# CHAUCER'S IMAGERY

## IN RELATION TO HIS PERSONALITY

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| Kn. T. | Knight's Tale |
| Sq. T. | Squire's Tale |
| Frank. T. | Franklin's Prologue and Tale |
| Mill. T. | Miller's Tale |
| Sum. T. | Summoner's Tale |
| C. Y. T. | Canon's Yeoman's Tale |
| M. L. T. | Man of Law's Prologue and Tale |
| Prior. T. | Prioress' Prologue and Tale |
| Pard. T. | Pardoner's Prologue and Tale |

# CHAPTER I

## THE PROBLEM AND THE METHOD

For centuries Geoffrey Chaucer has been ranked among the three greatest poets of English literature, yet little is known of the man himself. Entries in royal records and official documents indicate that he was trained as a squire in the court of Prince Lionel, served with the English army in France, married a lady-in-waiting to the queen, was Comptroller of the Customs and resident of London twelve years, took many mysterious journeys to the continent on diplomatic missions, was a member of Parliament one year and Clerk of the King's Works three, and became forester of the royal forest in Somerset nine years before his death. But such notes give only the skeleton of his activities and reveal nothing of his habits of thought, quirks of personality, attitudes, and temperament.

We assume from his character portrayals that he was a keen observer of the life around him and a realistic recorder of human nature as he saw it. We know by the allusions in his verse and the similarity of certain passages to Latin poets that he was a student of Ovid and other classical writers.[1] We know from his satire on clerics that he recognized corruption in the church, but we cannot tell how much of that satire was directed at the fundamental philosophies of Christianity and how much merely at the externals of religion as it was practiced in his day.

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[1] E. F. Shannon, Chaucer and the Roman Poets (Cambridge, Mass., 1929), p. 371.

In a study of Shakespeare's images, Miss Caroline E. Spurgeon worked on the assumption that "in the case of the poet, it is chiefly through his images that he, to some extent unconsciously, 'gives himself away.'"[2] But critics often use an isolated image as evidence for some preconceived idea about an author and give it an importance entirely out of proportion to its relation to other images. Consequently, before accurate conclusions can be drawn concerning the value of even one image of a poet, a representative study should be made of all his images, conventional, original, colorless, and spicy, so that each one can be seen in relation to the others. It is this sort of study that I propose to make here to determine what can be learned of the man Chaucer through his images.

Before proceeding, however, we might well determine in what sense the word "image" is being used. Miss Spurgeon's definition has been found applicable:[3]

> I use the term "image" here as the only available word to cover every kind of simile, as well as every kind of what is really compressed simile--metaphor. I suggest that we divest our minds of the hint the term carries with it of visual image only, and think of it, for the present purpose, as connoting any and every imaginative picture or other experience, drawn in every kind of way, which may have come to the poet, not only through any of his senses, but through his mind and emotions as well, and which he uses, in the forms of simile and metaphor in their widest sense, for the purpose of analogy.

Some of Chaucer's images may cover many lines, for example this extended simile:[4]

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[2]Caroline F. E. Spurgeon, Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells Us (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1936), p. 4.

[3]Ibid., p. 5.

[4]All quotations from the text of the Canterbury Tales are taken from John M. Manly and Edith Rickert (editors), The Text of the Canterbury Tales (Chicago, 1940), Volumes III, IV. Since Manly uses no punctuation, I have added it according to F. N. Robinson, The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933).

Men louen of propre kynde newefangelnesse
As bryddes doon that men in cages fede,
For though thow nyght and day take of hem hede,
And strewe hir cage faire and softe as silk,
And yeue hem sugre, hony, breed, and milk,
Yet right anon as that his dore is vppe,
He with his feet wol sporne doun his cuppe,
And to the wode he wole, and wormes ete;
So newefangel been they of hir mete,
And louen nouelries of propre kynde,
No gentillesse of blood may hem bynde. Sq. T. 610-20

Others will be briefly stated similes.

Therto she koude skippe and make game,
As any kyde or calf folwynge his dame. Mill. T. 3259-60

And still others consist of a one-word metaphorical verb (or other part of speech) such as "fatte."

Who so wol praye he moot faste and be clene
And fatte his soule and make his body lene. Sum. T. 1879-80

Since the purpose of this work is a study of the content of the images rather than of the form, their seperation into such types as metaphors, similes, personification, metonymy, and synecdoche is unnecessary. In any case only poetic images--those which are figurative and imply a comparison--will be considered. Sometimes the line of demarcation is indefinite, and it is difficult to decide which images are figurative and which are merely descriptive. For instance, the second line of the following description of a burning brand might at first be considered a poetic image, although in reality there is no comparison and the image is merely generalized description.

And as it queynte it made a whistlynge,
As doon thise wete brondes in hir brennynge . . .
Kn. T. 2237-39

Again, when Chaucer speaks of a "burel" man, meaning literally one who wears coarse cloth, was the term intended to be figurative, or had it lost its specific figurative connotation as in the modern colloquial "clodhopper"? For those who may have a different conception of what

distinguishes a poetic image, and for the convenience of anyone who may wish to make further use of the information collected here, all the images are listed in the Appendix. But the standard followed in this investigation has been

> the little word picture used by a poet or prose writer to illustrate, illuminate and embellish his thought. It is a description or an idea, which by comparison or analogy, stated or understood, with something else, transmits to us through the emotions and associations it arouses, something of the "wholeness," the depth and richness of the way the writer views, conceives or has felt what he is telling us.[5]

Naturally there are limitations to a study of this type. In the first place, some words which are common today may have been figurative in the late fourteenth century. For instance, the original meaning of "gnof" was "lump" and the New English Dictionary[6] lists as the first English use the Miller's Tale, line 3188, "A riche gnof that gestes held to bord." We have no way of knowing whether Chaucer was actually comparing the carpenter to a "lump" or whether the expression was already a common part of oral language. The New English Dictionary and Stratmann's Middle English Dictionary[7] have been consulted to determine the early meanings of questionable words, and the Chaucer Concordance[8] has been referred to for the frequency of their appearance in the poet's works.

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[5]Spurgeon, Shakespeare's Imagery, p. 9

[6]James A. H. Murray, etc. (editors), The New English Dictionary on Historical Principles (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888-1928).

[7]F. H. Stratmann, A Middle-English Dictionary, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1891).

[8]J. S. P. Tatlock and A. G. Kennedy A Concordance to the Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer and the Romaunt of the Rose (Concord: The Rumford Press, 1927).

Since relatively few pieces of Old and Middle English literature are extant, it is sometimes difficult to determine which figurative uses were original with Chaucer. He clearly employs many conventional and proverbial expressions, however. To be "drunk as a mouse" (cf. Kn. T. 1261) was a common expression in older English,[9] and little originality can be attached to such an expression as "black as a crow" (cf. Kn. T. 2692). Although such expressions are not original, there is some importance in the fact that he used them instead of any other conventional expression or instead of some fresh comparison. As we shall see, an undue proportion of conventional images in any one class may indicate a lack of deep personal interest in that subject.

It is also believed that Chaucer used some definite source for a number of his tales. In certain cases these sources are known, in others not. Some of his images have been lifted directly from the sources, and where such a fact is known, it will be hereinafter noted in connection with the image. Yet even these borrowed images are to some degree significant, for they must have appealed to him or he would not have repeated them.

Miss Spurgeon suggests that the imagery of a poet might be less valuable in reconstructing his personality than that of a dramatist, who, writing in the red-hot rush to meet production date, includes images as they surge up in his mind.[10] But a glance at the record of Chaucer's business activities proves that he had little time for either dawdling or polishing his poetry. While a custom's official, he may have had a little

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[9]W. W. Skeat, Early English Proverbs (Oxford, 1910), p. 90, Number 214.

[10]Spurgeon, Shakespeare's Imagery, pp. 4-5.

spare time but not enough for the pursuit of literary perfection. And as Clerk of the King's Works, he was responsible for building roads, bridges, and sewers, preparing the tournament grounds, and repairing the king's property. Such a job would have left little time for quibbling over the choice of a word or effective bit of minor imagery. Although he was not so busy after his retirement, his poetry was largely written in spare time for the amusement of his friends at court. The unfinished state of the Canterbury Tales gives evidence that they were never completed to his satisfaction. Therefore, we can conclude that Miss Spurgeon's objection would hardly prove valid in Chaucer's case.

Another objection to biographical inferences from the imagery might arise from the fact that in the Canterbury Tales the choice of images was to some extent determined by the type of mind and experiences of the characters telling the stories. The same would, of course, be true of that of a dramatist. Chaucer's descriptions in the General Prologue are evidence that he was well acquainted with the details of personal appearance of the types of persons he chose for pilgrims. The content of the stories and the manner of presentation show an understanding of what interests such people. It is only natural to assume that he chose some of the images with an eye to the person telling the story. Yet they all reflect the mind of Geoffrey Chaucer, poet, and the fact that they are put into the mouths of others does not destroy their effectiveness in that respect. Any image Chaucer used must either unconsciously reflect his own mind or consciously reflect that of his character. In either case, the images are drawn from his own knowledge, gained either by actual experience or vicariously through reading and observation. Why, in projecting himself into the mind of a carpenter, a squire, a lawyer, a prioress, or an alchemist's assistant, did he choose the images he did?

Admittedly, then, the narrator and the content of the tale should be kept in mind as we evaluate the significance of any image. An image of agriculture is more significant if found in the Knight's Tale than if found in the Miller's Tale. Yet the fact that Chaucer used the image at all is indicative of his familiarity with the subject.

This leads directly into an explanation of the choice of tales used in this discussion. The ideal would have been to classify all the images in Chaucer's works, or at least in the entire Canterbury Tales, but such an undertaking would have been too ambitious for the present. A representative group of tales should indicate whether anything can be learned from his images. In order to counteract any lack of balance which would result from presenting Chaucer's adaption of his images to the life of a restricted social milieu, I have selected some tales from each of the class groups: the upper class, the middle-class, the "religious and the professional members of the pilgrimage. Within these groups, I have chosen the stories with a view to obtaining as many images presumably original with Chaucer, as many types of medieval stories, and as diversified a range of subject matter, as possible.

The tales told by members of the upper class all deal with conventional love in some manner. Of these the Knight's Tale, a metrical romance based on Boccaccio's Teseide, is the most formal of all the tales. We must be careful not to attach too much significance to the fact that the tale was told by a Knight, however, for there is evidence that an earlier version was already circulating as a completed poem before the Knight started on his pilgrimage.[11] The Squire's Tale shows Oriental

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[11]R. K. Root, Poetry of Chaucer (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1922), p. 295.

influence but has no known source.[12] At any rate, it is an example of an unfinished fragment that had not received Chaucer's final polish. The Franklin's Tale is a Breton Lay with decided Celtic influences, although again no definite source has been found. Some writers emphasize Chaucer's indebtedness to Boccaccio's Filocolo, Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia regum Britanniae, and St. Jerome's Adversus Jovinianum.[13]

In striking contrast to these rather conventional tales are the racy narratives by the more informal members of the party. The Miller's Tale, a fabliau told supposedly by a drunken rustic, has a freshness that could have been produced only by a man who enjoyed telling the story. The tale, like the other two in this group, has no known source but may have been an adaptation of either verbal or written anecdote current in Chaucer's time.[14] The Summoner's Tale is another fabliau. The Canon's Yeoman's Tale is drawn from a background of fourteenth century alchemy. Although it does not belong to precisely the same medieval literary genre as the fabliaux of the Summoner and Miller, the Canon's Yeoman's Tale is similar, in that it is a spontaneous account of unconventional material told by one of the lower classes. It is interesting to note that these three stories are the richest in imagery, for their length, of any of the tales discussed.

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[12]"The best critical opinion favors the theory that Chaucer derived the material for his Squire's Tale from many quarters and worked inventively with free hand. Though we do not possess any unquestioned source of any portion of the tale or of any motif in it, we do find striking parallels to many of its features in various stories of oriental origin." H.S.V. Jones, "The Squire's Tale", in W. F. Bryan and Germaine Dempster (editors), Sources and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales (Chicago, 1941), p. 357.

[13]Germaine Dempster and J.S.P. Tatlock, "The Franklin's Tale," Sources and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales (Chicago, 1941,) p. 377.

[14]L. Stith Thompson, "The Miller's Tale," Sources and Analogues, p. 106.

The tales of the Prioress, the Pardoner, and the Man of Lawe deal with religion and morality. The first is a Miracle of Our Lady with no known source, although a fairly accurate conception of Chaucer's source may be drawn from existing analogues.[15] The Pardoner's Tale is a typical exemplum worked into a sermon. Its exact source is unknown, yet there are similar existing versions.[16] The Man of Lawe's Tale, told by a man unconnected with the church, can be placed in this group as an example of a story with a moral purpose. The story must have been popular in the Middle Ages, for it exists today in some twenty distinct forms. Chaucer's chief immediate source seems to have been the Chronicle of Nicholas Trivet.[17]

Chaucer's images are drawn from varied impressions and range from weaned lambs to court jugglers and from a cart horse to the horse of Troy. Classification is consequently difficult. Here again, use was made of the path already blazed by Miss Spurgeon, and the classifications were changed only so much as was necessitated by the difference in poets and their periods. Because images may be called up in a man's mind through any of the five senses, I have attempted in Chapter VII to classify the images according to taste, smell, sight, sound, and touch. It is even more important that we should know from what part of life the images are drawn. Nature, domestic or home life, occupations, education, and association with other people are the most important influences in a man's life; consequently, these are the main groupings to which others were added as needed. The classification "Nature" includes only images

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[15]Carleton Brown, "The Prioress's Tale", Sources and Analogues, pp. 447-485.

[16]Frederick Tupper, "The Pardoner's Tale", Sources and Analogues, pp. 415-416.

[17]Margaret Schlauch, "The Man of Lawe's Tale", Sources and Analogues, pp. 156-181.

referring to wild life or natural phenomena; "Everday Life and Occupations" includes images from agriculture, sailing, trades, and urban life. The "Domestic" group includes all those drawn from home life whether high or low, indoor or outdoor, and "Types of People" includes any reference to other human beings whether as individuals or as a class. The "Literary" images fall into four groups: classical, religious, courtly love, and scientific. A few miscellaneous groups--personifications, substance images, and quality images of hot and cold, light and darkness--remain; these are treated in Chapter VII.

In every case, for consistency, images have been listed according to the content to which the object is compared. An example may be found in the description of winter in the Franklin's Tale--undoubtedly one of the most beautiful bits of imagery in the Tales.

> Phebus wax old, and hewed lyk latoun,
> That in his hote declynacioun
> Shoon as the burned gold with stremes brighte;
> But now in Capricorn adoun he lighte,
> Wher as he shoon ful pale, I dar wel seyn.
> The bittre frostes with the sleet and reyn,
> Destruyed hath the grene in euery yerd.
> Janus sit by the fyr, with double berd,
> And drynketh of his bugle horn the wyn
> Biforn hym stant brawen of the tusked swyn
> And "Nowel" crieth euery lusty man. Frank. T. 1245-55

The thing compared is winter, but the things to which it is compared fall under several classifications. There are references to metal (latoun, burned gold), there is a taste image in "bittre frostes," and there is a visual image of a pagan god enjoying a Christian feast. It is not the thing compared but the thing to which it is compared that determines the classification. As can be seen, none of these images fall under "Nature," but most of them will be found in Chapter VII. A perusal of this material should throw some light on the experience and attitudes of the man, Geoffrey Chaucer.

## CHAPTER II

## IMAGES FROM NATURE

Since the influence of some of the later poets has made us unconsciously tend to think of nature images first when thinking of the figurative language of poetry, it would be well to begin by examining the nine tales to determine the quality and quantity of the images drawn from that source. The word "source" is used here as a better term than "type." In most cases there is little difference between the source and type of an image, but where there is the former has determined the classification. For example, the image "worthless as a tare"[18] might be considered a nature image until one recalls that it is only in agriculture that a weed is considered worthless and that such an image would be derived not from a knowledge of nature but from a knowledge of agriculture. This, then, limits nature images to include only those that spring from associations with nature as such.

The term "nature" is a confusing one, for it may have either narrow limits or virtually no limits at all. Under the general heading of nature, Miss Spurgeon included gardening, farming, sea, animal, and hunting images, but a difference in the two poets and the differences in the customs of their ages have called for some changes in classification. A London playwright of the sixteenth century may have associated farming, the sea, and country sports with a life close to nature; but two centuries earlier, when the feudal system was still the prevailing social order, the distinction between town and country life was not so clear. The London of Chaucer's age was only 2000 yards long by 1000 yards wide,[19]

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[18] Cf. Knight's Tale, 1570, "Ne sette I noght the mountaunce of a tare."

[19] J. M. Manly (editor), Canterbury Tales, (New York, 1928), p. 45.

and a half hour's walk in any direction would bring one out of town and into the fields. A knowledge of rural life formed the common background of the urbanite, and the distinction between rural and urban life, thought, and occupations must have been less pronounced that it was two hundred years later when the city had sprawled out to accomodate its 200,000 inhabitants.

Shakespeare draws relatively few images from farming, but his nature images show evidence of close observation. Chaucer, on the other hand, draws most of his nature images from reading, whereas his farming images contain a freshness that could spring only from an observation of farming as an occupation and not as a part of nature. For that reason, I shall treat farming images under "Occupations" where they may be easily compared with images drawn from urban life and occupations. The same is true of both sea and hunting images. In these, the comparisons seem to refer to nature as secondary, and the images apparently arose from observation of the life of a seaman or of the sport of the upper class.

After we have limited the nature images to those drawn from wild life or purely natural phenomena, a comparison of Chaucer with Shakespeare is interesting. Miss Spurgeon found that of the two main groups of Shakespearean images--nature, and indoor life and customs--the first is the larger.[20] Shakespeare was particularly fond of pictures of birds and mentions such specific details as the "new ta'n sparrow" fetching her breath shortly.

> All these and many more are the quick, graceful, characteristic movements of bird life which attract Shakespeare supremely, which he knows intimately and has registered with loving exactitude.[21]

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[20] Shakespeare's Imagery, p. 44.

[21] Ibid., p. 49.

We find no such close observation of any form of nature in the Canterbury Tales. Many nature images are conventional or the result of reading and are neither particularly colorful in themselves nor significant in the reconstruction of Chaucer's actual experiences and unconscious interests. Animals may be referred to for certain traits they have long exemplified in literature.

The lion has long been known in literature as the king of beasts. A restatement of the proverb, "beat the dog before the lion," refers to the practice of punishing the young sons of rulers by chastising someone of lower rank in their presence.

> And for to maken othere be war by me,
> As by the whelp chasted is the leoun . . . Sq. T. 490-91

It may be significant that Chaucer refers to the lion, ruler of the beasts, not as an animal of majesty and power but as one of insane cruelty and power.

> And softe vnto hymself he seyde, "Fy
> Vpon a lord that wol haue no mercy,
> But be a leoun, bothe in word and dede" . . . Kn. T. 1773-75
>
> With inne thyn hous ne be thow no leoun. Sum. T. 1989
>
> And as a leoun he his lookyng caste. Kn. T. 2171

The cruelty of the lion is stressed even when he is referred to in his native habitat.

> Ne in Belmarye ther nys so fel[22] leoun,
> That hunted is, or for his hunger wood,
> Ne of his preye desireth so the blood,
> As Palamon to sleen his foo Arcite . . . Kn. T. 2630-33
>
> The frere vp stirte as dooth a wood[23] leoun . . .
> Sum. T. 2152

---

[22] cruel.

[23] A discussion of "wood" as applied to people, animals, and inanimate objects will be found under "Types of People."

When Palamon and Arcite meet in the wood and begin to fight, both the lion and tiger aid the description of the combatants.

> Thou myghtest wene that this Palamoun
> In his fightyng were a wood leoun . . . Kn. T. 1655-56
>
> And as a cruel tigre was Arcite. Kn. T. 1657
>
> Ther nas no tygre in the vale of Galgopheye,
> Whan that hir whelp is stole whan it is lite,
> So cruel on the hunte as is Arcite
> For iolous herte vpon this Palamoun. Kn. T. 2626-29

The tiger is well known as one of the most cruel of beasts, and thus the Squire refers to one, in describing the unhappiness of the deserted falcon.

> And euere in oon she cryde alwey and shrighte.
> And with hir beek hir selven so she prighte,
> That ther nys tygre, ne noon so cruel beest,
> That dwelleth outher in wode or in the forest,
> That nolde han wept, if that he wepe koude,
> For sorwe of hire, she shrighte alwey so loude.
> Sq. T. 417-22

And in berating her former lover, the falcon compares him to a tiger--

> Anoon this tygre, ful of doublenesse . . . Sq. T. 543

"To make one his ape" seems to have been a common slang expression of the period--probably the grandparent of the expression "to make a monkey of him"--and occurs several times in Chaucer, but only twice in the nine tales discussed here.[24] It had apparently become so conventional that there was little real imagery left in it.

> And thus she maketh Absolon hir ape. Mill. T. 3389
>
> Right as hym liste, the preest he made his ape!
> C. Y. T. 1313

Certain of the animals with which he was familiar are used in the same conventional manner and others are casual references to common scenes.

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[24] The Chaucer Concordance lists this same expression ten additional times in Chaucer's works.

The fox is renowned everywhere in literature for his slyness. It was natural, then, that in referring to the scheming alchemist, the Canon's Yeoman should think of a fox.

Which that this fox yshapen hath to thee! C. Y. T. 1080

Like the fox, the whale was familiar literary figure and its size was well known. The exaggeration in calling a friar "Fat as a whale," Sum. T. 1930, was lifted from Jerome's treatise[25] as well as being a conventional expression. The cuckoo and hare are not used in the next image in any literary sense, but the reference probably was proverbial.

She woot namoore of al this hoote fare,
By god, than woot a cokkow of an hare! Kn. T. 1809-10

There seems to be much more originality in Chaucer's comparison of Alisoun's slimness to that of a weasel.

As any wesele hir body gent and smal. Mill. T. 3234

Since hunting wild boars was still a favorite sport, it is natural that those animals should be referred to several times. The Summoner merely says,

He looked as it were a wilde boor, Sum. T. 2160

but the Knight mentions the fierceness of a cornered boar in the following reference to Palamon and Arcite.

As wilde bores gonnen they to smyte,
That frothen whit as foom for ire wood. Kn. T. 1658-59

In the line "That foghten breme, as it were boles two," Kn. T. 1699, Chaucer may have been referring to wild bulls or perhaps to boars. About half of the most authentic manuscripts read "bores."[26]

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[25]St. Jerome, Adversus Jovinianum, I, 40.

[26]Manly and Rickert, Text of the Canterbury Tales, III, 73.

Certain references are to beasts in general and are of little value except that they must be considered in a study of all the images.

> For slayn is man right as another beest . . . Kn. T. 1309

> That man is bounden to his obseruaunce,
> For Goddes sake, to letten of his wille,
> Theras a beest may al his lust fulfille.
> And whan a beest is deed he hath no peyne;
> But after his deeth man moot wepe and pleyne,
> Though in this world he haue care and wo. Kn. T. 1316-21

Among the birds, we find the eagle, like the lion endowed by literature with nobility. The Squire refers to his supremacy as a soaring bird in:

> Or if yow list to flee as hye in the air
> As dooth an egle whan hym list to soore. Sq. T. 122-23

Some familiar birds are distinguished to the most casual observer for certain oft-mentioned traits. The most outstanding characteristic of the raven and the crow is their color, and the nightingale is constantly coupled with its song.

