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A CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL STUDY OF
ROBERT HENRYSON'S MORALL FABILLIS.

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A CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL STUDY
OF ROBERT HENRYSON'S MORALL FABILLIS

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By
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* * * * * *

The Ohio State University
1968

Approved by

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Fluellen. By your patience, Aunchient Pistol. Fortune is painted blind, with a muffler afore her eyes, to signify to you that Fortune is blind. And she is painted also with a wheel to signify to you, which is the moral of it, that she is turning, and inconstant, and mutability, and variation. And her foot, look you, is fixed upon a spherical stone, which rolls, and rolls, and rolls. In good t. i., the poet makes a most excellent description of it. Fortune is an excellent moral.

Henry V, III, vi, 31-40
PREFACE

The first two chapters comprise the actual introduction to my study of Henryson, and this fact accounts for the many tentative statements therein. These chapters also form a commentary on the "general Prolog" to the Fabillis and on the opening of The Preaching of the Swallow, Henryson's most significant remarks about his theory. In addition, they provide a survey of the various schools of criticism which have encrusted the poet.

Although my approach is essentially to relate "tradition" and "the individual talent," I have forsaken any idea of presenting the complete context of the work. The fullest comparative study of the literary analogues is Ian Jamieson's splendid unpublished doctoral thesis, The Poetry of Robert Henryson: A Study of the Use of Source Material (Edinburgh, 1964); accordingly, I have devoted much of my study to the philosophical influences so that I might avoid duplicating his labor. Inevitably, we share many critical opinions, notably an emphasis on Henryson's themes of the transitory world and "blindness." As a result, several of my notices of these themes echoing back and forth in the Fabillis have been anticipated by Jamieson. But we differ as often as we agree. I think that he relies too much on the moralitas to interpret the story, minimizing the gap between the appended moral and that which is "in" the story.

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Beyond the well-documented assumptions that Henryson was a Scottish schoolmaster, perhaps in Orders, who wrote the *Morall Fabillis* in the last quarter of the fifteenth century, none of the various biographical speculations are relevant. On this matter one may consult the introduction to any of the editions of Henryson cited in the Bibliography. For the context of Scottish history one should consult with care the books by Stearns and MacQueen. I will not place much emphasis on this aspect of Henryson's poetry, but rather I will, like Jamieson, regard it in the more general context of European literature. The first chapter of MacQueen's book ("Henryson's Milieu") does much to restore Henryson to his rightful place among the most literate of medieval British poets, and I hope to add further evidence of his erudition.

For the origin and transmission of fables before the twelfth century, see the Bibliography for the works authored by Hervieux (vol. I) and Perry, as well as Perry's edition of Babrius and Phaedrus. This exceedingly complex subject is beyond the scope of my dissertation. I have also ignored the Eastern analogues in Hervieux (vol. V) and have generally restricted myself to fable collections like those in Hervieux and to the beast-epics, as opposed to the many isolated fables occurring in medieval writings.

On the text of the *Fabillis*, something about which critics have long been complacent, see MacQueen's first appendix. He argues that the Bannatyne MS provides the best version, but his criteria are often vague, as Denton Fox's review points out (N&Q, CCXII [1967], 347-49). Both MacQueen and Jamieson use this MS for their text, and Jamieson (p. iii) claims that its ordering is closer to the Romulean tradition.
than that of any other version. The latter question is not of much importance to my study, because I find that the sequence of fables is, in general, rarely of significance. Even so, the Bannatyne is of little help in determining the original order of the Fabillis since it inter-sperses them with such other "fables" as The Duke of the Howlat. Where this MS does offer a superior reading I have adopted it and have given my reasons. But unless otherwise noted I have used the Bassandyne text as found in The Poems and Fables of Robert Henryson, ed. H. Harvey Wood, 2nd edn. (Edinburgh and London, 1958). This text does not always vary significantly from the Bannatyne, and it enables me to use the conventional enumeration of lines. My Bannatyne readings are from W. Tod Ritchie, ed., The Bannatyne Manuscript, IV, STS, Ser. 2, 26 (Edinburgh and London, 1930). Several times I present meaningful Bannatyne variants without comment. It may be assumed in these cases that I have accepted the Bassandyne readings but am aware that the variants make a difference in sense without affecting my argument. The following abbreviations refer to the editions of Henryson I have consulted: "G. G. Smith," "Elliott," and "Wood" (see the Bibliography for the first two). I use Wood for all of Henryson’s poetry save the Bannatyne version of the Fabillis.

At the end of this study I have included an appendix of "readings": passages translated from Henryson’s sources and analogues and from theoretical writings important to an understanding of the Fabillis. (Almost none of this material is elsewhere available in English.) I use this form to provide a reasonably full context for the smaller passages which I extract and use in the text in the original language.
Also, it will keep the text and its notes uncluttered by such translation and by the bibliographical apparatus attending it. A "q. v." refers the reader to these selections, but I recommend that they be read before the chapter is begun. All translations, unless otherwise indicated, are mine. I wish to thank Herbert Merrick and Ben Honeycutt for proofreading them; a grant from the Ohio State Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies made possible their help.

