and in Dunbar's Ballad of Kynd Kittok, Douglas' Prologue to the Eighth Book of the Aeneid and in the first stanza of Lindsay's Ane Satyre of the Thre Estaitis as well as in Henryson's poem. There are two virtues of this form for Henryson's purpose: the major words are set off by both alliteration and stress - Dunbar, similarly, in his abusive poems (cf. The Flyting, and Ane Ballat of the Fenyeit Friar of Tungland) uses heavy alliteration; secondly, the irregularity of the metre, here, serves to illustrate the confusion of the speaker's mind (this confusion - the pretence at learning, yet obscurity - is also shown by the studied difficulty of the diction). The poet is using satirical technique as opposed to that of complaint;[1] he makes his points by innuendo - however obvious that innuendo may be - not by direct statement. His aim

---

1. Cf. J. Peter, Complaint and Satire in Early English Literature (Oxford, 1956), pp. 1-13 for discussion of these terms.

is to make the object of his scorn seem ridiculous to other eyes. And not only does the verse form help to do this but the method of exaggeration: and this is the fourth tradition. Making use of materials provided by his chosen form, he exaggerated in two ways: to absurdity and obscenity. We might instance ll. 27-33 as an example. The mixture of absurdity and obscenity was a common one in the invective of contemporary poets; thus in Dunbar's Ane Ballat of the Fenyeit Freir of Tungland we find:

> The golk, the gormaw, and the gled,
> Beft him with buffetis quhill he bled;
> The sparhalk to the spring him sped,
> Als fers as fyre of flynt.
>
> The tarsall gait him tug for tug,
> A stanchell hang in ilka lug,
> The pyot furth his pennis did rug,
> The stork straik ay but stynt (77-84)

Even the technique of taking a form and exaggerating it for its ridiculous - and thus destructive - effect was not new: Chaucer, admittedly with a very different type of poem, had, in Sir Thopas, exaggerated the romance form for a satirical purpose.

We have found then that very little in Henryson's poem is new. But the poet is not merely recopying material; as we have seen in other poems he takes and adapts to his own purpose. A well-tried subject of Complaint Henryson transforms by using, with satirical intent, a well-tried didactic genre; this genre he gives a verse form previously used in other genres and adapts techniques, used elsewhere primarily for vilification, to his satirical purpose.

The remaining question that must be asked concerns the degree of seriousness of the poem: there has been no denial of the seriousness of the poet's attacks on lawyers, on unjust noblemen in the *Fabillis*; because the poet uses a different technique there is no reason to doubt his seriousness here. The subject has elsewhere been one of serious attack, as we have seen. And the alliterative technique and rugged verse form were used for serious purposes: Dunbar did not write *Ane Ballat of the Fenzeit Friar of Tungland* for comic relief; Skelton uses irregularity in his attacks on Cardinal Wolsey[1] which were certainly serious in intent. Henryson's poem then, is an attack on false physicians whose ignorance, self-assurance and mercenary motives made them obvious butts for attack. The statement that its prime purpose was 'to express the sense of freedom, or the demand for it, which is the excuse and motive of the rough flyting' and the hint that its sole effect was to amuse its audience[2] cannot be proved.

---

1. *Speak, Parrot*, *Colin Clout*, *Why Come Ye Not to Court*, ed. P. Henderson, *The Complete Poems of John Skelton* (London and Toronto, 1931) pp. 259 ff..
2. Smith *Poems*, *op. cit.*, i, lxxiv-v.

(iii) Ane Prayer for the Pest

Outbreaks of the plague were common in fifteenth and early sixteenth century Scotland: a glance at the Records of Edinburgh between 1498 and 1513[1] shows the plague almost continuously present and such epidemics were not uncommon: there were several during Bishop Kennedy's episcopacy at St. Andrews,[2] for instance. As Gregory Smith points out: 'There is no internal evidence in this poem to help us determine to which of the plagues of the fifteenth century the writer refers.'[3] But such information would not help us in an appreciation of the poem: the prayer embodied in it could refer to any or all of the plagues - just as a prayer or sequence in a Mass for the Pestilence could. For, as we shall increasingly discover, it is not essentially a personal prayer - setting forth personal experiences, or emotions or needs; it is the type of prayer that could be prayed in a community, a general petition for the needs of community and nation. And as such we shall find the influence of Church teaching and Liturgy to be important.

I think we shall find two major influences at work in the poem, influences which give it both its ideas and its form. They are religious and literary traditions though it is perhaps dangerous to distinguish too distinctly for the religious traditions often inspire literary traditions so that it is often

1. Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh 1403-1528, ed. J.D. Marwick (Scottish Burgh Records Society, Edinburgh, 1869), pp. 72-141.

2. Cf. Dunlop, The Life and Times of James Kennedy, op. cit., pp. 267, 270 and 300-1.

3. Poems, op. cit., i, 77.

impossible to distinguish the more important influence on the poet. We shall begin with the religious traditions.

The poem states that the reason for the plague was the people's sin (6, 51-2). This concept derived largely from the Old Testament: Numbers xiv, 11-12:

> 'Et dixit Dominus ad Moysen: Usquequo detrahet mihi populus iste? Quousque non credent mihi, in omnibus signis quae feci coram eis? Feriam igitur eos pestilentia, atque consumam;

Again, the ark brought plague to the Philistines (I Samuel [I Regum] v and vi). David chose three days of plague from the different punishments offered him for rebelling against God: I Samuel (II Regum) xxiv, 15-16: 'Immisitque Dominus pestilentiam in Israel de mane usque ad tempus constitutum et mortui sunt ex populo, a Dan usque ad Bersabee, septuaginta millia virorum'. The idea was prominent in the mediæval Church: we find it in Pope Clement's Mass 'pro mortalitate evitanda'[1] which, composed

---

1. Missale ad Usum Insignis et Praeclarae Ecclesiae Sarum, ed. F.H. Dickinson (Burntisland, 1861-3) cols. 886*-889*. This Mass, and another to be mentioned, are not contained in the later edition of the Sarum Rite, The Sarum Missal edited from three early manuscripts ed. J. Wickham Legg (Oxford, 1916). For a translation of the complete missal see The Sarum Missal in English, tr. F.E. Warren, 2 vols. (The Library of Liturgiology and Ecclesiology for English Readers, ed. V. Staley, 8 and 9, London, 1911). I have felt free to use the Sarum Missal for it was widely used in Scotland in later mediæval times (introduction to Epistolare in Usum Ecclesiae Cathedralis Aberdonensis, ed. B. McEwen (Edinburgh, 1924), pp. xi-xiii). There are also two interesting Masses - 'pro plaga' and 'pro pestilentia et fame' - in the Arbuthnott Missal: Liber Ecclesie Beati Terrenani de Arbuthnott: Missale Secundum Usum Ecclesiae Sancti Andreae in Scotia, ed. A.P. Forbes (Burntisland, 1864), pp. 458-9.

to combat 'mors subitanea', had obvious significance for times of plague. In the Office the anger of God at the Egyptians, and the resulting plague brought about by the destroying angel are recalled: 'Recordare, Domini, testamenti tui, et dic angelo percutienti, cessat jam manus tua: ut non desoletur terra: et ne perdas omnem animam vivam'. The Collect recalls the same conception: 'ut dum tibi devotus exsistit, iracundiae tuae ab eo flagella clementer amoveas'. The Lesson is from II Kings xxiv, which we have already noted. The Offertory: 'Stetit pontifex inter mortuos et viventes, habens thuribulum aureum in manu sua: et offerens incensi sacrificium placavit iram Domini, et cessavit plaga a domo et a populo Israel'. Similarly in sequence of the 'Missa de sancto Sebastiano, tempore pestis',[1] we find:

> nos pro nostris tantis malis
> jam absorbet pestis talis,
> quam tota gens gemuit,
> Sancte martyr Sebastiane,
> salva nos a peste epidemiae,
> nostra gravia ob peccata
> terra ista desolata
> non sit, pie quaesumus;

Again, in the Secret of the same Mass: 'Subveniat nobis, Domine, tua misericordia, intercedente beato Sebastiano martyre tuo; ut ab imminentibus peccatorum nostrorum periculis, te mereamur protegente salvari ...'. The conception is also found in sermons: Wulfstan shows the connection between sin and sickness:

1. Missale ad Usum Insignis et Praeclarae Ecclesiae Sarum, op. cit., cols. 892*-896*.

> Forðam hit is on us eallum swutol and gesene þæt we ær þysan oftor bræcon þonne we bettan, and by is þisse þeode fela onsæge. Ne dohte hit nu lange in ne ute, ac wæs here and hunger ... orfcwealm and uncoðu ...[1]

Of course the concept was reflected in written history. Leslie writes:

> 'About this tyme the pest was ryfe in Scotland, cheiflie in Dundei, Abirdine, and in sum vtheris tounes and dorpes, quhilkes a hail yeir skirslie culd be clinsed, that all man had this opinioune quhilk was commoune and evidente to sindrie, that God had plaget the peiple for their sinis committed against him, throich his Just Judgement, with thir thrie heuie plaigis, weiris, derth and pest al at ane and the selfe sam tyme.[2]

The concept is shown in literature too:[3] in A Warnyng to be Ware:[4]

> (8) þe Rysing of þe comunyes in londe
> þe pestilens and þe eorþe quake,
> þeose þreo þinges, I understonde,
> Beo-tokenes þe grete vengaunce and wrake
> þat schulde falle for synnes sake
> As þis Clerkes conne declare (57-62).

In Piers Plowman we are told that Conscience:

> preide the peple . haue pite of hemselue,
> And preuede that this pestilences . weore for puire synne.[5]

---

1. Sermo ad Anglos, ed. D. Bethurum, The Homilies of Wulfstan (Oxford, 1957), p. 257. Cf. also W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., pp. 178 and 310; B.M. MS. Harl. 2398, fol. 93b, quoted by G.R. Owst, Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England, op. cit., p. 464.
2. History of Scotland, tr. Father John Dalrymple, op. cit., ii, 294.
3. Cf. R. Crawfurd, Plague and Pestilence in Literature and Art (Oxford, 1914).
4. ed. F.J. Furnivall, Minor Poems of the Vernon MS., ii (E.E.T.S.O.S. 117, 1901), 719-21.
5. A Text, Passus V, ll. 12-13; ed. Skeat, op. cit., i, 123.

Lydgate implies the same reason in How the Plague was Ceased in Rome[1] where the plague is caused by the angels. The link between sin and plague is so marked that it seems to me, in the two prayers against the pestilence attributed to Lydgate - O Heavenly Star, Most Comfortable of Light and Stella Celi Extirpavit[2] - plague, to some extent at least, becomes symbolical for sin. O Heavenly Star, Most Comfortable of Light:

> O blessyd vyrgyn, so wyse, so feyre, so goode
> Lyght bode Aungil Adam be þe holy goost down sent,
> Be owre proteccyon Ageyn the olde serpent! ...
> ... Preserve thy peple from gostely pestylence,
> And from Infeccyon of worldly vyolence,
> Whan we shall passe - Mawgre the serpent -
> Off grace and Mercy be with vs present. Amen (68-77)

In his own The Dog, The Schein and the Wolff, Henryson himself repeats the argument:

> Thow tholis this bot for our grit offens
> Thow sendis ws truble and plaigis soir
> As hungir derth wer and pestilens (169-71)

There is perhaps not enough evidence to deduce a literary tradition;[3] what we do see is a religious tradition accepted by artists as by Henryson.

So the poet admits that punishment is deserved (6; 51-3). But he asks for mercy: and the grounds on which he does so are likewise part of the religious tradition. The plea: 'Use derth, o lord, or seiknes and hunger soir' (25), can perhaps be compared

---

1. Minor Poems of John Lydgate, i, Religious Poems, ed. H.N. MacCracken (E.E.T.S.E.S. 107, 1911), pp. 159-61.
2. ed. C. Brown, Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century (Oxford, 1939), pp. 206-10. MacCracken does not include the poems in his editions.
3. Later the concept is to be found in Lindsay's The Monarche, ll. 52-4 and 421-5; Works, op. cit., i, 197-386.

to the seven years of famine, one of David's alternatives for punishment. Mercy is also claimed by recalling the merits of Christ's sacrifice (27-8; 41-3). The poet is using theological terms: we recall I Corinthians vi, 20: 'Empti enim estis pretio magno'. In the sequence for the Mass 'pro mortalitate evitanda':

> Virgo Natum intercede,
>   ut afflictos liberet;
> Salvet hos a pestis cede,
>   quod pie redemerat ...

Literature too has provided parallels to this plea: Lydgate's *Stella Celi Extirpavit*:

> Be thy Requeste and Medyacyoun,
> *And be thy soonys gloryous passyon*
> And Remembraunce of thy Ioyes all,
> Gayne frowarde Eyres Causyng Infeccyoun,
> Diffend vs, lady, when we to the Call (20-4).

The plea for mercy through Christ's passion is, of course, not only relevant to the plague. *A Prayer for Mercy*:[1]

> Ihesu, that diede one the rude for þe lufe of me,
> And boghte me with thi precious blode,
>   thow hafe mercy of me! (1-2)

And, *Do Merci bifore thi Jugement*:[2]

> God, putte þin holi passioun
> Bitwixe us and thy iugement! (95-6).

---

1. ed. G.G. Perry, *Religious Pieces in Verse and Prose* (E.E.T.S.O.S. 26, rev. edn., 1914), p. 78. The poet, like Henryson (l. 42) uses the phrase 'precious blode', another theological term derived from the Bible: I Peter i, 19 'sed pretioso sanguine quasi agni immaculati Christi'.
2. ed. F.J. Furnivall, *Hymns to the Virgin and Christ, The Parliament of Devils and other Religious Poems* (E.E.T.S.O.S. 24, 1867), pp. 18-21. Cf. also Dunbar's *I Cry the Mercy and Lazar to Repent* (*Poems*, *op. cit.*, ii, 65-71), ll. 167-8.

There is another reason why the plea for mercy should be answered: the people are penitent (33, 49, 86). We compare again with the Sequence of the Mass 'pro mortalitate evitanda':

> Olim culpa nos ligati
> respirantes cedimus,
> corde moesto flagellati,
> tibi soli credimus.

The Sequence continues describing Old Testament heroes helped when repentant. In literature too, similar pleas can be found:

Do Merci Bifore thi Jugement:

> God, þou deeme us riȝtwijsli,
> Medele þou merci with execusioun,
> For we had forfetid wrongfulli;
> Take hede to oure contricioun. (85-8)

But, allowing these reasons for mercy, the chief plea is to the undeserved mercy of God (35-8). The cry for mercy is common in the Psalms. The Sequence for the Mass 'pro mortalitate evitanda':

> Omnes una proclamemus
> Summum Deum imploremus
> misereri ut dignetur; ...
> ... Si pro malis irascaris,
> tempus est ut revertaris;
> pie Jesu, miserere;

This complete reliance on the mercy of God is found in poetry too:

Do Merci Bifore thi Jugement:

> Or þou þe world with fier pure,
> Do merci bifore þi jugement (11-12)[1]

For the important argument of ll. 20-1 - that the plague does not allow man time for confession, striking suddenly as it does - I have been able to find no parallel, though the suddenness of

---

1. Cf. also Dunbar's I Cry the Mercy and Lazar to Repent, ll. 163-4.

death is a common topic and in his own Fox and the Wolf Henryson makes this fact an argument for confession and 'willfull pennance' (176-82).

Thus far then we have seen the content of the poem deriving ultimately from religious traditions, expressed in the Bible and in the Mass; but we have also noticed that these ideas were not heeded by Henryson alone; there is a considerable body of literature expressing the same ideas; to some extent a literary tradition has been built up. Into this tradition Ane Prayer for the Pest fits; and we cannot finally decide whether the ideas expressed are the product of this tradition or of the religious sources of that tradition. Perhaps from both for, as we have discovered in studying other poems and as we shall see more fully in this, Henryson was obviously fully conversant with the poetry of his own age; we know, from Biblical allusions discovered in other poems, that his Biblical knowledge was detailed.

The religious influence of the poem extends to the form as well as the ideas expressed: actual constructions from the Bible are used: 'we beseik the' occurs several times, for instance in Jonah i, 14: 'Quaesumus, Domine....'. Again, 'Remmember Lord': Psalm xxv (Vg. xxiv) 6: 'Reminiscere miserationum tuarum Domine'; or Psalm cxxxvii (Vg. cxxxvi) 7: 'Memor esto, Domine, filiorum Edom ...'. 'Haif mercy': Matthew xv, 22 '... Miserere mei Domine fili David ...'; Matthew xx, 30 and 31 'Domine, miserere nostri fili David'. 'Lord of Lords' - ... 'Dominus dominantium' Revelation xix. Many of these phrases had

been taken over into the liturgy and this is the probable source for the poet. Merely to take one of the multitude of examples of the first type from the Mass of St. Sebastian we have been using: 'Da, quaesumus, Domine.' The 'haif mercy' construction is that of the 'Kyrie eleison; Christe eleison'. Besides, the Psalms were a normal part of the liturgy. But the poet has not merely taken separate constructions; the poem is based on a common concept of prayer order and technique. Prayers and sequences typically begin with praise, moving thence to petition. So the Sequence for the Mass 'pro mortalitate evitanda':

> Jubelimus pia mente,
> voci corde concinente,
> Trinitatem collaudantes;
> Patrem Prolemque precemur,
> Sanctum Pneuma veneremur
> laudis melos concrepantes.
> Omnes una proclamemus,
> Summum Deum imploremus,
> misereri ut dignetur;

So Henryson begins:

> O Eterne god, of power infinyt
> To quhois hie knawledge na thing is of obscure
> That is, or was, or evir sal be, perfyt,
> In to thy sicht, quhill that this warld indure;
> Haif mercy of us, Indigent and peure: (1-5)

So *Christ Defend Me From my Enemies*:[1]

> Now rightwis Iuge, crist lord Ihū
> of kyngis kyng and lord also,
> With thi fadir þow regnes so trew
> the haly gost and elles no mo.
> Gudely þow take my praier now,
> and twrne noght þin ere þer fro (1-6)

---

1. ed. C. Brown, *Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century*, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-5. Cf. also Skelton's poems to the Three Persons of the Trinity, *Poems*, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-16.

The technique is that of stressing the Almighty Power and righteousness of God and, by contrast, the weakness and sinfulness of those praying. This contrast the poet heightens by two common poetic techniques: alliteration and careful choice of diction. We have seen Henryson constantly employing these techniques in other poems. Alliteration emphasizes by repetition: 'prince preclair' (73), the people confess themselves 'synnaris that servis to be schent' (37), suffering from the 'perrelus pestilens' (16, 40); the 'pepill ar perreist' (27) for they are 'puneist with this pestilence' (48). Now they are a 'pepill penetent' (34). The contrast is realized more markedly still by the poet's choice of diction: God is 'eterne', 'of power infinyt'; '<u>na thing</u>' is hidden to His '<u>hie</u> knawledge'; He is 'to mankynd <u>haill</u> succure'. But the people confess themselves 'Indigent <u>and</u> peure'. The technique is used throughout: 'on kneis <u>law prostrait</u>'; they are 'of vertew barrane <u>and</u> denude'; God is 'a king <u>most</u> hie' while they are, they repeat, 'synnaris' bewailing 'our syn'. Now to stress the greatness of God the poet uses a special type of vocabulary: 'superne', 'lucerne', 'preclair'. Smith[1] pointed out similar usage in Dunbar's <u>Ballat of Our Lady</u>; likewise one can find similarities in other of his poems: <u>Ane Orisoun: Quhen the Governour Past in France</u>, <u>Jerusalem Rejoss For Joy</u> and <u>The Sterne is Rissin of Our Redemptioun</u>. The same type of usage can be seen in Lydgate's prayers: <u>Stella Celi Extirpavit</u>:

---

1. <u>Poems, op. cit.</u>, 1, 77 note to l. 65.

> ... Emperesse of the hevynly Consystory ...
> ... And Crystall Paleys of owre gostely glorye
> Gladdest Aurora of most Magnificence (34-8)

and in Skelton: Prayer to the Father of Heaven:

> O Radiant Luminary of light interminable,
> Celestial Father, potential God of might (1-2).

We should note that these are all religious poems: hymns and prayers. Apart from the verbal 'firework-display' that has been suggested,[1] and the tendency of the period towards aureation, this usage also forms some attempt, influenced perhaps by the Latin hymns, at realizing a heightened poetic vocabulary suitable for religious verse.[2] The poet then has used prayer formulae and techniques heightening them by poetic techniques. And he is not alone in this - we have already illustrated other uses of the opening formula and of the special vocabulary.

We have seen then the religious source of much of the poem's content and form, content and form which had been taken into poetry to form a tradition of religious verse. But there are more purely literary devices used by the poet and by the tradition within which he was working. We have already seen two - alliteration and diction - but there are others: the verse form for instance. The poet uses the Monk's Tale stanza with refrain. Now this is a common fifteenth and early sixteenth century stanza; it is used almost exclusively for religious themes, including hymns and prayers. Thus Dunbar uses the form in his prayers I Cry The Mercy

---

1. Wood, Poems and Fables, op. cit., p. 270 note to l. 64.
2. For the concept, and illustrations of the idea of 'sacred language' see Christine Mohrmann, Liturgical Latin its Origins and Character (London, 1959).

and Lazar to Repent and Ane Orisoun: Quhen the Gouernour Past in France; Skelton too uses it in his three prayers to the various Persions of the Trinity. Many of the prayers in Brown's collection of fifteenth century religious lyrics are in this form - including Lydgate's poem imploring release from the pestilence Stella Celi Extirpavit. So another tradition is seen. Again, as Gregory Smith pointed out,[1] the internal rhyming of the last three stanzas can be paralleled in Dunbar. The poem then in metre and in form, is part of a group of prayers written by this poet, by Skelton and by Dunbar. They share with much other religious poetry of the period, as we have seen, a common tradition of religious thought and technique of expression.