> As blak he lay as any cole or crowe . . . Kn. T. 2692

> As any ravenes fethere it shoon for blak . . . Kn. T. 2144

> He syngeth, brokkyng as a nyghtyngale . . . Mill. T. 3377

The cooing of turtle doves is as well-known to everyone as to Absolon.

> Ywis, lemman, I have swich love longyng,
> That lyk a turtel trewe is my moornyng. Mill. T. 3705-06

The noise of jays forms two auditory images.

> They mowe wel chiteren as doon iayes . . . C. Y. T. 1397

> Thy mynde is lorn, thow ianglest as a iay . . . M. L. T. 774

The chirping of sparrows is often referred to but gains a certain freshness when used to describe a fat friar who had come to call,

> And kiste his swete, and chirketh as a sparwe. Sum. T. 1904

The next two images would be familiar to anyone who drove slowly through the country and indicate little close observation. The first is a description of Alisoun's singing.

> But of hir song, it was as loude and yerne
> As any swalwe sittyng on a berne. Mill. T. 3257-58

The second appears with a suddenness and an incongruity that thrust it into the comic. The Pardoner pompously stands in the pulpit,

> And est and west vp on the pepie I bekke,
> As dooth a dowue sittyng on a berne. Pard. T. 396-97

In his burlesque of courtly love, Absolon addresses Alisoun as "My faire bryd Mill. T. 3699, and "swete bryd," Mill. T. 3726. The joy of birds in the early morning occasions an image in the Canon's Yeoman's Tale, and the sight of a bird in the sun another in the Knight's Tale.

> Was neuere brid gladder agayn the day,
> Ne nyghtyngale in the sesoun of May. C. Y. T. 1342-43

> As fayn as fowel is of the brighte sonne. Kn. T. 2437

Insects and snakes are among the most effective images drawn from nature although they, too, are not particularly original. A scorpion aptly parallels the first wicked mother-in-law of Constance and Chaucer probably gained his knowledge of scorpions through reading.

> But this scorpion, this wikked goost,
> The sowdanesse, for al hire flaterynge,
> Caste vnder this ful mortally to stynge. M. L. T. 404-406

A very common insect referred to is the ant.[27]

> He is as angry as a pissemyre. Sum. T. 1825

Images involving serpents are references both to actual snakes and to Satan as a serpent.[28]

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[27] The expression "not worth a flye" is found in Frank. T. 1132 and C. Y. T. 1150, but beside being very conventional, it is probably drawn from domestic scenes. Although a fly is a creature of nature, there is no indication of a knowledge of nature in the image, so it would be of no worth classified as such.

[28] Religious images, p. 77.

> Oure firste foo, the serpent Sathanas . . . . Prior. T. 1748
>
> O serpent vnder femynynytee,
> Lyk to the serpent depe in helle ybounde! M. L. T. 360-01
>
> Right as a serpent hit hym vnder floures . . . Sq. T. 512
>
> War fro the serpent that so sleighly crepeth
> Vnder the gras and styngeth subtilly. Sum. T. 1994-95

The line in the Pardoner's Tale,

> Thus spitte I out my venym vnder hewe
> Of holynesse, Pard. T. 421-22

may be considered a concealed serpent or insect image, for according to popular superstition only those creatures commonly spit venom. And in the Knight's Tale a thief is compared to a serpent.

> Allas, I se a serpent or a theef,
> That many a trewe man hath doon mescheef,
> Goon at his large and wher hym list may turne. Kn. T. 1325-27

The Prioress got her poisonous creatures slightly mixed in

> Oure firste foo, the serpent Sathanas
> That hath in Iewes herte his waspes nest, Prior T. 1748-49

From animal life we go to plant life and find the oak, box, and sloe[29] mentioned specifically. In displaying the virtues of his sword, the mysterious knight boasts:

> Thurgh out his armure it wol kerue and byte,
> Were it as thikke as is a braunched ook. Sq. T. 158-59

The oak tree is used once in a series of images which identify the mysteries of human death with commonplace scenes.[30]

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[29] A small tree similar to hackberry.

[30] Cf. "Nature Images," p. 20.

> Lo the ook that hath so long a norisshynge
> Fro the tyme that it first bigynneth to sprynge,
> And hath so long a lyf, as ye may see,
> Yet at the laste wasted is the tree. Kn. T. 3017-20
>
> . . . al gooth that ilke weye;
> Thanne may I seyn that al this thyng moot deye. Kn. T. 3033-34

Palamon suffers so from love that

> . . . he lyk was to biholde
> The box tree or the asshen dede and colde. Kn. T. 1301-02

We learn of Alisoun that

> Ful smale ypulled were hir browes two,
> And tho were bent and blake as any sloo. Mill. T. 3245-46

The betrayed Constance, speechless with sorrow, is not "rooted to the spot", but "she, for sorwe, as domb stant as a tree," M. L. T. 1055.

The conventional image of a flower in the general sense appears twice in the Knight's Tale.[31]

> To dyen in his excellence and flour . . . Kn. T. 3048
>
> That goode Arcite, of chivalrie flour . . . Kn. T. 3059

"Well" (meaning "spring") and "root" symbolize the source of some trait.

> . . . the doublenesse
> Of this chanoun, roote of al cursednesse! C. Y. T. 1300-01
>
> O sowdanesse, roote of iniquitee! M. L. T. 358
>
> For she hir self is honour and the roote
> Of bountee, next hir sone, and soules boote. Prion T. 1655-56
>
> This welle of mercy, Cristes moder swete . . .
> Prior. T. 1846
>
> The moder of the sowdan, welle of vices! M. L. T. 323

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[31] Cf. "Images Drawn from Domestic Life," p. 25.

New spring shoots of trees and briers set the background for an image of the heights and depths to which the emotions of a lover will soar and sink. The emotions are "Now in the croppe, now doun in the breres," Kn. T. 1532. The image, "Whit as is the blosme vpon the rys," Mill. T. 3324, probably indicates as much close observation of nature as any flower image. A proverb, meaning to waste one's time in childish play[32], is expressed by "He moot go pipen in an yuy leef," Kn. T. 1838.

Images of inanimate objects of nature occur in references to stones and to chalk.

> Amydde a tree, fordrye as whit as chalk,
> As Canacee was pleyynge in hir walk
> Ther sat a fewkon ouer hir heed ful hye. Sq. T. 409-11

Stones, like the tree, are examples of immobility.

> And lyth aswowne, deed and lik a ston . . . Sq. T. 474
>
> Stant in the court stille as any stoon. Sq. T. 171
>
> That doun he fel atones as a stoon. M. L. T. 670

We find that the stone's durability warrants its place in the long image of natural objects which can be compared to the life and death of man.[33]

> Considereth eek how that the harde stoon
> Vnder oure feet, on which we trede and goon,
> Yit wasteth it as it lyth by the weye. Kn. T. 3021-23

In the same series, we learn that "The brode ryuer somtyme wexeth dreye," Kn. T. 3024. Although images from the sea are usually presented from a sailor's viewpoint, this reference to a river is obviously one of nature.

The color of the sun furnishes two images, neither particularly striking.

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[32] Skeat, Early English Proverbs, Number 204, p. 85.

[33] Cf. "Nature Images," p. 18.

His crispe heer lyk rynges was yronne,
And that was yelow and glitred as the sonne. Kn. T. 2165-66

Vp riseth freeshe Canacee hir selue,
As rody and bright as dooth the yonge sonne,
That in the ram is foure degrees vp ronne—[34] Sq. T. 334-36

In the following passage, the image is not a sun image but turns on the verb "reft", the idea being that the horizon had robbed the sun of its light. Its significance lies in Chaucer's burlesque of the nature imagery of the conventional epic poets.

. . . the brighte sonne loste his hewe;
For thorisonte hath reft the sonne his light,
This is as mucho to seye as it was nyght. Frank. T. 1016-18

Rain and other natural phenomena make effective images.

In which ther ran a rumbel in a swough,
As thogh a storm sholde breesten euery bough. Kn. T. 1979-80

His salte teerys trikled doun as reyn. Prior. T. 1864

This Nicholas anoon leet fle a fart,
As greet as it hadde been a thonder dint. Mill. T. 3806-07

As soore wondren somme on cause of thonder,
On ebbe, on flood, on gossomer, and on myst,
And alle thyng, til that the cause is wist;
Thus ienglen they, and demen, and deuyse,
Til that the kyng gan fro the bord aryse. Sq. T. 258-62

The numbering of the years by winters is not original, and such references are the only comparisons to the seasons.

But kepte it strongly many wyntres space. M. L. T. 577

And so bifel that whan this Cambyuskan
Hath twenty wynter born his dyademe. . . . Sq. T. 42-43

The fact that the month of May is used figuratively rather often throughout the Tales is not so unusual as the fact that it is the only month so employed in the tales which form the basis of this study. There

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[34] Cf. "Images from Learning," p. 79-80.

are many references to May, but only the following contain either comparisons of any sort or a personification of the month.

> And fressher than the May with floures newe--Kn. T. 1037

> Daunced a squier bifore Dorigen,
> That fressher was and iolyer of array,
> As to my doom, than is the monthe of May. Frank. T. 926-28

> And been a festlich man as fresshe as May . . . Sq. T. 281

> For May wol have no slogardye anyght.
> The sesoun priketh every gentil herte,
> And maketh it out of his sleep to sterte,
> And seith "Arys, and do thyn obseruaunce." Kn. T. 1042-45

> May, with alle thy floures and thy grene,
> Welcome be thow, faire, fresshe May! Kn. T. 1510-11

Nature herself is personified only once and that in a rather questionable image although it has been included as an example of figurative language.

> Nature hath no dominacioun.
> And certeinly, ther nature wol nat werche,
> Farewel phisik! go ber the man to cherche! Kn. T. 2758-60

In the Prologue to the Legend of Good Women, lines 35-39, Chaucer admits that the only thing capable of pulling him away from his booke is the sight of spring flowers. It is interesting to note that the images which are particularly fresh, such as "whit as blosme vpon the rys," and reference to new shoots as well as to the singing birds, are references to nature in the spring. The picture of "soules goon a blakeberyed," Pard. T. 406, indicates an appreciation of rosming at will. Yet none of the images show a close observation of nature. The comparison of a girl's slenderness to a weasel is the only really original wild animal image. From his images, it would seem that he was aware of nature, that he appreciated it, that he enjoyed it, but that it did not color his whole thought

to the extent that it does the minds of some of the later poets. Most of his references to nature are stereotyped figures he picked up through his reading. Thus, if there is any truth in the supposition that a poet unconsciously reverts to his childhood for images, we must look elsewhere for Chaucer's boyhood than at a little wanderer through the fields.

## CHAPTER III

## IMAGES FROM DOMESTIC LIFE

It is a common supposition that scenes from childhood remain most vivid in our unconscious minds. Since most of childhood, as well as a great part of later life, is spent in and around the home, it is not surprising that Chaucer frequently dipped into domesticity for that pinch of spice that adds flavor to a description. At first, it would appear that Chaucer was most familiar with middle class rural life, until one notes that most of the images which would apply only to simple cottages are drawn from the Miller's Tale and suit the content of that story, a racy fabliau of a carpenter and his wife.

Images from home life are divided into two main groups, indoor and outdoor. Some of the images from indoor domestic life concern family relationships and culinary practices common to all classes; others are definitely either from court life or from humble life.

Outdoor domestic. After examining all of Shakespeare's images, Miss Spurgeon found that he consistently retained one point of view throughout. She says:

> One occupation, one point of view, above all others, is naturally his, that of a gardener: watching, preserving, tending and caring for growing things, especially flowers and fruit. All through his plays he thinks more easily and readily of human life and action in the terms of a gardener.[35]

Here again we find a difference between the two poets. Chaucer shows little evidence of having scanned the skies for weather signs or of having lovingly cared for vegetables, but he was familiar with scenes surrounding a home.

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[35]Spurgeon, Shakespeare's Imagery, p. 86.

The only fruit tree mentioned is in the description of Alisoun, who was

> . . . ful moore blisful on to see
> Than is the newe perionette tree.[36] Mill. T. 3247-48

I have hesitated in placing the flowers among domestic images; yet the ones most frequently mentioned, roses and lilies,[37] were domesticated in England at that time, and if Chaucer were thinking of an actual flower, he probably was referring to those seen in cultivated gardens. However, roses and lilies are so conventionally used for description that they have almost lost the power to conjure up a mental picture. Even the manner in which they are referred to is not striking. Each of Alisoun's points of beauty is minutely described and compared to members of the animal, bird, and vegetable kingdoms, yet Emelye remains vaguely beautiful in the manner of most heroines of romance. She is described as

> . . . Emelye, that fairer was to sene
> Than is the lilie vpon his stalke grene. Kn. T. 1035-36

At least in the picture of a lily waving on a slender stalk, the implication of rhythmical grace as well as white color is more effective than the later reference to the same flower, in which an eagle is said to be merely "as any lilie whyt," Kn. T. 2178. The Prioress is apparently using the lily as a symbol of purity in conventionally comparing the Virgin Mary to one.

> Wher fore in laude, as I best kan or may,
> Of thee and of the white lilye flour
> Which that the bar and is a mayde alway . . . Prior. T. 1650-52

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[36]This image is included among domestic images on evidence of other writers of the period. Cf. Piers Plowman, Passus V, ll. 116, 134.

[37]The lilies referred to are apparently the lilies that grow wild in eastern countries but are domesticated in Europe. The figure of the lily, Professor Manly points out, is said by Alanus de Insulis to be derived from the Song of Solomon, ii, 2.

Emelye must have been a hot-house bit of femininity, for aside from being compared to a lily and "May with floures newe," Kn. T. 1037, she vies with the rose.

> For with the rose colour strof hir hewe;
> I noot which was the fairer of hem two.[38] Kn. T. 1038-39

For that matter, Alisoun, in addition to her individual points of beauty, is, taken as a whole, something of a flower also. But even here, there is a freshness in the choice of flowers that adds naturalness to the girl, for

> She was a prymerole,[39] a piggesnye,[40] Mill. T. 3269

There are other images drawn from scenes near a house. One occurs when Chaucer brings lovers down to earth by saying that their unsteady emotions, which soar and swoop from the heights of happiness to the depths of despair, are "Now vp, now doun, as boket in a welle," Kn. T. 1533. This line, according to a comparison with Boccaccio's Teseide, made by W. W. Skeat, is original with Chaucer.

The next image terms the ground, in which we have our graves, the gate of home--"mother's gate."

> We deeth, allas, ne wol nat han my lyf.
> Thus walke I, lyk a restelees caytyf,
> And on the ground, which is my modres gate,
> I knokke with my staf, bothe erly and late,
> And seye "Leeue moder, leet me in!".[41] Pard. T. 727-31

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[38] There are evidences of domesticated roses before the preservation of literature, and although Chaucer may have been referring to wild roses, the domesticated varieties would be the more beautiful and had long been symbols of loveliness.

[39] "Primrole" is listed in the Middle English Dictionary with this reference cited. The NED does not list this form of the word but lists "primerose" as "not used by Chaucer or Gower."

[40] Piggesnye was a type of flower, perhaps of the trillium family, which became a term of endearment. Robinson, Complete Works, p. 1095.

[41] Cf. "Images from Types of People," p. 59.

Chaucer may not have consigned puns to the low estate certain moderns have attempted to, for we find what is apparently a pun in the description of the strange knight's manner of speaking.

> Al be that I kan nat sowne his stile,
> Ne kan nat clymben ouer so heigh a style . . . Sq. T. 105-06

The only other outdoor domestic image is apparently drawn from the estates of the upper class either in England or on the continent. A swan usually connotes grace and peaceful tranquility, but not to the summoner. He plucks the fowl of its grace when he says a friar "walkyng as a swan," Sum. T. 1930.

Indoor Images. Most of the images of family relations are general references to members of the family and have been listed under "Types of people." However, there are some comparisons to childhood which grow directly out of domestic recollection. Images of beaten and burnt children might be considered auditory as well as visual. One of them is, in fact, a reference to weeping, for Absolon is cured of his love malady "and weep as dooth a child that is ybete," Mill. T. 3759. The other two are indirect comparisons of the science of alchemy to a fire and the believers to victims, burnt at the blaze.

> O! fy, for shame! they that han been brent
> Allas! kan they not flee the fyres hete? C. Y. T. 1407-08

> Withdrawe the fyr, lest it to faste brenne;
> Medleth nammoore with that art I mene,
> For if ye doon youre thrift is goon ful clene. C. Y. T. 1423-25

There is only one reference to a toy, and that occurs in a description of Alisoun, of whom it may be said that

> Ther nys no man so wys that koude thenche
> So gay a popelote or swich a wenche. Mill. T. 3253-54

But even there we wonder whether Chaucer was making an original comparison or merely employing a bit of fourteenth century slang similar to the use of "doll" in present day college vernacular.

Various functions of the body and traits of character are given relationships to each other. Such an interest in the body indicates Chaucer's interest in all the sciences of his day. In this case the image in the word "nurse" connotes a home scene, and develops into a full personification.

> The norice of digestioun, the sleep,
> Gan on hem wynke and bad hem taken keep
> That muche drynk and labour wol haue reste;
> And with a galpyng mouth hem alle he keste,
> And seyde that it was tyme to lye adoun,
> For blood was in his domynacioun.
> "Cherisseth blood, natures freend," quod he.
> They thenken hym galpynge, by two, by three,
> And euery wight gan drawe hym to his reste;
> As sleep hem bad they tooke it for the beste. Sq. T. 347-56

The suggestion that drink and labor need "rest" is an image within an image.

References to birds in a cage may have been as conventional then as they are today. At any rate, Chaucer makes a comparison to them in three tales and under entirely different circumstances. The first two might very well be general references and not necessarily imply any actual associations. The details of the third, however, would indicate some familiarity with the habits of caged birds. Palamon logically calls his prison a cage when he compares his state with that of free Arcite:

> . . . greet is thyn auauntage
> Moore than is myn that sterue here in a cage. Kn. T. 1293-94

The May wife, married to the December carpenter, may have been the old man's darling, but "Ialous he was, and heeld hire narwe in cage," Mill. T. 3224. In the third instance, men in the rut of monotony, are likened to caged birds in their desire for change. This one is from the Squire's

Tale, which has no known source, and the accurateness of the detail would indicate not only close observation of such birds but a bit of philosophical meditation as well.

> Men louen of propre kynde newfangelnesse,
> As bryddes doon that men in cages fede.
> For though thow nyght and day take of hem hede,
> And strewe hir cage faire and softe as silk,
> And yeue hem sugre, hony, breed, and milk,
> Yet right anon as that his dore is vppe,
> He with his feet wol sporne doun his cuppe,
> And to the wode he wole and wormes ete;
> So newefangel been they of hir mete,
> And louen nouelries of propre kynde,
> No gentilesse of blood may hem bynde. Sq. T. 610-20

Both "mirror" and "chamber" are familiar terms but not in the description of a woman. Only large homes or church buildings contained "chambers," and at that time mirrors were possessed only by the wealthier families. Constance's heart "is verray chambre of holynesse," M. L. T. 167, and her virtues are summed up in the line, "She is mirour of alle curteisye," M. L. T. 166. The image of a mirror is repeated as the poet emphasizes the ease with which the heavens can be read.

> For in the sterres, clerer than is glas,
> Is writen, god woot, who so koude it rede,
> The deeth of euery man, with outen drede. M. L. T. 194-96

"Hearth" has gradually come to connote cozy warmth to most people, but Chaucer speaks of a dead hearth. Arcite was burned by the fire of jealousy

> So woodly that he lyk was to biholde
> The box tree or the asshen dede and colde. Kn. T. 1301-02

Later the ravages of his love-sickness made his "hewe falow and pale as asshen colde," Kn. T. 1364. No doubt Chaucer saw many hearth fires burn into dead ashes while writing his poetry, for he could have found little time during the day.

There are certain other images which spring from the commonest domestic scenes. The expression, "drunk as a mouse," is common in older English[42] and is of little significance here. Arcite, for whom freedom has soured since it has taken him out of the sight of Emelye, wishes himself back in prison where he could at least gaze on her beauty. He classes himself with other men who are not satisfied with their condition.

> We faren as he that dronke is as a mous. Kn. T. 1261

> We seken fast after felicitee,
> But we goon wrong ful often, trewely. Kn. T. 1266-67

But the next picture, called to mind by Alisoun's attractiveness, displays a freshness which could come only from observation.

> She was so propre and swete and likerous,
> I dar wel seyn, if she had been a mous
> And he a cat, he wolde hir hente anon. Mill. T. 3345-47

Another lowly creature which probably infested the villages in the summer was the fly. Its worthlessness was so well known that although conventional, it was used in an exaggeration for emphasis concerning the learning of the magician to whom Aurelius appealed,

> That was that tyme a bacheler of lawe,
> Al were he ther to lerne another craft,
> Hadde pryvely vpon his desk ylaft;
> Which book spak muchel of the operacioune
> Touchynge the eighte and twenty mansioune
> That longen to the moone, and swich folye
> As in oure dayes is nat worth a flye . . . Frank. T. 1126-32

This passage seems to contradict the many other passages throughout all his works in which Chaucer seems not only to take astrology seriously but to be well informed as an amateur scientist. Possibly this skeptical attitude is the Franklin's rather than the poet's.

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[42]Skeat, Early English Proverbs, p. 90, Number 214.

Knitting was a common occupation of the women in the homes, but whether the idea of knitting people together was a common phrase of the language by that time or not is uncertain.[43] If it was, the following are not images, but the word probably still retained some of its figurative qualities. It is used by Aurelius to mean bound by a bargain.

> This bargayn is ful dryue, for we ben knyt. Frank. T. 1230

It is used again as the unity of man and wife, and finally in an address to the moon.

> I wol been his to whom that I am knyt. Frank. T. 986
>
> O fieble moone, vnheppy been thy pas!
> Thow knyttest thee ther thow art nat receyued;
> Ther thow were wel, fro thennes artow weyued. M. L. T. 306-08

Another group of images deals entirely with food and the kitchen and is used with a gusto that eliminates triteness. The Summoner steps directly into the buttery when he speaks of the frier as "Al vynolent as botel in the spence," Sum. T. 1931. Although Absolon's love-making may not be exactly delicate, his facetious terms of endearment are refreshing after the stilted phrases of the courtly lovers.

> What do ye, honycomb, swete Alisoun,
> My faire bryd, my swete cynamome? Mill. T. 3698-99

Spices are also used in the description of Nicholas.

> And he hymself as swete as is the roote
> Of licorys or any cetewale.[44]

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[43] MED--"knyt; to tie in or with a knot; to fasten, bind, attach, join.
1000 Aelfric Grammar, to conjoin as by knotting or binding together.
1340 Hampole "God, . . . first body and soul togyder knyt".
1386 Chaucer Fr. T. 258.

[44] Zedoary, a plant of the ginger tribe.

Even taste images are necessary to convey a satisfactory idea of the lusciousness of Alisoun, for the description of her includes:

> Hir mouth was swete as bragot[45] or the meeth,
> Or hoord of apples leyd in hey or heeth. Mill. T. 3261-62

Another taste image, trite in itself though not in its use, is found in the Canon's Yeoman's reference to the pleasures of alchemy as a "bittre swete," C. Y. T. 878. The word bitter is applied to tears in "The bittre teeres that on my chekes falle," Kn. T. 2327.