With these readings I provide tables of analogues not included with the translations. My chief purpose here is to tie Henryson in with that keystone of fable research, Perry's *Aesopica*, and to aid the folklorist who wishes to scrutinize the theories of Bauman. In the case of Chapter VI, for which I do not provide readings, I give more lengthy tables of both sources and analogues. For other tables see Diebler and the edition of Caxton's *Aesop* by Jacobs (vol. I) where it applies.

I would like to acknowledge the kind permission of the following authors and publishers to use copyrighted material: Denton Fox and The Johns Hopkins Press ("Henryson's Fables"); Ian Jamieson (his thesis); John MacQueen and The Clarendon Press, Oxford (*The Poetry of Robert Henryson*); and H. Harvey Wood and Messrs. Oliver & Boyd, Ltd. (Wood's edition of Henryson). I preferred the Roques edition for my translation of the *Roman de Renart*, but Librairie Hônore Champion Editeur refused, "Cette traduction pouvant nuire à la vente de nos volumes."

I am most indebted to my adviser, Professor Francis Lee Utley, for his guidance and for the use of "many a quaint and curious volume of
forgotten lore." I am very grateful for the criticism of Professors Robert Estrich and Martin Stevens.
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I  ANIMAL FABLE AND ANIMAL STORY

By all accounts, the beast tale has amused and enraged numberless members of the animal kingdom's highest order since man first considered that pride, and even intellect, were not enough to dissever him completely from the lesser species. Having endured as long as any other literary tradition,¹ this multifoliate genre, if ever studied comprehensively, would provide valuable indices to the cultural peculiarities of the times and places which it mirrors. But although the form is not at all monolithic, it has generally retained certain traits that enable one to speak of "traditions." I mean to survey these traditions, giving some idea of the variety of personalities at work upon ancient material and showing how, for the Middle Ages, the synthetic tendencies of the genre reached a culmination in the last original collection of that period: the thirteen Morall Fabillis of Robert Henryson.

So lengthy a treatment of so seemingly humble a form perhaps needs defense nowadays. But from classical times well into the Renaissance the fable was accorded much dignity as a means for effective didacticism; Aristotle (Rhetorica II, 20), Quintilian (Institutio oratoria I, 9, i), Boccaccio (Genealogia deorum XIV, ix), and Thomas Wilson (The Arte of Rhetorique²) bear witness to its value. The "serious" literature of the Middle Ages is filled with the wisdom of the fabulists, and it scarcely need be said that the form survived the dissolution of the
monasteries. The fables of La Fontaine and Krilof come to mind at once; and in America Aesop has been dealt with by the diverse hands of Joel Chandler Harris, George Ade, William Saroyan, and James Thurber—not to mention the countless briefer (and stranger) allusions like that in John Barth's *Giles Goat-Boy* (Vol. I, Second Reel, 1). The beast-epic, an offshoot of the fable, may have a modern representative in Orwell's *Animal Farm*.

I have had to restrict my study in several ways. In particular, I will lean heavily upon what might be called the English tradition: fabulists of English nationality writing in Latin, French, or the vernacular. Relying upon their work to establish the traditional elements of the story proper, I refer as well to some of the Old French *Isopets* and the *Roman de Renart* because they had currency in Britain and probably influenced Henryson. For the morals, I have expanded my scope considerably and will examine most of those available to me from Phaedrus (1st c. A.D.) to Caxton. As with the stories, my aim is to show the manifold possibilities open to Henryson. The broader coverage of the morals is necessary if one is to learn how the stories were generally read.

The qualification concerning "English" story-elements is actually not a significant restriction, for during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries England established the major Aesopic tradition of Western Europe. The most important collections of this period were those of Walter the Englishman (Gualterus Anglicus), Alexander Neckam, and Odo of Cheriton, who derived their work largely from prose redactions of Phaedrus—Odo having the greatest independence—and it is even possible
that some of the Isopets, derived in turn primarily from Walter and Neckam, were composed in England. The influence of these writers was vast, but it is not my intention to romanticize them. If I place what may seem undue stress upon them, it is to counter the arguments of at least one folklorist, who bases his claims for oral influence upon Henryson on "the absence of an artistic fable tradition in [vernacular] English literature. . . ."5