Ane Prayer for the Pest then, as we said in the first paragraph, is not a personal plea although it could perhaps be used as one. From the text it would be very difficult to justify Douglas Duncan's statement that 'it shows Henryson clinging to orthodoxy in the face of terrible circumstances.... In this tormented and moving poem it can be said that Henryson is just keeping his balance between faith and experience.'[2] The poet embodies his own emotion in orthodix language and doctrine; there is no suggestion of a conflict between faith and reason.

---

1. Poems, op. cit., i, 77 note to l. 64.
2. 'Henryson's Testament of Cresseid', Essays in Criticism, xi (1961), 134.

(iv) The Garmont of Gud Ladeis

Janet M. Smith states of The Garmont of Gud Ladeis 'Henryson borrowed the central idea from a tediously long French work Le Triumphe ou Parement Des Dames D'Honneur by Olivier la Marche, and with excellent judgement and taste compressed it into ten short stanzas'.[1] By contrast Gregory Smith, though noting the similarities between the poems, which Ellis[2] first pointed out, states 'If Henryson got his "idea" from this poem (and the suggestion is open to doubt) he got no more',[3] a judgement with which Harvey Wood agrees.[4] And certainly the evidence seems to support this latter judgement. For one thing, De La Marche's poem was not written until at least 1488. Julia Kalbfleisch, who edits the poem, states:

> 'Der Triumphe des Dames gehört zu den spätesten Werken La Marchès; einen sicheren 'terminus post quem' bietet die Erwähnung des 1488 erfolgten Todes der Herzogin Marie von Calabrien (Str. 167, vg l. S. 102). Victor Gay nimmt an, das Gedicht sei 1492 enstanden; Stein (S. 124 f.) möchte es noch ein oder zwei Jahre später stetzen.'[5]

Even if we were to assume Henryson's death to have been as late as 1500, this leaves little time for a manuscript poem to circulate

1. The French Background to Middle Scots Literature, op. cit., p. 101.
2. Specimens of the Early English Poets, 3 vols. (London, 1801), 1, 364.
3. Poems, op. cit., 1, lxv.
4. Poems and Fables, op. cit., p. 270.
5. Le Triumphe des Dames von Olivier de la Marche. Ausgabe nach den Handschriften. Inaugural-Dissertation ... von Julia Kalbfleisch (Rostock, 1901).

in Scotland, even taking the 'Auld Alliance' into account. But this is mere conjecture; the most important evidence is the nature of de la Marche's poem: in 181 eight lined stanzas interspersed with twenty-two prose passages giving examples of the particular virtues allegorized, its emphasis is severely moral, its order strictly logical - working from feet to head - and some attempt is made to justify the allegorization of each article of clothing. Now in none of these characteristics is The Garment of Gud Ladeis similar; our poem is shorter, with no examples given of the virtue in action; we shall find no exclusively moral preoccupation; the order is very different; there is little attempt to justify the particular allegorization given to an article of clothing. Besides, the actual allegorizations of particular articles of clothing are quite different. There is no evidence then of the poem being a compression of the French work. But de la Marche's poem is of considerable interest; that two poems could be written independently on the same subject provides some evidence for a tradition. It is quite conceivable that the idea of such allegorization was current in the Later Middle Ages; as Gregory Smith has shown[1] there was common allegorization of armour in a similar way. Besides, there was Biblical justification for the allegorization. Even more

1. *Poems*, *op. cit.*, p. lxv. Cf. also R. Woolf, 'The Theme of Christ the Lover Knight in Medieval Literature', *R.E.S.* New Series, xiii (1962), 1-16.

relevant than the allegorization in Ephesians vi, 13-17[1] is I Timothy ii, 9-10:

> Similiter et mulieres in habitu ornato,
> cum verecundia et sobrietate ornantes se,
> et non in tortis crinibus, aut auro, aut
> margaritis vel veste pretiosa; sed quod
> decet mulieres, promittentes pietatem per
> opera bona.

This verse had been commented on by many of the mediæval exegetes, for instance Hrabanus Maurus,[2] and Walafridus Strabus,[3] who had stressed the allegorical idea. So, although we are unable to pinpoint the ultimate source, it is reasonably certain that the

---

1. Cf. the use of this in sermon material:

> And ther fore whils that ye haue tyme, ryse owte of the werkes of derkenes and clothe you in Goddes armes ... with clennes, almusdede, mekenes, wakynge, and holy prayere, stedefast beleve, hope of Cristes mercy, also with charite and othur verteves. And iff ye clothe you in this wise, than may ye securly abide Goddes commynge.

W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., p. 113.

The concept is extended to describe royal virtues:

> God the endewe with a croune off glorie
> And with septre off clennesse and pytee,
> And with a swerde off myht and victorie,
> And with a mantell off prudence cladde thow be,
> A shelde off ffeyth fforto defende the,
> An helme off helthe wrouht to thyn encrees,
> Girt with a girdyll off love and parfyte pees.

Lydgate, King Henry VI's Triumphal Entry into London, (Lydgate's Minor Poems, op. cit., ii, 630-48), ll. 197-203.

2. Enarrationum in Epistolas Beati Pauli: In Epistolam I ad Timotheum, P.L. cxii, cols. 594-5.

3. Glossa Ordinaria, P.L. cxiv, cols. 627-8.

poet, as in many of his other works, took his idea from current tradition. His poem, in turn, is the certain source for a sixteenth century work contained in the Bannatyne Manuscript.[1]

Not merely the central idea was borrowed; there are phrases too which are commonplace in later medieval literature. For instance 'wirk eftir my will', (2) was a common phrase meaning to return the speaker's love.[2] The poet has also used the common allegorization of colour in the lines:

> That scho woir nevir grene nor gray
> That set hir half so weill (39-40).

---

1. ed. Ritchie, The Bannatyne Manuscript, op. cit., iii, 295. Its dating is perhaps suggested by some of the vocabulary used; for instance, 'pudicitie' (51) is not recorded by the N.E.D. before 1567. There are many direct parallels besides similarity of metre and form. So the later poem

   (1) Wald my gud ladye that I Luif
   (2) Luiff me best ffor ay
   (3) I suld gar mak for hir behuif
   (4) Ane garmond gude and gay (1-4)

   Henryson:

   (1) Wald my gud lady (2) lufe me best
   and wirk eftir my will
   (3) I suld (4) ane garmond gudliest
   Gar mak hir body till

   Almost every article in our poem is again used in the later; the allegorical descriptions are not always different - the gown in both cases is of goodness; in both poems the kirtill is 'malȝeit'; the conclusion:

   Nor this garmond sa Hair I seill
   Nor halff so weill will sett hir (67-8)

   Henryson:

   I durst sweir by my seill,
   That scho woir nevir grene nor gray
   That set hir half so weill (38-40)

2. It has sexual connotations in the lyric De Clerico et Puella, ed. C. Brown, Lyrics of the Thirteenth Century (Oxford, 1932) pp. 152-4, l. 36; and Lydgate's Troy Book, ed. H. Bergen, 4 vols. (E.E.T.S.E.S. 97, 103, 106, 126, 1906-35), Bk. V, ll. 2995-7.

Gregory Smith states of this that it is 'probably only an alliterative collocation ... But there is perhaps the suggestion that whether gaily or quietly dressed she would never look half so well as in the confection of the poet's allegory'.[1] But surely the reference is to the common allegorization of colour which plays such a large part in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, for instance, where it is the colour of magic, of temptation and in the Floure and the Leafe:[2]

> And as for her that crowned is in greene,
> It is Flora, of these floures goddesse.
> And all that here on her awaiting beene,
> It are such that loved idlenes
> And not delite of no busines
> But for to hunt and hauke, and pley in medes,
> And many other such idle dedes (533-9)

They honour the leaf, which:

> within a little space
> Woll be lost, so simple of nature
> They be, that they no greevance may endure,
>
> And every storme will blow them soone away,
> Ne they last not but for a season - (558-62)

Henryson uses the tradition elsewhere; in The Testament of Cresseid we find Venus:

> cled in ane nyce array,
> The ane half grene, the uther half Sabill black;
> ... Bot in hir face semit greit variaunce, ... (220-3)

The green is perhaps symbolic of fertility; it is also symbolic of change - for a while green, then black, just as leaves are green, seem beautiful, but eventually decay leaving bare, black

---

1. Poems, op. cit., p. 63, note to l. 39.
2. ed. D.A. Pearsall, The Floure and the Leafe and the Assembly of Ladies (London and Edinburgh, 1962).

boughs. In the same poem Henryson uses the colour gray to symbolize the antagonistic natures of Saturn, the old: 'his lyre was lyke the Leid,' (155) and 'his gyis full gay of gray' (164) - and of Cynthia, the changeable (254): 'Haw as the Leid, of colour nathing cleir' (258) and 'Hir gyse was gray' (260). These two punish Cresseid. These characteristics of Venus and those of Cynthia and Saturn are not, then, to be those of the lady. She is to be steadfast in love, showing: 'lesum lufe' not the rites of Venus. For this is not an exclusively moralistic portrait, as in de la Marche's poem, but one of a virtuous woman who is yet loving: 'lasit with lesum lufe' (14), 'Purfillit with plesour' (19) - and compassionate - 'Hir hals ribbane of rewth' (28). We remember the courtly love demand for pity as a fitting characteristic of a lady.

Technically, as in subject, the poem is based on conventional means. We find alliteration used for stressing in several lines, for instance in stanza five:

> Hir gown suld be of gudliness
> Weill ribband with renowne,
> Purfullit with plesour in ilk place,
> furrit with fyne fassoun (17-20)

But perhaps of most interest to us in this poem is the way in which the ballad stanza form, elsewhere used almost exclusively for narrative poetry, is used in this 'moral' poem. It is this which has given rise to impressions such as Speirs 'a poem with a taking metrical movement ... here Henryson is a very gentle moralist.'[1] More importantly for our purposes it is further evidence of Henryson's surprising use of forms to provide a new setting - and new meaning - for well-worn ideas.

---

1. <u>The Scots Literary Tradition</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 53 n.

(v) The Bludy Serk

Smith states of The Bludy Serk that 'the source of this poem is found in the Gesta Romanorum in the tale of the daughter of the Emperor Frederick'.[1] The stories certainly have many similarities: they are tales of a knight who dies for a lady in distress who treasures his 'blody serke',[2] and the moralitates are essentially the same. But there are several differences between the two poems. In the Gesta Romanorum the lady's father dies:

> Quidam rex regnavit, qui pulchram filiam habebit, quam multum dilexit, que post decessum regis regnum occupavit, quia unica est relicta. Hoc audiens quidam dux tyrannus ad eam venit, multa ei promisit, si ei consentiret. Illa vero seducta per eum est et deflorata.

Henryson's poem makes no mention of the father's death - in fact it states the opposite for the King in The Bludy Serk initiates his daughter's rescue (stanza 6). The tale in the Gesta Romanorum places much of the blame on the lady, who yielded to temptation[3] - Henryson's version perhaps does this, but in a much more subtle way. Henryson blames the 'gyane' (and we note that this is a 'gyane', described in all his terror - stanza 4 - whereas the corresponding figure in the Gesta Romanorum is a Duke). Again, the lady in the Gesta Romanorum is seduced and robbed of her lands:

---

1. Poems, op. cit., i, lix. Smith prints the complete tale and moralitas from one of the two vernacular versions given in The Early English Versions of the Gesta Romanorum, ed. S.J.H. Herrtage, op. cit., pp. 23-6. I have used the Latin text, ed. H. Oesterley, Gesta Romanorum (Berlin, 1872), pp. 376-7.
2. The term is found both in the English version and in Henryson.
3. R. Woolf, 'The Theme of Christ the Lover Knight in Mediaeval Literature', op. cit., p. 5 calls this a relic 'as though fossilized' of the older story 'of a husband reclaiming in

(continued overleaf)

> facta defloracione flevit amare, tyrannus vero eam ab hereditate sua expulit. Illa vero sic expulsa gemitus et suspiria emittebat et in via publica cunctis diebus sedebat, ut a transeuntibus elemosinam peteret.

On the other hand Henryson's lady is 'stollin' and cast into a dungeon where she suffers great physical pain (stanza 3). There she cannot see the knight before he saves her; in the Gesta Romanorum the lady's weeping disturbs a knight to whom she tells her tale and who vows to fight for her. At this meeting, before the battle, he asks her, when she has agreed to marry him:

> Si vero in bello mortuus fuero et hereditatem tibi acquisiero, nil aliud peto nisi quod arma mea sanguinolenta tecum custodias in signum amoris. Si vero aliquis veniat, ut in uxorem te ducat, cameram tuam intres, in qua arma pendent, et illa diligenter respicias, et memoriam habeas, quamodo propter tui amorem vitam meam amisi.

In Henryson's poem this request is made by the dying knight who has succeeded in rescuing the lady. Gregory Smith explains these differences as follows: 'He [Henryson] has modified the story in many ways in a manner analogous to what we find in all his adaptations.'[1] Now if the tale as told in the Gesta Romanorum were the only tale relating this subject we would, of course, be forced to agree with Gregory Smith's conclusions. But as Miss Woolf has shown[2] the story, and its interpretation, were common

---

his charity a lapsed and fickle wife', a story which 'the new theology' [i.e. the emphasis on Christ's love for the individual rather than on the Cross as the devil's rights] 'and the new literary tastes' [i.e. 'fine amour'] had changed to an account of 'a knight fighting to save a lady and win her love'.

1. Poems, op. cit., i, lxiii.
2. 'The Theme of Christ the Lover Knight', op. cit.

throughout the later Middle Ages in Britain and we must examine some of the other occurrences of it before we can make any judgement about Henryson's source.

Nicole Bozon's Du roy ki avait un ami[1] is one of the versions. Here again there are points of difference from Henryson's poem: there is no mention of the father; the knight is the lady's jealous husband; the lady agrees to a betrayal:

> Là vint un traitour, et par un acord
> Ouf ly la mena;

there is also much additional material - the arming of the knight, the promise of the knight to return after death; but here we do find the lady rescued from prison:

> Et ly roi descendist en un bas dongoun
> Là trova s'amie en grant chaitivesoun

where she had suffered 'Unques pus ne avoi solace ne joye de nul rien;' the conversation takes place after the battle, as in Henryson's poem, and it is then that the knight offers the lady, amongst other things admittedly, his shirt:

> E qe soiez plus sure encountre li adverser,
> Vers vous retenez, en lu de baner,
> Ma chemis de chartres et ma mort amer,
> E ceo vous sauvera du diable encombrer.

Another variation of the story is found in a poem in the Vernon Manuscript:[2] while a husband is away his wife is tempted, but does not yield; he returns to revenge her but, though successful, is killed in doing so; she took his 'scherte ... Al Bloodi.';

1. Appendix II, The Chronicle of Pierre de Langtoft, ed. T. Wright, 2 vols. (Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores XLVII, London, 1866-8), ii, 426-37.

2. ed. C. Horstmann, 'Die Evangelien-Geschichten der Homiliensammlung des MS Vernon', Archiv, lvii (1877), 274-5.

And whon heo was . I tempted ouht
To eny synne . heo wel of þouht,
heo loked sone . vppon þat schurte ... (55-7)
... And whon þis þhout . com hire vppon,
Al wikkednesse . hire weyuede anon
ffor euer heo hedde hit . in hir mynde
þat he hedde don . a dede kynde.
So schulde . eueri cristene mon
þenken on Ihū . god al on,
þat Monnes soule . weddet to wyue;
wiþ outen ende . he ȝaf hit lyue,
ffeir he maad hit . of Beute
To his liknesse . vppon to seo (59-72).

Again, in Dives and Pauper, according to H.G. Pfander's resumé,[1] the story is told of how:

'a king's son, having married beneath his station, became knight-errant and was at last slain on the field of battle. As he was dying he removed his bloody shirt and sent it to his wife with a message asking her fidelity for life. Afterwards, when tempted to sin, she would look at the shirt and say:
whil I haue his blod in myne mende
þat was to me so good and kende.
schal I neuir husbonde take
but hym þat died for myn sake (f. 149b)'

In Fasciculus Morum[2] we find a knight - and there is no mention of previous treachery by the lady - fighting successfully against a lady's enemy and returning home to die:

Accidit ergo quodam die cum de quodam bello pro ea rediret vulneribus sauciatus vix semivivus evasit. Accessit ergo ad eam tanquam ad tutoria refugia confidenter eo quod illam tantum pre ceteris dilexisset et se ipsum ac depauperando eam exaltasset.

---

1. 'Dives et Pauper', The Library, 4th series, xiv (1933-4), 310.
2. The version of our story in the MS. Rawl. 670 copy of the Fasciculus Morum (ff. 42v-43r) is cited by R. Woolf, 'The Theme of Christ the Lover Knight', op. cit., pp. 7-8. I have used her version in my text.

There is, however, no mention of a bloody shirt, and the lady apparently does not accept him. The 'gyane' in Henryson's poem can also be found elsewhere:

> ... I seye euery man was gette in bateyll thorowe the myghtfull dethe that Crist suffred on the Rode Tre. And how that he gatte the I will shewe the by ensample. I rede of an ermyte that walked by a veye and met with a knyght commynge ageyns hym vnarmed. And the ermyte asked hym fro whens that he com and whethur that he wolde. And the knyght answered and seid "I com fro my fadur and am goynge to feyght with a geaunte that hathe many of my faders men in pryson". Than seid the ermyte, "Sethen that thou wolte goye feyзthe with that geaunte, tell me what that thou bereste in thin armes ...
>
> By this armet I understonde gooslyche euery Cristen man in this worlde that walketh in the veye, I hope, towarde heven. For whan that thou shalte walke that veye, thou shalte mete withe a knyghte, the wiche is Crist, Goddes Sone of heven ... But he com vnarmed when that he lefte all is grete povere ther and com downe mekely for to feyght with a geaunte that was the dewell of hell. [1]

We have thus seen parallels for most of the points of agreement between the Gesta Romanorum and The Bludy Serk: there seems to be only one point where the two stories do agree which cannot be paralleled in one or other of the versions we have examined: in the other versions there is no mention of a father for the lady. And we have also seen parallels between the other versions and The Bludy Serk where that poem differs from the Gesta Romanorum: the character of the giant, the apparent innocence of the lady, her imprisonment, and the knight's request

---

1. W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., pp. 37-8.

as he is dying after rescuing the lady can all be found elsewhere. The *Gesta Romanorum* then probably cannot be regarded as the sole source of Henryson's poem. We must remember however the marked changes Henryson makes to his sources in the *Fabillis*, many to stress his allegorical purpose - thus the father remaining alive would perhaps have appeared more logical for his moralitas, man as prisoner is a common mediaeval idea.[1] But whatever the actual source or sources the poem provides a further example of Henryson reworking - creatively, as we shall see, a traditional story and moral.

We have now to examine, by analysis of the three principal characters, what Henryson made of the tale. The lady's ancestry is stressed in an addition: her father was:

> a worthy king;
> Dukis, erlis, and barronis bald
> He had at his bidding.
> The lord was anceane and ald,
> And sexty yeiris cowth ring; (2-6).

The poet uses his customary methods of emphasis: repetition through synonymous adjectives, the cumulative effect strengthened by conjunctions (ll. 5-6); alliteration (3-4). So the lady (man's soul) is of very noble, very powerful (controlling 'Dukis, erlis and barronis bald' - the accumulation suggests the great power), and worthy lineage, a lineage hallowed by age. The poet's portrayal of the lady herself is very interesting: he concentrates almost exclusively on her physical beauties, adding another dimension to the poem: she was:

---

1. See my discussion, pp.144-5, of this concept as found in *The Swallow and Othir Birdis*.

fair to fald
a Lusty Lady ying.

2. Off all fairheid scho bur the flour,
And eik hir faderis air,
Off lusty laitis and he honour,
Meik bot and debonair.
Scho wynnit in a bigly bour;
On fold wes none so fair;
princis luvit hir paramour
In cuntreis our all quhair (7-16)

The stress - heightened by alliteration, by conjunctions (we note the cumulative effect of 'and' in lines 10, 11, and 12), by superlative constructions which emphasize the lady's ability to excel ('all fairheid'; 'none so fair'; 'paramour'; 'our all quhair') - is thus overwhelmingly on the lady's great physical attraction. This stress recalls Cresseid who also was 'the flour of luif' (128), 'of Eirdlye wichtis Flour' (435); who also was 'Paramour' (53):[1]

My pleasand port all utheris precelling:
Of lustines I was hald maist conding (446-7)

Now, we have seen 'lusty' used twice in the extract quoted above from our poem; here the noun is used to describe an originally deluded state in which Cresseid had placed her trust on the wrong things. Other uses by Henryson imply the same meaning: the poet, describing Cresseid in her original state, speaks of 'lustie Cresseid' (69) and her 'lustie lyre' (339). Again, in the Moralitas to The Fox and the Wolf we find:

Ffor monye gois now to confessioun
Can nocht repent, nor for thair synnis greit,
Becaus thai think thair lustye lyfe so sweit (166-8)

---

1. Into the ballad form Henryson imports the devices of his more 'literary' poems, thus extending the form's possibilities. We shall see this again in the princess' lament.