The image in "Ye been the salt of the erthe and the sauour," Sum. T. 2196,[46] is clearly quoted from the Bible (Matthew 5:13) and sheds no light on Chaucer's familiarity with salt as a seasoning, but is listed here for consistency. The expression "without cup" is likewise proverbial[47] and means literally "to plunge one's mouth into the barrel without measure," or to act under difficulties.

> But neuere dorste he tellen hire his greuance--
> With outen coppe he drank al his penance. Frank. T. 941-42

Returning again to the description of Alisoun, we have another picture which indicates close observation in a kitchen. We find that Alisoun wore "A barmcloth as whit as morne mylk," Mill. T. 3236. This might be considered an agriculture image except that it is apparently a reference to the whiteness of morning milk as compared to evening milk on which the cream has risen. The image suggests a kitchen scene of open crocks of milk. Another food image occurs in the reference to beans, as worthless. Absolon's reaction to Gerueys' horseplay is summed up in the following expression:

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[45] Braggot, a drink made of ale and honey.

[46] Cf. Religious images, p. 76.

[47] For parallels see Robinson's note, Complete Works, p. 828.

This Absolon ne roghte nat a bene
Of al his pley . . . Mill. T. 3772-73

The first thing noticed in an examination of this group of images is that there are more references to familiar objects than among the nature images. Even the conventional figures are of familiar objects. But the effectiveness of the images lies not so much in what is compared as in the way it is compared. The expression "not worth a fly" becomes more than mere words when it climaxes the long build-up provided by the astrology. There is nothing particularly amusing in a cat playing with a mouse, yet few readers fail to laugh at the picture of Absolon and Alisoun as a cat and mouse.

Such images indicate Chaucer's awareness of everyday situations and of the details which characterize the familiar. Above all, they indicate an ability to find humor in the congruity of the incongruous.

## CHAPTER IV

## IMAGES FROM EVERYDAY LIFE AND OCCUPATIONS

Chaucer's skill in portraying characters and depicting human nature has been recognized for centuries. Such an understanding of human nature required a projection into the personalities of his associates and a consciousness of their strengths and weaknesses. That this ability to judge attitudes and prejudices was recognized in Chaucer's own age is proved by the fact that he was sent to the continent several times on what were apparently diplomatic missions. Later generations have largely appreciated this ability through the lifelikeness of his characters. These characterizations may be the result of conscious effort, yet if there is any truth in the supposition that a poet unconsciously reveals the trends of his thought in his images, we shall see how much of this interest in character was natural and how much acquired.

A man interested in his fellow men must be interested in their work. An examination of the images dealing with daily occupations should throw some light on the extent of Chaucer's unconscious use of impressions gleaned from observing the work of his contemporaries.

The images drawn from agriculture and the sea apparently arise from a knowledge of the practices of men who follow those occupations. The agricultural images are in a class to themselves in more ways than in content. Although most of them deal with familiar farm animals and scenes, the comparisons are not conventional but on the whole are made with more freshness and originality than those of any other group. This might lead immediately into the supposition that Chaucer was familiar with, or very much interested,in agriculture. But there is another point which must be

taken into consideration. The freshness and originality may be due to the fact that most of them are from the Miller's Tale, and both the content and the personality of the narrator tended to free Chaucer from the bonds of conventionality.

Sheep, cattle, and horses were the commonest farm animals and would have been to some extent known to everyone whether he were familiar with country life or not. The significance in the references to these animals, then, lies not so much in the fact that they are referred to as in the manner in which the reference is made and in the vividness of the image. To say of a girl

> Therto she koude skippe and make game,
> As any kyde or calf folwynge his dame, Mill. T. 3259-60

is not particularly unusual, but there is exaggeration for effect in describing wolf-hounds, "Twenty and mo as grete as any steer," Kn. T. 2149. The following image is found in lines parallel in the Teseide, according to Skeat. Palamon bewails his fate in prison and queries of the "cruel goddes,"

> What is mankynde moore vnto yow holde
> Than is the sheep that rowketh in the folde? Kn. T. 1307-08

There are many conventional religious figures representing Christ as "the lamb,"[48] but we find two allusions to the sheep as an actual animal in the Miller's Tale. Alisoun, whom Chaucer has taken keen delight in describing, is said to be "softer than the wolle is of a wether," Mill. T. 3249. Absolon wishes to see her, for "I moorne as dooth a lamb after the tete," Mill. T. 3704.

Some of the references to horses are of hunting horses or war horses, but the following could have been drawn from agriculture. We learn of

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[48] "Images from Learning," p. 77.

Alisoun that

> Wynsyng she was as is a ioly colt; Mill. T. 3263

and when about to be kissed

> . . . she sproong as a colt doth in the trane.[49] Mill. T. 3282

The next image need not be confined to agriculture since men of other other occupations drove carts.

> Ther nys no capul drawyng in a cart
> That myghte hem late a fart of swich a soun. Sum. T. 2150-51

To say that a husband in bed "groneth lyk oure boor lith in oure sty," Sum. T. 1829, is more amusing than merely "he sleep as a swyn," M. L. T. 745. The idea of fattening livestock is the basis for saying of one who prays, that he must "fatte his soule," Sum. T. 1880.

Two familiar barnyard fowls are responsible for an image apiece. To speak of eyes "greye as goos," Mill. T. 3317, was conventional, but the image in Nicholas' words of persuasion to the carpenter was not.

> Thanne shaltow swymme as murye I vndertake
> As doth the white doke after his drake. Mill. T. 3575-76

A smell image is produced when we learn of alchemists, who "smel of brymstoon" that

> For al the world they stynken as a goot
> Hir sauour is so rammyssh and so hoot. C. Y. T. 886-87

And an appeal is made to the auditory sense, also, when the couriers "murmured as dooth a swarm of bees," Sq. T. 204.

There are only a few pictures drawn from actual farm practices. The following one, comparing the length of the forthcoming story to an unplowed field, is the more striking for being made by the Knight.

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[49] A trave was the framework in which a horse was placed to be shod.

I haue, God woot, a large feeld to ere,[50]
And wayke been the oxen in my plough.
The remenant of the tale is long ynough. Kn. T. 886-88

The Man of Lawe speaks similarly of chaff and grain in the following lines:

Ne list not of the chaf, ne of the stree,
Maken so long a tale as of the corn.[51]
What sholde I tellen of the roialtee
At mariage or which cours goth biforn;
Who bloweth in a trumpe or in an horn?
The fruyt of euery tale is for to seye:
The ete, and drynk and daunce, and synge, and pleye.[52]
M. L. T. 701-07

Some knowledge of the agricultural winnowing fan is perhaps displayed when Absolon's hair "strouted as a fanne large and brode," Mill. T. 3315.

The reference to the worthlessness of a weed is an excellent contrast to the worries of Arcite.

Of al the remenant of myn oother care
Ne sette I nat the mountaunce of a tare. Kn. T. 1569-70

Birds on barns are familiar to any traveler in the country and are not important as images but as comparisons. It is unusually vivid to think of the Pardoner nodding in the pulpit in the following manner:

Thanne peyne I me to strecche forth the nekke
And est and west vp on the peple I bekke,
As dooth a dowve sittyng on a berne. Pard. Prol. 396-98

The other image occurs in the description of Alisoun.

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[50]Plow.

[51]Cf. Prologue to the Legend of Good Women, Text G, ll.311-312, Robinson, Complete Works, p. 577.

[52]The "fruit of a tale" is used several times. According to the NED, it was used figuratively as an immaterial product, issue, or consequence as early as 1300. This and its frequency would indicate that it was more or less a part of the language. Cf. Kn. T. 1282, M. L. T. 706, Pard. T. 656, and Sq. T. 74.

But of hir song, it was as loude and yerne
As any swalwe sittyng on a berne. Mill. T. 3257-58

The freshness of these images would indicate that they were drawn from scenes familiar to the author. Since it is also material not often treated in literature, Chaucer launched out on his own impressions and he gives us flickers of scenes which impressed him and which surged up in his mind for amusing and picturesque effects.

Sea Images. In classing sea images as nature images in Shakespeare's Imagery, Miss Spurgeon felt that any knowledge Shakespeare had of the sea was acquired as a landsman, and that even his acquaintance with ships came through an interest in the sea as a natural phenomenon. Chaucer, on the other hand, had crossed to the Continent several times and was familiar with the talk of those who sailed. The content of the images indicates that they sprang from an interest in the seaman's occupation and that the element of nature was secondary. Only one indicates nothing more than a landsman's view of the sea. Nicholas has so scared the carpenter into expecting a second flood that when he is rudely awakened in the middle of the night,

Hym thynketh verreiliche that he may se
Noes flood come walwying as the see. Mill. T. 3615-16

When Nicholas urges the safety of the kneeding troughs, "In which we mowen swymme as in a barge", Mill. T. 3580, his persuasion is more a statement than a comparison. Although the images drawn from ships are of comparatively well known parts of a ship, they do show some actual knowledge of a vessel. There is nothing unusual in a reference to a ship's mast; it is probably the most familiar part of a boat, next to sails. But a woman is not usually thought of as a mast, and passing over all the other long, slender objects, Chaucer pictures Alisoun "long as a mast," Mill. T. 3264. The figure of sail and rudder is commonly connected with

man's course through life.

> In hym triste I, and in his moder deere,
> That is to me my sayl and eek my steere. M. L. T. 832-33

The sailor's anxiety about staying afloat figuratively expresses Arcite's feeling of desertion.

> For she that dooth me al this wo endure
> Ne reccheth neuere wher I synke or fleete. Kn. T. 2396-97

As custom's official, Chaucer must have been familiar with the sight of worried merchants whose ships were long overdue. Something of their gambling philosophy creeps into the comparison of the possible failure or success of an alchemist's experiment with the uncertainties of a merchant's trade.

> A marchant, pardee, may nat ay endure,
> Trusteth me wel, in his prosperitee,
> Som tyme his good is drowned in the see,
> And som tyme comth it vn to the londe. C. Y. T. 947-50

An activity usually associated with those who follow the sea is fishing. Were Chaucer's images of the sea drawn from reading or mere observation of the sea as a natural phenomenon, the proportion of fishing images would probably have been greater. As it is, only one such reference occurs, and that is a variation of the religious figure of Christ as a fisher of men. At the bedside of Thomas, the friar says, "I walke and fisshe cristen mennes soules," Sum. T. 1820.[53]

Urban Life. In contrast with the comparisons to rural and sea life are those derived from urban occupations. As an inhabitant of London, Chaucer should have had ample opportunity to come in contact with artisans. Since none of the nine tales dealt with here is told by the craftsmen of the pilgrimage, no allowance need be made for possible adaptation

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[53]Cf. Religious images, p. 76.

of the images of the narrator. Some of the crafts are mentioned only once but images are used from the trades of clothiers, engravers, butchers, carpenters, and from the business terms of all tradesmen.

Terms familiar to weavers and clothiers occur in three images. A proverbial way of saying, "He had more business on hand;"[54] is "He hadde moore tow on his distaf," Mill. T. 3774. Since most of the spinning was done in the home, this might be considered a domestic image, but there were cloth-making guilds. A reference to the art of dyeing cloth is used figuratively in the case of the fickle falcon.

> So depe in greyn he dyed his coloures. Sq. T. 511.

To speak of laborers as "burel" folk is to speak figuratively of the common man, for "burel" meant only coarse cloth, and the NED lists no similar figurative use. "Burel folk," then, would be those dressed in coarse cloth.[55]

> And moore we seen of Cristes secree thynges
> Than burel folk, al thogh they weren kynges.
> We lyue in poverte and in abstinence
> And burel folk in richesse and dispence
> Of mete and drynk and in hir foul delit. Sum. T. 1871-75
>
> But sires by cause I am a burel man . . . Frank. T. 716

An image from stone engraving emphasizes the process by which Dorigen's friends finally persuaded her to mingle again in company instead of mourning in solitude for her absent husband.

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[54]Skeat, Early English Proverbs, Number 228, p. 96.

[55]Cf. p. 3.

By process, as ye knowen euerichoon,
Men may so longe grauen in a stoon
Til som figure ther inne emprented be;
So longe han they conforted hire til she
Receyued hath by hope and by resoun
The emprentyng of hir consolacioun . . . Frank. T. 829-34

Both butchering animals and felling trees might be considered phases of rural life, but in a city of only 35,000, familiarity with these occupations would not be confined to rural dwellers. In the fight between Palamon and Arcite

The brighte swerdes wenten to and fro
. . .
It semed as it wolde felle an ook. Kn. T. 1700-02

There is nothing particularly original in comparing Constance to a lamb brought to the slaughter.

For as the lomb toward his deeth is broght,
So stant this innocent bifore the kyng. M. L. T. 617-18

But there is originality in warning a drunkard

Thou fallest as it were a stiked swyn. Pard. T. 556

The friar of the Summoner's Tale draws on an implement of the carpenter's trade to assure Thomas of his honesty.

Thow shalt me fynde as just as is a squyre.[56] Sum. T. 2090

The conventional expression, "stant as it were to the ground yglewed," Sq. T. 182, may have had its origin in the home or among craftsmen. The coiner's trade is the basis for a vivid description of Alisoun's complexion.

Ful brighter was the shynyng of hir hewe
Than in the tour the noble yforged newe. Mill. T. 3255-56

There are some images which are drawn from no particular urban occupation, but from terms which are familiar to all men of business. The

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[56]Square.

growth and decline of towns is one of the series of pictures drawn for comparison to the life and death of a man.

> The grete townes se we wane and wende;
> Thanne ye se that al this thyng hath ende. Kn. T. 3025-26

The terms "rent" and "hire" are used metaphorically of religious dues.

> To yelden Iesu crist his propre rente . . . Sum. T. 1821

> Thow woldest han oure labour al for noght.
> The hye god, that al this world hath wroght,
> Seith that the werkman worthy is his hire.[57] Sum. T. 1971-73

The use of "purchace" in the following instance may not have been figurative although present evidence would indicate that it was.

> For wynd and weder almyghty god purchace
> And brynge hir hom! M. L. T. 873-74

The following way of expressing the idea of "stopping neither to barter nor to sell" may have been a common variation of the expression.

> . . . he fond neither to selle,[58]
> Ne breed ne ale til he cam to the celle . . .
> Mill. T. 3821-22

The fruit peddler's trade supplies a figurative proverb.

> Ne euery appul that is fair at eye
> Ne is nat good, what so men clappe or crye. C. Y. T. 964-65

The only medium of trade other than the "noble" previously mentioned, which gives rise to figurative language was a "myte," a small Flemish coin of small value. Its worthlessness inspired the expression "noght worth a myte," Kn. T. 1558.

Professional life. Aside from images drawn from the occupations of the artisans, there are a number from the professions of law and medicine. Love is treated as a law by Arcite.

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[57] Cf. Religious images, p. 76.

[58] Cf. Robinson, Complete Works, p. 789.

> Nostow nat wel the olde clerkes sawe
> That who shal yeue a louvere any lawe
> Loue is a grettter lawe by my pan
> Than may be yeue to any erthely man
> And therfore positif lawe and swich decree
> Is broke al day for loue in ech degree.[59] Kn. T. 1163-69

W. C. Curry's[60] investigation of Chaucer's knowledge of the medieval sciences reveals the poet's interest in many fields. As an amateur scientist, Chaucer dabbled in medicine, and we find certain images centering in medical terms. Christ is called "medicine" in the sense of remedy.

> Crist, which that is to euery harm triacle . . .
> M. L. T. 479

The friar compares himself to a doctor when he argues that there is no more need for another friar than there is need for another doctor when the patient already has a good one.

> What nedeth yow diuerse freres seche?
> What nedeth hym that hath a parfit leche
> To sechen othere leches in the toun? Sum. T. 1955-57

We still fancy sweethearts as "lovesick," but the word has ceased to be connected with a real illness. Such was not the case in the fourteenth century. Desperate illnesses were often believed to be the result of unrequited love for love disturbed the balance of the body humors. The victim should be treated as a sick man, especially since it was customary to prove love by a wan countenance and a wasted mien.[61] Love sickness was treated, therefore, as a disease; this may not be an image but it is included as doubtful. Absolon was cured of love, for

> Of paramours he sette nat a kers,
> For he was heeled of his maladye. Mill. T. 3756-57

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[59] Cf. "Images from Learning," p. 71.

[60] Chaucer and the Medieval Sciences, pp. 3-36.

[61] Cf. "Images from Learning," pp. 68-69.

Courtly love also pictured a victim as shot in the heart with an arrow;[62] hence there was necessarily a wound, although no mark appeared on the surface. Such a wound be similar to an actual sore, healed on the outside but still festering underneath. Aurelius had such a "sursanure

> His brest was hool with oute for to sene,
> But in his herte ey was the arwe kene.
> And wel ye knowe that of a sursanure
> In surgerye is perilous the cure,
> But men myghte touche the arwe or come there'
>
> Frank. T. 1111-15

The most important illness of the fourteenth century was the plague which ravaged England and destroyed an estimated fourth of the population. As far as men of that period were concerned, the fever spread in some swift, mysterious, intangible way. It is interesting to note that the only images from the plague concern the manner in which it spread. To some it seemed to be contracted by sight, for "My lokyng is feder of pestilence Kn. T. 2469; to others it seemed to result from one's breathing the foul smell which hovered over a plague-ridden city.

> That though a man from hem a myle be,
> The savour wol infecte hym, trusteth me. C. Y. T. 888-89

Or, as some supposed, it might spread through contact with another person.

> Ther is a chanoun of religioun
> Amonges vs, wolde infecte al a toun. C. Y. T. 972-73

War. Since the main occupation of men of the upper class consisted in fighting and preparing to fight their own and other men's wars, the trappings of their trade were familiar to all. Not only did Chaucer hear the talk of the knightly man-at-arms in his squire days, c. 1357-1367, but there is evidence that he was in the English army in France in

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[62] Cf. War Images, p. 45.

1359-60 and 1369. Hence his battle images may be founded on actual experience. The main leisure hour pastime of knights was courtly love, which, they took as seriously as their fighting. Naturally the expressions of one side of their lives carried over into their way of expressing all other emotions. Since the encounter of two knights on the battle field resulted in the wounding of one, the encounter of two potential lovers likewise resulted in the "wounding" of one. Because a lover was first smitten when his eyes beheld the beauty of his lady, love was believed to enter his body through the eyes. According to his own words, Palamon was wounded in that way, and Arcite fared little better.

> But I was hurt right now thurghout myn eye
> Into myn herte, that wol my bane be. Kn. T. 1096-97

> And with that sighte hir beautee hurte hym so
> That, if that Palamon was wounded soore,
> Arcite is hurt as muche as he, or moore. Kn. T. 1114-16

Later Arcite moans, "Ye sleen me with youre eyen Emelye," Kn. T. 1567. Love-wounded Aurelius carried the marks of his encounter, for " . . . in his herte ay was the arwe kene," Frank. T. 1112.[63] The idea of man's destiny being shaped by some outside force is expressed in the thought that Arcite's fate was determined before he had even a baby shirt. The image of the arrow, though originally from hunting or war, was common to the sufferers from conventional love.

> Loue hath his firy dart so brennyngly
> Ystiked thurgh my trewe, careful herte,
> That shapen was my deeth erst than my sherte.[64]
> Kn. T. 1564

Other properties of war also form images which clarify description. We

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[63]These images of arrows might refer to hunting but it is difficult to separate war and hunting images.

[64]Cf. Courtly love images, p. 70.

find that the Miller does not neglect the field of warfare in picturing Alisoun, for

> Wynsyng she was . . .
> . . . and vpright as a bolt.[65] Mill. T. 3262-64

> A broche she bar vpon hir loue coler,
> As brood as is the boos of a bokeler. Mill. T. 3265-66

A spear shaft helps to measure the extent of the effects of Arcite's attack of love. It was so intense that "lene he wex and drye as is a shaft," Kn. T. 1362

On hearing Arcite's protestations of love, Palamon

> . . . thoughte that thurgh his herte
> He felte a cold swerd sodeynliche glyde. Kn. T. 1574-75

The cruelty of winter is summed up in the phrase "the swerd of wynter, kene and cold," Sq. T. 57.

The description of the King of Inde, whose " . . . voys was a trompe thonderynge," Kn. T. 2174 refers to the trumpet blast which preceded the battles. The infinitive "To war" is used figuratively by Palamon, who swears to "holden werre alwey with chastitee," Kn. T. 2236.

Sports and Amusements. A man who was as busy during the day as Chaucer was, but who still found time to write the amount of poetry left by him, would have had little leisure to remain active in sports or amusements of any kind. But he was familiar with the upper class sports, for he had received the education of a squire in the court of Prince Lionel.[66] That education included training in jousting, hawking, riding, hunting, chess, and writing and singing verses. Although certain tales, such as

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[65] Crossbow bolt, cf. NED.

[66] The earliest known records of Geoffrey Chaucer himself are in the household accounts of Elizabeth, Countess of Ulster and wife of Prince Lionel. Manly, Canterbury Tales, pp. 8-9.

the Knight's drew details from this early training, there are few images referring to any phase of it.

Images from riding are used to measure the extent of a certain person's power over others. In the first case, Arveragus holds the rein and his wife, Dorigen, measures her freedom by the looseness.

> She seyde, "Sire, sith of youre gentilesse
> Ye profre me to have so large a reyne . . ." Frank. T. 754-55

In the second case, it is the gods who hold the bridle.

> O stronge god, that in the regnes colde
> Of Trace honoured art and lord yholde,
> And hast in euery regne and euery lond
> Of armes al the brydel in thyn hond . . . Kn. T. 2373-76

Familiarity with hunting has already been noted in connection with images of wild boars,[67] but there are also some which are definite images and some which may be merely the result of the absorption of the language of hunting, into the language of everyday life. One of the definite pictures of hunting is such a description of the hunt as he could have found in many of the later Latin poets. Moreover, the passage appears in lines to which Skeat has found parallels in the Teseide.

> To chaungen gan the colour in hir face,
> Right as the hunters in the regne of Trace,
> That stondeth at the gappe with a spere,
> Whan hunted is the leoun or the bere,
> And hereth hym come russhyng in the greues,
> And breketh bothe bowes and the leues,
> And thynketh, "Here cometh my mortal enemy!
> Withoute faille, he moot be deed, or I;
> For outher I moot sleen hym at the gappe,
> Or he moot sle me if that me myshappe"--
> So ferden they in chaungyng of hir hewe.[68] Kn. T. 1657-47

Probably the most enjoyable part of the sport of falconing was to watch the swift flight of the freed hawk. The sight was a familiar one, and

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[67] Cf. "Nature Images," p. 15.

[68] Cf. "Images from Learning," p. 63.

its use in the following comparison gives absurd reality to the prayers of pious friars.

> Therfore, right as an hauk vp at a sours[69]
> Vp spryngeth into theyr right so prayeres
> Of charitable and chaste bisy freres
> Maken hir sours to goddes eres two. Sum. T. 1938-41

Two of the next three images occur in passages for which Skeats finds parallels, but they were scenes familiar to all hunters. The last one, although it has no known source, is rather conventional.