The popularity of this "Aesopic" material is best verified by the literature of anecdote and sermon: for example, more than half of Odo's Narrationes are fables. Such works as Neckam's De naturis rerum (apart from his Novus Aesopus) and the later exempla collections of Holkot, Bromyard, and Bozon contain several of them. G. R. Owst observes that modern Sunday school teachers might be astonished to learn "that centuries earlier in Catholic England Brer Fox and his fellows had once provided a regular subject-matter for Sabbath-day discourses to adults."6 Extant fables in English date from the Old English Homilies, but no true collection in the vernacular appears until Lydgate's at the end of the fourteenth century, although Langland, Chaucer, Gower, and many others before them used Aesop in brief proverbs or extended exempla.7 Unfortunately, despite the influence of the same Anglo-Norman tradition that includes Marie de France8 Lydgate's few fables are badly written and overly dilated; Henryson may have known them, and his Scots version is an immense improvement.9 As final testimony to the continuous popularity of the fable in medieval England, we find that the first "complete" Aesop in English, that of Caxton, was this translator's best received work, to judge from the number of editions (six between 1484
and 1658) and from the large number of competing adaptations.

So far I have not been careful to distinguish between animal stories, such as the Renart cycle, and animal fables. In fact, as Perry has shown, one cannot find a definition that fits all tales claiming to be "fables." But what all have in common, he states, is that "In contrast to simile as a form of composition, which is framed in general terms or hypothetically, a fable, like anything we call a story, relates, in the guise of actual occurrence, a particular action or series of actions that took place once in the past through the agency of particular characters" ("Fable," p. 18). If the story is not obviously fictional, then "it will be an historical example or a chrie" (p. 18). The structure of a fable may be identical with that of a chrie or proverb, as long as the piece fits the above criteria and has "the obvious purpose of illustrating an ethical truth . . ." (p. 19). Stated simply, "The purpose of the Aesopic fable, as the rhetoricians of the first century and later see it, is simply to illustrate a truth of some kind by means of a story" (p. 22).

I dwell upon this matter of definition because I hope to show that Henryson's uses of the fable are at once remarkably traditional, a point not often sufficiently attended to, and yet individual in particular detail and emphasis. As Marshall W. Stearns puts it, the Fabillis are "derivative and original at the same time (therein lies the paradox of an author who makes his borrowings his own)." And Bauman rightly points out that Janet Smith goes too far in her claims for the literary influence of the French upon Henryson, but then he wrongly asserts that "to consider Henryson's Fables purely in the context of formal
literature, as most other critics have done, is to uphold the other extreme," namely that he was uninfluenced by oral tradition.\textsuperscript{15} I hope to demonstrate that Henryson's links with oral "sources" are far more tenuous than ascriptions to recorded literature and, moreover, that the oral influence (what little there is) is generally irrelevant to an evaluation or understanding of the \textit{Fabillis}.\textsuperscript{16}

Returning to the traditional elements in Henryson: his purpose is manifestly didactic, even if the reader makes the mistake of not considering each \textit{moralitas} in tandem with its story. Henryson had other alternatives, for Perry observes that the "truth" demanded by the rhetoricians is "In the great majority of our extant fables . . . a general proposition relating to the nature of things or to types of human characters or behavior, with or without an implied moral exhortation" ("Fable," p. 22). This three-fold distinction was anticipated in the sixth century by Isidore of Seville,\textsuperscript{17} who says that the fable can do any of the following: delight (\textit{delectandi causa}), discourse on the nature of things, or relate to man's morals (\textit{mores}). The first includes those told to the multitude (\textit{vulgo dicunt}) and those of Plautus and Terence. An example of the second is the description of the "Hippocentaur," a man-horse emblematic of the speed of human life.\textsuperscript{18} And Horace's fable of the two mice is of the sort dealing with morality. Thanks in part to his \textit{moralitates}, Henryson's fables always do more than delight, and he has few Hippocentaurs. Only four of the stranger beasts of the \textit{Physiologus} invade his Lothian landscape; and in the few cases when a Plinian trait accompanies a conventional animal, it can be traced to an intermediary such as Odo.\textsuperscript{19} The element of delight is
obvious--functionally so--but I hold that Henryson's nominalism, among other causes, precluded much fantasy beyond the usual anthropomorphism of his *dramatis personae*. I will take up this matter in time.

On the "intention" displayed by the *Fabillis*, I think it important to establish Henryson's probable audience in order to illuminate later the function of several elements of his narrative. While Henryson nowhere states for whom he is writing, addressing us deferentially as "my Maisteris" (1. 29), the evidence of previous collections and the internal evidence of his own work (to be studied shortly) point toward a general audience of children and other laymen, chiefly of the lower estates. The author of the *Isopen II de Paris* claims such explicitly (Epilog, 11. 16-18, q. v.), as does Jacques de Vitry in discussing the exemplary devices of his *Sermones de tempore* (q. v.). In the Prolog to the *Sermones vulgares* he goes further, claiming that exempla not only stimulate the piety of the simple and unpolished but also keep them awake. And in the addition to the Prolog for Cdo's *Fabulae* (q. v.) we are told "Blessed Basil's" program for teaching children. Welter shows how writers of sermon manuals were aware of the need for adapting to an audience and how they were nearly unanimous in acclaiming exempla (which broad genre includes the fable) as beneficial for laymen.