To further the argument, the word 'ying' does not solely stress that the Lady was very desirable - young and attractive - but, being in direct contrast to the stress on her father's age, implies perhaps in this context lack of maturity and perhaps makes the reader wonder to what extent her other characteristics are different from those of the 'worthy king'. So we are perhaps left with a certain doubt concerning the lady's values, a doubt which may be explained by the Christian doctrine of the Fall of which this poem is, in part, an allegory. There is certainly a 'fall' here for whereas she was a paramour of princes and 'Scho wynnit in a bigly bour' (13) the giant cast her:

> in his dungering
> Quhair licht scho micht se nane;
> hungir and cald and grit thristing
> Scho fand in to her wane (21-4)[1]

The terror of this place (hell, as we are told in l. 103) is further stressed throughout the poem: it is referred to as 'a deip dungeoun' (34); the giant finds there 'hungir, cauld and confusion' (55) when he is imprisoned; and the lady's gratefulness is increased when she remembers that:

> bandoun
> quhair scho was wont to sit full merk
> In that deip dungeoun; (84-6)

1. I accept Smith's emendation here: perhaps it is merely a mistake in transcription for he does not seek to justify it. Wood gives the MS. reading 'wame'. 'Wane' seems more likely in the context: this 'dwelling' is being contrasted with the 'bigly bour' in which the Lady formerly lived; one would perhaps expect to suffer 'cald' in 'wane' rather than 'wame'; besides, the rhyme throughout the stanza has been 'ane'. On the other hand, however, 'wame' would stress the physical discomfort, and, as we have seen, the physical characteristics of the lady seem to matter most to her; and the rhyme scheme is not completely regular (stanza 8).

But from this state the Lady is rescued; her gratefulness is shown by her sorrow at the death of the knight:

> The lady murnyt and maid grit mone
> With all hir mekle micht (65-6)

Henryson brings into his ballad the literary device for portraying great sorrow which we discussed at length when dealing with The Lyon and the Mous ll. 210 ff..[1]

The poet uses similar artistic means to stress two characteristics of the giant: his loathsomeness and his strength. He is: 'A fowll gyane of ane' (18). The superlative construction is used again with alliterative emphasis to reinforce this idea:

> He wes the laithliest on to luk
> That on the ground mycht gang (25-6).

In the next two lines the simile (an addition, of course), both refers to the allegorical meaning of the poem - the association of the devil and hell - and, it itself, is symbolic of the loathsomeness of the giant:

> His nailis wes lyk ane hellis cruk,
> Thairwith fyve quarteris lang (27-8)

Just as he is the most loathsome, the giant is the strongest on earth:

> Thair wes nane that he ourtuk,
> In ryeht or yit in wrang
> Bot all in schondir he thame schuke -
> The gyane wes so strang (29-32)

The constant use or implication of superlative with reference to the giant indirectly shows the greatness of the knight who overcomes him, and also the strength of his love: he will go

---

1. see p. 127.

to any lengths to rescue the Lady. The poet emphasizes both these characteristics directly. He is

> a worthy prince that had no peir
> ... and held full trew cunnand (45-8).

He is as virtuous as the giant is vicious. Of course the adversary is so strong that the knight, though victorious, cannot escape unwounded:

> In all the warld was thair a wicht
> So peteouss for to sy? (59-64)

Again Henryson imports into the poem a literary device - the rhetorical question used elsewhere[1] to invoke pity.

We have seen then the emphasis of the Tale; the Moralitas does not merely interpret: it, together with the last few lines of the Tale itself, emphasizes the importance of the tale for each of the readers. The Tale has served as an exemplum; this must be applied. So the poem ends on the appeal:

> hend men, will ye nocht herk?
> ffor his lufe that bocht us deir,
> Think on the bludy serk (118-20)

The relationship to sermon writing is thus marked: and, as we have seen, this very story had been used in sermons - in Dives and Pauper and in the sermon manuscript MS. Roy 18 B xxiii.

Whatever version of the story Henryson has used then, he has used it creatively: he has stressed, by literary means, the essence of his moralitas - the power of God, the original nobility yet essential vanity of mankind, the horrors of hell and of Satan, the great love of Christ. This, an essentially didactic poem,

---

1. Cf. The Wolff and the Lamb, ll. 90-1.

he has cast in a surprizing metre, which has links with the ballad metre (it is the same as that used in Robene and Makyne). Again, the creativity of Henryson's used on conventional material is so apparent as to need no stress whatever.

(vi) The Reasoning Betuix Aige and Yowth

The poem is traditional in subject matter (and not only in general subject matter but in the metaphors and descriptions used), in form and in technique; we shall examine each in turn.

Middle English literature contains many warnings by older people of the passing of youth and its associated beauty, joy and love. There are three characteristics of this type of warning which can also be found in Henryson's poem. Firstly, there is depiction of the sheer horror of physical decay: a poem from B.M. MS. Harl. 7322, _Death and its Precursors_[1] illustrates:

> And Hyse eyen shullen dymmen;
> And his nese shal sharpen;
> And his skyn shal starken;
> and his hew shal falewen;
> And his tonge shal stameren; (other famelen)
> And his lippes shulle bliken;
> And his hondes shulle quaken;
> And his teth shulle ratelen;
> And his throte shal rotelen;
> And his feet shullen streken;
> And his herte shal breken.

The Parlement of the Thre Ages[2] gives a similar portrait:

> The thirde was a laythe lede lenyde one his syde,
> Aiberyne bownn alle in blake, with bedis in his hande;
> Croked and courbede encrampeschett for elde;
> Alle disfygured was his face, and fadit his hewe,
> His berde and browes were blanchede full whitte,
> And the hare on his hede hewede of the same.
> He was ballede and blynde and alle babirlippede,
> Tothelesse and tenefull, I tell yowe for sothe;
> And euer he momelide and ment and mercy he askede ... (152-60),

1. ed. T. Wright and J.O. Halliwell, _Reliquae Antiquae_, 2 vols. (London, 1841-3), i, 64-5. Cf. also _Old Age_, ed. Wright and Halliwell, _Reliquae Antiquae_, _op. cit._, ii, 210-2; and _God send us Paciens in oure Oolde Age_, ed. F.J. Furnivall, _Hymns to the Virgin_, _op. cit._, pp. 79-82.
2. ed. M.Y. Offord (E.E.T.S.O.S. 246, 1959).

Henryson describes Age similarly (ll. 10-13). Physical decay has set in, a decay which is constantly compared to decay in nature - this is the second characteristic. Rolle of Hampole in *The Pricke of Conscience*[1] explains: a man:

> son fayles and fades, als dos þe flour
> For a flour þat semes fayre and bright,
> Thurgh stormes fades, and tymes þe myght ... (695-7)
> ... Þarfor a man may likend be
> Til a flour, þat es fayre to se,
> Þan son aftir þat it es forth broght,
> Welkes and dwynes til it be noght;
> Þis aught to be ensample til us;
> For whi Iob, in a boke, says þus:
> *Homo quasi flos, egreditur et conteritur,*
> *et fugit ve-*
> *lud umbra et numquam in eodem statu permanet*
> "Man" he says, "als a flour bright
> First forth comes here till þis light,
> And es sone broken and passes away,
> Als a shadu on þe somers day;
> And never mare in þe same state duelles,"
> Bot ay passand, als Iob telles; (704-17)

Not only does this conceit have similarities with that constantly appearing in our poem -

> O yowth, be glaid in to thy flowris grene ...
> ... O yowth, thy flowris fedis fellone sone.

- but it also helps to explain the setting of the poem, a setting very much like that of *The Parlement of the Thre Ages*:

> In the monethe of Maye when mirthes bene fele
> And the sesone of somere when softe bene the wedres ... (1-2)
> ... There the gryse was grene, growen with floures -
> The primrose, the pervynke, and piliole þe riche -
> The dewe appon dayses donkede full faire,
> Burgons ⁊ blossoms ⁊ braunches full swete,
> And the mery mystes full myldely gane falle ... (8-12)

---

1. ed. W. Morris (Philological Society, Berlin, 1863). Cf. also *Think on Yesterday*, ed. F.J. Furnivall, *Minor Poems of the Vernon Manuscript*, *op. cit.*, ii, 675-80, ll. 41-3; *Quhen phebus in the ranie clude*, ed. W.A. Craigie, *The Maitland Folio Manuscript*, *op. cit.*, i, 205-7, ll. 9-12.

The same emphasis, on the beauty of spring especially of its flowers, is found in our poem (ll. 1-4). This is not merely a conventional opening; it has a purpose, commenting on the theme of the poem: the young man, in the spring time of his life, is fresh, beautiful and joyful; the old man has withered just as the flowers will wither; the young man's joy will not last just as the beauties of spring cannot last.

The third characteristic of many of these warnings is the dramatization of the threat: it is put into the mouth of one who himself has personally experienced the ravages of time - he, too, has felt the joys of youth but he has also discovered their transitoriness: <u>The Parlement of the Thre Ages</u>:

> While I was ȝonge in my ȝouthe and ȝape of my dedys,
> I was als cuerrous in armes as ouþer of ȝoure-seluen ...
> (270-1)
> ... Bot Elde vndire - ȝode me are I laste wiste,
> And alle disfegured my face and fadide my hewe,
> Bothe my browes and my berde blawnchede full whitte -
> And when he sotted my syghte, than sowed myn hert - (283-6)[1]

The old man in Henryson's poem complains likewise (ll. 27-30). We are confronted by a living example: <u>The Parlement of the Thre Ages</u>:

> I sett ensample bi my-selfe, and seke it no forthire ... (269)
> ... Make ȝoure mirrours bi me, men bi ȝoure trouthe;
> This schadowe in my schewere schunte ȝe no while (290-1)

1. Cf. also <u>This World is but a Vanyte</u>, ed. F.J. Furnivall, <u>Hymns to the Virgin</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 83-5. <u>King Hart</u> (ed. J. Small, <u>The Poetical Works of Gavin Douglas</u>, 4 vols. [Edinburgh and London, 1874], i, 85-120) also provides a living example of the transitoriness of youth. For the uncertain authorship of this poem see Priscilla Preston, 'Did Gavin Douglas write <u>King Hart</u>', <u>op. cit.</u>, and Florence Ridley, 'Did Gavin Douglas write <u>King Hart</u>?' <u>Speculum</u>, xxxiv (1959), 402-12.

Quhen Phebus in the ranie clude:

... be me your sampill ye may se (37)

Henryson:

... Luke now my laikly luking gif I lie (31)

The old man's argument can thus be seen to be part of a long tradition contrasting the terrors of old age with the joys of youth, and from the contrast drawing a lesson; this lesson is commonly expressed by comparison of the approach of old age to the fading of spring and its flowers, and is commonly spoken by one who himself provides a living example - a dramatisation - of the threat he utters. This warning, traditional in itself, is a vestige of the universal later medieval theme (in sermon material, where it is ever present, and in literature - in an extended form in the allegories): the transitoriness of this world.

The point of view of the young man can be seen elsewhere too: the behaviour of Troilus (in Chaucer's poem), and of Cresseid dramatized his values. The young man in The Parlement of the Thre Ages voices the same feelings:

> And than kayre to the courte that I come fro,
> With ladys full louely to lappyn in myn armes,
> And clyp thaym and kysse thaym and comforthe myn hert;
> And than with damesels dere to daunsen in thaire chambirs;
> Riche Romance to rede ...
> ... With renkes in ryotte to reuelle in haulle,
> With coundythes and carolles and compaynyes sere,
> And chese me to the chesse that chefe es of gamnes;
> And this es life for to lede while I schalle lyfe here;
> (246-56)

Youth, in Henryson's poem, boasts similarly that he will:

> ... mell with mouthis meit,
> In secreit place, quhair we ma not be sene,
> And so with birdis blythly my bailis beit: (37-9)

The young man's protestations are illustrated by their appearance: they are happy (Henryson stresses this in ll. 6 and 49) and they are perfect physical beings (we remember too the original beauty of Cresseid):

> He was balghe in the breste and brode in the scholdirs,
> His axles and his armes were i-liche longe,
> And in the medill als a mayden menskfully schapen.
> Longe legges, and large, and lele for to schewe ... (112-5)
> ... And he throly was threuen of thritty gere of elde,
> And ther-to gonge and gape, and gouthe was his name;
> And the semely[este] segge that I seghe euer (133-5)

Henryson's young man boasts his physical prowess (stanzas 3 and 7), and illustrates it in his movement (l. 17).

The form is as traditional as the subject matter. The debate form, coming from France,[1] became established in Britain too. Perhaps the earliest written here are those in Latin attributed to Walter Mapes,[2] but vernacular debates soon followed: for example, The Owl and the Nightingale. It is to this tradition that Henryson's poem, and his Ressoning Betuix Deth and Man belong. Our poem has the traditional opening, a fact which does not, of course, mean that it is irrelevant to the theme to follow. We compare with the opening of the fifteenth century Eye and the Heart:[3]

> In the first weke of the saisoun of May
> Whan the wodes be couered al in grene
> In whiche the nightingale list for to play
> To shewe his voix amonges þe thornes kene

1. Its medieval origin, as a Carolingian imitation of the classical eclogue, and its later development are traced by J.H. Hanford, 'Classical Eclogue and Medieval Debate,' The Romanic Review, ii (1911), 16-31 and 129-43.
2. The Latin Poems commonly attributed to Walter Mapes, ed. T. Wright (Camden Society 16, London, 1841), pp. 87-106. These disputes appear in several translations given in this edition of Mapes' Latin Poems, pp. 299-349.
3. ed. E.P. Hammond, Anglia xxxiv (1911), 235-65.

> Theim to reioisse whiche loue is seruantes bene
> Which from al comfort thinke theim far behinde
> My pleasir was as was after seen
> Ffor my disport to chase hert and hinde (St. 1)

The narrator goes out into the woods in spring time and there meets the combattants of the debate; a very similar situation is found in The Parlement of the Thre Ages although there the dream device is used in addition. Similarly in The Owl and the Nightingale:[1]

> Ich was in one sumere dale;
> In one suþe digele hale
> I herde ich holde grete tale
> An Hule and one Niztingale ... (1-4).

And our poem shows a characteristic type of ending: it is inconclusive. It ends by restating the views of both men. In the debate between the Eye and the Heart Venus does not judge but sends to all lovers asking their opinions - and there the poem ends; The Owl and the Nightingale ends with the birds going off to submit themselves to 'Maister Nichole's' judgement. The ending of The Ressoning Betuix Aige and Yowth might also be interpreted, as saying that the contestants are both right; and here we also have parallels. For instance in the thirteenth century French dispute between Water and Wine:[2]

> Car quant à verité retraire,
> Tous estes bons et nescessaire
> Chascun de vous en sa seson.

Our poem then has an obvious connection with this genre; but I think we can see too that it is part of a certain group within

---

1. ed. E.G. Stanley, op. cit.
2. ed. Wright, The Latin Poems commonly attributed to Walter Mapes, op. cit., pp. 299-306.

that genre. The Eye and the Heart is also written in the Monk's Tale stanza; it is interesting too that - at the times of dispute - the contestants debate in alternating stanzas, as in our poem. However, it must be admitted, the Monk's Tale stanza is very common in the period. A more interesting comparison can be found with two other poems. Firstly with A Dialogue between a Clerk and a Husbandman.[1] The poem begins traditionally:

> As I cowthe walke because of recreacioun
> Be a grene wode syde as I kane
> I herde a meruolse comynycacioun
> Betwene a clerke and a husbandman (1-4)

The characters debate in alternating stanzas and each, as in our poem, has his own refrain, the clerk: 'Quia amore languio', the husbandman: 'Turn up hyr haltur and let hyr goo'. The debate ends inconclusively. The stanzas are of eight lines, rhyming a, b, a, b, b, c, b, c. In fact the only difference in form between this poem and ours is that the metre of the former is an irregular tetrameter whereas that of the latter is solely the pentameter. Secondly, we must compare our poem with Dunbar's In May as that Aurora did Upspring.[2] This also opens in a spring setting with the narrator overhearing:

> In May as that Aurora did upspring
> With cristall ene chasing the cluddis sable,
> I herd a merle with mirry notis sing ...

The birds debate on much the same subject - the transitoriness of earthly love - in alternating Monk's Tale stanzas, and each has its respective refrain: the blackbird 'A lusty lyfe in luves

---

1. ed. C. Brown, M.L.N., xxxiii (1918), 415-7.
2. Works. op. cit., ii, 174-8.

scheruice bene'; the nightingale 'All luve is lost bot vpone God allone'. Here, admittedly, the debate is resolved but the similarities are such, in my opinion, that it seems impossible to argue coincidence. I would suggest that the three poets, certainly Henryson and Dunbar in any case, are using a recognized form.

Content and form then rely closely on traditional patterns; so does technique - in its use of alliteration for instance. The extraordinarily close pattern of alliteration here reminds us of parts of the *Fabillis*, particularly the description of spring mornings in *The Lyon and the Mous* (1-21) and *The Fox tryed before the Lyone* (71-8). It is used to intensify the theme. We find too the common rhetorical techniques we have found elsewhere in Henryson's poems: the 'both ... and' technique of emphasizing size and importance: '*Baith* firth *and* feildis freschely had our fret'(2); the use of repetition with cumulative effect:

> Ane freik on fold, *als* forss and *als* fre
> *als* glaid, *als* gay, *als* ying, *als* yaip as yie (28-9);

the use of balance and contrast (the 'my' and 'thy' of stanzas 7 and 8; lines 65 and 67).

(vii) The Prais of Aige

The poem is partly an old man's complaint - in the same manner as the complaint in The Ressoning Betuix Aige and Yowth - of the folly of pursuing youthful pleasures which must perish. How traditional this is we have already seen in our examination of the Ressoning and there is no need to repeat the evidence. There are, however, a few additional points which must be made. As in the Ressoning, the opening is set in the traditional garden with the common scene of the narrator overhearing; but here we have a 'rede rosere' featured rather than flowers and green leaves. However, this too has parallels. The young man in The Parlement of the Thre Ages[1] wears:

> A chaplet one his chefe - lere, chosen for the nones,
> Raylede alle with rede rose, richeste of floures (118-9)

Dunbar begins The Golden Targe[2] similarly: '... I raise, and by a rosere did me rest' (13). The explanation for the use of this convention, which can be found as early as Le Roman de la Rose, can be found in Lydgate's As Mydsomer Rose:[3]

> Lat no man booste of konnyng nor vertu,
> Off tresour, richesse, nor of sapience ... (1-2)
> ... Somman hath wisdom, somman hath eloquence,
> Al stant on chaung, lyke a mydsomyr roose.
>
> (2)
>
> Holsom in smellyng be the soote fflourys,
> Ful delitable outward to the sight;
> The thorn is sharp, curyd with fressh colouris,
> Al is not gold that outward shewith bright; (7-12)

---

1. ed. M.Y. Offord, op. cit.
2. Works, op. cit., ii, 1-10. 'Rosere' is found in the Bannatyne reading only; Maitland Folio reads 'rivere'.
3. Minor Poems of John Lydgate, ed. MacCracken, op. cit., ii, 780-5.

Again, the symbol of kingship as the highest of earthly attainments (l. 28) can be paralleled elsewhere: This World is but a Vanyte:[1]

> At hiȝ noon y was crowned king
> þis world was oonli at my wille; ...
> ... Now age is cropen on me ful stille ... (41-5)

An additional reason is given in this poem for the folly of youthful pleasures: not only does youth fade, but the world itself is variable, largely because of covetousness (stanza 2). The same reason is given (in much the same type of 'laudator temporis acti' form) as in The Dog, the Scheip and the Wolff:

> Se how the cursit syn of cuvatys
> exylit hes bayth lufe lawty and law ... (155-6)
> Now symony is haldin for no syn
> Now is he blycht with okir can most wyn
> gentreis is slane and pety is ago (165-7)

So far we have discussed the poem as though it were simply a restatement of the old man's complaint in The Ressoning Betuix Aige and Yowth. But, of course, it is very different in tone. In that poem the old man showed nothing but despair at his state; this man rejoices in his old age because it brings him nearer to God. I have been able to find no parallel to this theme, earlier (though I suspect it is traditional), but there are two very interesting parallels in Middle Scots literature, parallels which once again give evidence for at least a community of interest, a common stock of thought and technique, and perhaps even for direct imitation. By studying such parallels we gain some understanding of the attitudes towards the theory of poetry current at the time; attitudes held by Henryson as well as by those who have imitated

1. ed. F.J. Furnivall, Hymns to the Virgin, op. cit., pp. 83-5.

him here. Dunbar's Now Cumis Aige Quhair Yewth hes bene[1] shows exactly the same theme: the falseness of the things of this world, blind, unhappy youth; the coming of age shows man the true reality - the love of Christ:

> Now culit is dame Venus brand;
> Trew luvis fyre is ay kindilland,
> And I begyn to undirstand,
> In feynit luve quhat foly bene;
> Now cumis aige quhair yewth hes bene
> And trew luve rysis fro the splene ... (1-6)
> ... Quhair I wes hurt with jelosy,
> And wald no luver wer bot I,
> Now quhair I lufe I wald all wy
> Als weill as I luvit I wene:
> Now cumis aige quhair yewth hes bene
> And trew lufe rysis fro the splene. (43-8)

Here too, the refrain sums up the theme as it does in our poem. With Kennedy's At Matyne houre in midis of the nicht[2] there are even closer resemblances, in both subject matter and form. In both the narrator (though in different circumstances) hears an old man singing gaily: Kennedy:

> Ane aigit man semit sextie yeiris of sicht
> This sentence sett and sang it in gud tone (3-4)

ll. 2-3 of Henryson's poem are very similar. Youth is folly; old age brings holiness:

> Grene youth to aige thow mon obey and bow
> thy foly lustis lestis skant ane may
> That than wes witt Is naturall foly now ... (9-11)
> ... O bittir yowith that semis delitious
> O haly aige that sumtyme semit soure
> O restless yowth hie hait and vicious
> O honest aige fulfillit with honoure (17-20)

As in our poem the contemporary state of the world is condemned:

---

1. Works, op. cit., ii, 179-82.
2. ed. Ritchie, The Bannatyne Manuscript, op. cit., ii, 131-2.

> This world is sett for to dissaive ws evin
> pryd is the nett and covece is the trane ... (25-6)
> ... Law luve and lawtie gravin law thay ly
> Dissimvlance hes borrowit conscience clayis
> Aithis writ walx nor seilis ar not set by
> flattery is fosterit baith with freindis and fayis ... (33-6)

Because of the falseness of the world and the folly of youthful desires Kennedy's 'aigit man' does not wish to be young again: he wishes (like Henryson's protagonist) to worship Him in whom stability is found:

> Omnipotent and eterne god in trone
> To be content and lufe the I haif caus
> That my licht yowtheid is opprest and done ... (5-7)
> ... Ffor na reward except the Ioy of hevin
> Wald I be yung in to this warld agane (27-8)

Both poems are written in the Monk's Tale stanza, both have refrains, and both use alliterative devices constantly.