> Lo, al thise folk so caught were in hir lass. Kn. T. 1951

> And therfore syn I knowe of loues peyne
> And woot how sore it kan a man distreyne,
> As he that hath ben caught ofte in his lass . . .
>
> Kn. T. 1815-17

> But sith that he was fallen in the snare
> He moste endure as oother folk his care. Mill. T. 3231-32

Nor is love the only snare of which man must beware; he must beware the snares of both Fortune and the devil. The word "snare" had been used figuratively in English, almost one hundred years[70] and may have ceased to carry a conscious connotation of hunting.

> Custaunce answerde, "Sire, it is Cristes myght
> That helpeth folk out of the feends snare." M. L. T. 570-71

> Now wol I turne to Arcite ageyn
> That litel wiste how neigh that was his care
> Til that fortune had broght hym in the snare.
>
> Kn. T. 1483-90

Man has little chance if he does elude the snares of Fortune, for that she is well acquainted with unethical gambling devices is proved in

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[69]Upward leap or flight.

[70]The first example given in the NED occurs in Cursor Mundi, ca.1300.

the following conventional idea and image:

> Thanked be Fortune and hir false wheel . . . Kn. T. 925

Not satisfied with a false wheel, she loads the dice and, according to Arcite, casts them in Palamon's favor, "Fel hath fortune yturned thee the dys," Kn. T. 1238. The game of craps is an ancient one, and we find the game has changed little since it was called "Hazard" in the fourteenth century. "Ambes as," double ace or "snake-eyes," is still a losing cast, and "sys cynk," eleven, is a winning one. The Man of Law lapses easily into the jargon of the gambler.

> Youre bagges been noght filled with ambes as,
> But with sys cynk, that renneth for youre chaunce.
> M. L. T. 124-25

Although Chaucer repeats many images from the conventional patter that filled every well-ordered upper class establishment, he draws singularly few from the indoor social life he must have known as a squire at the court. Many of the entertainers of the period were traveling minstrels, jugglers, and tumblers or permanent favorites living at the court of a patron. There is only one image drawn from such entertainers. In the Squire's Tale, one of the spectators conjectured on the origin of the brass horse, comparing it to

> An apparence ymaad by som magyk
> As iogelours pleyen at thise festes grete. Sq. T. 218-19

It seems strange that such amusements made no more impression on the memory of a prospective poet. But if we are to picture the young squire Geoffrey as a court lyricist, there is a more obvious omission. Only one image is drawn from a musical instrument, a tabour, or a drum, and that is to the instrument itself and not to its musical qualities.

> Thanne shal this cherl, with baly stif and toght
> As any tabour hider been ybroght . . . Sum. T. 2267-68

After collecting all Chaucer's direct and indirect references to music, musical instruments, and vocal singing, C. C. Olson[71] was forced to the conclusion that Chaucer had made no special study of music.

> In the first place, it is clear that Chaucer either did not know or did not care much about the theoretical aspects of music. His writings present us with a fairly representative, though not a complete, list of the instruments in use at that time, but he tells us very little about ensembles. He was interested in the numerous ways in which music of many kinds entered into the lives of all sorts of people in fourteenth-century England, and yet he tells us much more about amateur musical performance than he does about the activities of the professional minstrels.
>
> . . .
>
> He doubtless retained throughout his life the interest in music which any cultured person may have who is by nature endowed with some appreciation of the art and a certain amount of ability in it. There is no reason to suppose, however, that Chaucer was equally talented in the fields of music and literature . . .

The images seem to bear out this view of Chaucer's interest in music. Two very general images are drawn from the pastime of singing. The priest's joy was matched by none, for

> Was neuere brid gladder agayn the day. C. Y. T.1342
>
> Was neuere noon that lyste bet to synge
> Ne lady lustier in carolynge. C. Y. T. 1344-45

Considering what we know of the cold facts that form the outline of Chaucer's life, these images which indicate his impressions of other men's occupations are of special interest. While there is a lack in quantity of images drawn from the crafts, two of them are used rather strikingly. There is originality in both the comparison of a man's honesty with a carpenter's square and in the comparison of making an impression on a woman to making an impression on stone. Yet neither these nor the others from crafts reveal a practicing familiarity with

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[71] "Chaucer and the Music of the Fourteenth Century," Speculum, XVI (1941), 90-91.

the details of the trade. Rather they suggest an outsider looking in. Shakespeare's imagery shows this same lack of craft images. Chaucer was a man of affairs with a legal education, yet he was apparently more interested in medicine and science than in law; he was a member of the upper class and a resident of London, yet, his freshest images are from humble rural life. It must be remembered that a large part of the agriculture images are found in the Miller's Tale, and in that story Chaucer seems to have dropped all conventions and told each detail with a gusto that is infectious. But he had to be familiar with such scenes as a horse being shod, a duck paddling after her drake, a calf frisking beside its mother, and a pig grunting in its mudhole, or he could not have used them with such detail. The content of the images indicates that the familiarity springs from genuine interest. Images from a seaman's life hint at the same curiosity toward other men's occupations, but are more general than those from agriculture.

Miss Spurgeon found that Shakespeare hated war for "he constantly symbolizes it by and associates it with loud and hideous noises, with groans of dying men, with braying trumpets and loud churlish drums, clamors of hell."[72] There is no such aversion to war found in Chaucer. Rather it is merely another part of life to be accepted. To be sure, blows "bite on helmets," and trumpets blow "bloody battle sounds," but those images lack the horror and hatred of war, and many of the other images are found in conventional expressions.

There are not many images from sports and amusements, and this lack scarcely bears out the customary picture of Chaucer as a young

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[72] Shakespeare's Imagery, p. 29.

court favorite who was familiar with all the court entertainers and entertained the ladies with lyrics. To be sure, at the time Chaucer wrote the Canterbury Tales, he was an elderly man away from court many years, but most elderly men who were particular favorites are prone to recall with pleasure the scenes and incidents connected with their youthful triumphs. Those which are drawn from sports are not as by an outsider looking on, but as by one who was familiar with but not avid about such enterteinments. Of course, both war and sports were favorite literary subjects, and a great many conventional expressions had sprung from them. Yet, it would seem that when he wrote the Canterbury Tales, Chaucer preferred his books for his own recreation.

## CHAPTER V

## IMAGES DRAWN FROM TYPES OF PEOPLE

Much of Chaucer's poetry is written in the first person, yet he says little of himself. Although each of the other Canterbury pilgrims is described in detail, the character of the poet remains vague. When he is mentioned, the intimation is usually that he was a quiet, bookish man. One of the most frequently cited passages is in the words of the host preceding Sir Thopas:

> And thanne at erst he looked vp on me,
> And seyde thus, "What man artow?" quod he;
> "Thow lookest as thow woldest fynde an hare,
> For euere vp on the ground I se thee stare.
>
> "Approche neer and looke vp myrily.
> Now, war yow, sires, and lat this man haue place!
> He in the wast is shape as wel as I;
> This were a popet in an arm tenbrace
> For any woman, smal and fair of face.
> He semeth elvyssh by his contenaunce,
> For vn to no wight dooth he daliaunce. ll. 1884-94

In the House of Fame, we find a longer description of Chaucer in the eagle's reproof of his hermit ways.

> Wherfore, as I seyde, ywys,
> Jupiter considereth this,
> And also, beau sir, other thynges;
> That is, that thou hast no tydynges
> Of Love's folk yf they be glade,
> Ne of noght elles that God made;
> And noght oonly fro fer contree
> That ther no tydynge cometh to thee,
> But of thy verray neyghebores,
> That duellen almost at thy dores,
> Thou herist neyther that ne this;
> For when thy labour doon al ys,
> And hast mad alle thy rekenynges,
> In stede of reste and newe thynges,
> Thou goost hom to thy hous anoon;
> And, also domb as any stoon,
> Thou sittest at another book
> Tyl fully daswed ys thy look,

> And lyvest thus as an heremyte,
> Although thy abstynence ys lyte.[73] House of Fame, II, 641-660

This passage appears to refer to the period during which he served as Comptroller of the customs. Such an existence may have been his habit of life at that time. However, later positions, such as the clerkship of the king's works, required an association with people. His characterizations prove that he was not unaware of "his neighbors" but that he was a keen observer of the people around him. The frequency of images drawn from comparisons with other people would indicate that this awareness of people was a constant one. The range of people mentioned is wide and varies from a knight to a thief and from a wife to a queen.

The general comparisons in the phrases "no one," "someone," or "never was one" occur for emphasis yet are almost too general to be termed images and reveal nothing of the poet's personality. Two such images are more specific, however, than the others.

> Of man and womman se we wel also
> That neder, in oon of thise termes two,
> This is to seyn in youthe or elles age,
> He moot be deed, the kyng as shal a page;
> Som in his bed, som in the depe see,
> Som in the large feeld as ye may see;
> Ther helpeth noght, al gooth that ilke weye.
> Thanne may I seyn that al this thyng moot deye.
> Kn. T. 3027-34

The fourteenth century knew little of geography and India was commonly used to express the most distant regions. The following expression is more figurative than to say "noone on earth."

> And seyde thus: "For I ne kan not fynde
> A man thogh that I walked in to Inde. . . . Pard. T. 721-22

Several images are drawn from the relationships of various members of the family but are both general in reference and conventional in use.

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[73] Robinson, Complete Works, p. 338.

In one case, the heavenly voice addresses Custance as "doghter of holy chirche," M. L. T. 675; and in another, when Palamon and Arcite prepare to fight,

> Euerich of hem heelp for to armen other
> As frendly as he were his owene brother. Kn. T. 1651-52

Again we find:

> And either syde ylyk as otheres brother . . . Kn. T. 2734

The expression "to be the father of" is used three times:

> . . . ye been fadres of tidynges
> And tales . . . M. L. T. 129-30
>
> Of philosophres fadre was, Hermes . . . C. Y. T. 1434
>
> My lokyng is the fader of pestilence.[74] Kn. T. 2469

The reference to "lusty Venus children deere," Sq. T. 272, treats her followers as children. The only other general images of children occur in the conventional terms "child and man," "youth and age," as expressions for "everyone." When Arcite dies,

> For hym ther wepeth bothe child and man. Kn. T. 2830

See also:

> For youthe and elde is often at debaat. Mill. T. 3230

The most specific child image occurs in the following passage:

> My konnyng is so wayk, O blisful queene,
> For to declare thy grete worthynesse
> That I no may the weighte nat sustene;
> But as a child of twelf month old or lesse,
> That kan vnnethe any word expresse,
> Right so fare I, and ther fore I yow preye,
> Gydeth my song that I shal of yow seye. Prologue to Pr. T. 1671-77

There are a number of images dealing with the idea of serving or servants, but most of them occur so conventionally in connection with

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[74] Cf. "Images from Everyday Life and Occupations," p. 44.

serving God, a lord, or a lady, as hardly to involve a comparison to a servant in the modern sense.[75] Those which deal with serving a lady seem logically to fall under courtly love images, since such expressions were the idiomatic language of lovers. A real servant seems to be implied in two instances. Arcite promises Mars to "been thy trewe seruaunt whil I lyue," Kn. T. 2418. Another example appears in, "And nat to been constreyned as a thral," Frank. T. 769.

When the Canon's Yeoman finds that he cannot express his feeling about the Canon, he compleins of the inability of his tongue to serve his wits. Chaucer was apparently fond of personifying parts of the body and showing their relationship by the use of a figurative noun, adjective, or verb.

> Al to symple is my tonge to pronounce,
> As ministre of my wit, the doublenesse
> Of this chanoun . . . C. Y. T. 1299-1301

In the description of Custance by the young men of the town, who virtually dissect her and extol the virtues of each part of her body, her hand is "ministre of fredam for almesse," M. L. T. 168.[76] Other such images occur with both "minister" and "executor."

> The destinee, ministre general,
> That executeth in the world oueral
> The purueiaunce that God hath seyn biforn . . .
> Kn. T. 1663-65

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[75] Cf. "Images from Learning," p. 69.

[76] Cf. "Miscellaneous Images," p. 82

Ire is, in sooth, executour of pride.[77] Sum. T. 2010

Three types of women are used with various emphases. "Maid" carries a bashful, retiring connotation, for Nicholas was "lyk a mayden meke for to see," Mill. T. 3202, and Absolon wailed that he could "nat ete namoore than a mayde," Mill. T. 3707. It is questionable whether the next reference is an image or a mere comment on a practice of wives in general. These lines should prove interesting to those who seek to discover Chaucer's ideas on marriage, for the comment is entirely unnecessary, almost irrelevant to the subject, yet it is inserted with an emphasis which intimates experience. After her husband's departure from Dorigen,

> For his absence wepeth she and siketh,
> As doon thise noble wyues whan hem liketh. Frank. T. 817-18

"Queen" is used as the conventional expression of supremacy in femininity.

> Allas, myn hertes queene! allas my wyf! Kn. T. 2775
>
> . . . What dooth this queene of loue,
> But wepeth so, for wantyng of hir wille . . . Kn. T. 2564-65
>
> He cherisseth hire as thogh she were a queene. Frank. T. 1554

Other members of upper class society are mentioned less frequently, and it is significant to note that the references are not made by the knight.

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[77] The image is supported and illustrated by the division de Ira of the Parson's Tale, especially:

> And right so as pride is ofte tyme matere of ire, right so is rancour norice and kepere of Ire. Parsons T. 550
>
> In this forseyde deueles fourneys ther forgen thre shrewes: Pride, that ay bloweth and encreseth the fyr by chidynge and wikked wordes;/ Thanne stant Enuye, and holdeth the hoote iren vpon the herte of man with a peire of longe tonges of long rancour;/ and thanne stant the synne of Contumelie, or strif, and cheeste and batereth and forgeth by vileyns repreuynges./ Certes this cursed synne anoyeth bothe to the man hymself and eek to his neighebore, for soothly almoost al the harm that any man dooth to his neighebore comth of wratthe:/ For certes, outrageous wrathe dooth al that euere the deuel hym comaundeth, for he ne spareth neither Crist ne his swete moder./ Pars. T. 554-58

Yong, fresch, and strong, in armes desirous
As any bachiler of al his hous. Sq. T. 23-24

This sotted preest, who was gladder than he? C. Y. T. 1341

Ne knyght in armes to doon an hardy dede,
To stonde in grace of his lady deere . . . C. Y. T. 1347-48

So far the images of this type have been more or less conventional. Such images as those of the jugglers, merchants, craftsmen, etc., all indicate acquaintance with types of people, but since the images spring from their occupations they have been included in the previous chapter.[78] Images which really call up a mental picture are largely found in unconventional references to a group of what might be called the unfortunates of society. If Chaucer remained the hermit he intimated in the House of Fame, he would scarcely have known such people well enough to draw from their lives at will. At a time when an execution was an occasion for a public holiday and the gratification of morbid curiosity, it is significant that Chaucer should have been impressed by the helpless appeal on the victim's face. This passage, according to R. D. French's comparison with Trivet's Chronicle, was added by Chaucer.[79]

Have ye nat seyn som tyme a pale face,
Among a prees, of hym that hath be lad
Toward his deeth, wher as hym gat no grace,
And swich a colour in his face hath had,
Men myghte knowe his face that was bistad,
Amonges alle the facees in that route?
So stant Custance, and looketh hire aboute. M. L. T. 645-51

A look of fear occasioned by just the opposite circumstance is described by the Summoner.

Ye loken as the wode were ful of theuys. Sum. T. 2173

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[78] Cf. "Everyday Life and Occupations," pp. 32-54.

[79] A Chaucer Handbook (New York: F. S. Crofts and Company, 1927), page 231.

"Thief" is also applied to death in the conventional figure:

> Ther cam a privee theef, men clepeth deeth. . . . Pard. T. 675

Yet a sense of sympathy hovers in the images drawn from the restraint placed on a captive.

> Thus walke I, lyk a restelees caytyf. Pard. T. 728
>
> And stille he lay as he hadde been ybounde. Prior. T. 1866

Perhaps Chaucer chose a most familiar picture, even as it is today, of a drunkard for comparison with Arcite's bewilderment, yet this comment, so rich in vividness, could have been made by no man indifferent to his neighbors.

> We faren as he that dronke is as a mous.[80]
> A dronke man woot wel he hath an hous,
> But he noot which the righte wey is thider,
> And to a dronke man the wey is slider. Kn. T. 1261-64

The same uncertainty in the course of human life is expressed by the image of pilgrims, not necessarily unfortunates of society, but at least wanderers.

> This world nys but a thurghfare ful of wo,
> And we been pilgrymes, passynge to and fro. Kn. T. 2847-48

Chaucer apparently had a tolerant understanding of the common people, yet he did not ignore their weaknesses. The carpenter is amply described in one phrase, "riche gnof," literally meaning lump, Mill. T. 3188. Another reference to the ignorance of the common man occurs in a questionable image of the Squire's Tale. Although the passage may be mere description, it may also be considered an image and is included here.

> Of sondry doutes thus they jangle and trete.
> As lewed peple demeth comunly
> Of thynges that been maad moore subtilly
> Than they kan in hir lewednesse comprehende,
> They demen gladly to the badder ende. Sq. T. 220-24

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[80]Common comparison in older English. Cf. W. B. Prol., 246; Skeat, Early English Proverbs, Number 214, p. 90.

The adjective "wood," meaning "insane," is applied too frequently to be considered figurative in all cases. Not only is it applied to a man,[81] but also to a lion,[82] rain,[83] and fire.[84] There is a sufficiently long list of uses of the term stating actual comparisons to establish it either as a favorite of the period or as a favorite of Chaucer's.[85] Examples of its use may be found in

He cride and knokked as that he were wood. Mill. T. 3436

As he were wood, with face deed and pale . . . Kn. T. 1578

Three less frequent ways of expressing the same condition are to be found in the following lines.

This frere cam as he were in a rage . . . Sum. T. 2166

As mazed folk they stoden euerychone . . . M. L. T. 678

Conclusions. After an examination of the images drawn from references to other people, we find that a large proportion of them are conventional or not particularly picturesque. Especially is this true of the upper class personages. It is only when Chaucer makes references to people and traits not usually described that his images spring from his own impressions. From that fact, we could conclude either that Chaucer found people of the masses more interesting or that he was more free from conventional phrases in describing them. The first conclusion could hardly be defended on such small evidence, but it is safe to assume that the images do substantiate the picture of a man who saw life all around him, not just that beside him. His character portraits of the Canterbury Tales have gained for him the reputation of understanding and portraying all classes of men. The images only substantiate that reputation.

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[81] Cf. Mill. T. 3394, 3507, 3833, 3846, 3848; Kn. T. 1456, 2631.
[82] Kn. T. 1656, 2631; Sum. T. 2152.
[83] Mill. T. 3517
[84] Kn. T. 2950
[85] Kn. T. 1600, 2042, 2950; Mill. T. 3814, 3817.

## CHAPTER VI

## IMAGES FROM LEARNING

Since we have found that a large proportion of the images are conventional expressions, it would be well to investigate Chaucer's imagery for evidence of the extent to which it is based on his reading. In the prologue to the Legend of Good Women,[86] he sets forth his ideas of the importance of books, but how much of that we can take seriously is questionable.

> Than mote we to bokes that we fynde,
> Thurgh whiche that olde thynges ben in mynde,
> And to the doctrine of these olde wyse,
> Yeve credence, in every skylful wise,
> That tellen of these olde appreved stories
> Of holynesse, of regnes, of victories,
> Of love, of hate, of other sondry thinges,
> Of whiche I may not maken rehersynges.
> And yf that olde bokes were aweye,
> Yloren were of remembraunce the keye.
> Wel ought us thanne honouren and beleve
> These bokes, there we han noon other preve.
> And as for me, though that I konne but lyte,
> On bokes for to rede I me delyte,
> And to hem yive I feyth and ful credence,
> And in myn herte have hem in reverence
> So hertely, that ther is game noon
> That fro my bokes maketh me to goon,
> But yt be seldom on the holyday,
> Save, certeynly, whan that the month of May
> Is comen, and that I here the foules synge,
> And that the floures gynnen for to sprynge,
> Farewel my bok, and my devocioun! Prol. L. of G. W. Text F, 17-39

Again he mentions being the possessor of sixty books,[87] a considerable library for an age in which one copy of Aristotle had a value equal to that of three London houses. Many of his tales have known sources and many other references indicate familiarity with classical and current

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[86] Robinson, The Complete Works of Chaucer, p. 567-68.

[87] Prologue to the Legend of Good Women, Text G, 273-74.

literature. An examination of the images derived from books should indicate what parts of his reading appealed to him the most and made the deepest impression.

Images from Secular Literature. Among the images drawn from secular literature we find references to Aesop's Fables and other Greek stories which came to fourteenth-century England through various translations and redactions in Medieval Latin and the vernaculars. The following image is similar to the Aesop fable of the lion and the bear who fought for the body of a fawn while a fox carried it off. This account of the hounds illustrates the same moral, that some run away with the prize over which others are fighting.[88]

> Me stryue as dide the houndes for the boon;
> They foghte al day, and yet hir part was noon.
> Ther cam a kyte, whil they were so wrothe,
> That bar awey the boon bitwixe hem bothe. Kn. T. 1177-80

The close of the Iliad describes the lamentations for Hector,[89] but Chaucer read the account in a Latin version of the story, perhaps in Dares[90]

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[88]Charles Halm (editor), Aesop's Fables (Leipzig: Teubner, 1852), Number 247.

[89]Book 24, lines 699-804, edited by D. B. Munro and T. W. Allen, (Oxford Classical Texts, 1919).

[90]There is no evidence that Chaucer read Greek. Petrarch had a copy of Homer, but he could find no one to teach him to read it. William Smith (editor), A Smaller Classical Dictionary (New York: American Book Company, 1910), p. 138. "Dares, a priest of Hephaestus (vulcan) at Troy, mentioned in the Iliad, to whom was ascribed in antiquity, an Iliad, believed to be more ancient than the Homeric poems. This work, which was undoubtedly the work of a Sophist, is lost; but there is extant a Latin work in prose in 44 chapters, on the destruction of Troy, bearing the title Daretis Phrygii de Excidio Trojae Historia, and purporting to be a translation of the work of Dares by Cornelius Nepos. But the Latin work is evidently of much later origin; and is supposed by some to have been written even as late as the twelfth century."

or Dictys.[91] Latin and vernacular re-workings of Dares especially were favorite source material for medieval writers.[92]

> So greet wepyng was ther noon, certayn,
> Whan Ector was ybroght, al fresh yslayn
> To Troye . . . Kn. T. 2931-33

Apparently the references to hunting in Thrace also came from one of the later Latin writers. The method of hunting in the following passage follows the general descriptions of hunting in Thrace, except that boars instead of bears were the usual animal hunted. This is an example of the long Homeric type of epic simile.

> To chaungen gan the colour in hir face,
> Right as the hunteres in the regne of Trace,
> That stondeth at the gappe with a spere,
> Whan hunted is the leoun or the bere,
> And hereth hym come russhyng in the greues,
> And breketh bothe bowes and the leues,
> And thynketh, "Here cometh my mortal enemy!
> Withoute faille, he moot be deed, or I;
> For outher I moot sleen hym at the gappe,
> Or he moot sle me, if that me myshappe,"--
> So ferden they in chaungyng of hir hewe,
> As fer as evereich of hem oother knewe.[93] Kn. T. 1637-48

Several images may be traced directly to Virgil's Aeneid, to which Chaucer probably had access. The horse of Troy, to which the strange knight's steed is compared, is described at length in the Aeneid.[94]

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[91] Ibid, p. 145. "Dictys Cretensis, the reputed author of an extant work in Latin of the Trojan war, divided into six books, and entitled Ephemeris Belli Trojani, professing to be a journal of the leading events of the war. In the preface to the work we are told that it was composed by Dictys of Cnossus who accompanied Idomeneus to the Trojan war; but it probably belongs to the time of the Roman Empire."