One way in which Henryson accommodated his audience was to use the level of style traditional with his form: "low to low middle." As MacQueen points out, there is more than either modesty or convention to Henryson's self-reproach for lack of eloquence when he asks for correction if anything "Be deminute, or yet superfluous" (1. 41):
He aimed at a language normally neither "diminut" nor "superfluys"—almost certainly an indication that he aimed not at a technically low style, which for his purpose would be "diminut," nor at a "superfluys" high style (one should perhaps think of some of Lydgate's work), but at a mean—some form of the middle style. So far as one can judge over a gap of some five hundred years, the general stylistic level of the Fabillis would support this reading, although it must be assumed that when occasion demanded Henryson allowed his style to moderate into high or low, or even a burlesque of high—the mock heroic (p. 99).

Kinsley claims that "the narrative and dialogue of the Fabillis have, to the ear of a Lowland reader, the unmistakable ring of spoken Scots." Bauman, not fully appreciating the conventional nature of Henryson's colloquial usage, cites it as an example of Henryson's "connection with oral tradition" and goes so far as to say that the poet's intrusion of himself into the action of some tales was "borrowed from oral tradition" (p. 117). In the latter case he overlooks such literary conventions as the dream-vision, and in the former he neglects 1500 years of recorded custom in languages known to Henryson. No matter what Henryson's usage suggested to his first audience, he could hardly have written otherwise without seeming to intend parody of the kind informing the Nun's Priest's Tale. I trust the ears of the two Scotch critics, but I will restrict myself to judging what the fifteenth-century audience understood, not what they heard.

That Henryson, author of The Testament of Cresseid and Orpheus and Eurydice, should have chosen a series of fables for his longest work is not surprising in view of his position as Schoolmaster of Dunfermline. As Rose observes, "the Latin version of Aesop formed one of the most important primers in the monastic schools." Moreover,
Quintilian had advised as an exercise for elementary pupils that they first paraphrase Aesop in simple language and then abridge or embellish this paraphrase with the same simplicity of style as that of the author (Inst. oratoria I, 9, i). I cannot prove that Henryson's purpose was to give his scholars an example of this technique; yet a great deal of internal evidence indicates that the Fabillis were meant to delight a young audience and to instruct them not just in morality but in such areas as astronomy and law. In addition, Henryson seems to have been introducing them to an Ockhamistic outlook and, in so doing, teaching them to appreciate, if not in fact how to read, his fable allegory. But in places the Morall Fabillis have a depth of philosophical and social commentary best appreciated by more sophisticated readers. One is tempted to place this work among those which provided, in Owst's words, "self-education for the middle classes [of the fifteenth century] in the art of reading and literary appreciation," their primers being not the classics but rather the "same little works of devotion and moral instruction" that had been popular throughout the Middle Ages—hence so many of the works Caxton chose to print (pp. 8, 9).

But Henryson's fables are basically not childish, though in ways child-like, and in this he is true to the oldest traditions. The earliest extant fables show the Greek disposition toward self-criticism: the story appears to speak only of the animal in man; then the moral points out how truly the fable speaks of the whole man and of his society. Not all of "Aesop's fables" have this broad significance, but few were intended merely for the amusement of children. Much later,
Isidore emphasized that fables are to depict recognizable aspects of human life through dumb animals (I, xl, 1), and the increasing "realism" that evolved in the Middle Ages is the tradition of which Henryson is a direct heir. Moreover, as Daly writes, "the history of the collections pretty clearly indicates that the morals were not a necessary or standard accompaniment of the fable from the beginning" (pp. 17-18), and that the characteristics of the animals are not always consistent in the early fables (p. 19). Here too Henryson is conventional, first in making a good story out of whatever material came to hand, and second in striking home with a moral that has a clear, didactic purpose regardless of how tenuous its connection with the story.

The allegory of the Fabillis, to be discussed more fully in the next chapter, is linked with what I call the "moral imperative," the fundamental seriousness of purpose, which characterizes medieval fables into the fifteenth century. One can pick out frivolity in some fables before Henryson, but it has little suggestion of the extreme to which Poggio Bracciolini's Facetiae carry the form. Caxton's Aesop has some of Poggio's fables, but Henryson's mode, except for the inoffensive scatology of The Taill of the Wolf and the Wedder, is strictly in keeping with earlier precepts. Instances of these rules are to be found amid the exegetical pyrotechnics of Odo's Prolog (q. v.), wherein he stresses the heavy obligations of the tale-teller. And the exemplum in the addition to this prolog serves to demonstrate the wide range of possibilities open to teachers of manners and morals. Thus, when Henryson claims to have made his "translation"
Nocht of my self, for vane presumtioun,
Bot be request and precept of ane Lord,
Of quhome the Name it neidis not record (11. 33-35),