(viii) Obey and thank thy god of all

Advice to accept the vicissitudes of life, indeed to thank God for them, was common in poetry before Henryson. Chaucer gives the advice in his Balade de Bon Conseyle:

> Tempest thee noght al croked to redresse,
> In trust of hir that turneth as a ball:
> Gret reste stant in litel besinesse;
> Be war also to sporne ayenys an al;
> Stryve not, as doth the crokke with the wal ... (8-12)
> ... Know thy contree, look up, thank God of all; (19)

We note that Chaucer uses some of the same type of proverbial expressions as does our poet (l. 30[1] and the refrain). A poem in the Bannatyne Manuscript Thus I propose in my carping[2] contains the same advice:

> Welcum be werd as evir god will ... (5)
> ... Eiss or diseiss quhilk god sall send
> allyk sall pleiss eiss or diseiss
> ay till obeyiss Till lyfe mak end
> Eiss or diseiss quhilk god will send (13-16)

An anonymous fifteenth century poem Lefte our hertes with good entent[3] has the refrain: 'And thanke God that al hath sent'. Again, Deo Gracias,[4] from the Vernon Manuscript of the later fourteenth century (Bodl. 3938):

1. The proverb is also used in The Testament of Cresseid, l. 475.
2. ed. Ritchie, The Bannatyne Manuscript, op. cit., ii, 349-50.
3. ed. T. Wright, Songs and Carols of the Fifteenth Century, op. cit., pp. 37-8.
4. ed. H. Varnhagen, 'Die Kleineren Gedichte der Vernon - und Simeon Handschrift', Anglia vii (1884), 287-9. Cf. also I See A Rybane Ryche and newe, ed. C. Brown, Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century, op. cit., pp. 283-4.

þouȝ I weore out of bonchef brouȝt,
What help weore to me to seye: Allas!
In þe name of god what ever be wrouȝt,
I schal seie Deo Gratias.

In mischef and in bonchef boþe
þat word is good to seye and synge
And not to wayle ne to be wroþe,
þouȝ al be nouȝt at ure lykynge; (45-52)

As might be expected, sermons recommend the same virtue:

> But here ye shall vndirstond that ryght as Crist afore is passion preyed that is passion shuld passe fro hym, for he was so sore a-dred of is deth that he swett stremes of blod for drede of is passion that he knewe was commynge, and yit he seid to is Fadur, "thi will be do and nott myn", and so shull we, what-euer that we will desire of God, putt it all in is will, for he will do the beste for vs, thogh it be strait and hard to vs[1]

We have, then, enough evidence to show that the poet was writing within a tradition even without the evidence of source material pointed out by G. Gregory Smith.[2] He showed the great similarities between our poem and the one in the before mentioned Vernon Manuscript.[3]

---

1. W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., p. 51.
2. Poems, op. cit., i, lxviii-lxix.
3. ed. H. Varnhagen, 'Die Kleineren Gedichte der Vernon - und Simeon Handschrift', op. cit., pp. 306-9. Shorter versions are found in MS. Bodl. 21896, fol. 15a (ed. C. Brown, Religious Lyrics of the Fourteenth Century, 2nd edn., rev. G.V. Smithers [Oxford, 1952] pp. 157-60); MS. Trinity Coll. Camb. 1450, fol. 25b (unedited); B.M. MS. Cotton Calig. A ii, fol. 68b (ed. J.O. Halliwell, Lydgate's Minor Poems [Percy Society 2, London, 1840], pp. 225-8); B.M. MS. Sloane 2593, fol. 19b (ed. T. Wright, Songs and Carols from a Manuscript in the British Museum of the fifteenth century [Warton Club, London, 1856], pp. 56-9); Princeton MS. Garret 143, fol. 47a (ed. R.K. Root, 'Poems from the Garret MS.', Englische Studien xli [1910], 374-6).

The evidence seems fairly conclusive for as Smith shows, not only are the first stanzas, although differently phrased, very similar but there are some close verbal parallels. But if this poem is accepted as the source, it must be admitted that our poet has considerably modified it, not only condensing certain parts and adding examples, but also, to my mind, radically altering the emphasis of the poem. Although the original states that the fluctuations and adversities are God's will it also constantly reassures the sufferers of improvement:

> God sende him [Job] hele and catel bo,
> Toun and tour and steede in stal,
> For he never grucched in wele ne wo
> But ever þonked god of al ... (45-8)
> ... In what meschef þut ever we be,
> He is mihti inonȝ, ur serwe to slake.
> Good amendes he wol us make,
> And we to him wol crie and cal ... (83-6)[1]

If we submit to His will He will restore happiness either in this world or in the next. These promises are not offered in our poem: the emphasis is on thankfulness and obedience, whatever the circumstances. We note that the refrain in the original poem was merely 'Euer to þonke God of al'; likewise, in Chaucer's poem, as we have seen, the phrase reads merely 'thank God of al'. In our poem we are repeatedly urged to <u>obey</u> God's will.

Besides, for the poet, there can be no question of restoration of <u>this world's</u> possessions, for they are: 'nocht bot verry vanitie' (52). For they:

> Sall nocht endeur at thy desyre,
> Bot as the wind will wend away; (11-12).

---

1. Cf. also ll. 105-8, 118-20, 131.

He cannot say, as does the other poet:

> þis world is good and nouzt in gesse
> To hem þat wolen kuynde be (121-2).

Our poem, then, is thus linked more closely to that tradition of poems decrying the variety of this world's possessions, emphasizing their transitoriness, their fickleness: 'This changeing and grit variance' (41). Of course this is not basically the work of Fortune; it is God's 'provisioun' (42-6). So Henryson has imported into his source the problem of the apparent fickleness of the world - at some stage one might think it ruled as by chance ('as sum men sayis, without ressoun' 44). But he has provided the answer given by Boethius:

> and God, byholdere and forwytere of alle thingis, duelleth above, and the present eternite of his sighte renneth alwey with the diverse qualite of our dedes, dispensynge and ordeynge medes to gode men and tormentz to wikkide men. Ne in ydelne in veyn ne ben ther put in God hope and prayeris that ne mowen nat ben unspedful ne withouten effect whan they been ryghtful[1]

The conception is certainly not new in literature, of course. The denial of determinism - the arbitrary rule of Fortune - is found, for instance in Kingis Quair and, by implication at least, in Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde, in Henryson's Testament of Cresseid and Orpheus and Eurydice.

Other differences between our poem and its source are perhaps less important. The poem is considerably shorter: the example of Job is reduced to its bare essentials; some general examples - jealousy of neighbour's prosperity, betrayal by friends - are

---

1. De Consolatione Philosophiae, Bk. V, Prosa 6; Robinson, p. 384.

omitted. Much of the original poem is essentially repetition of the main theme; this repetition too is omitted. An addition is the example of Tobias: Tobias 'maist full of cheritie' (18) was 'tempit with adversitie' (20) just as much as 'maist riche' Job - adversity befalls the very virtuous as well as the very rich. The setting is made more explicit. The original begins: 'Bi a wey wandryng as I went'. There is no suggestion of the abbey setting used by our poet. Wood writes that the setting 'may suggest the great Benedictine Abbey of Dunfermline, in the Grammar and Song School of which the poet taught';[1] a suggestion first made by Laing.[2] But they have overlooked the fact that such a beginning was not an uncommon feature in contemporary poetry. The poem <u>Deo Gratias</u> mentioned before, presents the narrator in Church; he was at prayer, a clerk brought out a book:

> Faste he souȝte what he schulde synge,
> And al was Deo gracias.
>
> Alle þe queristes in þat qwer
> On þat word fast gon þei cri; (7-10)

He called aside a priest to explain the phrase. A <u>Lamentacion beate marie</u>[3] begins:

---

1. <u>Poems and Fables</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. xiv.
2. <u>Poems and Fables</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. xix.
3. ed. H.E. Sandison, <u>The Chanson d'Aventure in Middle English</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 105-9. Cf. also '<u>Mery hit is in may mornyng</u>' (ed. Sandison, <u>The Chanson d'Aventure</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 102) which tells how the narrator had a vision of Christ and certain of the apostles 'by a chapell as I came'.

In a chyrch as I gan knelle
Thys endres dey for to here messe,
I saw a sy3ht me lykyd welle ...
... Oure lady and hyre sonne in fere

Reading advice on a wall is also to be found elsewhere: <u>Hyre and see and say not all</u>[1]

Throwe a toun as y com ryde,
Y saw wrotyn on a wall
A leffe of letterys long and wyde:
'Hyre and se, and sey not al!' (1-4)

Metre and verse form remind us once again of the question of genre. As in many of Henryson's other directly didactic and religious poems the rhyme scheme of the Monk's Tale stanza is used. The metre is that of the source, iambic tetrameter; it should be noted that most of Dunbar's poems using this rhyme scheme and metre are also directly didactic; and that the source is but one of many similar poems, found together in the Vernon Manuscript, with the same verse form.

1. ed. Sandison, <u>The Chanson d'Aventure</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 121-3. The same convention is used in <u>As I stod in a ryalle haulle</u>, ed. J.O. Halliwell, <u>Early English Miscellanies</u> in prose and verse selected from an unedited manuscript of the fifteenth century (Warton Club, London, 1855), pp. 62-5.

(ix) The Annunciation

The ultimate source of The Annunciation is, of course, St. Luke's Gospel (i, 26-38) and traditional exegesis of certain other Biblical passages. The Gospel account tells of the sending of Gabriel, of his greeting Mary, of her fear and of her acceptance of God's will. All these events are mentioned by the poet, though reordered slightly - for instance, in the Gospel account Mary is afraid before Gabriel has told her of God's purpose - and added to: there is no 'Brichtnes fra bufe aboundis' (20) in St. Luke. There is no verbal parallel between Gospel and poem, much is omitted, and the emphasis - on the virgin's chastity - in The Annunciation is an emphasis of one facet of that story (vv. 34-5). The poet then is not merely restating the Gospel narrative.

The allegorization of the burning bush and of Aaron's rod has its ultimate source in patristic exegesis. Thus Bede, commenting on Exodus iii, 2 (et [Moyses] videbat quod rubus arderet, et non combureretur) writes 'Alii per rubum sanctam Mariam significari volunt, in qua divinitas ardebat et nullum detrimentum patiebatur.'[1] And of Numbers xvii, 8 (sequenti die regressus invenit geminasse virgam Aaron in domo Leui: et turgentibus gemmis eruperant flores, qui, foliis dilatatis, in amygdalas deformati sunt) he writes 'Alii virgam hanc, quae sine humore florem protulit, Mariam putant, quae sine coitu virili

---

1. In Pentateuchum Commentarii - Exodus, P.L. xci, col. 293.

protulit Filium Dei; de qua scriptum est, Exiet virga de radice Jesse.'[1]

Of course the story had been retold countless times. Sermons had dealt with it, often stressing the virtues of Mary and her power to help[2]. And there were very many poems written in the Later Middle Ages, as earlier, retelling the Gospel story[3] and using the same Biblical interpretation as our poet. Chaucer, translating Deguileville, in the A.B.C. writes:

> Moises, that saugh the bush with flawmes rede
> Brenninge, of which ther never a stikke brende,
> Was signe of thin unwemmed maidenhede.
> Thou art the bush on which ther gan descende
> The Holi Gost, the which that Moyses wende
> Had been a-fyr; and this was in figure. (89-94)

In poems by Ryman we find:

> Behold, the yerde of Aaron
> Unmoysted bare a floure
>
> Beholde and see how that nature[4] (St. 2, 11. 3-4)

> Aaron yerde withowte moystowre,
> Thatte longe was sere, a flowre haþe born:
> So sche hath born oure sauyowre
> To saue mankynde, thatt was forlorn
>
> Mirabile Misterium[5] (St. 6, 11. 1-4)

---

1. In Pentateuchum Commentarii - Numeri, P.L. xci, col. 367.
2. W.O. Ross, Middle English Sermons, op. cit., pp. 318-26, 329-36.
3. Thus The Annunciation of the Virgin Mary, ed. R. Morris, An Old English Miscellany (E.E.T.S.O.S. 49, 1872), p. 100; various poems of Ryman, ed. J. Zupitza, 'Die Gedichte des Franzikaners Jakob Ryman', Archiv lxxxix (1892), 260, 277, 288-95, 313-6; Mary Modr and Missus est Angelus Gabriel, ed. W. Sandys, Christmas Carols (London, 1833), pp. 7, 8-11; several fifteenth century lyrics - ed. C. Brown, Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century, op. cit., pp. 103-8; ed. T. Wright, Songs and Carols of the Fifteenth Century, op. cit., pp. 33-4, 36-7, 79-81. And many others.
4. ed. J. Zupitza, 'Die Gedichte des Franzikaners Jakob Ryman', op. cit., pp. 185-6.
5. ibid., pp. 293-4.

Several of these poems refer, as does The Annunciation (ll. 53-60) not merely to this event but also to the death of Mary's Son. Thus, in Hec salutatio composuit Angelus Gabrielus,[1] a poem whose central theme is the annunciation, we find Audelay writing:

> Hent he out 3ed, batelis bede to al þ[e] flok,
> Beryng on His chulderis bloo
> þe hole cros þat kene a knok
> Unto oure dedly foo (27-30)

And a very large number end with a similar plea to that expressed in our poem. Thus in a thirteenth century poem, Gabriel's Greeting to Our Lady,[2] we find:

> Maiden, moder makeles,
> of milche ful ibunden,
> bid for hus im þat þe ches
> at wam þu grace funde,
> þat he forgive hus senne and wrake,
> and clene of euri gelt us make ... (49-54)

Of course this is a common ending not merely for poems retelling the story of The Annunciation, but also of hymns in praise of Mary.[3] And we must remember that our poem, as was pointed out in the opening paragraph, is not merely a retelling of the story of the Annunciation.[4] Mary's virtues, especially her purity, are stressed throughout.

---

1. ed. E.K. Whiting, Poems of John Audelay (E.E.T.S.O.S. 184, 1931), pp. 159-60.
2. ed. C. Brown, English Lyrics of the Thirteenth Century, op. cit., pp. 75-6.
3. Cf. those by Lydgate, Minor Poems of John Lydgate, op. cit., 1, 280-329.
4. Of course this combination is not new: see, for instance, Ryman's A Roose hath borne a lilywhite, ed. Zupitza, 'Die Gedichte des Franzikaners Jakob Ryman', op. cit., pp. 187-8; Audelay's Hec Salutatio composuit Angelus Gabrielus, op. cit.

The introductory passage in praise of love has no parallels elsewhere in Annunciation poetry. However poems telling of the power of love are numerous and some begin in similar manner to Henryson's. For instance, a fourteenth century poem, A Song of the Love of Jesus,[1] begins

> Luf es lyf þat lastes ay, þar it in criste es feste,
> For wele ne wa it chaunge may, als wryten has men wyseste.
> þe nyght it tournes in-til þe day, þi travel in-tyll reste;
> If þou wil luf þus as I say, þou may be wyth þe beste.
> (1-4)

As in our poem - 'Luf us fra barret betis;' (5) - love removes all ills.

The verse form provides several points of interest: it is a twelve lined stanza rhyming a, b, a, b, b, a, a, b, b, a, a, b; the a rhymes end lines of iambic tetrameter, the b rhymes those of iambic trimeter. Dunbar's poem Ane Ballat of our Lady[2] - also dealing with the Virgin Mary it should be noted - also has a twelve lined stanza; although the rhyme scheme is slightly different from that of The Annunciation, it is also formed largely from two rhymes (except the ninth line) and, again, the a rhymes end lines of iambic tetrameter, the b rhymes, lines of iambic trimeter. A twelve lined stanza - often completely tetrameter - was common in medieval verse,[3] often in religious poems, including poems concerning the Virgin Mary. Thus A Prayer of the Five Joys[4]

---

1. ed. C. Brown, Religious Lyrics of the Fourteenth Century, op. cit., pp. 102-6.
2. Poems, op. cit., ii, 269-71.
3. See English Lyrics of the Thirteenth Century, ed. C. Brown, op. cit., pp. 92-100, 143-5; 146-7; Religious Lyrics of the Fourteenth Century, ed. C. Brown, op. cit., pp. 3-7, 98-9, 125-31, 139-48, 152-4, 160-4, 174-7, 205-15; Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century, ed. C. Brown, op. cit., pp. 213-4, 273-7.
4. ed. C. Brown English Lyrics of the Thirteenth Century, op. cit., pp. 27-9.

uses a twelve lined stanza, though it is completely of iambic tetrameter; the previously mentioned, Gabriel's Greeting to Our Lady, uses a twelve lined stanza, with varying metres. The Marian lament, Filius Regis Mortuus Est,[1] the prayer to the Blessed Virgin 'Off all þe bryddus þat ever 3eyt were,'[2] and the song, I Have now set my Heart so High'[3] all use the twelve lined stanza of tetrameters as does Audelay's hymn, Haile! þe fayrst þer ever God fond.[4] It should be noted too that, though his Hec salutatio composuit Angelus Gabrielus uses a ten lined stanza, its metre is that of our poem - tetrameter and trimeter. Thus although it would be false to suppose that Henryson was following a rigid genre - many other metres are used for similar poems; and Dunbar, for instance, uses a similar metre, admittedly with very different rhyme scheme, in his humorous poem The Turnament[5] - we can assume that our poet was following a widely known tradition.

Just as the poet has drawn upon a common stock of thought and verse form, so his vocabulary can be traced in other Annunciation poems. Thus stress on Mary's mildness[6] is common.

---

1. ed. C. Brown, Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century, op. cit., pp. 8-13.
2. ibid., pp. 43-5.
3. ibid., p. 74.
4. ed. Whiting, Poems of John Audelay, op. cit., pp. 155-9.
5. Poems, op. cit., ii, 122-6.
6. Cf. I Have now Set my Heart so High, l. 4; Ecce! Ancilla Domini, ed. C. Brown, Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century, op. cit., pp. 105-6, ll. 6 and 14.

She is often referred to as a princess,[1] as one who is without peer,[2] as a blossom,[3] as one whose face is 'moist fair and schene' (62),[4] one who is 'clene' (64).[5]

So far we have examined the elements of Henryson's poems which are conventional in character. We have already seen one aspect of the poem which is new. Henryson has added the opening (conventional in itself of course). This addition places the poem in a new perspective. In the paradox introduced by this opening - 'lufe / throuch quhome al bittir suet is' (2) - we see foreshadowed the paradox (chaist with child) on which Henryson bases a large proportion of his poem structurally and thematically (cf. ll. 10-11, 15, 17-18, 40, 43, 48-9).[6] For

> the miraclis ar mekle and meit,
> fra luffis Ryver Rynnis" (37-7).

Love can achieve another miracle

> and mak me chaist
> Fra termigant that teyn is" (67-8).

---

1. Cf. Dunbar's Roiss most of vertew virginall, Poems, op. cit., ii, 272-3, l. 21; I Have now Set my Heart so High, l. 21; Ave Gracia Plena, ed. C. Brown, Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century, op. cit., pp. 103-5, l. 43; Audelay's Haile! þe fayrst þer euer God fond, l. 11.

2. Cf. Quhen þe devyne deliberatioun, ed. W. Tod Ritchie, The Bannatyne Manuscript, ii, 102-3, l. 12; Off all þe bryddus þer euer zeyt were, l. 3; I Have now Set my Heart so High, l. 21.

3. Cf. Audelay's Haile! þe fayrst þer euer God fond, l. 5.

4. Cf. Audelay's Haile Mary to þe I say, ed. Whiting, Poems of John Audelay, op. cit., pp. 149-55, l. 11; Off all þe bryddus þer euer zeyt were, ll. 37-8 and 49; Dunbar, Ane Ballat of our Lady, l. 39.

5. Cf. Dunbar Ane Ballat of our Lady, l. 41; Dunbar, Roiss Mary most of vertew virginall, l. 17; Off all þe bryddus þer euer zeyt were, l. 32.

6. The thorough working out of the implications of the paradox of the Virgin Birth in this way is unparalleled in Annunciation poems I know and illustrates a degree of poetic skill far greater than that found in most such poems.