[92] Latin: Guido delle Colonne, Historia Destructionis Trojae; Old French: Benoit de Ste. More, Roman de Troie; Middle English: Anon., Geste Hystoriale of the Destruction of Troy, etc. For further information, see W. H. Schofield, English Literature from the Norman Conquest to Chaucer, (London, 1931), pp. 286-89.

[93] Cf. "Sports and Amusements," p. 47.

94 II, 15--249

> Swich wondryng was ther on this hors of bras
> That syn the grete sege of Troye was,
> Ther as men wondreden on an hors also,
> Ne was ther swich a wondryng as was tho. Sq. T. 305-08

Another reference to Troy, described in the Aeneid,[95] is combined with a comparison of the Second Punic War, probably from Livy, [96] and one from Boccaccio or Statius.[97]

> I trowe at Troye, when Pirrus brak the wal,
> Or Ylion brende, Thebes the citee,
> Nat Rome, for the harm thurgh Hanybal
> That Romeyns hath venquysshed tymes thre,
> Nas herd swich tendre wepyng for pitee
> As in the chambre was for hir departynge. H. L. P. 288-93

To emphasize the image of the heavens as a large book in which future events can be read, Chaucer lists men in literature whose sudden deaths are famous. He could have found stories of Hector, Achilles, and the Seven against Thebes in Ovid or other Latin writers, the account of Turnus' duel with Aeneas for the love of Lavinia in the Aeneid,[98] the deaths of Pompey and Julius Caesar in Plutarch, and the poisoning of Socrates in the writings of many men--including Cicero. Sampson,[99] of course, is from the Bible.

> Parauenture in thilke large book
> Which that men clepe the heuene ywriten was
> With sterres, whan that he his birthe took,
> That he for loue sholde han his deth, allas!
> For in the sterres, clerer than is glas,
> Is writen, god woot, who so koude it rede,
> The deeth of euery man, with outen drede.

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[95] Aeneid, Book II, lines 469-505.

[96] Livy, Books 21-30.

[97] Chaucer was acquainted with the Teseide of Boccaccio and the Thebaid of Statius, both of which deal with the destruction of "Thebes the citee

[98] Aeneid, Book 12, ll. 901 ff. Edited by F. A. Hirtzel (Oxford Classical Texts Series, 1919).

[99] Cf. Religious Images p. 73.

> In sterres, many a wynter ther biforn,
> Was writen the deeth of Ector Achilles,
> Of Pompey, Iulius, er they were born;
> The stryf of Thebes and of Hercules,
> Of Sampson, Turnus, and of Socrates
> The deeth; but mennes wittes ben so dulle
> That no wight kan wel rede it atte fulle. M. L. T. 190-203

Julius Caesar's triumphs are mentioned and ascribed to Lucan. But there seems to be a mistake, for Lucan lamented that Caesar had no triumphs.[100] Yet, nevertheless, to the Man of Law, it was Lucan who described them in detail, and either Chaucer or later scholars which have confused the sources.

> Nought trowe I the triumphe of Iulius,
> Of which that Lucan maketh swich a boost,
> Was roialler ne moore curyus
> Than was thassemblee of this blisful oost. M. L. T. 400-03

Images of Jason and Paris, who, like the falcon, deserted their faithful mistresses, are from Ovid. Lamech,[101] according to the Bible, was the first man to have two wives.

> So rauysshed, as it semed, for the ioye,
> That neuere Iason ne Parys of Troye--
> Iason? certes, ne noon oother man
> Syn Lameth was, that alderfirst bigan
> To louen two, as writen folk biforn . . . Sq. T. 547-51

Although Ovid mentions Pegasus, it is not in connection with his wings. Chaucer apparently got this part of the image from some other Latin poet or poets. Here Pegasus is compared to the strange knight's brass beast.

> And seyden it was lyk the Pegasee,
> The hors that hadde wynges for to flee . . . Sq. T. 207-08

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[100] Robinson's note, Complete Works of Chaucer, p. 797.

[101] Genesis 4:17.

The story of Narcissus and Echo[102] and mention of the vale of Galgopheye[103] occur in Ovid. Aurelius, suffering from unrequited love, compares himself to Echo, who was shunned by Narcissus and faded to nothing but a voice.

> And dye he moste, he seyde, as dide Ekko
> For Narcissus, that dorste nat telle hir wo. Frank. T. 951-52

In addition to including certain Roman gods as characters in the Knight's Tale, Chaucer uses the gods figuratively. Instead of saying Theseus "stopped fighting and started hunting," Chaucer says:

> For after Mars he serueth now Diane. Kn. T. 1682

And the King of Inde "Cam ridynge lyk the god of armes, Mars." Kn. T. 2159. Not only does he mix Roman and Greek gods, but a mixture of Roman religion and Christianity occurs when Janus, the two-headed god of beginnings and ends, sits down to enjoy a Christmas dinner.

> Ianus sit by the fyr, with double berd,
> And drynketh of his bugle horn the wyn;
> Biforn hym stant brawen of the tusked swyn,
> And "Nowel" crieth euery lusty man. Frank. T. 1252-55

The Mount of Parnassus was the Greek seat of the nine muses, and was mentioned so frequently by the Latin poets that it would be difficult to assign any one source to it.

> Thyng that I speke, it moot be bare and pleyn,
> I sleep neuere on the mount of Parnaso,
> Ne lerned Marcus Tullius Scithero.[104] Frank. T. 720-22

A long series of implied images occurs in the Franklin's Tale which at first seem to indicate that Chaucer read widely in order to compile examples. However, Chaucer has merely taken the entire group from Jerome's

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[102] Ovid, Metamorphoses, III, 339-510.

[103] Probably "gargophie" is from Ovid, Metamorphoses, III, 156.

[104] This may have been a frequent misspelling by scribes.

Adversus Jovinianum, retaining to some extent the same order.[105] He has included only about half of the examples found in Jerome, and it would be interesting to investigate the reasons for his choices. Faced with the necessity of breaking her word to Aurelius or to her husband, Dorigen swears:

> I wol be trewe vn to Arueragus,
> Or rather sle my self in som manere,
> As dide Demociones doghter deere
> By cause that she wolde nat defouled be.
> O Cedasus, it is ful greet pitee
> To reden how thy doghtren deyde, alas!
> That slowe hem self for swich maner cas.
> As greet a pitee was it or wel moore,
> The Theban mayden that for Nichanore
> Hir seluen slow, right for swich manere wo.
> Another Theban mayden dide right so;
> For oon of Macedonye hadde hire oppressed,
> She with hir deeth hir maydenhed redressed.
> What shal I sey of Nycerates wyf,
> That for swich cas birafte hir self hir lyf?
> How trewe eek was to Alcibiades
> His loue that rather for to dyen chees
> Than for to suffre his body vnburyed be.
> Lo which a wyf was Alceste, quod she.
> What seith Omer of goode Penolopee?
> Al Grece knoweth of hir chastitee.
> Pardee of Laodomya is writen thus:
> That whan at Troye was slayn Protheselaus,
> No lenger wolde she lyue after his day.
> The same of noble Porcia telle I may;
> Withoute Brutus koude she nat lyue
> To whom she hadde al hool hir herte yeue.
> The parfit wifhod of Arthemesye
> Honoured is thurgh al the Barbarye.
> O Teuta queene thy wifly chastitee
> To alle wyues may a mirour bee.
> The same thyng I seye of Bilyea,
> Of Rodogone and eek Valeria.
> Thus pleyned Dorigene a day or tweye . . . Frank. T. 1424-57

Mention is made of the Jovinian of Jerome's treatise. The Summoner prefaces his description of friars by saying, "Me thynketh they been lyk Iouynyan," Sum. T. 1929.[106]

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[105] Jerome, Adversus Jovinianum in Sources and Analogues, pp. 595-97.

[106] Cf. "Nature Images," p. 15.

Literature of a more recent period claimed his attention also. Aurelius' love is compared to that of Pamphilus, the hero of the medieval Latin poem "Pamphilus de Amore,"

> Vnder his brest he baar it moore secree
> Than euere dide Pamphilus for Galathee. Frank. T. 1109-10

Native British literature contributes one image in the reference to a favorite hero, Sir Gawain. The strange knight

> Salueth kyng and queene and lordes alle,
> By ordre, as they seten in the halle,
> With so heigh reuerence and obeisaunce,
> As wel in speche as in contenaunce,
> That Gawayn, with his olde curteisye,
> Though he were come agayn out of fairye,
> Ne koude hym nat amende with a word. Sq. T. 91-97

Two comparisons apparently come from medieval Continental literature. The wicked mother-in-law, who attempted to kill Constance, is spoken of as "thow Semyrame the secounde," M. L. T. 359. Semiramis, legendary queen of Assyria, is described in Dante's Divine Comedy, Canto V, ll. 58-60. This was probably Chaucer's source:

> . . . Empress of peoples of many tongues, who was so corrupted by licentious vice that she made lust lawful in her land to take away the scandal into which she was brought; she is Semiramis, of whom we read that she succeeded Ninus, being his wife, and held the land which the Soldan rules.[107]

Another expression lifted from Dante is:[108]

> And firy Phebus riseth vp so brighte
> That al the orient laugheth of the lights. . . .
> Kn. T. 1493-94

Courtly Love Images. It was in the metrical romances growing up as legends of medieval knights that the phrases and manners of courtly love gained fixity until they became so conventional that they were less significant than their omission. The vows of fealty required of a medieval

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[107]John D. Sinclair (editor), Divine Comedy (London: John Lane, 1939) p. 75

[108]Cf. Purgatorio, I, 20. "The fair planet that prompts to love made all the east laugh".

knight embraced loyalty to his God, his lord, and his lady. The worship of his lady, like the worship of his God, was ritualistic. So much of a lover's speech was prescribed that his lingo distinguished him to all as a lover. Chaucer lapses into this courtly love jargon on occasion, and none of the figurative language of his lovers can be considered original with him, although it illustrates his familiarity with the current upper class attitude toward love. Part of this familiarity he gained through reading, but it must be remembered also, that he was familiar with the practice of courtly love during his days as a squire and later as an observer.

Since social conditions and conventions prevented most knights from marrying the woman who caused their loss of appetite and pale looks, they merely paid homage to and served her. Hence the term "servant of love" and "servant" of a lady.

> That loues seruantz in this lyf enduren . . . Kn. T. 1923
>
> But I wolde haue fully possessioun
> Of Emelye and dye in thy seruyse. Kn. T. 2242-43
>
> And spenden it in Venus heigh seruyse. Kn. T. 2437
>
> Syn he hath serued yow so many a yeer . . . Kn. T. 3086
>
> For in my tyme a seruant was I oon. Kn. T. 1814
>
> Thus hath she take hir seruant and hir lord,
> Seruant in loue and lord in marriage . . . Frank. T. 792-93
>
> This lusty squier, seruant to Venus . . . Frank. T. 937

Nor does the service cease at death, for the lover Arcite murmurs with his last breath, "But I byquethe the seruyce of my goost," Kn. T. 2768.

When a man suffered from unrequited love the results were physically disastrous. Either he was "syk and wood for loue," Kn. T. 1600, or he was wounded or slain. Wounding was to be expected since he was

shot by love's arrow.

> But in his herte ay was the arwe kene. Frank T. 1112

> But I was hurt right now thurghout my eye[109]
> Into myn herte, that wol my bane be. Kn. T. 1096-97

> Loue hath his firy dart so brennyngly
> Ystiked thurgh my trewe careful herte,
> That shapen was my deeth erst than my sherte. Kn. T. 1564-66

Since beauty is responsible for love-sickness, beauty is said to do the wounding or killing.

> And with that sighte hir beautee hurte hym so,
> That, if that Palamon was wounded soore,
> Arcite is hurt as muche as he, or moore. Kn. T. 1114-16

> The fresshe beautee sleeth me sodeynly
> Of hire that rometh in the yonder place,
> And but I haue hir mercy and hir grace,
> That I may seen hire at the leeste weye,
> I nam but deed; ther nys namoore to seye. Kn. T. 1118-22

> Ye sleen me with youre eyen, Emelye! Kn. T. 1567

No one has been able to define love successfully--it has too many qualities. But in the language of conventional love, it took many forms. It is figuratively spoken of as a fire and sometimes compared to the fire that burned in Mars when he was smitten with love of Venus.

> For thilke fyr that whilom brente thee,
> As wel as thilke fyr now brenneth me . . . Kn. T. 2403-04

> For thilke peyne and thilke hote fyr
> In which thow whilom brendest for desir,
> When that thow vsedest the beautee
> Of feire, yonge, fresshe Venus free . . .Kn. T. 2383-86

> Theras he hadde his amorouse desires
> His compleinte, and for loue his hote fyres . . .
> Kn. T. 2361-62

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[109]Cf. War images in "Everyday Life and Occupations," p. 45.

That al hir hote loue and hir desir,
And al hir bisy torment, and hir fyr
Be queynt, or turned in another place[110]. . Kn. T. 2319-21

Love is also a law to limit man and a chain to bind him.

Nostow nat wel the olde clerkes sawe,
That "who shal yeue a louere any lawe?"
Loue is a gretter lawe, by my pan,
Than may be yeue to any erthely man;
And therfore positif lawe and swich decree
Is broke al day for loue in each degree.[111] Kn. T. 1163-68

The first moeuere of the cause aboue,
Whan he first made the faire cheyne of loue,
Greet was theffect, and heigh was his entente,
Wel wiste he why and what therof he mente.
For with that faire cheyne of loue he bond
The fyr, the eyr, the water, and the lond
In certeyn boundes, that they may nat flee.[112] Kn. T. 2989-3001

Moreover love is something tangible that can be bought as Palamon buys his with many years of suffering.

Gendo hym his loue that hath it deer aboght, Kn. T. 3100

but it may be described in metaphysical terms.

Loue is a thyng as any spirit free. Frank. T. 767

Whan maistrie comth, the god of loue anon
Beteth hise wynges, and farwel, he is gon. Frank. T. 765-66

Two other images are drawn from practices of courtly love. The Canon's Yeoman describes the priest's joy at finding gold and says no lady was ever happier

. . . for to speke of loue and wommanhede. C. Y. T. 1346-49

Ne knyght in armes to doon an hardy dede,
To stonde in grace of his lady deere,
Than hadde this preest this sory craft to leere.
C. Y. T. 1347-

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[110] Cf. "Miscellaneous Images," p. 86-87.

[111] "Images from Everyday Life and Occupations," p. 43.

[112] This image might seem not to belong here, but apparently it refers to love between the sexes.

Religious Learning and Biblical Influence. Chaucer's satiric characterizations of clerics indicate that he turned his penetrating eye on the fourteenth-century churchmen, saw through them, and found little that was solid. How much of this criticism was directed at church practices and how much at Christian philosophy is questionable. An examination of the Biblical images should indicate something of his religious training.

Some scholars and men of the upper classes had access to the Latin classics, but Biblical stories and religious writings were more familiar to the masses. Since these stories had to be spread to the laymen through oral story-telling, the most dramatic stories had the widest appeal. An examination of Chaucer's images drawn from the Bible shows that most of Chaucer's references are to this familiar group of Biblical narratives.

When Custance was saved from her wicked mother-in-law, it was natural to compare her escape to those of others who had received providential assistance at a critical time.[113] Daniel's escape from the lion's den has always been popular.

> Men myghten asken why she was noght sleyn
> Eek at the feeste? who myghte hir body saue?
> And I answere to that demaunde agayn,
> Who saued Daniel in the horrible caue
> Ther euery wight saue he, maister and knaue,
> Was with the leoun frete er he asterte?
> No wight but god, that he bar in his herte. M. L. T. 470-75

Jonah's punishment and safe deliverance is as well-known among non-believers as believers. And the dividing of the waters of the Red Sea is equally popular.

> Who kepte Ionas in the fisshes mawe
> Til he was spouted vp at Nynyuee? M. L. T. 486-87

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[113]French, A Chaucer Handbook, p. 231, includes lines 470-504 and 925-945, among Chaucer's additions to the tale of Custance.

> Wel may men knowe it was no wight but he
> That kepte peple Ebrayk from hir drenchynge,
> With drye feet thurgh out the see passynge. M. L. T. 488-90

Little David's battle with Goliath has always appealed to champions of the underdog.

> How may this weyke womman hem this strengthe
> Hir to defende agayn this renegat?
> O Golias, vnmesureble of lengthe,
> How myghte Dauid make thee so mast,
> So yong and of armure so desolat?
> How dorste he looke vpon thy dredful face?
> Wel may men seen it was but goddes grace. M. L. T. 932-38

Noah is mentioned oftener than any other one character, but those allusions occur while Nicholas is persuading the "lump" of a carpenter that he should seek safety from a second flood in a kneading trough.

> That half so greet was neuere Noes flood. Mill. T. 3518
>
> To han as greet a grace as Noe hadde. Mill. T. 3560
>
> Hym thynketh verrailiche that he may se
> Noes flood come walwyng as the see Mill. T. 3615-16

Solomon has become almost a symbol of wisdom, and it is natural to call the mother of the murdered boy a Rachel--even though the boy was murdered by Jews.[114]

> And whan we been togidres euerichon
> Euery man semeth a Salomon. C. Y. T. 960-61
>
> Vnnethe myghte the peple that was there
> This newe Rachel bryngen fro his beere. Prior. T. 1816-17

Lamech[115] and Samson[116] were equally familiar. Less well known today is the Apocryphal account of Judith, the beautiful widow who entered the

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[114] In Matthew 2:18, Rachel symbolizes all Jewish mothers weeping after the slaughter of the innocents. Mr. Joseph Dwight points out that this passage was read at the Mass on the Feast of the Holy Innocents, and Chaucer may have been acquainted with it there. C. F. Robinson, Complete Works, p. 841.

[115] Cf. Images from Secular Literature, p. 65 .

[116] Cf. Images from Secular Literature, p. 64.

enemy camp of Holofernes and received his attentions until she could thrust a dagger into his heart.

> Who yaf Iudith corage or hardynesse
> To sleen hym Olofernus in his tente,
> And to deliueren out of wrecchednesse
> The peple of god? I seye, for this entente,
> That right as god spirit of vigour sente
> To hem, and saued hem out of meschaunce,
> So sente he myght and vigour to Custaunce. M. L. T. 939-45

The story of the beggar Lazarus, who was taken to heaven while the rich man lay in the torments of hell, has helped many a priest lead his flock.

> We lyue in pouerte and in abstinence,
> And burel folk in richesse and dispence
> Of mete and drynk, and in hir foul delit,
> We han this worldes lust al in despit.
> Lazar and Diues lyueden diuersly,
> And diuerse guerdoun hadde they ther by. Sum. T. 1873-78

Among the occasions of God's power of exertion to which Custance's escape is compared, we find two miracles of Christ. The first concerns the feeding of the five thousand, and the second refers to his calming the raging waves. The first is an especially popular story.

> Fyue thousand folk it was a greet meruaille
> With loues fyue and fisshes two to fede.
> God sente his foyson at hir grete nede. M. L. T. 502-04

> Who bad the foure spiritz of tempest
> That power han tanoyen lond and see,
> Bothe north and south, and also west and est,
> "Anoyeth neither se ne land ne tree"?
> Soothly, the comandour of that was he
> That fro the tempest ay this wommman kepte
> As wel whan she wook as whan she slepte. M. L. T. 491-97

Later Catholic religious history is represented in the reference to a Saint Mary, who lived forty-seven years in the wilderness to meditate on a youth of wantonness.

> Wher myghte this wommman mete and drynke haue?
> Thre yeer and moore, how lasteth hire vitaille?
> Who fedde the Egipcien Marie in the caue,
> Or in desert? no wight but Crist, sanz faille. M. L. T. 498-501

Saint Nicholas is also mentioned.[117]

> But ay whan I remembre on this matere,
> Saint Nicholas stant euere in my presence
> For he so yong to Crist dide reuerence. Prior. T. 1703-05

Constance's need for a champion such as Iudith had is expressed in the lines:

> Allas, Custaunce, thou hast no champioun!
> Ne fighte kanstow noght, so weilaway!
> But he that starf for oure redempcioun
> And bond Sathan and yet lyth ther he lay,
> So be thy stronge champion this day!
> For, but if Crist open miracle kythe,
> Withouten gilt thow shalt been slayn as swythe.
> M. L. T. 631-37

This passage contains a reference to the medieval belief in Christ's harrowing of hell. It was believed that Christ descended into hell to free all those who had died before his earthly birth.[118]

The image in "to tere and rente" in the following lines is really a crucifixion image.

> Hir othes been so grete and so dampnable
> That it is grisly for to heere hem swere.
> Oure blissed lordes body they to tere,--
> Hem thoughte that Iewes rente hym ynough. Pard. T. 472-75

Judas has become the symbol of traitors[119] in general, and is used in that sense by the Canon's Yeoman, who warns

> If any Iudas in youre couent be,
> Remeueth hym by tymes, I yow rede. C. Y. T. 1007-08

In addition to images drawn from religious characters, there are figurative uses of certain properties of religion.

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[117] For Christian heroes of medieval literature, cf. Manly's note, student edition.

[118] The popular conception of the bound Satan probably arose from the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, Chapters Xv-XXI, The Apocryphal Books of the New Testament (Philadelphia: David McKay Publishing Company, 1901), p. 82-88. There may be scriptural authority in II Peter, ii, 4; Jude 6; and Revelation xx, 1-2.

[119] A passage almost immediately preceding this one may be merely general or may refer to Judas. If so, it would be considered an image.

> He that semeth the wisest by Iesus
> Is moost fool whan it comth to the preef,
> And he that semeth trewest is a theef. C. Y. T. 967-69

Oilles, ablucioms and metal fusible,--
To tellen al wolde passen any bible. C. Y. T. 856-57

Bileueth this as siker as youre crede. C. Y. T. 1047

A church practice supplies an image when cold water symbolizes baptism and baptism stands for Christianity. The Sultaness strips the practice of its symbolism and has nothing but cold water left; and as she says, cold water is not to be feared.

We shul first feyne vs cristendom to take,--
Coold water shal nat greue vs but a lite! M. L. T. 351-52

Baptism forms the basis for the next synecdoche.

For thogh his wyf be crist ned neuer so white,
She shal haue nede to wasshe awey the rede,
Thogh she a font ful water with hir lede. M. L. T. 355-57

The Summoner lifts four images from the Scriptures, and although the objects compared are not from religion, they should be mentioned among images drawn from religious learning.

For lettre sleeth, so as we clerkes seyn.[120] Sum. T. 1794

I walke and fisshe cristen mennes soules[121]. . . Sum. T. 1820

Thow woldest han oure labour al for noght.
The hye god that al this world hath wroght,
Seith that the werkman worthy is his hire.[122] Sum. T. 1971-73

Ye been the salt of the erthe and the sauour.[123] Sum. T. 2196

The falcon is like a sepulchre, for

As in a tombe is al the faire aboue,
And vnder is the corps swich as ye woot,
Swich was this ypocrite bothe cold and hoot.[124] Sq. T. 518-20

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[120] II Corinthians, iii, 6.

[121] Luke v, 10; Matthew iv, 19; cf. Sea Images, p. 39.

[122] Luke x, 7; cf. "Everyday Life and Occupations," p. 42.