it seems to me more likely that he refers to the Lord of Parables than to an earthly ruler, as will be shown in my discussion of Odo's quotations from Matthew XIII. To seek a contemporary lord is as fruitless as the long quest for a uniform reading of Spenser's political allegory, one of the darker chapters in scholarship. Elliott comments that "Such vague reference seems poor reward for patronage. Henryson is probably attempting to establish an initial attitude of objectivity rather than acknowledging a patron." I find more to the lines than this, and if my identification would seem too obvious to have been overlooked, the reason perhaps is that it is too uninteresting at first glance. If not Christ, then my second choice for the "Lord" would be the "Romulus" whose prose redaction of Phaedrus was the basis of most subsequent collections: he was often taken for an Emperor. But, as Crowne has shown, Henryson nowhere mentions Romulus, and his peculiar conception of Aesop himself as a Roman (11. 1370-73) has more in common with Lydgate than with the usual Romulean prologs of earlier collections (pp. 587-88). In any event, that Henryson felt the touch of divine sanction in his sources is manifest from his canonization of Aesop. In the dream-vision preacing The Taill of the Lyoun and the Mous, Aesop says, "... now my winning is in Hevin ffor ay" (1. 1374). And Henryson's question to the master reflects two frequently reiterated concerns, worry over the literal level and conviction that his work is essentially moral:

Ar ye not he that all thir Fabillis wrate,
Quhilk in effect, suppois thay fenyeit be,
Ar full off prudence and moralitie? (11. 1379-81).

The distinction in the last line is an important one for Henryson. The prudence he teaches is most often the sort involving practical matters, as opposed to purely moral instruction. This distinction is far from unique, and Perry notes that the majority of fables do not deal with moral truths but rather with worldly wisdom and shrewdness ("Fable," p. 22). For instance, Marie de France writes of Romulus' concern for his son's conduct in worldly affairs:

\begin{quote}
Romulus, ki fu emperere,
a sun fiz escrit e mandra
e par essample le mustra
cum se delust cuntreguatier
que hum nel pedust engignier (Prolog, 11. 12-16, q. v.).
\end{quote}

And most of Blessed Basil's precepts, in the aforementioned exemplum, have to do with mannerly conduct, including the injunction that youth ought not "magistralem usurpare dignitatem," a maxim surely close to any schoolmaster's heart. One of many examples of Henryson's practical advice is to be found in The Tail of the Scheip and the Doig, where he first teaches the legal process and then tells how to survive it.

Before relating more specifically Henryson's uses of the fable, I should discuss what he owed to the animal story or "beast-epic." The latter genre provides the sources and analogues for five of the thirteen Fabillis. (His purely Aesopic tales find their only undoubted source in Walter; less certain are his debts to Lydgate, Cdo, Caxton's Aesop, and the Isopet de Lyon.) As I take up Henryson's Renardian tales, I will quarrel with the implications of Bauman's statement that
"Not one possible source in the beast epic has been advanced for any of Henryson's fox stories that can demonstrate the degree of similarity or amount of evidence in its favor that the fables of Walter can for the Aesopic material. The best evidence that can be mustered from written fox tales consists almost entirely of analogues of varying degrees of similarity" (p. 115). For now, I shall proceed with the backgrounds of the beast-epic, which owes much to "Aesop," deriving as it does from the fable of the sick lion. The earliest known example, the Ecblasis Captivi (11th c.?), had little influence upon subsequent beast literature. However, the next major beast-epic, the Isengrimus (ca. 1150), was the first to individualize the animals by means of proper names and was the chief source of the Roman de Renart. Its satire is broader than that of the Ecblasis, attacking clergy, court, and society in general. The didactic possibilities of this longer form were soon realized, and the beast-epic in turn influenced many fabulists. The so-called Fabulae Extravagantes, possibly descendants of the lost fables ascribed to "Alfred," are longer than others of their kind and involve elaborate conversations between the animals. And in the fables of Odo, Owst notes, "the animals themselves are regarded as little people, precisely as they appear in frequent representations upon the margins of illuminated manuscripts, engrossed in earnest conversations, fighting in miniature tourneys, playing on musical instruments, indulging in the various pastimes and mischiefs of men and women of the day" (p. 205). Like others, these two collections show traces of the Roman de Renart and have by diverse means found their way into Caxton's Aesop. They are not like most of the ancient kinds, those short "allegorical" tales
of an international nature designed to illustrate a simple truth; instead they have begun to be elaborate satires pointing toward the problems of the nations in which they were written. Even though few lengthy tales were inspired in England by this genre, Renardian names and motifs infiltrated the Gesta Romanorum, Bozon, Bromyard, and many others.