(x) The Thre Deid Pollis

The warning given by a dead man to those living is not unusual in medieval poetry. Thus:

> þou art now as I was in wardly fygure
> I was as þou art sumtyme be dayes olde.[1]

Again:

> Take hede un to my fygure here abowne
> And se how sumtyme I was fressche and gay
> Now turned to wormes mete and corrupcoun
> Bot fowle erth and stynkyng slyme and clay[2]

Our poem states similarly - 'As ye ar now, into this warld we wair' (5) - and there is a preoccupation, too, with the physical details of decay (ll. 3-4, 21, 32, 40), a preoccupation shown in the second example above and in much other medieval literature.[3] We see it for instance in Skelton's _Upon a Dead Man's Head_,[4] a poem which uses, as ours, the sight of a decayed skull as an example. We remember it, too, in _The Ressoning Betuix Aige and Yowth_, a poem in which it also serves as a warning example. This use of example is a recurrent factor in poems of the period. In one way we might look on many of the longer poems of the period - for instance Henryson's own _Testament of Cresseid_ and _Orpheus and Eurydice_ or Chaucer's _Troilus and Criseyde_ - as among other things extended examples: you have seen, the poet seems to imply, the fate of this person who acted wrongly; avoid, then, acting

---

1. _O ye al whilk þat by me cummes and goth_, ed. K. Brunner, 'Mittelenglische Todesgedichte', _Archiv_ clxvii (1935), 27-8, st. 12, ll. 5-6.
2. _Take hede unto my fygure_, ed. K. Brunner, 'Mittelenglische Todesgedichte', _op. cit._, p. 30, ll. 1-4.
3. Cf. _A disputacioun betwyx þe body and wormes_, ed. K. Brunner, 'Mittelenglische Todesgedichte', _op. cit._, pp. 30-5.
4. _Poems_, _op. cit._, pp. 17-18.

wrongly yourself. In some cases, as in our poem, the very example speaks in warning. Cresseid herself says:

> O Ladyis fair of Troy and Grece, attend
> My miserie ...
> ... Be war in tyme, approchis neir the end,
> And in your mind ane mirrour mak of me (452-6)

In other cases the poet himself points out the warning exemplified in his story: so Chaucer,

> Swich fyn hath, lo, this Troilus for love!
> Swich fyn hath al his grete worthynesse! ... (V 1828-9)
> ... Lo here, of payens corsed olde rites
> Lo here, what alle hire goddes may availle;
> Lo here, thise wrecched worldes appetites; ... (V 1849-52)

The poet has not merely stated a lesson; he has shown it in action - an example from real life, a forceful example, has been given. In The Thre Deid Pollis, then, Henryson has used a very common device: his example from 'life' emphasizes his didactic point.[1]

The skulls warn that all will die and become as they have come (9). The insistence that all will die recurs frequently in medieval poetry;[2] all becomes earth (40).[3] The very categories of people referred to by the poet are those of tradition: so

---

1. Cf. also Of þre messagers of deeth, ed. F.J. Furnivall, Minor Poems of the Vernon Manuscript, op. cit., ii, 443-8, ll. 149 ff.; Against Death is no Defence, ed. C. Brown, Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century, op. cit., pp. 246-8, ll. 9 ff..

2. Cf., for example, Ryman's O cruell deth paynfull and smart, ed. J. Zupitza, 'Die Gedichte des Franziskaners Jakob Ryman', op. cit., pp. 265-7, st. 5, ll. 1-2; O ȝe al whilk þat by me cummes and goth, st. 1, ll. 1-4; Of þre messagers of deeth, ll. 17-20; Dunbar, Lament for the Makaris, Poems, op. cit., ii, 13-20; Dunbar, Memento, homo quod cinis es, Poems, op. cit., ii, 74-5; The Dance of Death, ed. F. Warren (E.E.T.S.O.S. 181, 1931), ll. 9 ff. (references are to MS. Ellesmere 26/A.13); Death's Wither-Clench, ed. C. Brown, English Lyrics of the Thirteenth Century, op. cit., pp. 15-16, l. 16; O wrechit man full of iniquitie, ed. W. Tod Ritchie, The Bannatyne Manuscript, op. cit., pp. 191-5, ll. 36-42.

3. The expression has Biblical origins. Cf., for a literary parallel, the many versions of the poem Erthe apon Erthe, ed. H.M.R. Murray (E.E.T.S.O.S. 141, 1911).

'peure and riche, sal be but differens' (39) is a common classification.[1] Rulers (38-9),[2] the beautiful (stanza 4),[3] the wise (45-6)[4] the old and young (stanzas 3 and 7)[5] all figure prominently in this type of poetry. Pride therefore is folly.[6] The stanzas referring to youth and beauty particularly will repay a close examination, not merely because they give good examples of the author's technique but also because they show further parallels with contemporary literature. So

> O wantone yowth, als frescho as lusty may,
> farest of flowris, renewit quhyt and reid
> Behald our heidis: O lusty gallandis gay,
> full laichly thus sall ly thy lusty heid
> holkit and how, and wallowit as the weid,
> thy crampand hair, and elk thy cristall ene;
> full cairfully conclud sall dulefull deid; (17-23)

The artistic techniques and phraseology are very reminiscent of those in Henryson's longer poems: the use of adjectives to convey attitude through intensification ('lusty' is used three times, for instance and there are also 'gay', 'frescho', 'wantone'); the intensifying adverbs 'elk' in line 22 and 'full' in lines 20 and 23; and, above all, the emphasis given by alliteration:

---

1. Cf. Ryman, O cruell deth paynfull and smart, st. 1, l. 4; O ȝe al whilk þat by me cummes and goth, st. 8, ll. 1-3; Of þre messangers of death, l. 27.
2. Cf. Of þre messagers of death, ll. 139-40; The Dance of Death, ll. 10-11; This World is Verra Vanité, ed. I. Gollancz, Parlement of the Thre Ages (Select Early English Poems, 2, London, 1915), Appendix 9, st. 4, ll. 1-4; Everyman, ed. A.C. Cawley (Manchester, 1951), l. 126.
3. Cf. A disputacioun betwyx þe body and wormes, st. 23-5; A Song of Mortality, ed. C. Brown, Religious Lyrics of the Fourteenth Century, op. cit., pp. 96-7, ll. 31-2.
4. Cf. O ȝe al whilk þat by me cummes and goth, st. 5, l. 1; Knight, King, Clerk Wend to Death, ed. C. Brown, Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century, op. cit., pp. 248-9, ll. 9-12.
5. Cf. O cruell deth paynfull and smart, st. 1, l. 4; Of þre messagers of death, l. 28; The Dance of Death, l. 8.
6. Cf. All is Lost on Death, ed. F.J. Furnivall, Political, Religious and Love Poems (E.E.T.S.O.S. 15, 1866), pp. 249-50, ll. 9-11; Signs of Death, ed. F.J. Furnivall, Political, Religious and Love Poems, op. cit., p. 253; A Song on Mortality.

the l, for instance, linking 'lusty', 'gallandis', 'laichly', 'ly', 'lusty' (ll. 19-20), the stress on 'dulefull deid' (23). The stanza too gives very interesting points of comparison in vocabulary and thus in theme. We compare with a passage from The Dance of Death

Dethe to the amerous Squyere	ȝe that be Jentel / so fresshe and amerous Of ȝeres ȝonge / flowring in ȝoure grene age Lusti fre of herte / and eke desyrous Ful of deuyses / and chaunge yn ȝowre corage Plesaunt of porte / of loke and [of] visage But al shal turn / in to asshes dede (433-8)

We see a similarity of vocabulary ('fresshe', 'ȝonge', 'lusti') and a similarity of metaphor - the flowering of youth[1] - giving rise to a similarity of theme. Chaucer's lines in Troilus and Criseyde should also be remembered:

> O yonge, fresshe folkes, he or she,
> In which that love up groweth with youre age,
> Repeyreth hom fro worldly vanyte, ... (V 1835-7)

The following stanza of Henryson's poem is equally interesting:

> O ladeis quhyt in claithis corruscant
> poleist with perle, and mony pretius stane
> With palpis quhyt, and hals [so] elegant
> Sirculit with gold and sapheris mony ane;
> Your finyearis small quhyt as quhailis bane;
> arrayit with ringis, and mony rubeis reid:
> as we ly thus, so sall ye ly ilk ane,
> with peilit pollis and holkit thus your heid (25-32)

Similar techniques are thus used: repetition of important adjectives and adverbs ('quhyt', 'mony' are both used three times in the stanza), alliterative emphasis (the stress on the precious

---

1. The Biblical origins of this metaphor, its constant occurrence in mediaval poetry, and the significance of the colours 'quhyt and reid' (18) have been discussed when dealing with The Lyon and the Mous, pp. 128-30 and The Ressoning Betuix Aige and Yowth, pp. 344-5.

stones in lines 26 and 30 for instance); the poet uses balance too ('as we ... so sall ye', 30) to emphasize his theme. The Young Man in The Parlement of the Thre Ages was similarly decked out in precious stones (including gold, rubies and sapphires).[1]

All will die then: this world is a 'mortall se'. The sea is a common symbol for the world, its vagaries and its sins, in medieval poetry and sermon material. Henryson uses it himself in The Mous and the Paddock (ll. 79-85) and I have shown its conventional nature in my analysis of that poem.[2]

Nothing else is sensible but to

> fall on thy kneis; ask grace at god greit,
> with oritionis, and haly salmes sweit, (52-3)

The poem ends with an exhortation that the hearers pray to Christ that, through His blood, the 'thre deid pollis' (and, by implication, the hearers themselves for they will die too) may 'ay leif and ring ... be eternitie'. Line 61 in the Maitland Folio Text[3] makes the implication explicit, 'Throw your prayar that we and ye may Regnne'. Of course similar endings were very frequent in poems warning of death.[4]

---

1. ed. M.Y. Offord, op. cit., ll. 122-9.
2. Pp. 70-1.
3. There seems to be little to choose between either text; certainly some of the Maitland Folio lines scan more satisfactory than those in the Bannatyne text - cf. ll. 45, 48, 52, 59 - but l. 2 reads more satisfactorily in Bannatyne and the alliterative pattern of l. 22 (cr ... cr) is not found in Maitland.
4. Cf. Evere more where so euer I be, ed. E. Flügel, 'Liedersammlungen Des XVI Jahrhunderts, besonders aus der zeit Heinrichs VIII', Anglia xxvi (1903), 193, st. 8; Skelton, Upon a Dead Man's Head; O cruell deth paynfull and smerte, st. 7.

We have already examined the author's rhetorical technique. He uses the Monk's Tale stanza which, as we have already noted, was a very common form for didactic poems in the fifteenth century. It will be sufficient to note then, that the translator of the Dance of Death also uses this form as does Lydgate in his Timor Mortis Conturbat me.[1]

1. The Minor Poems of John Lydgate, op. cit., ii, 828-32.

(xi) The Ressoning betuix Deth and Man

Many of the details of The Ressoning betuix Deth and Man have been dealt with in discussing The Thre Deid Pollis and it will not be necessary to repeat that discussion: we have seen before the common occurrence of the threat that all must die (stanza 3); indeed, many of the categories in this poem are those isolated in our study of The Thre Deid Pollis: the 'fresche', the fair, the young and the old, the rich and the poor. We have seen elsewhere too the advice to repent (l. 33) and poems ending with a prayer to Jesus to have mercy on doomsday. The form of the poem, too, has been largely dealt with before in the discussion of the debate form in The Ressoning betuix Aige and Yowth: each contestant speaks in alternate stanzas; stanzas are of the Monk's Tale form. We should note, however, that there is a conclusion to the debate: Death persuades Man to accept his decrees and advice, as the body accepts the decrees and advice of the worms in A disputacioun betwyx þe body and wormes[1] or as the blackbird accepts the nightingale's correction in Dunbar's In May as that Aurora did upspring.[2]

However, there are several points which need separate comment. The device of having Death speak directly to Man - another dramatization of the didactic theme, the like of which we have already discussed in The Ressoning betuix Aige and Yowth and

1. ed. K. Brunner, 'Mittelenglische Todesgedichte', op. cit., pp. 30-5.

2. Poems, op. cit., ii, 174-8; l. 97 especially should be noted.

The Thre Deid Pollis - is very common[1] and often gives rise to a form of debate, as, for instance, in Everyman and The Dance of Death. Death's speeches to man in our poem contain several traditional phrases and concepts. Death advises man to make a mirror of him; this very advice can be paralleled elsewhere.[2] This concept is closely connected with that of example, discussed earlier; the passage quoted from the Testament of Cresseid when dealing with The Thre Deid Pollis is but one of many examples of this figure.[3] Death twice threatens 'paip, empriour, king' (lines 4 and 40), a phrase that had become a common-place in this type of poetry.[4] And the threat of 'edderis, askis, and wormis' (38) is of course part of the tradition.[5]

Man's replies to Death can also be paralleled. He asks Death who he is. Similarly Everyman says to Dethe 'I knowe the not what messenger arte thou' (114). Man complains that he thought youth would remain with him forever, that he has spent his time fulfilling his sinful desires, satisfying his pride.

---

1. Cf. I haue soghte þe many a day, ed. K. Brunner, 'Mittelenglische Todesgedichte', op. cit., p. 23, ll. 1-4; Þo ȝe wele now warre with me, ed. K. Brunner, 'Mittelenglische Todesgedichte', op. cit., p. 22; Ryman, O cruell deth paynfull and smert, ed. J. Zupitza, 'Die Gedichte des Franzikaners Jakob Ryman', op. cit., pp. 265-7, st. 5 and 7
2. Cf. A Mirror for Young Ladies at their Toilet, ed. C. Brown, Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century, p. 241.
3. Cf. also The Dance of Death, ed. Warren, op. cit., ll. 31-2 and 49 ff..
4. Cf. Of þre messagers of deeth, ed. F.J. Furnivall, Minor Poems of the Vernon Manuscript, op. cit., ii, 443-8, ll. 139-40; The Dance of Death, ll. 9-10; Everyman, ed. Cawley, op. cit., l. 126.
5. Cf. Take hede vnto my fygure, ed. K. Brunner, 'Mittelenglische Todesgedichte', op. cit., p. 30, l. 3; A disputacioun betwyx þe body and wormes.

This admission is the very complaint made by the Old Man in both <u>The Parlement of the Thre Ages</u> and Henryson's <u>Ressoning Betuix Aige and Yowth</u>. Once again we are given a living illustration of a didactic point: Man's pride is illustrated by his words in stanza 2 - anyone who attacks him will be caused to 'bow to me on forss' (16).

In considering these two poems on death we should remember, then, that they are part of a long tradition of such poems. It is helpful, I believe, to consider them and their like as just one type of the very large number of poems of the period condemning the folly of this transitory world and its passing possessions.

(xii) Aganis Haisty Credence of Titlaris

Aganis Haisty Credence of Titlaris complains of contemporary conditions ('now', l. 1),[1] yet the very complaints voiced come from a common stock of complaint poetry.

Taletelling is condemned by Biblical writers[2] to whom the tongue is a dangerous enemy.[3] The theme is continued in sermon material.[4] And there is a fairly considerable group of poems advising reticence, or at least wisdom, in speech to avoid the evil consequences of flattery, of scandal, of taletelling and of rash speech. A representative stanza may be quoted:

> Certayn thys ys a wondere thyng!
> Be a tale nevere so fals
> Meny men haue grete lekyng
> To tell it forth, and eche it als;
> And be it tolde ons or twyse
> Hyt wol be long or it downe fall.
> There-for y rede be ware and wyse,
> And hyre, and se, and sey not all![5]

---

1. Cf. my discussion of the possible relationship between this type of complaint and political conditions in Scotland in the early 1480's, pp. 185-9.
2. Cf. Leviticus xix, 16; Proverbs xi, 13, xviii, 6-8, xx, 19, xvi, 22.
3. Cf. Psalm lii, 4 (Vg. li, 6), cxx, 2-3 (Vg. cxix, 2-3); Proverbs xvii, 4; James iii, 5-6.
4. Cf. G.R. Owst, Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England, op. cit., 450-8.
5. Throwe a towne as I com ryde, ed. H.E. Sandison, The Chanson d'Aventure in Middle English, op. cit., pp. 121-3. Cf. also (I include refrains in brackets where appropriate) three Lydgate poems, Who seith the best shal neuer repent, See myche, say lytell, and lerne to soffar in tyme, Sum man goth stille of wysdam and resoun, The Minor Poems of John Lydgate, op. cit., ii, 795-9, 800-1, 813-8; Always try to Say the Best, ed. C. Brown, Religious Lyrics of the Fourteenth Century, op. cit., pp. 191-3; Qween of Heuene, Moder and may (And fond euer more to seye þe best), ed. F.J. Furnivall, Minor Poems of the Vernon Manuscript, op. cit., ii, 723-5; two carols Man bewar, bewar, bewar, Kep thi tunge, thi tunge, thi tunge, ed. R.L. Greene, The Early English Carols (Oxford, 1935), pp. 232, 233; Think Before You Speak (Whate euer thow sey A-vyse the welle), ed. C. Brown, Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century, op. cit.,

(Continued overleaf)

Several poems confine themselves to condemning the wickedness of the tongue, as do lines 41-3 of our poem. Thus a carol[1] begins:

> Off al the enmys that I can fynd
> The tong is most enmy to mankynd

Others (cf. line 44 of our poem) threaten the pains of hell to wicked tongues.[2]

Still more akin to our poem are those advising against credulity. P.W. Thomson pointed out to Gregory Smith[3] similarities between our poem and two of Lydgate. In the _Churl and the Bird_[4] the bird, in return for her release, gives the churl three pieces of advice, the first of which is

> Yiff nat of wisdam to _hasty credence_
> To euery tale, nor to eche tidyng,
> But considre of reson and prudence
> Mong many talis is many grett lesyng;
> _Hasty credence_ hath causid gret hyndryng,
> Report of talis, and tydynges brought vp new
> Makith many a man to be hold vntrewe. (197-203)

The bird tests the churl and, discovering he has forgotten the advice, complains:

> Tauht I the nat this wisdam in sentence:
> To euery tale brouht to the of newe,
> Nat _hastily_ yeue ther-to _credence_,
> Into tyme thou knowe that it were trewe? (301-4)

---

pp. 280-2; _As I stod in a ryalle haulle_ (Ewyre say wylle, or hold the styll), ed. J.O. Halliwell, _Early English Miscellanies_, _op. cit._, pp. 62-5.

1. ed. R.L. Greene, _The Early English Carols_, _op. cit._, p. 233. Cf. also Skelton, _Against Venemous Tongues_, _Poems_, _op. cit._, pp. 138-42.

2. Cf. _But thou say Sooth thou Shalt be Shent_, ed. C. Brown, _Religious Lyrics of the Fourteenth Century_, _op. cit._, pp. 205-8.

3. _Poems_, _op. cit._, i, lxxii n..

4. _The Minor Poems of John Lydgate_, _op. cit._, ii, 468-85.

Thomson's other reference is even more interesting. Lydgate's Fall of Princes[1] Book I Chapter 8 tells the story of Theseus whose greatest sorrow was that he 'gaff credence' (4485) to his wife. Readers are advised:

> Nor be [to] hasti talis for to leeue
> Off flaterers in chaumbre nor at table;
> Forgers of lesyngis, myn auctour doth weel preeue,
> Tabide with lordis that thei be nat able ...
> ... That pryncis sholde examyne ech parti.
>
> Off wisdam also and off discrecioun,
> Withoute a preef nat be parciall; (I 4495-4503)

Princes must not be hasty of judgment nor

> Leue no talis nor yiue no credence,
> Till that the parti may come to audience ...
> ... hasti credence, I dar sey in sentence,
> A thousend fold is more pereilous; ...
> ... For haste ful offte, for lakkyng off resoun,
> Off moche peeple hath be destruccioun (I 4584-92)

A prince ought to examine well before he delivers judgment

> For there is noon mor dreedful pestilence
> Than is a tunge that can flatre and fage (I 4621-2)

The first line of these two is very similar to line 29 of our poem.

The cause of much trouble

> Been these liers with ther tunges double,
> Themsilff afforcyng ay trouthe to oppresse;
> With whom flatrie is a cheeff maistresse:
> And, werst of all, to ther dreedful sentence,
> Is whan pryncis been hasti off credence.
>
> Hasti credence is roote off all errour ...
> ... Gladli concludyng with full gret disauail ...
> ... To al that truste and haue in hir plesaunce (I 4805-16)

In l. 30 of our poem it is the ground of strife for a lord 'to haif plesaunce' in flatterers. There is nothing so evil,

> As chaung off pryncis to yiue iugement,
> Or hasti credence, withoute auisement (I 4822-3)

---

1. ed. H. Bergen, 4 vols. (E.E.T.S.E.S. 121-4, 1924-7).

The envoy ends with a plea

> Pryncis, Pryncessis, off noble and hih parage,
> Which ha[ue] lordshipe and domynacioun
> Voide hem aside that can flatre and fage;
> Fro tunges that haue a tarage off tresoun,
> Stoppith your eris from ther bittir soun;
> Beth circumspect, nat hasti but prudent,
> And yiueth no credence withoute auisement (I 4838-44)

The resemblances to our poem are indeed very close, in theme and vocabulary. Lydgate's work could be the source, though no final proof could be offered for such an assumption. Elsewhere Lydgate echoes the advice: Considere welle with euerie circumstance:[1]

> Most noble princes, cherissheris of vertu ...
> ... Chastiseth the reuers, and of wisdome doth this,
> Voideth ȝowre heryng from al that sey a-mys (127-53)

In a poem from Oxford MS. Digby 102,[2] we find the same theme:

> Gloseres maken mony lesynges -
> Al to sone men hem leue -
> Boþe to lordys and to knynges,
> Þat boþe partye ofte greue.
> Wolde lordis soche repreue,
> Glosers shuld not go so gay (73-7)

Dunbar likewise advises flight:

> ... fra all fals tungis fulfild with flattry,
> Als fra all schrewis, or ellis thow art eschamit;
> Sic art thow callit as is thy cumpany:
> Fle perrellus taillis foundit of invy;
> To Dwell in Court My Freind[3] (26-9)

In Henryson's fables there are also similar passages: The Mous and the Paddock ll. 135-49, and The Fox and the Cock ll. 204-10.