[123] Matthew v, 13; cf. "Domestic Images," p. 32

[124] Matthew xxiii, 27.

Although the following passage is not a direct quotation, it springs from the Biblical expression of Christianity as a "light."[125]

> Thow goost biforn of thy benygnytee,
> And getest vs the light of thy prayere,
> To gyden vs vn to thy sone so deere. Prior Prol. 1668-70

The figure of Christ as the Lamb of God has become almost a second name, and we find Chaucer using it twice. Once Christ is called the "white lamb celestial," Prior. T. 1771, and once, "The white lamb, that hurt was with a spere," M. L. T. 459. Medieval religion stressed heaven and hell, angels and devils. Chaucer's figurative references treat them as familiar but not too serious. Very conventional is the term "serpent" as applied to the devil. In this case, the Sultaness is compared to Satan.

> O serpent vnder femynynytee,
> Lyk to the serpent depe in helle ybounde! M. L. T. 360-61

Satan, who was responsible for Eve's fall, is accused of being responsible for breaking up Constances' marriage.

> O Sathan, envyous syn thilke day
> That thow were chaced from oure heritage,
> Wel knowestow to wommen the olde way!
> Thow madest Eua bryngе vs in seruage;
> Thow wolt fordoon this cristen mariage
> Thyn instrument so, weylawey the while!
> Makestow of womman, whan thou wolt bigile. M. L. T. 365-71

Men in the Middle Ages feared not only hell fire and brimstone, but also the slow torments of purgatory.[126] The Greek Arcite makes a distinction in the first passage.

> Now is my prisoun worse than biforn;
> Now is me shape eternally to dwelle,
> Noght in purgatorie, but in helle. Kn. T. 1224-26

> Allas! I ne haue no language to telle
> Theffect ne the torments of myn helle. Kn. T. 2227-28

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[125] II Corinthians iv, 4; John i, 4.

[126] There is an anachronism in the Greek Arcite's referring to the Catholic purgatory, but older writers seem not to have been unduly concerned with anachronisms. Many examples can be found in Shakespeare, and an indication of the typical attitude may be found in the Fool's discussion of his own anachronism, King Lear, Act III, sc. ii, 95.

"This prophecy shall Merlin make; for I live before his time."

What is the cause, if it be for to telle,
That be been in this furial pyne of helle? Sq. T. 447-48

But langwissheth as a furye dooth in helle . . . Frank. T. 950

But the very sight of Emelye can change prison from hell to heaven.

In prisoun,certes nay, but in paradys! Kn. T. 1237

The beauty of heaven and heaven's music are both well known.

That neuere was ther gardyn os swich prys,
But if it were the verray Paradys! Frank. T. 911-12

Ther as ther sownen diuerse instrumentz
That it is lyk an heuene for to heere. Sq. T. 270-71

And as an aungel heuenysshly she song. Kn. T. 1055

His manere was an heueune for to see . . . Sq. T. 558

Certain references to fiends and devils would seem to be references to the practice of conjuring rather than to Christian devils. Perhaps conjuring began as a religious rite, but it still retains little of religion except the element of superstition. The idea of an alchemist conjuring up devils is similar to the activities of Marlowe's Dr. Faustus.

For, as I trowe, I haue yow told ynowe
To reyse a feend, al looke he neuere so rowe. C. Y. T. 860-61

Two other images involve devils:

Syngeres with harpes, baudes, wafereres,
Whiche been the verray deueles officeres . . . Pard. T. 479-80

But it a feend be, as hym seluen is . . . C. Y. T. 984

Although Chaucer makes use of the supernatural in several tales, including the Prior. T., Pard. T., Frank. T., Sum. T., M. L. T., only one image in these tales indicates any interest of his own in popular superstitions.

This Nicholas sat euere capyng vprighte,
As he had kiked on the newe moone. Mill. T. 3444-45

Scientific Images. Chaucer's interest in the science of his day was

mentioned in connection with medical images.[127]

> But certes, I suppose that Auycen
> Wroot neuere in no canone ne in no fen,
> Mo wonder signes of empoysonyng
> Than hadde thise wrecches two, er hir endyng.
> Thus ended been thise homicides two,
> And eek the false empoysonere also.[128] Pard. T. 889-94

This interest was especially manifested in connection with astrology. Most of the references to astrology occur as straight fact, but astrological terms are often used figuratively. The idea that man's fate is determined by the position of the stars is expressed

> O firste moeuyng! cruel firmament,
> With thy diurnal sweigh that crowdest ay
> And hurlest al from est til occident
> That naturelly wolde holde another way,
> Thy crowdyng set the heuene in swich array
> At the bigynnyng of this fiers viage,
> That cruel Mars hath slayn this mariage.
>
> Infortunat ascendent tortuous
> Of which the lord is helpless, falle allas
> Out of his angle into the derkest hous!
> O Mars, O Atazir, as in this cas!
> O fieble moone, vnhappy been thy pas!
> Thow knyttest thee ther thow art nat receyued;
> Ther thow werewel fro thennes artow weyued. M. L. T. 295-308

Venus' influence on those born under her reign is expressed in the changeableness of Friday.

> Right as the Friday, soothly for to telle,
> Now it shyneth, now it reyneth faste,
> Right so kan gery Venue ouercaste
> The hertes of hir folk; right as hir day
> Is gerful, right so chaungeth she array.
> Selde is the Friday al the wike ylike. Kn. T. 1534-39

Although this next comparison is to the sun, the Squire is thinking

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[127] Cf. Images from medicine, p. 37.

[128] Refers to The Book of the Canon in Medicine by Avicenna.

of it in astrological terms.

> Vp riseth fresshe Canacee hir selue,
> As rody and bright as dooth the yonge sonne,
> That in the ram is foure degrees vp ronne. Sq. T. 384-86

Reference to other sciences occur in descriptions of Jankyn's eloquence. In fact, it matched that of the ancient geometer, Euclid, and that of the astronomer, Ptolemy.

> The lord, the lady, and ech man, saue the frere,
> Seyden that Iankyn spak, in this matere,
> As wel as Euclyde or Protholomee. Sum. T. 2287-89

Conclusions. We must remember that the images in no wise indicate the limit of Chaucer's acquaintance with the subject dealt with. Rather the evidence indicates positively, not negatively, the extent of that learning.

Chaucer's religious images are largely drawn from heroes of favorite Old Testament stories and conventional New Testament symbols. In the Middle Ages, when the common people received all their Biblical training orally, the stories with dramatic appeal were relatively more important in religious education than they are today. Yet, we cannot limit Chaucer's religious training by the evidence here; for not only is this merely a partial study of his imagery, but few men expose the full extent of their religious education. Nor would many more profound religious references have been in keeping with his satiric attitude toward clerics. However, there are no indications in the religious images of a deep comprehension of the Scriptures beyond that of a well-informed man familiar with popular Bible stories and the liturgy of the mass.

We must also remember that no matter how much he knew of classical literature, he was writing for a period almost as ignorant of classical learning as the public of today. Even the most simple allusions, then,

indicate more than ordinary acquaintance with the classics. Furthermore, his familiarity with the phrases of courtly love prove an acquaintance with the metrical romances popular in contemporary court circles. For his period, then, his reading must have been extensive. Although much of the literary imagery occurs in comparisons to oft-quoted incidents from literature, such as the horse of Troy and the death of Hector, the bulk of the images is significant. Yet the quality is as important as the quantity; and in the main, the images do not seem forced or far-fetched, but come naturally and indicate not that he kept his knowledge in a book on his desk but that he was sufficiently familiar with his reading that parallels automatically came to mind. In this respect, he differs from Shakespeare, whose classical training was very meagre, but whose thoughts, according to Miss Spurgeon, were unconsciously tempered by the attitudes of a gardener.[129] The images of these nine tales are too small a proportion of all his works to be evidence for any definite conclusions, but they do bear out conjectures based on other evidence in his works that he was one of the most widely read men of the Middle Ages. His knowledge of men in books undoubtedly helped him realistically to turn the human beings he knew into lifelike characters of poetry.

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[129] Shakespeare's Imagery, p. 89.

## CHAPTER VII

## MISCELLANEOUS IMAGES

In addition to those images the source of which was comperatively easy to determine, there are many images which are a part of everyday life and defy any other classification. Among these are the following:

> I peyne me to han an hauteyn speche,
> And rynge it out as round as gooth a belle. Pard. T. 330-31
>
> " Ye, sterue he shal, and that in lasse while
> Than thow wolt goon a paas nat but a myle,
> The poysoun is so strong and violent." Pard. T. 865-67
>
> The voys of peple touchede the heuene.[130] Kn. T. 2561

There are also a group of personifications of parts of the body and character traits. Personifications are a type of poetical image, but since they are compared to nothing else, they cannot be classified in the same manner as other images. By the use of figurative verbs and adjectives, parts of the body and character traits acquire properties not usually attributed to them. An eye becomes "likerous," and a foot "dredful" when we are assured of Alisoun that "sikerly she hadde a likerous eye," Mill. T. 3244, and "with dredeful foot thanne stalketh Palamon," Kn. T. 1479. Other images of eyes occur in the following lines:

> That "feeld hath eyen and the wode hath eres." Kn. T. 1522
>
> And Absolon hath kist hir nether eye. Mill. T. 3852

Constance's hand is "ministre of fredam for almesse," M. L. T. 168. That the hand is sole executor of handwriting is implied in the metonymy, "The hand is knowe that the letter wrcot," Mill. T. 890. "Tongue" is used in the same manner as the sole organ necessary for speech.

> Ther may no tonge expresse in no science. Prior T. 1666

---

[130] Might be considered nature if referring merely to sky, but it seems hardly definite enough.

[131] Cf. "Types of People," p. 56.

> And thus withinne a while his name is spronge,
> Bothe of his dedes and his goode tonge . . . Kn. T. 1437-38

A personification of belly occurs in the following apostrophe.

> O wombe! O bely! O stynkyng cod,
> Fulfilled of donge and of corrupcioun!
> At either ende of thee foul is the soun.
> How greet labour and cost is thee to fynde!
> Thise cokes, how they stampe, and streyne, and grynde,
> And turnen substaunce in to accident,
> To fulfillen al thy likerous talent! Pard. T. 534-540

The heart has always been a mysterious, unpredictable organ, but its range of activity was quite large in Chaucer's language. Beside the very conventional abilities of the heart, such as breaking, being filled with pity, joy, and sorrow, it also daunces, and starves. It is light, heavy, sore, "wood," afire, and is burst in two and pierced with sweetness.[132]

Blood was treated several times in the same way. To say "blood roial" implies more personification than "royal blood" but may have been the conventional phrase at that time. It is used to signify royalty.

> As they that weren of the blood roial . . . Kn. T. 1018
>
> The blood roial of Cadme and Amphioun, -- Kn. T. 1546
>
> O blood roial, that stondest in this drede! M. L. T. 657

"Stock roial" is substituted in the line

> By verray ligne, as of the stok roial. Kn. T. 1551

The only definite personification of blood occurs through the figurative verb "crieth."

> The blood out crieth on youre cursed dede. Prior. T. 1768

Chaucer seems to have been interested in the relationship of one personal trait to another. Some of these have already been mentioned in connection with the figurative verb which personifies them. We find that

---

[132]Cf. Kn. T. 1079; 1136, 1230, 1237; Sum. T. 1982; C. Y. T. 937; M. L. T. 167; M. L. T. 677.

"humblesse hath slayn in hir al tirannye," M. L. T. 168, "ire engendreth homicide," Sum. T. 2009, and is "executor of pride," Sum. T. 2010.[133]

Other personifications occur with figurative verbs or adjectives and are listed here only because they shed light on the emotion personified. In that way, Pity is dispensed by "drops," Kn. T. 920; treasons are dark," Kn. T. 3468;[134] and wits are "thinne," C. Y. T. 741.[135] Moreover,

> . . . dronkenesse is verray sepulture
> Of mannes wit and his discrecioun.
> In whom that dronke hath dominacioun
> He kan no conseil kepe, it is no drede.

We find that the little martyr singer is "souded [136]to virginitee," Prior. T. 1769, that Palamon would "holden werre alwey with chastitee," Kn. T. 2236, that Constance is taken "anon foot hoot," M. L. T. 458, and that the science of alchemy is a "glyding science," C. Y. T. 732. A series of personifications occurs in the Knight's Tale.

> First in the temple of Venus maystow se
> Wroght on the wal ful pitous to biholde,
> The broken slepes, and the sykes colde,
> The sacred teeres, and the waymentynge,
> The firy strokes of the desirynge
> That loues seruentz in this lyf enduren;
> The othes that hir couenants assuren;
> Pleasance and hope, desir, foolhardynesse,

---

[133] Cf. "Types of People," p. 57. Also, Parson's Tale, lines 562-63. Of ire comen thise stynkynge engendrures: first hate that is cold wratthe; discord, thurgh which a man forsaketh his olde freend that he hath loued ful longe;/ and thanne cometh werre,/ and euery manere of wrong that man doth to his neighebore, in body or in catel./ Of this cursed synne of Ire cometh eek manslaughtre./understonde wel that homycide, that is manslaughtre, is in dyuerse wise. Som manere of homycide is spiritual, and som is bodily./Spiritual manslaughtre is in sixe thynges.

[134] Cf. Light and dark images, p. 89.

[135] NED: "To make thin, to reduce in the thickness or depth." First figure of "thinned judgment" occurs in 1670.

[136] Cf. NED, "souded: 1000A.D. Unite in addition to, fasten materially.

Beautee and youthe, baudrye, richesse,
Chaunce and force, lesynges, flaterye,
Despense, bisynesse, and ialousye,
That wered of yelowe goldes a gerland,
And a cokkow sittyng on hir hand . . . Kn. T. 1918-1930

Ther saw I first the derke ymaginyngе
Of felonye, and al the compassynge;
The cruel ire, reed as any gleede;
The pikepurs, and eek the pale drede;
The smylere with the knyf vnder the cloke;
The shepne brennyng with the blake smoke;
The treson of the mordryng in the bed;
The open werre, with woundes al bibled;
Contek with blody knyf and sharp manace.
Al ful of chirkyng was that sory place.
  The sleere of hymself yet saugh I ther,--
His herte blood hath bathed al his heer;
The nayl ydryuen in the shode anyght;
The colde deeth, with mouth gapyng vpright.
  Amyddes of the temple sat meschaunce,
With discomfort and sory contenaunce.
Yet saugh I woodnesse, laughyng in his rage,
Armed compleynt, outhees, and fiers outrage;
The carayne in the busshe, with throte ycorue;
A thousand slayn, and nought of qualm ystorue;
The tiraunt with the praye by force yraft;
The toun destroyed, ther was nothyng laft.
Yet saugh I brent the shippes hoppesteres;
The hunte strangled with the wilde beres;
The sowe freten the child right in the cradel;
The cook yscalded, for al his longe ladel.
Naught was forgeten by the infortune of Marte:
The carters ouerryden with his carte,
Vnder the wheel ful lowe he lay adoun.
Ther were also, of Martes doctrine,
The barbour, and the bochier, and the smyth,
That forgeth sharpe swerdes on his styth.
  And al aboue, depeynted in a tour,
Saugh I conquest, sittyng in greet honour,
With the sharpe swerd ouer his heed
Hangyng by a subtil twynes threed. Kn. T. 1995-2030

Metals and gems. Comparisons to metals and precious stones might be included under jeweler's craft, but the content of the images indicates no such specific references. Aside from the image of the newly forged coin,[137] there are two images of the color gold.

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[137] "Images from Everyday Life and "Occupations," p. 41.

With nayles yelwe and brighte as any gold. Kn. T. 2141

The other is a restetement of the proverbial expression, "all is not gold that glitters."

But al thyng which that shyneth as the gold
Nys nat gold, as that I haue herd told; C. Y. T. 962-63

Latoun is a mixed metal, compounded largely of copper and zinc. At first the sun breaks convention and shines like copper, but it cannot long be divorced from the metal usually used in its description.

Phebus wex old, and hewed lyk latoun,
That in his hote declynacioun
Shoon as the burned gold with stremes brighte; Frank. T. 1245-47

Since the swords were of steel, a comparison to silver would mean little.

Out goon the swerdes as the siluer brighte.. Kn. T. 2608

The Prioress relies on gems to convey an idea of the worth and rarity of such a boy as the murdered child. He was a

. . . gemme of chastitee, this emeraude,
And eek of martirdom the ruby bright. . . Prior. T. 1799

Fire. Chaucer was of an age that still considered fire one of the four elements, equal to air, water, and earth. Such references to fire as the "fyr of ialousie," Kn. T. 1299, are conventional references to the substance "fire" rather than to an actual fire burning on a hearth. A mantle is "bret ful of rubies rede as fyr sparklynge," Kn. T. 2164; and

Ye lye heere ful of anger and of ire,
With which the deuel set youre herte a fire. Sum. T. 1981-82

Fire was an important symbol in the language of courtly love.[138] One who knew love suffered from "hir bisy torment and hir fyr," Kn. T. 2320. Arcite prayed for relief from Mars.

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[138]Cf. Courtly love images, p. 68.

> For thilke peyne, and thilke hote fyr
> In which thow whilom brendest for desir,
> Whan that thow vsedest the beautee
> Of faire, yonge, freshe Venus free
> And haddest hir in armes at thy wille-- Kn. T. 2393-97

In addition to there being a fire of jealousy, a fire of love, there is also a "fyr of lecherye,"kindled and blown by"syngeres with harpes, baudes, wafereres," Sum. T. 479-481.

Qualities. Closely connected with the substance, fire,are the qualities of hot and cold, light and darkness. The former, hot and cold, are tactile images. Chaucer's imagery, like that of most poets, is largely visual. Not a great deal can be learned from a separation of the images according to the senses to which they appeal, unless there is an unusual proportion of images from any group. In the case of Chaucer, definite auditory images are found in the Kn. T. 900, 2174, 2880; Mill. T. 3377, 3806; Sum. T. 1804, 2150; C. Y. T. 1345, 1397; Pard. T. 330, and M. L. T. 774. These refer to such sounds as thunder, trumpeting, and weeping children. Definite gustatory images are largely of bitter and sweet and occur in Sum. T. 2136; Prior. T. 1864; Mill. T. 3261; and Kn. T. 2021. Only one unquestionable olfactory image occurs in the Canon's Yeoman's Tale,

> For al the world they stynken as a goot;
> Hir savour is so rammyssh and so hoot . . . C. Y. T. 886-87

Tactile images are employed for a description of the personality of "pale Saturnus the colde," Kn. T. 2443, who decided the dispute among the gods. Apparently Chaucer was little concerned with these sensations, for there is only one other recurrence which occurs in Saturn's boast:

> And myne be the maladies colde . . . Kn. T. 2467

Such courtly love images as the following, in which love is described as

"hot" or "hot fire," may be considered tactile.

> That al hir hoote loue and hir desir. . . Kn. T. 2319
>
> For thilke peyne and thilke hote fyr. . . Kn. T. 2363

In comparing the images of Bacon and Shakespeare, Miss Spurgeon found that the former included many images "drawn from light and darkness, the contrast between artificial and natural lights, and other "light" effects, which constantly recur in his writings. Miss Spurgeon further explains Bacon's attitude toward light:

> Light, indeed, to Bacon, very noticeably represents all good things, enlightenment of every kind, both mental and spiritual: truth, virtue, knowledge, understanding, reason, and even the essence of God himself, 'the Father of illumination or lights'. Light, to him, is clear and unbiased judgment (dry light) not obscured by mists or humidity, and it is also the action of friendship, 'which maketh daylight in the understand'.[139]

Shakespeare shows no sign of such great interest in light, nor does he associate light with intellect. In Chaucer's much smaller body of material, we find several references to light and darkness. These references would indicate perhaps more interest than Shakespeare had, but nothing like Bacon's almost passionate awareness.

Chaucer draws on both natural and artificial light for his images. Alisoun's shining forehead is compared to the brightness of daylight.

> This goode wyf wente on an halidey.
> Hir forheed shoon as bright as any day,
> So was it wasshen whan she leet hir werk.[140] Mill. T. 3309-11

Flickers of firelight form the picture Chaucer draws of Absolon's position with Alisoun. Nicholas has got in his light.

> Men seith right thus, "alwey the nye slye
> Maketh the ferre leeue to be looth."
> For thogh that Absolon be wood or wrooth,

---

[139] Spurgeon, Shakespeare's Imagery, p. 17.

[140] Images from "Everyday Life and Occupations," p 41.

By cause that he fer was from hir sighte,
This nye Nicholas stood in his lighte. Mill. T. 3392-96

Prayers of the Virgin, according to the Prioress, light our way to her son.

Thow geost biforn of thy benygnytee,
And getest vs the light of the preyere,
To gyden vs vn to thy sone so deere. Prior. T. 1668-70

The Bible often refers to Christ as a "light," but the mind here is a "dark" for which Christ is the remedy.

Crist, which that is to euery harm triacle,
By certein menes ofte, as knowen clerkes,
Doth thyng for certein ende that ful derk is
To mannes wit, that for oure ignoraunce
Ne konne noght knowe his prudent purueiaunce. M. L. T. 479-483

Coal and pitch have long been measures of the intensity of blackness, but the expression coal black would not have been so common then as now. Alisoun's high collar was of "colblak silk," Mill. T. 3240, and "derk was the nyght as pych or as the cole," Mill. T. 3751.

Naturally there are too few quality or substance images in this group of tales to justify any conclusions from them. However, there is no particular evidence of any constantly recurring images which indicate one train of thought. But that is to be expected. Chaucer was a realistic writer rather than an abstract thinker.

# CHAPTER VIII

## CONCLUSIONS

From an examination of the images in this group of tales, it would appear that the images are indicative of the interests of Chaucer, the man. Poets of certain periods have followed contemporary style and obviously sought images. Poets of the sixteenth century are particularly rich in imagery; yet, much of theirs was dictated by fashion. There were "commonplace books" in which the author could sort out the most effective images for his particular use. But in Chaucer's period there was apparently no such conscious endeavor to embellish style. Consequently, when he does use an original image, we can assume that it was a familiar comparison and that it automatically sprang to mind as the best means of describing the point he wished to stress.

We have found not only that Chaucer knew his fellow men well enough to pluck out their weaknesses and hold them up to ridicule in his satiric characterizations, but that his images indicate the same genuine interest in other people. These images may also be used for another approach to Chaucer's understanding of people. If the stories were to fit the framework of the tales, the content and manner of telling must suit the narrator. The images would be a part of that manner of telling the story, and if they were tempered by the type of person telling the story, we must assume that some images which might have been spontaneous to the upper class poet had to be discarded as inappropriate to his narrator. But they also indicate the power of intellect of the author who could project himself so successfully into the mind of a character that even the images are true to type.

The Knight's Tale, full of conventional images to suit a definitely literary story, contains many original images also. However, there is no assurance that the story was written for the Knight, although it may have been revised after the Canterbury Tales were planned. For that reason we cannot be sure that it portrays the mind of the narrator. Perhaps the fact that the story could so conceivably have been told by a knight is due to the fact that it was designed as a complete poem for the amusement of members of the court circles. Uncertainty also exists as to whether the Franklin's Tale and the Man of Law's Tale were really written for these men.