One scant bit of evidence suggests that Henryson may have known the Isengrimus; two or three of its episodes are in any event analogous to those in the Scots poems. More likely, Henryson knew the Roman de Renart, which contains all of the episodes in the Isengrimus save for the death of the title character. The Roman, composed between 1170 and 1250, is unlike the Ecballus and the Isengrimus in that the fox and not the wolf is the dominant beast; he remains so in this genre for the rest of the Middle Ages. The Roman is also unlike its predecessors because it was composed largely by trouvères instead of clerics, and this fact accounts perhaps for the purely humorous character of the earlier branches: the parodies of the heroic epic and of the romance of chivalry. Satirical and didactic tendencies belong primarily to the last few branches. Whatever Henryson derived from the Roman in the way of characters and motifs, his omissions are just as noteworthy: he has none of the French work's conventional assaults on monks, for example, or its burlesques of sacred institutions and lack of true sympathy for the poor. Yet the poem has several themes agreeable to Henryson, especially its attacks upon certain aspects of medieval justice and the rapacity of the nobles. His satire is not as overt as that of the later branches, possibly because as early as the thirteenth century symbolic values became attached to the characters, and even the Roman
de la Rose could make satiric thrusts by using the name "Renart."  

Henryson would not have been thought frivolous for introducing these comic tales into his "moral fables." An interchange between didactic works and the Roman was taking place even while the cycle was being written. For instance, Petrus Alphonsus inspired two branches of the poem (though his moralizing was left out). And as I have said, the Englishman Odo of Cheriton, who was in France between 1214 and 1221, changed the anonymous vulpes of the Aesopic tradition to "Renart," often in character as well as in name. But like Henryson, and unlike the Roman, he treats Renart freely, killing him off without qualms whenever the fable demands it for its moral. Two fourteenth-century Anglo-Normans, Jean de Shepney and Nicole Bozon, generally abridged Odo in their works, but they expanded several of the Renardian tales. A large part of English literature devoted to Renart is accounted for by the work of these three men.

Until Caxton's History of Reynard the Fox (1481), translated from a Flemish version of the Roman, it was Odo's popularity that spread Renart's in England. But the paucity of Renardian tales in the vernacular before the fifteenth century is amazing. The thirteenth-century The Vox and the Wolf and Chaucer's Nun's Priest's Tale are virtually the only examples. But several traces of the word "Renart" exist (it appears four times in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight) and, as Flinn points out, "les nombreuses miséricordes et autres sculptures de la fin du XIVème ou du début du XVème siècle dans toutes les régions de l'Angleterre semblent confirmer que les exploits de Renart avaient été connus et avaient eu une certaine faveur populaire, sinon
littéraire . . ." (pp. 678-79). Kenneth Varty's recent book has demonstrated this last point and thus has disproved Bauman's assertion that the lack of a literary tradition "would imply a weak or non-existent oral tradition of the fox tales in Great Britain" (p. 119), even if one concedes the absence of a significant vernacular tradition. Bauman assumes the influence of Flemish traders to find the "oral tradition" behind Henryson's fox (pp. 119-20), but the various native and French literary sources seem more substantial evidence of whatever borrowing Henryson did. Anyone anxious to seize upon a poetic utterance which is previously unrecorded verbatim, in order to ascribe it to an unrecorded source, should bear in mind the ironic words of Fred Norris Robinson: "... scholars are loath to credit anything to pure invention." At any rate, Flinn and Mossé are probably wrong in asserting that there were no more fables of Renart between Chaucer and Caxton. Henryson retold Chaucer's tale and probably knew the Roman in some version—he certainly knew French, and evidence exists that for some of his fox fables he drew upon sources other than Caxton's History, and possibly before the date of this work's publication.

Having mentioned satire in connection with the beast-epic, I cannot let the subject pass without prefatory comment. Some critics have spent a great deal of time finding historical analogues to situations in the Fabillis. (Again the comparison with Spenser scholarship comes to mind.) But as Owst notes, Henryson was probably in Orders—so his position would suggest—and hence he would have been influenced by the preacher's common theme, "Dies mali sunt" (p. 232 and n. 1). Whether or not Henryson was a cleric, one might extend to
the fable what Owst says of the pulpit: "... it spared no rank or order, high or low, from its searching scrutiny and correction" (p. 361). Even if a Stewart happens to resemble Henryson's lion, the poet, as we shall see, has written allegory of a kind that transcends personal satire. Henryson respects the traditional universality of most fables, as he indicates in his Prolog:

This Nobill Clerk, Bsope, as I haif tauld,
In gay metir, as poete Lawriate,
Be figure wrait his buke: for he nocht wald
Lak the disdane [make light] off hie, nor lowe estate
(ll. 57-60).53