---

1. The Minor Poems of John Lydgate, op. cit., ii, 839-44.
2. As þe see doþ ebbe and flowe, ed. J. Kail, Twenty Six Political and Other Poems, I (E.E.T.S.O.S. 124, 1904), 14-22.
3. Poems, op. cit., ii, 98-9.

Two further points need to be made concerning the theme. Firstly, this poem belongs to a group addressing lords, or princes, or the king (often employing the apostrophe) and giving advice.[1] Secondly, the poem and its like are part of a very large number of poems decrying contemporary conditions, a class that will be discussed in Appendix B when dealing with The Want of Wyse Men.

We end this study of Henryson's shorter poems then where we began it, stressing the fact that without a thorough understanding of the genres within which they were written we miss their very nature and purpose.

---

1. Cf. also, for instance, Chaucer's Lak of Stedfastnesse; Rycht as the stringis ar reulit in a harp, ed. F.J. Skene, Liber Pluscardensis, op. cit., pp. 392-400.

Appendix A

In this brief appendix I wish merely to hint at a method of approach to The Testament of Cresseid and Orpheus and Eurydice which may prove of value. Dr. S. J. Harth[1] has already undertaken for these poems the type of research - a hunt through previous tellings and related stories to find just what is traditional and what Henryson has added or changed - which I think has been proved to be of value in our study of the Fabillis. But she has not undertaken in any detail study of the more formal material of the poems.

In The Testament of Cresseid there are four points to which I should like to draw attention. Firstly, the opening. Henryson, as is normal in a poem dealing with Fortune, with trust in worldly pleasures, began his poem with a spring opening (in middis of Lent, 5); but he has used the convention creatively: this is not the normal spring, when all seems lovely, but a sour spring when the things of this world show themselves in true perspective - the narrator is old, Cresseid has contracted physical disease through unnatural affection, spiritual disease through trust in the things of this world. Knowledge of the normal use of the convention and the counterpoint which Henryson plays on it contribute to our understanding of the poem. Secondly, the role of the narrator. Henryson's narrator is very similar to that

---

1. Convention and Creation in the Poetry of Robert Henryson, op. cit.

in Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde, not fully understanding the situation into which the central characters have brought themselves, sympathising with them, echoing their blindness to their own true nature in his own blindness to their nature and to his own. Thirdly, the 'extasie'. Macrobius explains:

> the patient experiences in dreams vexations similar to those that disturb him during the day. As examples of the mental variety, we might mention the lover who dreams of possessing his sweetheart or of losing her, or the man who fears the plots or might of an enemy and is confronted with him in his dream or seems to be fleeing him ... Anxiety about the future would cause a man to dream that he is gaining a prominent position or office or that he is being deprived of it as he feared.[2]

The 'gods' are projections of Cresseid's own imagination and fears, just as the narrator's dream in The Book of the Duchess is a projection of what he has been reading and of his personal life. Leprosy was thought of as a type of venereal disease[3] and Cresseid's fears after her life of wantonness (Sa gigotlike, takand thy foull plesance, 83) are projected on to the gods, on to Fortune (Venus is a fortune figure in the poem [221-38] as in The Kingis Quair[4])

---

2. Commentary on the Dream of Scipio, tr. W. H. Stahl, op.cit, Bk I, ch. iii, pp. 88-9.

3. Cf John of Gaddesden, Rosa Anglica practica medicine a capite ad pedes (Venice, 1516), fol 49; W. C. Curry, Chaucer and the Mediaeval Sciences, op.cit., pp. 37 ff.

4. ed Skeat, op.cit., stanzas 160-1; cf also H. R. Patch, The Goddess Fortuna in Mediaeval Literature (Cambridge, Mass., 1927), pp. 90-8.

For Cresseid, like Troilus in Chaucer's poem (IV,958ff.) has, in trusting this world, become a determinist, cannot see that her 'punishment' is of her own creation - at least, she does not realize this until her encounter with Troilus (cf 1.574): the poem is a study of the growth of self-knowledge. And fourthly, the lament (11.406 ff.). The form here shows exactly the same characteristics as others in Henryson, for instance that in The Lyon and the Mous (11.210-21): the opening phrase 'maid hor mone' (406); the heavy alliterative pattern (indeed the alliterative frequency throughout the whole poem is rather high and would repay close study); the ubi sunt motif; the expression of hopelessness at Fortune's attack - for the complaints are made by determinists, those who have blindly put their trust in the things of this world: this can be seen by the very nature of the complaint Cresseid makes; she does not complain because she has lost Troilus but because she has lost those worldly pleasures which were her true love[5].

Orpheus and Eurydice can be similarly approached. It has three points of interest for us. Firstly, the use of the May morning motif (11. 86-96), with protagonist wandering into the fields to 'se the flouris spring', immediately informs those of Henryson's readers/hearers who recognize the normal function of

---

5. This is not the place to comment in detail on the changed role of Troilus from Chaucer's poem - here his love is pure, noble, praised - with the allegorical overtones in the poem the change implies: A Christ figure? A figure of 'the pairte intelletyfe ... seperat fra sensualite,' like Orpheus?

this form in mediaeval poetry of the nature of her pleasures (quhyle to the flesche it settis the appetyte, 434)[6]. Secondly, the complaint form is used, with characteristics we noted when dealing with The Testament of Cresseid: 'till his harp thuss gait (he) maid his mone' (133)[7]; we feel he was perhaps to some extent to blame for Eurydice's downfall (he too experienced 'wardly Ioy' 137) - later he was to lose Eurydice again through 'Giffand consent and delectatioun, /off fleschly lust' (622-3). Thirdly there is the ascent to heaven and descent through the spheres - the device had been used somewhat differently in Chaucer's Hous of Fame and to end his Troilus and Criseyde, there, as in Henryson, recalling Cicero's Dream of Scipio and Macrobius' commentary:

> He (Pythagorus) says that the reason why milk is the first nourishment offered to the new born infant is that the first movement of souls slipping into earthly bodies is from the Milky Way. Now you see, too, why Scipio, when the Milky Way had been shown to him, was told that the souls of the blessed proceed from here and return hither.

---

6. Eurydice is a 'lady ying' (96) like the princess in The Bludy Serk. I gave in my analysis of that poem (pp.) reasons for my belief that Henryson's stress on the princess' youth implied a condemnation of her immaturity - a similar condemnation is perhaps implied here.

7. Henryson places great stress on Orpheus' harp - the stress appears to be his, not Trivet's. The emphasis is perhaps explained by mediaeval Biblical commentary in which phrases like the following are numerous: 'cithara vero, quod ab inferiori sonat, tribulationes et infirmitates nostras in corpore Christi exhibitas significat,' (Bede, commenting on Psalm lvi:9 [Vg.], In Psalmorum Librum Exegesis, P.L. xciii, col. 782); 'Confitebor tibi, inquam, o Deus in vasis psalmi, et psallam tibi in cithara, id est, in sanctis operibus ad carnis mortificationem pertinentibus,' (Bede, commenting on Psalm lxxi:22 [Vg], In Psalmorum Librum Exegesis P.L., col.8 Cf also Macrobius' discussion of the value of music in gener Commentary on the Dream of Scipio, tr. W. H. Stahl, op.cit., Bk II, ch.iii, p.195.

> (4) So long as the souls heading downwards still remain in Cancer they are considered in the company of the gods, since in that position they have not yet left the Milky Way. But when in their descent they have reached Leo, they enter upon the first stages of their future condition[8].
>
> (13) By the impulse of the first weight, the soul, having started on its downward course from the intersection of the zodiac and the Milky Way to the successive spheres lying beneath, as it passes through these spheres, not only takes on the afore-mentioned envelopment in each sphere by approaching a luminous body, but also acquires each of the attributes which it will exercise later ... in the lunar sphere (it obtains) the function of molding and increasing bodies, phytikon. (15) This last function, being the farthest removed from the gods, is the first in us and all the earthly creation; inasmuch as our body represents the dregs of what is divine, it is therefore the first substance of the creature. (16). The difference between terrestial and supernal bodies (I am speaking of the sky and stars and the other components) lies in this, that the latter have been summoned upwards to the abode of the soul and have gained immortality by the very nature of that region and by copying the perfection of their high estate; but to our terrestial bodies the soul is drawn downwards, and here it is believed to be dead while it is shut up in a perishable region and the abode of mortality.[9]

Although what I have suggested is merely a hint - much more could be learnt from a detailed study - one cannot, of course, exhaust the meaning of the poems in this way. But an understanding of the forms Henryson uses, and the counterpoint he plays on these forms, does help towards a fuller appreciation of the poems.

---

8. Commentary on the Dream of Scipio, tr. W. H. Stahl, op.cit. Bk. I, ch.xii, p.134.

9. ibid., pp.136-7. Macrobius is also helpful in analysing for us the nature and the occasion (the punishments occur now, in this world, as well as in the next) of the sufferings in hell: Bk. I, ch.x, pp.128-9. Cf also, on this subject, Walter Map, De Nugis Curialium, tr. M. R. James (Cymmrodorion Record Series IX, London, 1923), pp.4-5.

APPENDIX B : The Want of Wyse Men

I have already stated that I think there can be no case made for ascribing this poem to Henryson. It is of considerable interest however for it uses, in rather crude form perhaps, several of the topoi and forms (particularly the laudator temporis acti) which Henryson uses in a more sophisticated manner.

The poem is a rewording of traditional concepts: a criticism of the times. But society was not always evil. Formerly there was a Golden Age (stanza 2). Chaucer, too, writes of such an age when there was peace and trust, in _The Former Age_:

> Unforged was the hauberk and the plate; ...
> No pryde, non envye, non avaryce,
> No lord, no taylage by no tyrannye;

and in _Lak of Stedfastnesse_:

> Somtyme the world was so stedfast and stable
> That mannes word was obligacioun.[1]

The reference - allegorical in our poem (1-12)[2] is to the sinless, and therefore happy, state in the garden of Eden. But now the world is evil, turned upside down (2-3). This image of reversal is conventional.[3]

The state of the world now is constantly compared, either explicitly or implicitly, with what it had been in that ideal past. The temporal contrast is accentuated by the use of the adverb "now" (ll. 5,7,14,15,25,33,49,52). In line 52 another means of rein-

1. cf also _On The Times_, 1388, ed. T. Wright, _Political Poems and Songs_, op.cit., i, 270-8 ll.3-6; and _On the Corruptions of the Times_, ed. T. Wright, _Political Poems and Songs_, op.cit., ii, 235-7, 1.11

2. For examples and discussion of the christianizing of pagan myth see B. F. Huppé, _Doctrine and Poetry_ (New York, 1959), pp.69 ff.

3. cf Chaucer, _Lak of Stedfastness_, ll 5-6; _On the Corruptions of_

(See Over)

forcing the comparison is used: a vice, or a virtue, have become its opposite (cf also ll.51,59). Many verbs, too, stress the change: worthin (6), exilde (33), banyst (38), flemyt (45), lorne (46), tane leif (57). Similarly the use of 'away' (637). Other poems use the same comparison, and the same means of comparison: for instance, Chaucer's Lak of Stedfastnesse:

> And now it is so fals and deceivable ...(3)
> ... For among us now a man is holde unable, (10)
> Vertu hath now no dominacioun; (16)
> Fro right to wrong, fro trouthe to fikelnesse. (20)

The expressions 'put doun', 'exyled' show the same purpose. Chaucers whole idyllic picture in The Former Age is an implied contrast with the present age, a compassion implied by the use of 'yet' and the use of the negative throughout, thus stressing that the evils present now were then absent.

A non-Chaucerian example is provided by the following lines:

> Witte is tourned to trechery
> Love is tourned to lechery
> Pleye is tourned to vilany
> And haliday to gloteny[4].

Now, not only is the poet's constant comparison of the ideal former age with the decadence of later times - as well as the means of presenting this comparison - traditional, but many of the evils he deplores come from a common stock of complaint. Thus

---

3. the Times, l.45. Also E.R. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, op.cit., pp. 94-8.

4. Ills of our Time, ed. F. J. Furnivall, A Booke of Precedence (E.E.T.S.E.S.,.8, 1869), p.88 ll. 9-12. Cf also God that syttoth in trinitie, ed. T. Wright, Songs and Carols of the Fifteenth Century, op.cit., pp. 96-7, ll. 4, 7-9; Skelton's devise 'so many ... saw I never' in his The Maneres of the World Nowadayr, Poems, op.cit.,pp.144-50; Dunbar's refrain 'Within this land was nevir hard nor sene', Devorit with Dreme, Devysing in my Slummer, Poems, op.cit., 11, 61-3

we have further evidence that the poem and its like do not necessarily or solely refer to any contemporary political or social condition. Such poems deplore the state of mankind as a whole, his fallen position, as well as having perhaps contemporary reference. Almost every complaint in The Want of Wyse Men can be paralleled elsewhere in mediaeval literature. The complaints expressed in the poem may perhaps be divided into four groups: the decay of personal virtues; the decay of reason and learning; the lack of justice; and the lack of respect for the Church.

Firstly, the decay of personal virtues. All loyalty has disappeared (4-5, 45, 51). This is one of the most common complaints in later mediaeval literature. To illustrate:

> ... Sone trowyth ys set asyde,
> dic qualiter Anglia staret
> Where oure frendis were,
> nostri sunt iam inimici ...[5]

Love, as well as fidelity and friendship, has disappeared (ll.33-4, 57). This is a contemporary topic:

> Hate and wreth ther is wel rive,
> And trew love is ful thinne.[6]

Humility also has disappeared giving way to pride (58):

> Lechery, lust and pryde
> haec sunt quibus Anglia paret;[7]

---

5. On the Times, 1388, ll. 11-14; cf also Ills of Our Time, l.24; Lex must fere et defere, ed. G. Holmstedt, Speculum Christiani (E.E.T.S.O.S. 182, 1933), pp. clxxxv-clxxxvii, ll.39-44; Chaucer, The Former Age, ll. 61-2; Dunbar's, Quhome to Sall I Complene my Wo, Poems, op.cit., ii, 100-3, ll. 1-4.

6. A Song on the Times (Reign of Edward I), ed. T. Wright, The Political Songs of England, op.cit., pp.195-205, ll. 5-6. cf also God that sytteth in trinitie, ll. 15-17.

7. On the Times 1388, ll.9-10; cf also Skelton, The Manner of the World Nowadays, st.5-6; Dunbar, Devorit with Dreme, Devysing in my Slummer, ll.41-2.

Secondly the poet complains about the decay of reason and learning. Now these have been set aside for other pursuits (20-21, 23, 25-6), or they are used for evil purposes (16). While men sleep those seeking worldly pleasures are awake (1.22). Once again this is a common complaint:

... Witte is tourned to trechery ...
... Prudentes ceci cornati degeneres sunt ...
Wise men bien blynde ...[8]

Thirdly there is constant complaint about the lack of justice, the substitution of might for right (28, 41-2, 49-50). For contemporary parallel we may cite:

... For miht is riht ...
... For miht is riht the lond is laweles ...[9]

For when the wise sleep, the evil are about their business (22):

Qwan men rest takyn,
noctis somno recreati,
Swoch felawys wakyn,
ad damna patrata parati[10]

Fourthly, the Church has lost its power (53). Similarly from contemporary literature we may cite: "the drede of God ys al

---

8. Ills of our Time, 11.9, 19 and 21; cf also Perversities of the Age, ed. C. Brown, Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century op.cit., p.268, 1.1, Quhen doctouris prechit, ed. W. Tod Ritchie, The Bannatyne Manuscript, op.cit., 11, 234-5, 11. 9-13.

9. Len puet fere et defere, 11.28 and 31; cf also Chaucer, Lak of Stedfastnesse, 11. 10-12; Virtues Exiled-Vice Enthroned, ed. C. Brown, Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century, op.cit.,p.269 11. 1-2, 12-13, 17; Dunbar, Devorit with Drome, Devysing in my Slummer, 11. 31-3, 46-8; Now is our king, ed. W. Tod Ritchie, The Bannatyne Manuscript, op.cit., 11, 247-9, 11.40-6.

10. On the Times, 11. 175-8.

to drawe;"[11] The Church is itself corrupt (17-21). As Owst has shown[12] complaint about the worldly and hypocritical lives of many of the clergy is common in later mediaeval sermon material; the poetry of the age is equally condemning:

> Sic pryd with prellattis, so few till preiche and pray;
> ... So mony preistis cled vp in secular weid
> With blasing breistis casting thair claithis on breid ..[13]

This is but one of many possible examples.

The cause the writer gives for these calamities is also traditional:

> Sen want of wyse men makis fulis to sit on binkis (8 et ff)

We should note that this is, in itself, another example of the world 'upside down': fools should be ruled over not judges and princes. Gregory Smith[14] has shown that the expression itself is proverbial; as such it is another instance of the common use of proverbs by mediaeval poets. The idea occurs elsewhere in mediaeval poetry:

> Quhat is the caus sic truble sic debait
> Sic rugrie reif ryngis in this regioun
> The lordis in youth to leir folye ar sett
> Swa wantis vertew and eruditioun ....[15]

We should perhaps remember also the theological overtones of the word 'fule' for a mediaeval audience. A 'fule' was not merely one lacking in intelligence, but one who substituted the values of this world for those of the next. This is a common conception in Middle Scots poetry: we have seen it already in Henryson's

---

11. On the Corruptions of the Times, 1.23

12. Literature and Pulpit in Mediaeval England, op.cit., pp. 242-86.

13. Dunbar, Devorit with Dreme, Devysing in my Slummer, 11.6, 11-12.

14. Poems, op.cit., i, 78, note to 1.8.

15. Be gratious ground and gate to sapience, ed. W. Tod Ritchie (See over)

Cok and the Jewell (1.142). It also occurs in Dunbar's In May as that Aurora did upspring:[16]

> "O merle," quod scho, "O fule, stynt of thy taill,
> For in thy song gud sentens is thair none,
> For boith is tynt the tyme and the travaill
> Of every luve bot vpone God allone" (29-32)

And, of course, the poet's remedy for this confusion is equally traditional. God has been grieved; he prays to Him to reform the situation (70-1). This can be paralleled elsewhere:

> Now lett us pray both on and all,
> And specyally upon God call,
> To send love and peace among us all, ...[17]

The subject of The Want of Wyse Men, then is traditional; so is the form and style. We have already seen other examples of the rhetorical devices used to express contrast in time. The heavy occurrence of alliteration - found in almost every line, often linking every important word in the line - is familiar to us from our study of Henryson's poems. The rhyme scheme is that of the Monk's Tale stanza which is used extensively throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, largely for didactic poems of the type of The Want of Wyse Men. The metre, however, proves very interesting. Many of the lines are far from regular. Some have

---

15. (cont.) The Bannatyne Manuscript, op.cit., ii, 221-4, ll.57-60; cf also Dunbar, Doverit with Dreme, Devysing in my Slummer, ll.21-5.

16. Poems, op.cit., ii, 174-8; cf also Sad and solitaire and sett and myn allone, ed. W.A. Craigie, The Maitland Folio Manuscript, op.cit., i. 250-1, ll.33-6.

17. God that is both in Trinitie, ll. 23-5.

eleven syllables, others twelve. Thus "Sen want of wyse men makis fulis to sit on binkis" (8) has eleven syllables; so have 11.19 (the final 'ge' must be pronounced to rhyme with 'moralitee') 23, 29, 33, 35, 41, 62, 63, 71. Of course these are read with five stresses, but they are certainly not regular iambic metre as the beginning of the poem would lead us to expect. And there are many lines which have twelve syllables: "For gudely gouvernance this world was goldin cald (10)" Similarly lines 12, 27, 38, 39, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 57, 58, 59, 61, 69. Again, most of these could be read with five stresses - a type of accentual metre - but some at least, for instance that just quoted, could be read with six. Again, some lines have less than ten syllables, and fewer than five stresses e.g.

Quhais power, wisdome and honoure (67)

Henryson has incorporated the basic form of this poem (the 'laudator temporis acti') into The Dog, The Scheip and the Wolff (11.154-68) and The Lyon and the Mous (11.69-77). Whereas The Want of Wyse Men is merely a genre poem, however, Henryson has used the form creatively: it transforms its context in his poems (widening the scope of the fable forms) and is transformed by them (the detail of the context gives added force to the generalized complaints).

eleven syllables, others twelve. Thus "Sen want of wyse men makis fulis to sit on binkis" (8) has eleven syllables; so have ll.19 (the final 'ge' must be pronounced to rhyme with 'moralitee') 23, 29, 33, 35, 41, 62, 65, 71. Of course these are read with five stresses, but they are certainly not regular iambic metre as the beginning of the poem would lead us to expect. And there are many lines which have twelve syllables: "For gudely gouvernance this world was goldin cald (10)" Similarly lines 12, 27, 36, 39, 49, 50, 51, 52, 55, 57, 58, 59, 61, 69. Again, most of these could be read with five stresses - a type of accentual metre - but some at least, for instance that just quoted, could be read with six. Again, some lines have less than ten syllables, and fewer than five stresses e.g.

Quhais power, wisdome and honoure (67)

Henryson has incorporated the basic form of this poem (the 'Laudator temporis acti') into The Dog, The Scheip and the Wolff (ll.154-66) and The Lyon and the Mous (ll.69-77). Whereas The Want of Wyse Men is merely a genre poem, however, Henryson has used the form creatively: it transforms its context in his poems (widening the scope of the fable forms) and is transformed by them (the detail of the context gives added force to the generalized complaints).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Bibliography contains all works cited in the text and other works found useful in the preparation of this thesis. It is not by any means exhaustive - many works consulted proved of little or no use - but does include all books and articles containing substantial work on Henryson.

Aarne, A. The Types of the Folktale, tr. and enlarged S. Thomps
2nd rev., F.F.Communications, vol. lxxv, no. 184,
Helsinki, 1961.