However, in those stories which we are reasonably certain were written for the narrator, we find a certain relation between the teller, the content, and the images.[141] The Pardoner's Tale was the result of a conscious effort on Chaucer's part to sound not only like a pardoner, but like a pardoner repeating a standard sermon, not talking spontaneously. Those images which are included are surprisingly effective, such as that of a drunkard who falls "as a atyked swyn," 556. The Prioress' Tale is short and similar to many Miracles of our Lady. The images in her tale are not particularly striking, but the conventional references show a familiarity with religious expressions. Her images are scarely more original than,

His salte teers trikled doun as reyn, Prior. T. 1864

The images in the Squire's Tale are dispersed through all the classications but are noticably lacking in the agricultural and nature groups. Since

---

[141] Cf. Appendix for grouping according to tales.

they come from a fragment and are told by a person whose background was similar to Chaucer's, they may represent less alteration for narrator than the images of any of the other tales. Yet these also are more conventional than original. It is in the unconventional, spontaneous, more or less original tales of the "down-to-earth" members of the pilgrimage that Chaucer is not hampered by conventional ways of expressing ideas. There is a typical Chaucerian gusto in such tales as the Reeve's, the Canon's Yeoman's, the Nun's Priest's, the Summoner's and the Miller's. The latter is a risque story told by a decidedly drunken member of the middle class at the expense of a trade enemy. With such a framework, Chaucer's tongue is unleashed and the description of Alisoun, the attractive wife of that rich "lump" of a carpenter, tumbles out, and one image mounts on another until the completed girl stands at the top--natural, alive, and human. All the images are of everyday objects, and not one is a conventional phrase usually employed in describing a beautiful woman. It might even seem a burlesque of the extravagant descriptions of impossible romance heroines. The images can best be compared when listed together.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| As any wesele hir body gent and smal. | Mill. T. | 3234 |
| A barmcloth as whit as morne milk | | 3236 |
| Of colblak silk . . . | | 3240 |
| Ful smale ypulled were hir browes two,<br>And tho were bent and blake as any sloo. | | 3245-46 |
| She was ful moore blisful on to see<br>Than is the newe perionette tree. | | 3247-48 |
| And softer than the wolle is of a wether. | | 3249 |
| Ther nys no man so wys that koude thenche<br>So gay a popelote or swich a wenche. | | 3253-54 |

Ful brighter was the shynyng of hir hewe
Than in the tour the noble yforged newe. 3255-56

But of hir song, it was as loude and yerne
As any swalwe sittyng on a berne. 3257-58

Therto she koude skippe and make game,
As any kyde or calf folwynge his dame. 3259-60

Hir mouth was swete as bragot or the meeth,
Or hoord of apples leyd in hey or heeth. 3261-62

Wynsyng she was, as is a ioly colt. 3263

Long as a mast, and vpright as a bolt. 3264

A broche she bar vpon hir loue coler,
As brood as is the boos of a bokeler. 3265-66

She was a prymerole, a piggesnye. 3268

This ability of Chaucer's to project himself into the minds of his characters establishes his responsiveness to the temperaments of others. He looked around him and, whether what he saw was good or bad, he accepted it as it was and found something at which to be amused.

While the content of the images may guide us to the personality of the man, there is danger in assuming too much. We can always find images to support a preconceived opinion, half substantiated conjecture. It would be easy to lift a few images out of their relation to the others and fashion from them a distorted personality, half what we expected to find and half what we wanted to find, throw a veil of uncertainty over it all to cover the rough spots, and label it the man Chaucer.

But that would be taking unfair advantage of Chaucer. This study is only a trial examination of a representative part of his work and is not a complete study. It can be only indicative, not conclusive. Furthermore, it is true that every image sprang from a previous impression, but how important that impression was in his complete personality can be determined only by its relationship to his other images. That is why I have included even the obviously conventional ones.

Limited as was this group of tales, they nevertheless indicate the relationship of certain phases of his life. They prove, first of all, that no general statement is safe on the mere evidence of one or two images. For instance, we might happen upon the image of court jugglers and think,"Ah, ha, Chaucer well remembered his days at court. He probably enjoyed those entertainments immensely and was quite fond of traveling minstrels." Yet, we have stumbled upon the only image referring to such upper class indoor amusements found in these tales. Certainly it shows that he recalled them, but their importance was dwarfed by other phases of life.

Although this is a representative group of images, it is still only a part of all he used and nothing conclusive can be stated from them alone. But they can support or weaken conceptions of his personality drawn from his other writings and from records of his affairs. Readers have assumed that he was a great nature lover from his statement that only spring could take him away from his books. Perhaps he was, but he left an appreciation of the impressive grandeur of nature to later generations. We have seen that his nature images which are not conventional are merely casual observations of one who enjoys nature.

His observation of all aspects of life with which he dealt is much the same. He found metrical romances of people veiled in conventional manners and conformed to the rules in retelling them. He found pompous church hypocrites and jabbed them with pins to let the air out. He found human beings, like the Wife of Bath and Old Thomas, living their own lives and he made them human. He put such characters in earthy tales, told the tales simply but with a gusto of tolerant appreciation for life as it is.

A study of the images endorses that picture of the poet. It points out no consuming passion, no one train of thought to which his mind constantly reverted. In varying degrees he drew on the little realities of which life is composed. He did not think in abstract terms; he did not try to warp what he found by seeing a strained similarity to something else. He accepted life as he found it, and when he saw a similarity, it was a natural one.

We have seen that Chaucer was familiar with many phases of life: he was acquainted with the domestic life of the wealthy and the humble, with hunting, and music, and medicine, with sailing ships and reading stars. He knew farmers and sailors, knights and murderers, and his images indicate that he was more understanding and more observant of the naturalness of the lower classes than of the stilted manners of the upper class. What he saw, he seasoned with satire and realistically recorded.

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# APPENDIX

## THE KNIGHT'S TALE

863 That grettor was ther noon vnder the sonne

866 I haue God woot a large feeld to ere
And wayke been the oxen in my plough
The remenant of the tale is long ynough

900 But swich a cry and swich a wo they make
That in this world nys creature lyuynge
That herde swich another waymentynge

920 Som drope of pitee thurgh thy gentillesse

925 Thanked be Fortune and hir false wheel

1018 As they that weren of the blood roial

1035 That lhelye that fairer was to sene
Than is the lilie vpon his stalke grene

1037 And fresscher than the May with flowres newe

1038 For with the rose colour strof hir hewe

1042 For May wol haue no slogardye anyght
The sesoun priketh euery gentil herte
And maketh it out of his sleep to sterte
And seith arys and do thy obseruaunce

1055 And as an aungel heuenysshly she song

1079 As though he stongen were vnto the herte

THE KNIGHT'S TALE

---

1096 But I was hurt right now thurghout myn eye
Into myn herte that wol my bane be

---

1114 And with that sighte hir beautee hurte
hyn so
That if that Palamon was wounded soore
Arcite is hurt as muche as he or moore

---

1118 The fresshe beautee sleeth me sodeynly
Of hire that rometh in the yonder place
And but I haue hir mercy and hir grace
That I may seen hire at leeste weye
I nam but deed ther nys nemoore to seye

---

1163 Nostow nat welthe olde clerkes sawe
That who shal yeue o louere any lawe
Loue is a gretter lawe by my pan
Than may be yeue to any erthely man
And therfore positif lawe and swich degree
Is broke al day for loue in ech degree

---

1177 We stryue as dide the houndes for the boon
They foghte al day and yet hir part was
noon
Ther cam a kyte whil they were so wrothe
And bar away the boon bitwixe hem bothe

---

1224 Now is my prisoun worse than biforn
Now is me shape eternally to dwelle
Nought in purgatorie but in helle

---

1237 In prisoun certes nay but in paradys

---

1238 Wel hath fortune yturned thee the dys

---

1261 We faren as he that dronke is as a mous

---

---

1262 A dronke man woot wel he hath an hous
But he noot which the righte wey is
thider
And to a dronke man the wey is slider
And certes in this world so faren we
We seken fast after felicitee

---

1282 Of al oure strif God woot the fruyt is
thyn

---

1293 (Speaking of prison)
. . . greet is thyn nuauntage
Moore than is myn that sterue here in a
cage

---

1299 Ther with the fyr of ialousie vpsterte
With inne his breest and herte hym by the
herte

---

1301 So woodly that he lyk was to biholde

---

1302 The box tree or asshen dede and colde

---

1307 What is mankynde moore vnto yow holde
Than is the sheep that rouketh in the
folde

---

1309 For slayn is man right as another beest

---

1316 That man is bounden to his obseruaunce
For Goddes sake to letten of his wille
Theras a beest may al his lust fulfille
And whan a beest is deed he hath no peyne
But after his deeth man moot wepe and
pleyne
Though in this world he have care and wo

---

THE KNIGHT'S TALE

---

1325 Alas I so a serpent or a theef
That many a trewe man hath doon mescheef
Goon at his large and wher hym list may
turne

---

1359 So muchel sorwe had neuere creature
That is or shal whil that the world may
dure

---

1362 That lene he wex and drye as is a shaft

---

1364 His hewe falow and pale as asshen colde

---

1372 And in his gere for al the world he
ferde
Nat oonly lyk the loueris maladye
Of Hereos but rather lyk manye
Engendred of humour melancolyk
Biforn his celle fentestyk

---

1458 Bothe of his dedes and his goode tonge

---

1479 With dreedful foot thanne stalketh
Palamoun

---

1490 Til that fortune had broght hym in the
snare

---

1491 The bisy larke messager of day
Salueth in hir song the morwe gray

---

1493 And firy Phebus riseth vp so brighte
That al the orient laugheth of the
And with his stremes dryeth in the greues
The siluer drȣpes hangynge on the leues

---

May with alle thy floures and thy grene
Welcome be thou faire freessche May

---

That feeld hath eyen and the wode hath
eres

---

Now vp now doun as boket in a welle

---

Right as the Friday soothly for to telle
Now it shyneth now it reyneth faste
Right so kan gery Venus overcaste
The hertes of hir folk right as hir day
Is gerful right so chaungeth she array
Selde is the Friday al the wike ylike

---

The blood reial of Cadme and Amphioun

---

By verrey ligne as of the stok reial

---

. . . noght worth a myte

---

Loue hath his fyry dart so brennyngly
Ystiked thurgh my trewe carefull herte
That shapen was my deeth erst than my
shorte

---

Ye sleen me with youre eyen Emelye

---

Of al the remenant of myn oother care
Ne sette I noght the mountaunce of a tare

---

This Palamoun that thoughte that thurgh
his herte
He felte a cald  sword sodeynliche
glyde

---

1578 As he were wood with face deed and pale

1598 As fiers as leoun pulled out his swerd

1637 To chaungen gan the colour in hir face
Right as the hunters in the regne of
Trace
That stondeth at the gappe with a spere
When hunted is the leoun or the bere
And hereth hym come russhyng in the
greues
And breketh bothe bowes and the leues
And thynketh here cometh my mortal enemy
Withoute faille he moot be deed or I
For outher I moot sleen hym at the gappe
Or he moot sle me if that me myshappe
So ferden they in chaungyng of hir hewe
As fer as euerich of hem oother knewe

1652 As frendly as he were his owene brother

1655 Thou nyghtest wene that this Palamoun
In his fightyng were a wood leoun

1657 And as a cruel tigre was Arcite

1658 As wilde boores gonnon they to smyte

1659 That frothen whit as foom for ire wood

1663 The destinee ministre general
That executeth in the world overal
The purueiaunce that God hath seyn biforn

1682 For after Mars he serueth now Diane

1699 That foghten breme as it were bolde two

1701 The brighte swerdes wenten to and fro
It seemed as it wolde felle an ook

1773 Vpon a lord that wol haue no mercy
But be a leoun bothe in word and dede

1780 That in swich cass kan no diuisioun
But weyeth pryde and humblesse after oon

1809 She woot namoore of al this hoote fare
By god than woot a cokkow of an hare

1814 For in my tyme a seruant was I oon

1816 And woot how sore it kan a man distreyne
As he that hath been caught ofte in his lass

1838 He moot go pipen in an yuy leef

1918 First in the temple of Venus mayster se
Wroght on the wal ful pitous to biholde
The broken slepes and the sykes colde
The sacred teerys and the waymentynge
The firy strokes of the desirynge
That loues seruantz in this lyf enduren
The othes that hir couenantz assuren
Plesance and hope desir foolhardynesse
Beautee and youthe baudrye richesse
Charmes and force lesynges flaterye
Despense bisynesse and ialousye
That wered of yelowe goldes a gerland
And a cokkow sittyng on hir hand

THE KNIGHT'S TALE

---

1951 Lo al thise folk so caught were in hir lass

---

1980 As though a storm sholde breaten euery bough

---

1995 Ther sey I first the derke ymagynynge
Of felonye and al the compassynge
The cruel ire reed as any gleede
The pikepurs and eek the pale drede
The smylere with the knyf vnder the cloke
The shepne brennyng with the blake smoke
The treson of the mordryng in the bed
The open werre with woundes al bibled
Contek with blody knyf and sharp manace
Al ful of chirkyng was that sory place
The sleere of hymself yet saugh I ther
His herte blood hath bathed al his heer
The nayl ydryuen in the shode anyght
The colde deeth with mouth gapyng vpright
Amyddes of the temple sat meschaunce
With disconfort and sory contenaunce
Yet saugh I woodnesse laughyng in his rage
Armed compleynt outhees and fiers outrage
The caryne in the bussh with throte ycorue
A thousand slayn and noght of qualm ystorue
The tiraunt with the preye by force yraft
The toun destroyed ther was nothyng laft

---

2027 And al aboue depeynted in a tour
Saugh I conquest sittyng in greet honour
With the sharpe sword ouer his hed
Hangynge by a subtil twynes threed

---

THE KNIGHT'S TALE

---

2008 The colde deeth with mouth gapyng vpright

---

2042 Armed and loked grym as he were wood

---

2133 And lik a griffoun loked he aboute

---

2144 As any rauenes fethere it shoon for blak

---

2149 Twenty and mo as grete as any steer

---

2159 Com ridynge lyk the god of armes Mars

---

2163 A mantelet vpon his shulder hangynge
Bret ful of rubies reds as fyr sparklynge

---

2165 His crispe heer lyk rynges was yronne

---

2166 And that was yelow and glitred as the
sonne

---

2171 And as a leoun he his lookyng caste

---

2174 His voys was as a trompe thonderynge

---

2178 An egle tame as any lilie whyt

---

2209 The Sonday nyght er day bigan to spryngе

---

2223 Theffect ne the tormentz of myn helle

---

2235 And holden werre alwey with chastitee

2242 But I wolde haue fully possessioun
Of Emelye and dye in thy seruyse

2319 That al hir hote loue and hir desir

2320 And al hir bisy torment and hir fyr
Be quoynt or turned in another place

2327 The bittre teeres that on my chekes falle

2373 O stronge god that in the regnes colde
Of Trace honoured art and lord yholde
And hast in euery regne and euery lond
Of armes al the brydel in thyn hond

2383 For thilke peyne and thilke hote fyr

2396 For she that dooth me al this wo endure
Ne reccheth neuere wher I synke or floote

2403 For thilke fyr that whilom brente thee
As wel as thilke fyr now brenneth me

2418 And been thy trewe seruaunt whil I lyue

2437 As fayn as fowel is of the brighte sonne

2443 Til that the pale Saturnus the colde

2457 And myne be the maladies colde

THE KNIGHT'S TALE

---

2468 The derke treasons and the castes olde

---

2469 My lokyng is the fader of pestilence

---

2487 And spenden it in Venus heigh seruyce

---

2491 And on the morwe when that day gan
sprynge

---

Pipes trompes nakers clariounes
2512 That in the bataille blowen blody sounes

---

2522 Longe after that the sonne gan to sprynge

---

2539 To gentil blood to fighten in the gyse

---

2559 With long swerd and with maces fighteth
youre fille

---

2561 The voys of peple touched the heuene

---

2603 Out goon the swerdes as the siluer
brighte

---

2614 He rolleth under foot as doth a bul

---

2625 Ther nas no tygre in the vale of
Galgopheye
Whan that hir whelp is stole whan it is
lite
So cruel on the hunte as is Arcite
For ialous herte vpon this Palamoun

---

THE KNIGHT'S TALE

---

2630 He in Belmarye ther nye so fel leoun
That hunted is or for his hunger wood
He of his praye desireth so the blood
As Palamon to sleen his foo Arcite

---

2634 The ialous strokes on hir helmes byte

---

2661 For ioye of this so loude and heigh
witholle
It semed that the lystes sholde falle

---

2664 . . . what dooth this queene of loue
But wepeth so for wantyng of hir wille

---

2692 As blak he lay as any cole or crowe

---

2734 And either syde ylyk as otheres brother

---

2759 And certeinly ther nature wol nat werche

---

2768 But I byquethe the seruyce of my goost

---

2787 To speken of a seruaunt properly

---

2812 Of soules fynde I nat in this registre

---

2830 For hym ther wepeth bothe child and man

---

2831 So greet wepyng was ther noon certayn
Whan Hector was ybroght al fressh yslayn
To Troye allas the pitee that was ther

---

THE KNIGHT'S TALE

---

2943 Right as ther deyed neuere man quod he
That he ne lyued in erthe in son degree
Right so ther lyued neuere man he seyde
In al this world that somtyme he ne deyde

---

2947 This world nys but a thurghfare ful of wo
And we been pilgrymes passynge to and fro

---

2961 Theran he hadde his amorouse desires
His compleinte and for loue his hote fyres

---

2980 Whan it was day he broghte hym to the helle
That roreth of the cryyng and the soun

---

2950 Into the fyr that brente as it were wood

---

3017 Lo the ook that hath so long a norisshynge
Fro the tyme that it first bigynneth sprynge
And hath so long a lyf as ye may see

---

3020 Yet al the laste wasted in the tree

---

3021 Considereth eek how that the harde stoon
Vnder oure feet on which we trede and goon
Yit wasteth it as it lyth by the weye

---

3024 The brode ryuer somtyme wexeth dreye

---

3025 The grete townes se we wane and wende
Than ye se that al this thyng hath ende

---

THE KNIGHT'S TALE

---

3037 Of man and woman se we wel also
That nedes in oon of thise termes two
This is to seyn in youthe or elles age
He moot be dead the kyng as shal a page
Som in his bed som in the depe see
Som in the large feeld as ye may see
Ther helpeth noght al gooth that ilke weye
Thanne may I seyn that al this thyng moot
deye

---

3048 To dyen in his excellence and flour

---

3059 That goode Arcite of chivalrie the flour

---

3061 Out of this foule prisoun of this lyf

---

3086 Syn he hath served yow so many a yeer

---

3100 Sende hym his love that hath it deere
aboght

---

THE SQUIRE'S TALE

---

21 Sooth of his word benygne and honurable
Of his corage as any centre stable

---

23 Yong freesh and strong in armes desirous
As any bachiler of al his hous

---

42 And so bifel that whan this Cambyuskan
Hath twenty wynter born his diademe

---

THE SQUIRE'S TALE

---

56 Hem semed han geten hem proteccions
Agayn the swerd of wynter kene and cold

---

74 I wol nat tarien yow for it is pryme
And for it is no fruyt but los of tyme

---

95 That Gawayn with his olde curteisye
Thogh he were comen ayeyn out of fairye

---

105 Al be that I kan not some his style
Ne kan nat clymben over so heigh a style

---

122 Or if yow list to flee as hye in the air
As dooth an egle whan hym list to soore

---

159 Were it as thikke as is a breunched ook

---

170 His steede which that shoon as sonne
brighte

---

171 Stent in the court as stille as any stoon

---

194 Ther with so horsly and so quyk of eye
As it a gentil Poyleys courser were

---

204 They murmured as dooth a swarm of been

---

207 And seyden it was lyk the Pegasee
The hors that hadde wynges for to flee

---

Or ellis it was the Grekes hors Synoun
That broghte Troye to destruccioun
As men in thise olde gestes rede
Myn herte quod oon is euere moore in drede
I trowe som men of armes been ther inne
That shapen hem this citee for to wynne
It were right good that al swich thyng were knowe

An apparence ymaad by som magyk
As iogelours pleyen at thise festes grete

Of sondry doutes thus they iangle and trete
As lewed peple demeth comunly
Of thynges that been maad moore subtilly
Than they kan in hir lewednesse comprehende
They demen gladly to the badder ende

As soore wondren somme on cause of thonder
On ebbe on flood on gossomer and on myst
And alle thyng til that the cause is wist
Thus ianglen they and demen and deuyse

Thre as they sownen diuerse instrumentz
That it is lyk an heuene for to heere

Now dauncen lusty Venus children deere

And been a festlich man as fressh as May

Swich wondryng was ther on this hors of bras
That syn the grete sege of Troye was
Ther as men wondreden on an hors also
Ne was ther swich a wondryng as was tho

THE SQUIRE'S TALE

---

347 The norice of digestioun the sleep
Gan on hem wynke and bad hem take keep
That muche drynk and labour wol haue reste
And with a galpyng mouth hem alle he keste
And seyde that it was tyme to lye adoun
For blood was in his domynacioun
Cherisseth blood natures freend quod he
They thanken hym galpynge by two by three
And euery wight gan drawe hym to his reste
As sleep hem bad they tooke it for the beste

---

384 Vp riseth fresshe Canacee hir selue
As rody and bright as dooth the yonge sonne
That in the ram is foure degrees vp ronne

---

401 The knotte why that euery tale is told

---

409 Amydde a tree fordrye as whit as chalk

---

417 And euere in oon she cryde alwey and
shrighte
And with hir beek hir seluen so she prighte
That ther nys ne tygre noon so cruel beest
That dwelleth outher in wode or in forest
That nolde han wept if that he wepe koude
For sorwe of hire she shrighte alwey so
loude

---

474 And lyth aswowne deed and lik a ston

---

447 What is the cause if it be for to telle
That ye been in this furial pyne of helle

---

490 And for to maken othere be war by me
As by the whelp chasted is the leoun

---

THE SQUIRE'S TALE

---

511 So depe in greyn he dyed his colours

---

512 Right as a serpent hit hym vnder floures

---

514 Right so this god of loues this ypocrite

---

518 As in a tombe is al the faire aboue
And vnder is the corps swich as ye woot
Swich was this ypocrite bothe cold and
hoot

---

545 (speaking of the falcon)
Anoon this tygre ful of doublenesse

---

547 So rauysshed as it semed for the ioye
That neuere Iason ne Parys of Troye

---

549 Iason certes ne noon oother man
Syn Lameth was that alderfirst bigan
To louen two as writen folk biforn

---

558 His manere was an heuene for to see

---

610 Men louen of propre kynde newfangelnesse
As bryddes doon that men in cages fede
For though tho nyght and day take of hem
hede
And strewe hir cage faire and softe as
silk
And yeue hem sugre hony breed and milk
Yet right anon as that his dore is vppe
He with his feet wol sporne doun his cuppe
And to the wode he wole and wormes ete
So newegangel been they of hir mete
And louen nouelries of propre kynde
No gentilesse of blood may hem bynde

---

715 But sires by cause I am a burel man

720 Thyng that I speke it moot be bare and
plevn
I sleep neuere on the mount of Parnaso
Ne lerned Marcus Tullius Scithero

754 She seyde sire ath of youre gentilesse
Yo profre me to haue so large a reyne

765 Whan maistrie comth the god of loue anon
Beteth hise wynges and farwel he is gon

767 Loue is a thyng as any spirit free

769 And not to been constreyned as a thral

793 Thus hath she take hir seruant and hir
lord
Seruant in loue and lord in mariage

829 By proces as ye knowen euerichoon
Men may so longe grauen in a stoon
Til som figure ther inne emprented be
So longe han they conforted hire til she
Receyued hath by hope and by resoun
The emprentyng of hir consolacioun