This passage must also be read as a conventional disclaimer, for, while generally respecting the Great Chain, he nevertheless excoriates high and low estates, "Be figure."54

The social satire is part of Henryson's design, but his primary emphasis is pedagogical, in the broadest sense of the word.55 I have already mentioned some of the authorities who sanctioned the use of fables as a teaching device, and, to judge by frequency of citation, no one spoke with greater authority than Aristotle, with whom Henryson was familiar.56 Apart from the locus classicus in Rhetorica II, 20, Aristotle refers to fables and the exemplum in other passages known to the Middle Ages. Problemeta XVIII, 3 (916b),57 alluded to in the Prolog of the Speculum sapiencie (q. v.), claims that men learn more quickly by examples and fables than by enthymemes because the former deal with particulars, "resemble evidence," and "display similarities," which men like to hear.58 Bromyard prefaces his Summa praedicantium (q. v.)59 with a similar statement, and Henryson likewise subordinates deduction to experiential knowledge in even more explicit terms. On
the question of the fable's apparent levity of subject-matter, Mayno, in the Dialogus creaturarum (q. v.), cites Ethica Nicomachea IV, 8 (1127b), among other authorities, to show that levity can be virtuous. But the fact that these authors felt compelled to justify the fable points up their nervousness about the literal level, and Henryson was no exception. This worry will be taken up at the beginning of the next chapter, and Henryson's "empiricism" at the end.

As a teacher, Henryson goes beyond the matter of his instruction. He is concerned with very broad questions of learning, knowledge, and ignorance. Time and again the action of a story, even without considering the moralitas, involves a contest between intelligence and ignorance, prudence and folly. I view his work the way Conrad of Hirsau (q. v.) viewed that of the fabulist Avianus, who, he says, intended "ignorantium et stulticiam errantium describere sicque conscientiam deuiam per has similitudines ad statum aliquem morum bonorum prouocare." I submit that this is the unifying theme of the Fabillis and that if the work is viewed from such a perspective the issue of its "original order" becomes secondary. For all the scholarly shuffling, no thoroughly consistent sequence has yet appeared; if my theory has no other virtue, at least it enables the reader to see an autonomy of purpose in the work as a whole, while allowing for the traditional integrity of each fable. Moreover, it helps account for the adoption and construction of Henryson's Renardian material. Those very few of his fables with genuine links seem to imitate the beast-epic's loose junctures. And regarding the theme, Stith Thompson writes that animal stories "are designed usually to show the cleverness of one animal and the stupidity
of another, and their interest usually lies in the humor of the deceptions or the absurd predicaments the animal's stupidity leads him into. "Henryson took great advantage of this fundamental motif, choosing as well for his Aesopic fables those which illustrate the same contrast. He explores the ways of knowing and the consequences of ignorance, and he shows the eternal and temporal significance for man of the wisdom and folly of his beasts.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER I


3"The first German book to be printed was Ulrich Boner's *Der Edelstein* (Bamberg, 1461), a translation from Walter of England" (Kenneth McKenzie, "Some Remarks on a Fable Collection," Princeton University Library Chronicle, V [1943-44], 144). For much of the following discussion I am indebted to *The Fables of Aesop as First Printed by William Caxton in 1484*, ed. Joseph Jacobs (London, 1889), I, pp. 178 ff. (Hereafter, "Jacobs.") See McKenzie's article (pp. 137-49) for a good short history of the fable, especially as it developed after the Middle Ages.


5Bauman, 108.


Ben E. Perry, "Fable," Studium Generale, XII (1959), 17-37. See also Perry's Aesopica, I (University of Illinois, 1952); and M. Ellwood Smith, "A Classification for Fables, Based on the Collection of Marie de France," MP, XV (1917-18), 477-89.

"Chria, a very short exposition of any deed or saying, with the autours name beyng recited" (Richard Sherry, 1555); quoted in Sister Miriam Joseph, p. 311.

He gives the following example from Bacon's "Of Vainglory": "It was prettily devised of Aesop, 'The fly sat upon the axle-tree of the chariot wheel, and said, 'What a dust I do raise!'"


Bauman, 116.

See I. W. A. Jamieson, "Henryson's 'Fabillis': An Essay Towards a Revaluation," Words: Wai-te-Ata Studies in English, II (1967), 29, n. 14. I heartily agree with Jamieson's approach to Henryson. He writes that he wishes . . . to maintain that it [Henryson's humor] is at all times subject to the moral purpose. Nor do I wish to deny that there are contemporary references in the work—largely making traditional complaints on the nature of man local as a means of persuasion to moral improvement; but I do claim that Henryson's point of view is neither specifically Scottish nor solely political—that it is basically moral and religious rather than political, that it is basically that of any well-educated European. For, it seems to me, it can be claimed that Henryson is a rustic or an entertaining popular poet only if one is ignorant of the mediaeval traditions which lie behind his work: philosophical and religious traditions, traditions of verse forms, genres, rhetorical techniques, topoi. To neglect these is to neglect one of the main features of the poetry, its sophisticated and conscious use of conventions, its revivifying of old forms through combination into a new whole (21).