Aberdeen Epistolary: Epistolare in Usum Ecclesiae Cathedralis
Aberdonensis, ed B. McEwen, Edinburgh 1924

Ademar Aesop: ed. G. Thiele, Der illustrierte lateinische Aesop
in der Handschrift des Ademar, Codices Graeci et
Latini Photographice Depicti, Supplementum III,
Leyden, 1905.

An Alphabet of Tales, ed. M. M. Banks, 2 vols, E.E.T.S.O.S.
126-7, 1904-5

Amours, F.J. ed. Scottish Alliterative Poems, S.T.S., 1897

Arbuthnott Missal: Liber Ecclesie Beati Terrenani de Arbuthnott:
Missale Secundum Usum Ecclesiae Sancti Andre
in Scotia, ed. A.P. Forbes, Burntisland, 186

Ardenne, J. Treatises of Fistula in Ano, Haemorrhoids and
Clysters from a fifteenth century manuscript trans-
lation, ed. D'Arcy Power, E.E.T.S.O.S. 139, 1910.

Aristotle, Metaphysics, tr. Cardinal Bessarion, Paris, 1515

Atkins, J.W.H. English Literary Criticism: The Mediaeval Phase,
Cambridge, 1943

Audelay, John, Poems, ed E.K. Whiting, E.E.T.S.O.S. 184, 1931

Auerbach, Erich, Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in
Western Literature, tr. W.R. Trask, Princeton, 1953

Augustine, St. Bp. of Hippo, Enarrationes in Psalmos, P.L. xxxvi,
cols 67 ff.

Baldwin, C.S. Mediaeval Rhetoric and Poetic, New York, 1928

The Bannatyne Manuscript, ed. W. Tod Ritchie, 4 vols, S.T.S.
New Series 22, 23, 26, Third Series
5, 1928-33

Barbazan, E. ed. Fabliaux et Contes des Poètes François des XI,
XII, XIII, XIV et XVe Siecles 2nd édn, augmentée
et revue M.D.M. Méon, 4 vols, Paris, 1808

Bartholomaeus, Anglicus , De Proprietatibus Rerum, tr. John of Trevisa
London, 1535

Bartsch, K. ed. Altfranzösische Romanzen und Pastourellen, Leipzig, 1870

Bastin, Julia ed. Recueil Général des Isopets, 2 vols, S.A.T.F., 1929-30

Bauman, R. 'The Folktale and Oral Tradition in the Fables of Robert Henryson,' Fabula, vi (1963), 108-29

Bede, In Lucae Evangelium Expositio, P.L. xcii, cols 301-634.

Bede, In Matthaei Evangelium Expositio, P.L. xcii, cols 9-132.

Bede, In Pentateuchum Commentarii, P.L. xci, cols 189-394.

Bede, attrib. In Psalmorum Librum Exegesis, P.L. xciii, cols 477-1098

Berdan, J.M. Early Tudor Poetry, New York, 1920

Bernard, St. Sermones in Cantica, P.L. clxxxiii, cols 785-1198

Bethurum, D. ed. Critical Approaches to Mediaeval Literature, selected papers from the English Institute, 1958-9, New York and London, 1960

Beveridge, J. Erskine, ed. Fergusson's Scottish Proverbs, S.T.S. New Series 15, 1924.

Blench, J.W. Preaching in England in the Late Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries: A Study of English Sermons, 1450-c.1600, Oxford, 1964

Bloomfield, Morton W. 'Symbolism in Mediaeval Literature', Modern Philology lvi (1958-9) 73-81

Bone, Gavin, 'The Source of Henryson's Fox, Wolf and Cadger', R.E.S. x (1934), 319-20

A Booke of Precedence, ed. F. J. Furnivall, E.E.T.S.E, 1869

Bossuat, R. Le Roman de Renard, Connaissance des Lettres, 49, Paris, 1957

Bowden, Muriel, A Commentary on the General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales, New York, 1949

Bozon, Nicole, Les Contes Moralisés, ed. P. Meyer and L. Toulmin-Smith, S.A.T.F., 1889

Brant, S. The Ship of Fools, tr. A. Barclay, ed. T. H. Jamieson, 2 vols, Edinburgh, 1879

Bromyard, J. *Summa Praedicantium*, Antwerp, 1614

Brown, Carleton, ed. *English Lyrics of the Thirteenth Century*, Oxford, 1932

Brown, Carleton, ed. *Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century*, Oxford, 1939

Brown, Carleton, ed. *Religious Lyrics of the Fourteenth Century*, 2nd edn., rev. G.V. Smithers, Oxford, 1952

Brown, Carleton and Robbins, Rossell Hope, *Index of Middle English Verse*, The Index Society, New York, 1943

Brunner, K. ed. 'Mittelenglische Todesgedichte', *Archiv* clxvii (1955), 20-35

Bruno, St., Founder of the Carthusian Order, *Expositio in Psalmos*, *P.L.*, cliii, cols 637-1420

Bruno Astensis, St. *Commentarius in Lucam*, *P.L.*, clxv, cols 333-452

Bryan, W.F. and Dempster, Germaine, ed. *Sources and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales* Chicago, 1941

Caesarius Heisterbacensis, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, ed. J. Strange, 2 vols, Cologne 1851

Caesarius Heisterbacensis, *The Dialogue on Miracles*, tr. H. von E. Scott and C.C. Swinton Bland, 2 vols, Broadway Mediaeval Library, ed. G.G. Coulton and Eileen Power, London, 1929

Cassiodorus, *Expositio in Psalterium*, P.L., lxx, cols 9-1056

Caxton, W. tr. *The Fables of Aesop*, ed. J. Jacob, 2 vols, Bibliothèque de Carabas Series, 4-5, 1889

Caxton, W. tr. *The Game and Playe of Chess*, ed. W.E.A.Axon, London, 1883.

Caxton, W. *The History of Reynard the Fox*, ed. E. Arber, The English Scholars Library of Old and Modern Works, I, London, 1878.
ed. Donald B. Sands, Cambridge Mass., and London, 1960

Chaucer, Geoffrey, *The Complete Works*, ed. W.W. Skeat, 7 vols, Oxford, 1894-7

Chaucer, Geoffrey, The Parlement of Foulys, ed. D.S. Brewer, London and Edinburgh, 1960

Chaucer, Geoffrey, The Works, ed. F.N.Robinson, 2nd edn, London, 1957

Chapman, W. and Myllar, A. Porteous of Noblenes and Ten Other Rare Tracts, Edinburgh, 1508

Child F.J. ed. English and Scottish Popular Ballads, 5 vols, Boston, 1882-98

Clay, R.M. The Mediaeval Hospitals of England, London, 1909

The Cloud of Unknowing, ed. Phyllis Hodgson, E.E.T.S.O.S. 218, 1944

Comrie, J.D. History of Scottish Medicine, 2nd edn, 2 vols, Wellcome Historical Medical Museum, London, 1932

Le Couronnement de Renard, ed. A. Foulet, Elliot Monographs 24, Princeton and Paris, 1929

Crane, T.F. 'Mediaeval Sermon Books and their Study since 1883', Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, lvi (1917) 1-34

Crawfurd R. Plague and Pestilence in Literature and Art, Oxford, 1914

'Cresseid in Scotland', Times Literary Supplement, April 9th, 1964 p. 290

Crowne, David K. 'A Date for the Composition of Henryson's Fables', J.E.G.P. lxi (1962), 583-90

Curry, W.C. Chaucer and the Mediaeval Sciences, New York, 1926

Cursor Mundi, ed. R. Morris, 5 vols, E.E.T.S.O.S.57, 59, 62, 67, 68, 1874-8

Curtius, E.R. European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, Tr. W.R.Trask, Bollingen Series, XXXVI, New York, 1953

The Dance of Death, ed. F. Warren, E.E.T.S.O.S. 181, 1931

Deguileville, Pélérinage de la Vie Humaine, tr. John Lydgate as The Pilgrimage of the Life of Man, ed. F.J.Furnivall, 3 vols, E.E.T.S.E.S. 77, 83, 92, 1899-1904

A Dialogue between a Clerk and a Husbandman, ed. C. Brown, M.L.N. xxxiii (1918), 415-7

Dickins, Bruce, 'Contributions to the Interpretation of Middle Scots Texts', Times Literary Supplement, 21st February, 1924, p. 112

Dickinson, W. Croft, Scotland from the Earliest Times to 1603, A New History of Scotland, I, London etc. 1961

Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue, ed. W.A.Craigie and J. Aitken, Chicago and London, 1937 -

Diebler, A.R. Henrisone's Fabeldichtungen, Inaugural-Dissertation sur erlangung des Philosophischen Doctorwürde an der Universitat Leipzig, Halle, 1885

Donovan, Mortimer, 'The Moralite of the Nun's Priest's Sermon, J.E.G.P. lii (1953) 498-508

Douglas, Gavin, The Poetical Works, ed. J. Small, 4 vols, Edinburgh and London, 1874

Duncan, Douglas, 'Henryson's Testament of Cresseid', Essays in Criticism, xi (1961), 128-35

Dunbar, William, Poems, 3 vols, vol i Introduction by AE,J,G,MacKay, vol ii, Poems ed. J. Small, vol iii Notes and Glossary, by W. Gregor, S.T.S. 1893

Dunlop, Annie I, The Life and Times of James Kennedy, Bishop of St. Andrews, Edinburgh and London, 1950

Ecbasis Cujusdam Captivi per Tropologiam, ed. K. Strecker, Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in Usum Scholarum, Hanover, 1935

Elliott, Charles, 'Sparth, Glebard and Bouranbane', Notes and Queries ccvii (1962) 86-7

Elliott, Charles, 'Two Notes on Henryson's Testament of Cresseid', J.E.G.P. liv (1955) 241-54

Ellis, G. ed. Specimens of the Early English Poets, 3 vols, London, 1801

Erthe upon Erthe, ed. H.M.R.Murray, E.E.T.S.O.S. 141, 1911

Eucherius, St. Liber Formularum Spiritalis Intelligentiae P.L. l, cols 727-72

Everyman, ed. A.C.Cawley, Manchester, 1961

The Eye and the Heart, ed. E.P.Hammond, Anglia, xxxiv (1911) 235-65

Faral, E. ed. Les Arts Poétiques de XIIe et du XIIIe Siècles, Recherches et Documents sur la technique littéraire du moyen âge, Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études: Sciences Historiques et Philologiques, 238, Paris, 1924

The Floure and the Leafe and the Assembly of Ladies, ed. D.A.Pearsall, London and Edinburgh 1962

The Floure of the commandements of god, tr. A. Chertsey, London, 1510

Flugel, E. ed. 'Liedersammlungen des XVI Jahrhunderts, besonders aus der zeit Heinrichs VIII,' Anglia, xxvi (1903) 94-285

Foucher, J.-P. La Littérature Latine du Moyen Age, Que sais-je? 1043, Paris, 1963

Foulet, L. Le Roman de Renard, Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, fasc. 211, Paris, 1914

Fox, Denton, 'Henryson's Fables', E.L.H. xxix (1962) 337-56

Franklyn, C.A.H. 'Academical Press: A Brief Sketch from the twelfth to the twentieth centuries with especial reference to Doctors', Oxford IX, ii, (Winter, 1946-7) 78-85

Furnivall, F.J. ed. Hymns to the Virgin and Christ, the Parliament of Devils and Other Religious Poems, E.E.T.S.O.S. 24, 1867

Furnivall, F.J. ed. Minor Poems of the Vernon Manuscript, ii, E.E.T.S.O.S.117, 1901

Furnivall, F.J. ed. Political, Religious and Love Poems, E.E.T.S.O.S.15, 1866

Gaddesden, John of, Rosa Anglica practica medecine a capite ad pedes, Venice, 1516

Garner of St. Victore, Gregorianum, P.L. cxciii, cols 23-462

Gawayn and the Grene Knight, ed. J.R.R.Tolkein and E.V.Gordon, Oxford, 1925

Geoffroi de Vinsauf, Documentum de Arte Versificandi, ed. E. Faral, Les Arts Poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe Siècles, op. cit. pp. 263-320

Geoffroi de Vinsauf, Poetria Nova, ed. E. Faral, Les Arts Poètiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècles, op. cit. pp 194-262

Gesta Romanorum, ed. H. Oesterley, Berlin, 1872
The Early English Versions ed. S.J.H.Herrtage, E.E.T.S.E.S. 33, 1879

Gielee, J. Renart le Nouvel, ed. Henri Roussel, S.A.T.F., 1961

Gilson, Étienne, 'Michel Menot et la Technique du Sermon Médiéval', Revue d'histoire Franciscaine ii (1925) 301-60

Gobi, Joannes, Scala Celi, Lubec, 1476

Gower, John, The Complete Works, ed. G.C.Macaulay, 4 vols, Oxford, 1899-1902

Grant, I.F. The Social and Economic Development of Scotland before 1603, Edinburgh, 1930

Greene, R.L. The Early English Carol, Oxford, 1935.

Grierson, H.J.C. 'Robert Henryson', Aberdeen University Review xxi (1933-4) 203-12

Grimm, J. Reinhart Fuchs, Berlin, 1834

Gritsch, Joannes, Quadragesimale, Ulm, 1475

Hailes, Lord (Sir David Dalrymple, 3rd Bart.) ed. Ancient Scottish Poems published from the manuscript of George Bannatyne, 1568, Edinburgh, 1770

Halliwell, J.O. Early English Miscellanies in prose and verse selected from an unedited manuscript of the fifteenth century, Warton Club, London, 1855

Hammond, E.P. English Verse between Chaucer and Surrey, Durham, North Carolina and London, 1927

Hanford, J.H. 'Classical Eclogue and Mediaeval Debate', The Romanic Review, ii (1911) 16-31 and 129-43

Harry, Philip Warner, A Comparative Study of the Aesopic Fable in Nicole Bozon, University Studies presented by the University of Cincinnati, Series II, vol 1, no. 2, Cincinnati, 1905

Harth, S.J. Convention and Creation in the Poetry of Robert Henryson : a study of the Testament of Cresseid and Orpheus and Eurydice, an unpublished thesis, University of Chicago 1960

Harth, S.J. 'Henryson Reinterpreted', Essays in Criticism xi (1961) 471-80

Hawes, *The Pastime of Pleasure*, ed. W.F.Meads, E.E.T.S.O.S. 173, 1928

Haymo Halberstatensis, *Expositio in Epistolas S. Pauli, P.L.*, cxvii, cols 361-938

Helinandus Frigidi Montis, *Sermones*, P.L. ccxii, cols 481-720

Henderson, T.F. *Scottish Vernacular Literature: A History*, 2nd edn, London, 1900

Henryson, Robert, *Poems*, ed. Charles Elliott, Oxford, 1963

Henryson, Robert, *Poems*, ed. G. Gregory Smith, 3 vols, S.T.S. 1906-14

Henryson, Robert, *Poems and Fables* ed. D. Laing, Edinburgh, 1865

Henryson, Robert, *Poems and Fables*, ed. H. Harvey Wood,
1st edn, Edinburgh and London, 1933
2nd edn, Edinburgh and London, 1958

Herolt, Johannes, *Sermones Discipuli de sanctis cum promptuario exemplorum et miraculis beate Marie virgine*, Lugdunensis, 1502

Hervieux, L. ed. *Les Fabulistes Latins depuis le siècle d'Auguste jusqu'à la fin du moyen âge*, 5 vols, Paris, 1884-99
The first two volumes were re-edited, 1893-4.

Hilarius, St. *Tractatus super Psalmos*, *P.L.* ix cols 231-890

Hoccleve, *The Regement of Princes*, ed. F. J. Furnivall, E.E.T.S.E.S. 72, 1897

Horace, *Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica*, ed. H. Rushton Fairclough, Loeb Classical Library, New York and London, 1926.

Horstmann, C. ed. 'Die Evangelien - Geschichten der Homiliensammlung des M.S. Vernon', *Archiv*, lvii (1877) 241-316

Hrabanus Maurus, *Allegoriae in Sacram Scripturam*, *P.L.* cxii, cols 849 - 1088

Hrabanus Maurus, *De Universo*, *P.L.*, cxi, cols 9-614

Hrabanus Maurus, *Enarrationum in Epistolas Beati Pauli*, *P.L.* cxii, cols 1.834

Huizinga, J. The Waning of the Middle Ages, London, 1955

Humbertus de Romanis, De Dono Timoris, published Ulm 1480? as Liber de Abundantia Exemplorum magistri Alberti magni Ratispa episcopi ad omnem materiam.

Humbertus de Romanis, Expositio Regulae S.P. Augustini, ed. M. de la Bigne, Maxima Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum et Antiquorum Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum, XXV, Lyon, 1677, 567-653.

Huppé, B.F. Doctrine and Poetry, New York, 1959

Isopet I: ed MacKenzie K and Oldfather W.A., Ysopet-Avionnet, the Latin and French texts, University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, V, iv, Urbana, 1921.

Isopet III de Paris: ed M.P. Brush, PMLA xxiv (1909),494-546.

Isopet de Lyon: ed W.Foerster, Lyoner Yzopet, Altfranzosische Bibliothek V, Heilbronn, 1882.

Jacob's Well, ed. A.A. Brandeis,i, E.E.T.S.O.S. 115, 1900

Jacques de Vitry, Die Exempla, hg. G. Frenken, Munchen, 1914; Die Exempla aus den Sermones feriales et communes hg. J. Greben, Sammlung Mittelateinischer texte hg. Alfons Hilka, 9, Heidelberg, 1914; The Exempla or Illustrative Stories from the Sermones Vulgares, ed. T.F. Crane, publications of the Folk-Lore Society XXVI, London, 1890; Sermones Vulgares (extracts), ed. J.B. Pitra, Analecta Novissima Spicilegii Solesmensis altera continuatio, Paris, 1888,ii, 344-461.

Jerome, St. Commentaria in Librum Job, P.L.xxvi, col. 619-802

Jones, W. Powell, 'A Source for Henryson's Robene and Makyne,' M.L.N. xlvi (1931),457-8.

Kail, G. ed. Twenty-Six Political and other Poems, i, E.E.T.S.O.S. 124, 1904.

Kaske, R. E. 'The Canticum Canticorum in The Miller's Tale,' S.P. lix (1962), 479-500.

Keidel, G. C. A Manual of Aesopic Fable Literature, a first book of reference for the period ending A.D.1500, 1st fasc., Romance and Other Studies 2, Baltimore, 1896.

Kingis Quair, ed. W. W. Skeat, S.T.S. 1884.

Kinsley, J. ed. *Scottish Poetry A Critical Survey*, London 1955

Klapper, J. ed. *Erzählungen des Mittelalters in deutscher Übersetzung und lateinischem Urtext*, Wort und Brauch XII, Breslau, 1914.

Klapper, J. ed. *Exempla aus Handschriften des Mittelalters*, Sammlung Mittellateinischer Texte, hg. Alfons Hilka, 2, Heidelberg, 1911.

Knight, Pauline E. *The Alliterative Tradition in Mediaeval Scottish Poetry*, an unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Manchester, 1952.

Koonce, B. G. 'Satan the Fowler', *Mediaeval Studies* xxi (1959), 176-84

Laing, D. *Select Remains of the Ancient Popular and Romance Poetry of Scotland*, 2nd edn. rev. J. Small, Edinburgh and London, 1885.

La Marche, Olivier de, *Le Triumphe des Dames*, ed. Julia Kalbfleisch Rostock, 1901.

Lanfrank, *Science of Cirurgie*, ed. R.von Fleischhacker, E.E.T.S.O.S. 102, 1894.

Langland, W. *Piers the Plowman*, ed. W. W. Skeat, 2 vols, Oxford, 1886.

Laurent, *Le Somme des Vices et Vertues*, tr. Dan Michel as *Ayenbite of Inwyt*, ed. R. Morris, E.E.T.S.O.S. 23, 1866.

Lecoy de La Marche, A. *La Chaire française au moyen âge*, 2nd edn. Paris, 1886.

Leff, Gordon, *Mediaeval Thought St. Augustine to Ockham*, London, 1958

Leslie, Jhone, Bishop of Ross, *Historie of Scotland*, tr Father James Dalrymple (1596), ed. E.G. Cody and W. Murison, 2 vols, S.T.S. 1888, 1895.

Lewis, C. S. *The Allegory of Love*, Oxford, 1936.

Lewis, C.S. *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century excluding drama*, Oxford History of English Literature, 3, Oxford 1954.

Liber Exemplorum ad usum praedicantium, ed. A. G. Little, British Society of Franciscan Studies, I, Aberdeen, 1908.

Liber Pluscardensis, ed. F. J. Skene, Historians of Scotland VII, Edinburgh, 1877.

Lindsay, Sir David of the Mount, Works, ed. D. Hamer, 4 vols, S.T.S. Third Series 1,2,6,8, 1930-4.

Lindsay, Robert of Pitscottie, The Cronicles of Scotland, ed. Æ.J.G. Mackay, 3 vols, S.T.S. 1899-1911.

Lonergan, Mary B. A Study of the Poetry of Robert Henryson and of the Significance of its Mediaeval and Scottish Setting, unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Cork, 1957.

Lubac, Henri de, Exégèse Médiévale, Les Quatre Sens de L'Écriture, Pt 1, 2 vols, Aubier "Collection Theologie" XLI, Paris, 1959.

Lydgate, John, The Fall of Princes, ed. H. Bergen, 4 vols, E.E.T.S.E.S.121-4, 1924-7.

Lydgate, John, Minor Poems, A Selection ed. J.O. Halliwell, Percy Society, 2, London, 1840.
Minor Poems, ed. H.N. MacCracken, 2 vols, E.E.T.S.E.S. 107, O.S. 192, 1911 and 1934.
Troy Book, ed. H. Bergen, 4 vols, E.E.T.S.E.S. 97, 103, 106, 126, 1906-35.