893 Thise rokkes sleen myn herte for the
feere

907 Which May hadde peynted with his softe
shoures
This gardyn ful of leues and of flowres

THE FRANKLIN'S PROLOGUE AND TALE

---

912 But if it were the verray Paradys

---

926 Daunced a squier biforn Dorigen
That fressher was and iolyer of array
As to my doom than in the monthe of May

---

937 This lusty squier seruant to Venus

---

941 But neuere dorste he tellen hire his
greuance
With outen coppe he drank al his penaunce

---

950 But langwissheth as a furye doeth in
helle

---

951 And dye he moste he seyde as dide Ekko
For Narcisus that dorste nat telle hir wo

---

985 . . . as fer as I haue wit
I wol been his to whom that I am knyt

---

1109 Vnder his brest he baar it moore secree
Than euere dide Pamphilus for Galathee

---

1112 But in his herte ay was the arwe kene

---

1113 And wel ye knowe that of a sursanure
In surgerye is perilous the cure
But men myghte touche the arwe or come
thor by

---

THE FRANKLIN'S PROLOGUE AND TALE

---

1131 . . . and swich folye
As in oure dayes is nat worth a flye

---

1136 Anon for ioye his herte gan to daunce

---

1230 This bargayn is ful dryue for we ben knyt

---

1237 His woful herte of penaunce hadde a lisse

---

1245 Phebus wax old and hewed lyk latoun
That in his hote declynacioun
Shoon as the burned gold with stremes
bri ghte

---

1252 Janus sit by the fyr with double berd
And drynketh of his bugle horn the wyn
Biforn hym stant brawen of the tusked
swyn
And Nowel crieth euery lusty man

---

1353 Allas quod she on thee Tortuus Enleyne
That vnwar wrapped hast me in thy cheyne

---

1425 Or rather sle my self in som manere
As dide Demociones doghter deere
By cause that she wolde nat defouled be
O Cedasus it is ful greet pitee
To reden how thy doghtren deyde alles
That slowe hem self for swich a maner cas
As greet a pitee was it or wel moore
The Theban mayden that for Nichanore
Hir seluen slow right for swich manere wo
Another Theban mayden did right so
For oon of Macedonye hadde hire oppressed
She with hire deeth hir maydenhede
redressed
What shal I seye of Nyceretes wyf

THE FRANKLIN'S PROLOGUE AND TALE

---

1425 (Continued)
That for swich cas birafte hir self hir lyf
Now trewe eek was to Alcibiades
His loue that rather for to dyen chees
Than for to suffre his body vnburyed be
Lo which a wyf was Alceste quod she
What seith Omer of goode Penelopee
Al Grece knoweth of hir chastitee
Pardee of Leodomya is writèn thus
That whan at Troye was slayn Protheselaus
No lenger wolde she lyue after his day
The same of noble Porcia telle I may
With outè Brutus koude she not lyue
To whom she hadde al hool hir herte yeue
The parfit wifhod of Arthemesye
Honoured is thurgh al the Barbarye
O Teuta queene thy wifly chastitee
To alle wyues may a mirour bee
The same thyng I seye of Bilyea
Of Rodogone and eek Valeria

---

1554 He chorisseth hire as though she were a
queene

---

THE MILLER'S TALE

---

3188 A riche gnof that gestes held to bord

---

3201 And therto he was sleigh and ful pryuee
And lyk a maydon meke for to see

---

3206 And he hymself as swete as is the roote
Of licorys or any cetewale

---

3221 This carpenter had wedded newe a wyf
Which that he loued moore than his lyf

---

THE MILLER'S TALE

3225 Of xviij yeer she was of age
Ielous he was and heeld hire narwe in cage

3230 For youthe and elde is often at debaat

3231 But sith that he was fallen in the snare

3234 As any wessele hir body gent and smal

3236 A barmcloth as whit as morne mylk

3240 Of colblak silk withinne and eek withoute

3244 And sikerly she hadde a likerous ye

3245 Ful smale ypulled were hir browes two
And tho were bent and blake as any sloo

3247 She was ful moore blisful on to see
Than is the newe perionette tree

3249 And softer than the wolle is of a wether

3253 Ther nys no man so wys that koude thenche
So gay a popelote or swich a wenche

3255 Ful brighter was the shynyng of hir hewe
Than in the tour the noble yforged newe

3257 But of hir song it was as loude and yerne
As any swalwe sittyng on a berne

THE MILLER'S TALE

---

Therto she koude skippe and make game
As any kyde or calf folwynge his dame

---

Hir mouth was swete as bragot or the meeth
Or hoord of apples leyd in hey or heeth

---

Wynsyng she was as is a ioly colt
Long as a mast and vpright as a bolt

---

A broche she bar vpon hir loue coler
As brood as is the boos of a bokeler

---

She was a prymerole a piggesnye

---

And she sprong as a colt doth in the trawe

---

This goode wyf wente on an haliday
Hir forheed shoon as bright as any day
So was it wasshen whan she leet hir werk

---

Crul was his heer and as the gold it shoon

---

And strouted as a fenne large and brode

---

His rode was reed his eyen greye as goos

---

As whit as is the blosme vpon the rys

---

THE MILLER'S TALE

---

She was so propre and swete and likerous
I dar wel seyn if she had been a mous
And he a cat he wolde hir hente anon

---

He syngeth brokkyng as a nyghtyngale

---

She lyketh so this hende Nicholas
That Absolon may blowe the bukkes horn

---

And thus she maketh Absolon hir ape

---

Lyeuene that he fer was from hir sighte
This nye Nicholas stood in his lighte

---

He cride and knokked as that he were
wood

---

This Nicholas sat euere capyng vprighte
As he had kiked on the newe moone

---

That half so greet was neuere Noes flood

---

In which we mowen swymme as in a barge

---

. . . as greet a grace as Noe hadde

---

Thanne shaltow swymme as murye I
vndertake
As doth the white doke after hir drake

---

Hym thynketh verrailiche that he may se
Noes flood come walwyng as the see

---

THE MILLER'S TALE

---

3643 The dede sleep for wery bisynesse

---

3698 What do ye honycomb swete Alisoun

---

3699 My faire bryd my sweete cynamone

---

3704 I moorne as dooth a lamb after the tete

---

3705 Ywis lemman I haue swich loue longyng
That lyk a turtel trewe is my moornyng

---

3707 I may not ete namoore than a mayde

---

3726 Lemman thy grace and swete bryd thyn oore

---

3731 Derk was the nyght as pych or as the cole

---

3759 And weep as dooth a child that is ybete

---

3772 This Absolon ne roghte not a bene
Of al his pley . . .

---

3773 . . . no word agayn he yaf
He hadde moore tow on his distaf

---

3806 This Nicholas anoon leet fle a fart
As greet as it hadde been a thonder dint

---

3814 As he were wood for wo he gan to crye

---

THE MILLER'S TALE

3817 And herde oon cryen water as he were wood

3821 And doun gooth al he fond neither to selle
Ne breed ne ale til he cam to the celle

3852 And Absolon hath kist hir nether eye

THE SUMMONER'S TALE

1794 For lettre sleeth so as we clerkes seyn

1804 And kiste hir swete and chirketh as a
sparwe

1820 I walke and fisshe cristen mennes soules

1821 To yelden Iesu crist his propre rente

1825 He is as angry as a pissemyre

1829 He groneth lyk oure boor lith in oure sty

And moore we seen of Cristes secree thynges
1872 Than burel folk al thogh they weren kynges
We lyue in pouerte and in abstinence
And burel folk in richesse and dispence

1877 Lazar and Dives lyueden diuersly

1880 And fatte his soule and make his body lene

1929 Me thynketh they been lyk Iouynyen

THE SUMMONER'S TALE

---

1930 Nat as a whale and walkyng as a swan

---

1931 Al vynolent as botel in the spence

---

1938 Therfore right as an hauk vp at a sours
Vp sprynageth into theyr right so prayeres
Of charitable and chaste bisy freres
Maken hir cours to goddes eres two

---

195 What nedeth yow diuerse freres seche
What nedeth hym that hath a parfit leche
To sechen othere leches in the toun

---

1971 Thow woldest han oure labour al for
nought
The hye God that al this world hath
wrought
Seith that the werkman worthy is his hire

---

1982 With which the deuel set youre herte a
fire

---

1989 With inne thyn hous ne be thow no leoun

---

1994 Nar fro the serpent that so sleighly creepeth

---

2001 Ther nys ywis no serpent so cruel
Whan man tret on his tayl ne half so fel

---

2009 Kan seye how ire engendreth homicide

---

2010 Ire is in sooth executour of pride

---

---

Ther is ful many an elphe and many an ore
Awaityng on a lord and he noot where

---

Thow shalt me fynde as iust as Ia a squyre
Hoold nat the deueles knyf ay at thyn herte

---

Ther nys no cspul drawyng in a cart
That ryghte han lete a fart of swich a
soun

---

The frere vp stirte as dooth a wood leoun

---

He looked as it were a wilde boor

---

This frere cam as he were in a rage

---

Ye lokon as the wode were ful of theuys

---

Ye been the salt of the erthe and the
sauour

---

Neuere erst er now herde I of swich
matere
I trowe the deuel putte it in his myndc
In ars metrik shal ther no man fynde
Biforn this day of swich a questioun

---

Thanne shal this cherl with bely stif and
toght
As any tabour hider been ybroght

---

The lord the lady and ech man seue the
frere
Seydin that Iankyn spak in this matere
As wel as Euclide or Protholomee

---

THE CANON'S YEOMAN'S TALE

732 That slidynge science hath me maad so bare
That I haue no good wher that euere I fare

741 But empte his purs and make his wittes
thynne

Whan we been ther as we shul excercise
751 Oure sluysshe craft we semen wonder wise

857 To tellen al wolde passen any bible

859 Of alle thise names now wol I me reste

886 For al the world they stynken as a goot
Hir sauour is so rammyssh and so hoot

888 That though a man from hem a myle be
The sauour wol infecte hym trusteth me

937 Plukke vp youre hertes and beeth glad and
blithe

A marchant pardee may nat ay endure
948 Som tyme his good is drowned in the see
And som tyme corth it saue vn to the londe

960 And when we been togidres euerichon
Euery man semeth a Salomon

962 But al thyng which that shyneth as the
gold
Nys nat gold as that I haue herd told

964 Ne euery appul that is fair at eye
Ne is nat good what so men clappe or crye

THE CANOUN'S YEOMAN'S TALE

---

967 He that semeth the wisest by Iesus
Is moost fool whan it couth to the preef
And he that semeth trewest is a theef

---

972 Ther is a chanoun of religioun
Amonges vs wolde infecte al a toun

---

984 But it a feend be as hym seluen is

---

1007 If any Iudas in youre couent be

---

1047 Bileueth this as siker as youre crede

---

1069 In this chanoun roote of al trecherie

---

1077 With cousitise anon thow shalt be blent
O graceless ful blynd is thy conceit

---

1080 Which that this fox yshapen hath to thee

---

1089 Sire hoost in feith and by the heuenes
queene

---

1150 . . . nat worth a flye

---

1299 Al to symple is my tonge to pronounce
As ministre of my wit

---

1300 . . . the doublenesse
Of this chanoun roote of al cursednesse

---

THE CANOUN'S YEOMAN'S TALE

---

1313 Right as hym listo the preest he made
his ape

---

1342 Was neuere brid gladder agayn the day

---

1343 Ne nyghtyngale in the sesoun of May

---

1344 Was neuere noon that lyste bet to synge

---

1345 Ne lady lustier in carolynge

---

1346 Or for to speke of loue and womanhede

---

1347 Ne knyght in armes to doon an hardy dede
To stonde in grace of his lady deere
Than hadde this preest this sory craft
to leere

---

1388 Considereth sires how that in ech estaat
Bitwixe men and gold ther is debaat

---

1397 They mowe wel chiteren as doon iayes

---

1407 O fy for shame they that han been brent
Allas kan they nat flee the fyres hete

---

1413 Ye been as boold as is Bayard the blynde
That blondreth forth and peril casteth
noon
He is as boold to renne agayn a stoon
As for to goon bisides in the weye

---

1418 If that youre eyen kan nat seen aright
Looke that youre mynde lakke noght his
sight

---

THE CAN¢UN'S YEOMAN'S TALE

---

1423 Withdrawe the fyr lest it to faste brenne
Medleth nomoore with that art I mene
For if ye doon youre thrift is goon ful
clene

---

143 Ther may no man Mercurie mortifye
But it be with his brother knowleehyng

---

1434 Of philosophres fader was Hermes

---

THE PARDONER'S PROLOGUE AND TALE

---

330 I peyne me to han an hauteyn speche
And rynge it out as round as gooth a belle

---

396 And est and west vp on the peple I bekke
As dooth a dowue sittyng on a berne

---

406 Thogh that hir soules goon a blakeberyed

---

421 Thus spitte I out my venym vnder hewe
Of holynesse . . .

---

472 Hir othes been so grete and so dampnable
That it is grisly for to heere hem swere
Oure blissed lordes body they to tere

---

475 Hem thoughte that Iewes rente hym ynough

---

479 Syngeres with harpes baudes wafereres
Whiche been the verray deueles officeres

---

THE PARSONER'S PROLOGUE AND TALE

---

498 O glotonye ful of cursednesse
O cause first of oure confusioun
O original of oure dampnacioun

---

512 O glotonye on thee wel oghte vs pleyne

---

534 O wombe o bely o stynkyng cod
Fulfilled of donge and of corrupcioun
At either ende of thee foul is the soun
How greet labour and cost is thee to fynde
Thise cokes how they stampe and strayne and grynde
And turnen substaunce in to accident
To fulfillen al thy likerous talent
Out of the harde bones knokke they
The mary for they caste noght awey
That may go thurgh the golet softe and soote
Of spicerie of leef bark and roote
Shal been his sauce ymaked by delit
To make hym yet a newer apetit
But certes he that huanteth swiche delices
Is dead whil that he lyueth in thise vices

---

553 And thurgh thy dronke nose semeth the soun
As thogh thou seydest ay Sampsoun Sampsoun

---

558 For dronkenesse is verrey sepulture
Of mannes wit and his discrecioun

---

562 Now kepe yow fro the white and fro the rede
And namely fro the white wyn of Lepe
That is to selle in Fisshestrete or in Chepe
This wyn of Spaigne crepeth subtilly
In othere wynes growynge faste by
Of which ther riseth swich fumositee
That whan a man hath dronken draughtes thre
And weneth that he be at hoom in Chepe
He is in Spaigne right at the toune of Lepe
Nat at the Rochel ne at Burdeux toun
And thanne wol he seyn Sampsoun Sampsoun

---

THE PARDONER'S PROLOGUE AND TALE

---

481 To kyndle and blowe the fyr of lecherye

---

556 Thou fallest as it were a stiked swyn

---

575 Ther cam a privee theef men clepeth deeth

---

728 Thus walke I lyk a restelees kaytyf

---

729 And on the ground which is my modres gate

---

THE PRIORESS'S PROLOGUE AND TALE

---

1651 Of thee and of the white lilye flour
Which that the bar and is a mayde alwey

---

1654 Nat that I may encrysen hir honour
For she hir self is honour and the roote
Of bountee next hir sone and soules boote

---

1666 Ther may no tonge expresse in no science

---

1668 Thow goost biforn of thy berygnytee
And getest vs the light of thy [illegible]
To gyden vs vn to thy sone so deere

---

1673 That I me may the weighte nat sustene
But as a child of twelf month old or lesse

---

1703 But ay whan I remembre on this matere
Seint Nicholas stant euere in my presence
For he so yong to Crist dide reuerence

---

THE PRIORESS'S PROLOGUE AND TALE

---

1748 Oure firste foo the sergent Sathanas
That hath in Iewes herte his wespe nest

---

1768 The blood out crieth on youre cursed dede

---

1771 The white lamb celestial quod she

---

1784 She goth as she were half out of hir
mynde

---

1799 This gemme of chastitee this emersude
And eek of martirdom the ruby bright
Ther he with throte ykorue[n] lay vpright

---

1817 This newe Rachel bryngen fro his beere

---

1846 This welle of mercy Cristes moder swete

---

1864 His salte teerys trikled doun as reyn

---

1866 And stille he ley as he hedde been
ytounde

---

THE MAN OF LAW'S PROLOGUE AND TALE

---

124 Youre bogges been nogh filled with <u>wnbes</u>
<u>as</u>
But with <u>eye cynk</u> that renneth for youre
chaunce

---

129 . . . ye been fadres of tidynges
And tales bothe of pees and of debat

---

THE MAN OF LAWE'S TALE

---

165 Humblesse hath slayn in hir al tirannye

---

167 Hir herte is verray chambre of holynesse

---

168 Hir hand ministre of fredom for almesse

---

190 Perauenture in thilke large book
Which that men clepe the heuene ywriten
was
With sterres whan that he his birthe
took
That he for loue sholde han his deth
ellas
For in the sterres clerer than is glas
Is writen god woot who so koude it rede
The deeth of euery man with outen drede

In sterres many a wynter ther biforn
Was writen the deeth of Ector Achilles
Of Pompei Iulius er they were born
The stryf of Thebes and of Hercules
Of Sampson Turnus and of Socrates
The deeth but mennes wittes ben so dulle
That no wight kan wel rede it atte fulle

---

194 For in the sterres clerer than is glas

---

258 I trowe at Troye whan Pirrus brak the
wal
Or Ylion brende Thebes the citee
Nat Rome for the harm thurgh Hanybal
That Romayns hath venquyshed tymes thre
Was herd swich tendre wepyng for pitee
As in the chambre was for hir departynge
But forth she moot wher so she wepe or
synge

---

---

295 O first moeuyng cruel firmament
With thy diurnal sweigh that crowdest ey
And hurlest al from est til occident
That naturelly wolde holde another wey
Thy crowdyng set the heuene in swich array
At the bigynnyng of this fiers vinge
That cruel Mars hath slayn this mariage

---

306 O fieble moone vnhappy been thy pas
Thow knyttest thee ther thow art nat
receyued
Ther thow were wel fro thennes artow
weyued

---

323 The moder of the sowdan welle of vices

---

351 We shul first feyne vs cristendom to teke
Coold water shal nat greue vs but a lite

---

355 For thogh his wyf be cristned neuer so
white
She shal haue nede to wasshe awey the rede
Thogh she a font ful water with hir lede

---

359 O sowdanesse roote of iniquitee

---

359 Virago thow Semyrame the secounde

---

360 O serpent vnder femynynytee
Lyk to the serpent depe in helle ybounde

---

362 O feyned woman al that may confounde
Vertu and innocence thurgh thy malice
Is bred in thee as nest of euery vice

---

THE MAN OF LAWE'S TALE

---

365 O Sathan envyous syn thilke day
That thow were chaced from oure heritage
Wel knowestow to wommen the olde way
Thow madest Eua brynge vs in seruage
Thow wolt fordoon this cristen mariage
Thyn instrument so weylawey the while
Makestow of wommen whan thou wolt bigile

---

397 As any moder myghte hir doghter deere

---

400 Naught trowe I the triumphe of Iulius
Of which that Lucan maketh swich a boost
Was rialler ne moore curyus
Than was thassemblee of this blisful oost

---

404 But this scorpion this wi'ked goost
The sowdanesse for al hir flaterynge
Caste vnder this ful mortally to stynge

---

411 The fruyt of this matere is that I telle

---

420 (of the feest)
But al to deere they boghte it er they
ryse

---

438 And Custance han they take anon foot hoot

---

459 The white lamb that hurt was with a spere

---

470 Men myghten aske why she was noght slayn
Bek at the feste who myghte hir body saue
And I answere to that demaunde agayn
Who saued Danyel in the horrible caue
Ther euery wight saue he maister and knaue
Was with the leoun frete er he asterte
No wight but god that he bar in his herte

---

---

479 Crist which that is to euery harm triacle
By certein mones ofte as knowen clerkes
Dooth thyng for certein ende that ful derk
is

---

485 Who kept hire fro the drenchyng in the see
Who kepte Ionas in the fisshes mawe
Til he was spouted vp at Nynyuee

---

488 Wel may men knowe it was no wight but he
That kepte peple Ebrayk from hir
drenchynge
With drye feet thurgh out the see passynge

---

491 Who bad the foure spiritz of tempest
That power han tanoyen lond and see
Bothe north and south and also west and
est
Anoyeth neither see no lond ne tree
Soothly the commandour of that was he
That fro the tempest ay th' womman kepte
As wel whan she wook as whan she slepte

---

500 Who fedde the Egipcien Marie in the caue
Or in the desert no wight but Crist sanz faille
Fyue thousand folk it was as greet meruaille
With loues fyue and fisshes two to fede
God sente his foyson at hir grete nede

---

552 But it were with thilke eyen of his mynde
With whiche men seen after that they been
blynde

---

571 That helpeth folk out of the feendes snare

---

577 But kepte it strongly many a wyntres space

---

617 For as the lomb toward his deeth is broght
So stant this innocent bifore the kyng

631 Allas Custaunce thow nast no champioun
Ne fighte kanstow noght so weilawey
But he that starf for oure redempcioun
And bond Sathan and yet lyth ther he lay
So be thy stronge champion this day
For but if Crist open miracle kythe
Withouten gilt thow shalt been slayn as
swythe

645 Haue ye nat seyn som tyme a pale face
Among a prees of hym that hath be lad
Toward his deeth wher as hym gat no grace
And swich a colour in his face hath had
Men myghte knowe his face that was bistad
Amonges alle the faces in that route
So stant Custance and looketh hire aboute

657 O blood roial that stondest in this drede

670 That doun he fel atones as a stoon

675 The doghter of holy chirche in heigh
presence

679 As mased folk they stoden everychone

697 Hir thoughte hir cursed horte brest atwo

701 He list nat of the chef ne of the stree
Heken so long a tale as of the corn

THE MAN OF LAWE'S TALE

706 The fruyt of euery tale is for to seye
They ete and drynke and daunce and synge
and pleye

745 . . . whil he sleep as a swyn

774 Thy mynde is lorn thow iangleest as a iay

832 In hym triste I and in his moder deere
That is to me my sayl and eek my steere

873 For wynd and weder almyghty god purchace

879 The constable gan aboute his herte colde

890 The hond was knowe that the lettre wroot

891 And al the venym of this cursed dede

932 How may this weyke wommen han this
strengthe
Hir to defende agayn this renegat
O Colias vnmesurable of lengthe
How myghte Iauid make thee so mast
So yong and of armure so desolat
How dorste he looke vpon thy dredful face
Wel may men seen it was but goddes grace

THE MAN OF LAWE'S TALE

939 Who yaf Iudith corage or hardynesse
To sleen hym Olofernus in his tente
And to deliuceren out of wrecchednesse
The peple of god I sey for this entente
That right as god spirit of vigour sente
To hem and saued hem out of meschaunce
So sente he myght and vigour to Custaunce

1055 And she for sorwe as dumb stant as a tree

1075 And swich a blisse is ther bitwix hem two
That saue the ioye that lasteth euermo
Ther is noon lyk that any creature
Hath seyn or shal whil that the world may
dure

TYPIST: Ruby Cochran Davis