Macer Floridus, De Viribus Herbarum, A Middle English translation, ed. G. Frisk, The English Institute in the University of Upsala: Essays and Studies of English Language and Literature ed. S.B. Liljigren, 3, Upsala, 1949.

Mackie, R.L. King James IV of Scotland, a brief Survey of his life and times, Edinburgh and London, 1958.

Mackie, R.L. A Short History of Scotland, rev. Gordon Donaldson, Edinburgh and London, 1962.

McNally, Robert E., The Bible in the Middle Ages, Woodstock Papers No.4, Westminster Md, 1959.

MacQueen, John, 'The Meaning of The Kingis Quair', R.E.S. New Series xii (1961), 117-31.

MacQueen, John, 'The Text of Henryson's Morall Fabillis', The Innes Review x (1963), 3-9.

Macrobius, Commentary on the Dream of Scipio, tr. W.H. Stahl, Records of Civilization, Sources and Studies, 48, ed. Austin P. Evans, New York, 1952.

The Maitland Folio Manuscript, ed. W.A. Craigie, 2 vols, S.T.S. New Series 7, 20, 1919, 1927.

Malachy, Libellus septem peccatorum mortalium venena eorumque remedia describens, Paris, 1518.

Mall, E. 'zur Geschichte der mittelalterlichen Fabelliteratur und inbesondere des Esope der Marie de France', Zeitschrift fur Romanische Philologie ix (1885), 161-203.

Map, Walter, Latin Poems commonly attributed to Walter Mapes ed. T. Wright, Camden Society 16, London, 1841.

Map, Walter, De Nugis Curialium, tr. M.R. James, Cymmorodorion Record Series IX, London, 1923.

Marie de France, Die Fabeln hg. K. Warnke, Bibliotheca Normannica, Denkmaler Normannischer Literatur und Sprache, hg. Hermann Suchier, IV, Halle, 1898;
Fables, sel. and ed. A. Ewert and R.C. Johnston, Oxford, 1942.

Marie de France, Poesies ed. B. de Roquefort, 2 vols, Paris, 1836.

Martinus Strepus, Sermones de Tempore et de Sanctis cum promptuarium exemplorum, Argentine, 1484.

Marwick J.D. ed. Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1403-1528, Scottish Burgh Record Society, Edinburgh, 1869.

Mayn. de Mayneri, Dialogus Creaturarum, ed. J.G. Th. Grässe, Die Bieden Altesten Lateinischen Fabelbücher des Mittelalters, Bibliothek des Litterarischen Vereins in Stuttgart, CXLVIII, Tubingin, 1880. pp 120-290
The Dialogues of Creatures Moralysed Applyably and Edificatyfly, Antwerp, 1535.

Millar, J.H. A Literary History of Scotland, London, 1903.

Mirk, J. Festial, ed. T. Erbe, 1, E.E.T.S.E.S. 96, 1905.

Moffatt, James, The Bible in Scots Literature, London, n.d.

Mohrmann, Liturgical Latin, its Origin and Character, London, 1959.

Moran, Tatyana, The Meeting of the Lovers in the Testament of Cresseid', Notes and Queries, ccviii (1963), 11-12.

Moran, Tatyana, 'The Testament of Cresseid and The Book of Troylus', Litera, vi (1959), 18-24.

Moore, A.K. 'Robene and Makyne', M.L.R. xliii (1948), 400-3.

Moore, A.K. The Secular Lyric in Middle English, Lexington, 1951.

Morris, R. ed. An Old English Miscellany, E.E.T.S.O.S. 49, 1872.

Mosher, J.A. The Exemplum in the Early Religious and Didactic Literature of England, Columbia University Studies in English, New York, 1911.

Mudge, E. Leigh, 'A Fifteenth Century Critic', College English, v (1943), 154-5.

Muir, Edwin, 'Robert Henryson', in his Essays on Literature and Society, London, 1949, pp. 7-19.

Murith, A. Jean et Conrad Grütsch de Bâle, Fribourg, 1940.

Neveletus, I.N. Mythologica Aesopica, Frankfurt, 1610.

A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles, ed. J. A. H. Murray, H. Bradley, W. A. Craigie, and C.T. Onions, 15 vols, Oxford, 1888-1933.

Norris, H. Costume and Fashion, 6 vols. - vol. vi with Oswald Curtis - London and Toronto, 1924-33.

The Owl and the Nightingale, ed. E.G. Stanley, London and Edinburgh, 1960.

Owst, G.R. The Destructiorum Viciorum of Alexander Carpenter, London, 1952.

Owst, G.R. Literature and Pulpit in Mediaeval England, 2nd edn. Oxford, 1961.

Owst, G.R. Preaching in Mediaeval England, an introduction to the sermon MSS of the period C.1350-1450, Cambridge, 1926.

Owst, G.R. 'Sortilegium in English Homiletic Literature of the Fourteenth Century', *Studies Presented to Sir Hilary Jenkinson*, ed. J. Conway Davies, London, 1957, pp. 272-303.

Oxford Classical Dictionary, ed. M. Cary etc., Oxford, 1949.

Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church ed. F. L. Cross, London etc., 1957.

Pantin, W. A. *The English Church in the Fourteenth Century*, Cambridge, 1955.

Paris, Gaston, articles reviewing Hervieux' *Les Fabulistes Latins*, *Journal des Savants*, 1884, pp.670-86, 1885, pp. 37-51; 1899, pp.207-26.

The Parlement of the Three Ages, ed. I. Gollancz, Select Early English Poems, 2, London, 1915.
ed. M.Y. Offord, E.E.T.S.O.S. 246, 1949.

Parr, Johnstone, 'Cresseid's Leprosy Again, *M.L.N.* lx (1945),487-91.

Patch, H.R. *The Goddess Fortuna in Mediaeval Literature*, Cambridge Mass.,1927.

Patch, H.R. *The Other World According to Descriptions in Medieval Literature*, Smith College Studies in Modern Languages, New Series, 1, Cambridge Mass.,1950.

Patch, H.R. *The Tradition of Boethius, A Study of his Importance in Mediaeval Culture*, New York, 1935.

Patterson, Warner Forrest, *Three Centuries of French Poetic Theory*: A Critical History of the Chief Arts of Poetry in France 1328-1630, 2 vols, University of Michigan Publications: Language and Literature XIV-XV, Ann Arbor, 1935.

Perry, Ben E. *Aesopica*, 1, Urbana, 1952.

Perry, G.G. *Religious Pieces in Verse and Prose*, E.E.T.S.O.S. 26, rev. edn., 1914.

Peter, John, *Complaint and Satire in Early English Literature*, Oxford, 1956.

Petrarch, *Invective Contra Medicum*, ed. Pier Giorgio Ricci, Rome, 19

Petrus Abaelardus, *Expositio in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos*, *P.L.* clxxviii, cols. 783-978.

Petrus Alphonsus, *Disciplina Clericalis*, *P.L.* clvii, cols. 671-706. hg. A. Hilka and W. Söderhjelm, Sammlung Mittelateinischer Texte hg. Alfons Hilka, Heidelberg, 1911.

Petrus Lombardus, *Collectanea in Omnes D. Pauli Apostoli Epistolas*, *P.L.* cxci, colx. 1297-1696. *Commentarium in Psalmos*, *P.L.* cxci, cols. 55-1296.

Pfander, H. '*Dives et Pauper*', *The Library*, 4th series, xiv (1933-4) 299-312.

Phaedrus, *Fabulae*, ed. P. Pithou, *Phaedri Aug. Liberti Fabularum Aesopiarum Libri V*, Augustobonae Tricassium, 1956.
ed. J.P. Postgate, *Phaedri Fabulae Aesopiae, cum Nicolai Perotti Prologo et Decem Novis Fabulis*, Scriptorum Classicorum Bibliotheca Oxoniensis, Oxford, n.d.
tr. H.T. Riley, *The Comedies of Terence and the Fables of Phaedrus*, London, 1853.
ed. C. Zander, *Phaedrus Solutus vel Phaedri Fabulae Novae XXX*, Acta Societas Humaniorum Litterarum Lundensis, 3, Lund, 1921.

Pierre de Langtoft, *Chronicle*, ed. T. Wright, 2 vols. Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores, XLVII, London, 1866-8.

Preston, Priscilla, 'Did Gavin Douglas write *King Hart*?', *Medium Aevum* xxviii (1959), 31-47.

Primasius Adrumetani, *Commentaria in Epistolas S. Pauli*, *P.L.* lxviii, cols. 415-794.

Randall, Lillian M.S. 'Exempla as a Source of Gothic Art Illumination', *The Art Bulletin* xxxix (1957) 57-107.

Rashdall, H. *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, new edn. ed. F.M. Powicke and A.B. Emden, 3 vols., Oxford, 1936.

Ratherius Veronensis, *Sermones*, *P.L.* cxxxvi, cols. 689-758.

Renard le Contrefait, ed. G. Raynaud and H. Lemaître, 2 vols. Paris 1914.

Ridley, Florence H. 'Did Gavin Douglas write King Hart?' Speculum xxxiv (1959), 402-12.

Robert, A.C.M. ed. Fables inédites des XIIe, XIIIe et XIVe siècles et Fables de La Fontaine, 2 vols, Paris, 1825.

Robertson, D.W. Jr. A Preface to Chaucer, Studies in Mediaeval Perspectives, Princeton and London, 1963.

Robertson, D.W. Jr. 'Some Mediaeval Literary Terminology with Special Reference to Chrétien de Troyes', M.P. xlviii (1951), 669-92.

Robertson, D. W. Jr. and Huppé, B.F. Piers Plowman and Scriptural Tradition, Princeton Studies in English, 31, Princeton, 1951.

Robertus de Sorbona, De Consciencia et De Tribus Dietis, ed. F. Chambon, Collection de Textes pour servir à l'étude et à l'enseignement de l'histoire, Paris, 1902.

Rolle, Richard, of Hampole, The Pricke of Conscience, ed. W. Morris, Philological Society, Berlin, 1863.

Le Roman de la Rose, ed. E. Langlois, 5 vols, S.A.T.F. 1914-24.

Le Roman de Renard, ed. Ernst Martin, 4 vols, Strasbourg, 1882-7.
ed. M.D.M. Méon, 4 vols, Paris, 1826.
ed. Mario Roques, 6 vols (unfinished), Classiques Francaise du Moyen Age, 78,79,81, 85,88,90,1948-63.
(modernized) ed. J. de Foucault, from the text of Paulin Paris, s.l. 1949.

The Romans of Partenay or of Lusignan, a fifteenth century translation from the French, ed. W. W. Skeat, E.E.T.S.O.S.22, rev. edn., 1899.

Romulus, Vulgate, ed. H. Oesterley, Romulus Die paraphrasen des Phaedrus und die Aesopische Fabel im mittelalter, Berlin, 1870.
ed. G. Thiele, Der Lateinische Asop des Romulus und die Prosa-Fassungen des Phaedrus Kritischer Text mit Kommentar und einleitenden Untersuchungen von G. Thiele Heidelberg, 1910.

Root, R. K. ed. 'Poems from the Garret MS,' Englische Studien xli (1910), 360-79.

Ross, Ian, Review of Elliott's edition of Henryson's Poems, Studies in Scottish Literature 1 (1963-4), 268-73.

Ross, W.O. ed. Middle English Sermons edited from British Museum MS Royal 18 B xxiii, E.E.T.S.O.S. 209, 1940.

Rossi, Sergio, 'L'Annunciazione di Robert Henryson,' Aevum xxix (1955), 70-81.

Rossi, Sergio, Robert Henryson, Milano, 1955.

Rowlands, Mary, 'The Fables of Robert Henryson', The Dalhousie Review xxxix (1959-60), 491-502.

Roy, James A. Of The Makaris A Causerie', University of Toronto Quarterly xvi (1946-7), 30-41.

Rupertus, De Gloria et Honore Filii Hominis Super Matthaeum, P.L. clxviii, cols 1307-1634.

Rupertus, In Evangelium S. Joannis Commentariorum, P.L. clxix cols 205-1004.

Rupertus, In S. Job Commentarium, P.L. clxviii, cols, 961-1196.

Rutebeuf, Renart le Bestorné, ed. E.B. Ham, University of Michigan Contributions in Modern Philology IX, Ann Arbor, 1947.

Ryman, J. Poems, ed. J. Zupitza, 'Die Gedichte der Franzikaners Jakob Ryman', Archiv lxxxix (1892), 167-338.

Sacro Bosco, J de. The Sphere, ed. Lynn Thorndike, The Sphere of Sacrobosco and its Commentators, Chicago, 1949.

Samouillan, A. Olivier Maillard, Sa Predication et Son Temps: Etude sur la Chaire et la Société Française au Quinzieme Siècle, Toulouse and Paris, 1891.

Sandison, Helen E. The "Chanson d'Aventure" in Middle English, Bryn Mawr College Monographs, Monograph Series XII, Bryn Mawr Pennsylvania, 1913.

Sandys, W. ed. Christmas Carols, London, 1833.

Sarum Missal: ed. F.H. Dickinson, Missale ad Usum Insignis et Praeclarae Ecclesiae Sarum, Burntisland, 1861-3.

tr. F.E. Warren, The Sarum Missal in English, 2 vols. The Library of Liturgiology and Ecclesiology for English Readers, ed. V. Staley, 8 and 9, London, 1911
ed. J. Wickham Legg, The Sarum Missal edited from three early manuscripts, Oxford, 1916

Secreta Secretorum, tr. Lydgate and Burgh, Secrees of old Philisoffres, ed. R. Steele, E.E.T.S.E.S. 66, 1894
tr. James Yonge, The Governance of Prynces (1422), ed. R. Steele, Three Prose Versions of the Gesta Romanorum, E.E.T.S.E.S. 74, 1898, pp. 119-248

Servasanctus, Antidotarium Anime, Louvain, 1485?

Skelton, John, The Complete Poems, ed. Philip Henderson, London and Toronto, 1931

Small, J. ed. English Metrical Homilies from Manuscripts of the Fourteenth Century, Edinburgh, 1862

Smalley, Beryl, English Friars and Antiquity in the Early Fourteenth Century, Oxford, 1960

Smalley, Beryl, The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages, 2nd edn., Oxford, 1952.

Smith, G. Gregory, Specimens of Middle Scots, Edinburgh and London, 1902

Smith, Janet M. The French Background to Middle Scots Literature, Edinburgh and London, 1934

Snavely, G.E., The Aesopic Fable in the Miroor Historiale of Jehan de Vignay, Baltimore, 1908

South, John Flint, Memorials of the Craft of Surgery in England, ed. D'Arcy Power, London, etc., 1886

Spearing, A.C. Criticism and Medieval Poetry, London, 1964

Spearing, A.C. 'The Testament of Cresseid and the "High Concise Style"', Speculum, xxxvii (1962), 208-25

Speculum Christiani, ed. G. Holmstedt, E.E.T.S.O.S. 182, 1933

Speculum Exemplorum, s.l., 1481

Speculum Laicorum, ed. J.C.Th. Welter, Thesaurus Exemplorum, Fasc. V, Paris, 1914

Speculum Sapiencie, ed. J.G.Th. Grässe, Die Bieden Ältesten Lateinischen Fabelbücher des Mittelalters, Bibliothek des Litterarischen Vereins in Stuttgart, CXLVIII, Tubingen, 1880, pp. 3-124

Speirs, John, 'Mediaeval Scots Poetry', Scrutiny vi (1937), 83-102

Speirs, John, The Scots Literary Tradition An Essay in Criticism, 2nd edn., London, 1962

Spicq, C. Esquisse d'Une Histoire de l'Exégèse Latine au Moyen Age, Bibliothèque Thomiste XXVI, Paris, 1944

Stearns, Marshall W. 'Henryson and Chaucer', M.L.Q. vi (1945)

Stearns, Marshall W. 'Henryson and the Political Scene', S.P. xl (1943), 380-9

Stearns, Marshall W. 'A Note on Henryson and Lydgate', M.L.N. xl (1945), 101-3

Stearns, Marshall W. 'A Note on Robert Henryson's allusions to Religion and Law', M.L.N. lix (1944), 257-64

Stearns, Marshall W. 'The Planet Portraits of Robert Henryson', PMLA lix (1944), 917-27

Stearns, Marshall W. Robert Henryson, New York, 1949

Stearns, Marshall, W. 'Robert Henryson and the Aristotelian tradition of psychology', S.P. xli (1944), 492-500

Stearns, Marshall W. 'Robert Henryson and the Fulgentian Horse', M.L.N. liv (1939), 239-45

Stearns, Marshall W. 'Robert Henryson and the leper Cresseid', M.L.N. lix (1944), 265-9

Stearns, Marshall W. 'Robert Henryson and the socio-economic scene', E.L.H. x (1943), 285-93

Stegmüller, F. Repertorium Biblicum Medii Aevi, Madrid, 1940-

Steinhöwels Äsop, ed. H. Oesterley, Bibliothek des Litterarischen Vereins in Stuttgart, CXVII, Tubingen, 1873

Stephanus de Borbone, Anecdotes historiques, légendes et apologues tirés du recueil inédit d'Étienne de Bourbon, ed. A. Lecoy de la Marche, Société de l'Histoire de France, Paris, 1877

Stephens, G. ed. 'Extracts in Prose and Verse from an Old English Medical Manuscript preserved in the Royal Library at Stockholm', Archaeologia xxx (1844), 349-418

Stevenson, G. ed. Pieces from the Makculloch and Gray MSS. together with the Chepman and Myllar Prints, S.T.S. 1918

Sudre, L. Les Sources du Roman de Renart, Paris, 1893

Sutherland, J. English Satire, Cambridge, 1958

Tabula Exemplorum Secundum Ordinem Alphabeti, ed. J. Th. Welter, Thesaurus Exemplorum Fasc. III, Paris, 1926

Tenessax, J. _Le Livre de Maistre Regnard et de Dame Hersant sa Femme_, Paris, 1530?

Tillyard, E.M.W. 'Henryson, _The Testament of Cresseid_ 1470?' in his _Five Poems 1470-1870_, An Elementary Essay on the Background of English Literature, London, 1948, pp. 5-29.

Thorndike, Lynn, _History of Magic and Experimental Science_, 8 vols., London and New York, 1923-48

Tillotson, Geoffrey, 'The _Fables_ of Robert Henryson', in his _Essays in Criticism and Research_, Cambridge, 1942, pp. 1-4

Ulrich, J. _Proben der Lateinischen Novellistik des Mittelalters_, Leipzig, 1906

Utley, Francis Lee, Review of _Robert Henryson_ by Marshall W. Stearns, _M.L.Q._ xii (1951), 493-7

Varnhagen, H. ed. 'Die Kleineren Gedichte der Vernon - und Simeon Handschrift', _Anglia_, vii (1884), 280-315

Vincent Ferrer, St. _Sermones de Tempore_, Cologne, 1487

Walafridus Strabus, _Glossa Ordinaria_, _P.L._ cxiii, cols. 67 ff. and cxiv, cols. 9-752

Ward, H.L.D., _Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum_, 3 vols. - vol. iii by J.A. Herbert - London, 1883-1910

Warnke, K. 'Die Quellen des Esope der Marie de France', _Forschungen zur romantischen Philologie_, Festgabe für Hermann Suchier, Halle, 1900, pp. 161-284

Wedel, T.O. _The Mediaeval Attitude towards Astrology particularly in England_, Yale Studies in English LX, New Haven and London, 1920

Welter, J. Th. _L'Exemplum dans la littérature religieuse et didactique du moyen âge_, Bibliothèque d'Histoire Ecclésiastique de France, Paris and Toulouse, 1927

Welter, J. Th. 'MS. 1019 de la Bibliothèque d'Arras', _Études Franciscaines_ xxx (1913), 646-65 and xxxi (1914), 194-213, 312-20

White, J.B. _Nature Fables in English Literature_, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1957

Whiting, B.J. Chaucer's Use of Proverbs, Harvard Studies in Comparative Literature XI, Cambridge Mass. and London, 1934

Whiting, B.J. 'A Probable Allusion to Henryson's Testament of Cresseid', M.L.R. xl (1945), 46-7

William of Waddington, Le Manuel des Pechiez, tr. Robert of Brunne as Handlyng Synne, ed. F.J. Furnivall, E.E.T.S.O.S. 119, 123, 1901 and 1903

Wilson, R.H. 'The Poggiana in Caxton's Esope', P.Q. xxx (1951), 348-52

Wittig, Kurt, The Scottish Tradition in Literature, Edinburgh and London, 1958.

Wolfe, H. Notes on English Verse Satire, London, 1929

Woolf, R. 'The Theme of Christ the Lover Knight in Medieval Literature', R.E.S. New Series, xiii (1962), 1-16

Wright, T. Essays on subjects connected with the Literature, Superstitions and History of England in the Middle Ages, 2 vols., London, 1846

Wright, T. ed. Political Poems and Songs, 2 vols., Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores XIV, London, 1859-61

Wright, T. ed. Political Songs of England from the Reign of John to that of Edward II, Camden Society VI, London, 1839

Wright, T. ed. A Selection of Latin Stories from Manuscripts of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries, Percy Society, VIII, London, 1843

Wright, T. ed. Songs and Carols from a Manuscript in the British Museum of the Fifteenth Century, Warton Club, London, 1856

Wright, T. ed. Songs and Carols of the Fifteenth Century, Percy Society, XXIII, London, 1848

Wright, T. and Halliwell, J.O. Reliquae Antiquae, 2 vols., London, 1841-3

Wulfstan, The Homilies, ed. D. Bethurum, Oxford, 1957

Ysengrimus, ed. E. Voigt, Halle, 1884