I am indebted to Dr. Jamieson for an off-print of this article.

Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi Etymologiarvm sive Originvm Libri XX, ed. W. M. Lindsay (Londini et Novi Eboraci, 1911), I; I, xi, 3-6. Isidore borrowed much of this passage from St. Augustine's Contra Mendacium ad Consentium, c. XIII, 28 (PL, XL [Paris, 1887], col. 538). See D. W. Robertson, Jr., A Preface to Chaucer: Studies in Medieval
Perspectives (Princeton, 1962), pp. 58-59, 337-38, 344-45. Isidore also makes a distinction between Aesopic fables, those involving commerce between animals or between inanimate things, and Libyan fables, which involve both men and animals. See Aristotle's Rhetorica II, 20 (1393a); and Babrius and Phaedrus, ed. and trans. Ben E. Perry (Harvard and London, 1965), pp. 139, 506. The Epilog of the Romuli Vindobonensis Fabulae (Hervieux, II, p. 454) is modelled after Isidore and adds the implication that fables may be read with the four levels. (Hervieux uses a fourteenth-century MS but traces its tradition back to the eleventh.) This is the only such statement I have found in Hervieux, and I infer that fables did not have to be read this way.

He gives no examples from the playwrights. Horace's fable of the two mice is in Satires II, 6; Isidore also refers to the fable of the fox and the weasel (cf. Babrius 86) in Epistles I, 7.

The best instance is his use of the symbolic meaning of the fox's tongue in "The Fox, the Wolf, and the Gadgear."

Stearns substantially agrees (p. 129), as does Bauman (116-17, 122-23).

On Jacques see Welter, pp. 118-24.

See Welter, pp. 68-69.

Second Part, ch. 1.


"The Mediaeval Makars," in James Kinsley, ed., Scottish Poetry: A Critical Survey (London, 1955), p. 18. This is evidence that Middle Scots was not so thoroughly the artificial language that it has been thought to be.

See MacQueen, pp. 95-96, for Boccaccio's statement on the low style of Aesop and for that of Walter and the Isopet de Lyon. Genealogia deorum XIV, ix, owes much to Isidore, or Augustine.


In the twelfth-century Dialogus super auctores (q. v.), Conrad of Hirsau borrows heavily from Isidore and expands the criterion of lifelikeness. This work is one of many documenting the use of Aesop in grammar schools. See also MacQueen, pp. 12, 18.

See also Perry, "Fable," 19.


The Bannatyne MS reads "prayeris" for "precept."


For example in Marie de France's Prolog (q. v.) and perhaps in Caxton's Aesop, Prolog to the first book, p. 74. See Jamieson, Source Material, pp. 8-9.

Stearns has also observed the practicality of his arguments (p. 128), though his more frequent mode of analysis is to illustrate specific political situations.

See MacQueen, "Appendix III: The Morall Fabillis and the Beast-Epic."

Ibid., "Appendix II: The Morall Fabillis and the Aesopic Tradition."

Rose (p. xi) claims that it had no influence, but see Nigel de Longchamps, Speculum Stultorum [1180], ed. John H. Mozley and Robert R. Raymo, University of California Publications, English Studies, XVIII (University of California, 1960), pp. 3-7; and Alfred Foulet, ed., Le Couronnement de Renard (Princeton and Paris, 1929), pp. xxxvii-ix. Rose, pp. xi, xvii-xviii, provides the basis for the rest of the paragraph.

Jacobs, I, p. 159.

Ibid., pp. 204-05.

The Poems of Robert Henryson, ed. G. Gregory Smith, I, STS 64 (Edinburgh and London, 1914), p. xli: in The Taill of Schir Chantcleir and the Foxe, "The presence of such a name as Sprotok, which, if not Henryson's own Northern form, is reminiscent of the cock Sprotinus of the Latin Reinardus, would show that the Scots poet had ranged beyond Caxton's pages." But on p. 10 he notes that "Sprotok occurs in The Tale of Colkelbie Sow, I. 117."
For much of the following, cf. Rose, pp. xxiii ff.

See John Flinn, _Le Roman de Renart dans la littérature française et dans les littératures étrangères au moyen âge_ (Paris, 1963), ch. III.

Flinn (pp. 121-22) cites 11. 1520-24, 11117-28, 15008-14.

Flinn, ch. XI.

For Jean see Hervieux, IV, pp. 161-70. For Bozon, the "Introduction" to his _Contes Moralisés_, ed. Lucy Toulmin Smith and Paul Meyer, SATF (Paris, 1889); and Welter, pp. 354-56. As evidence that Bozon's animal stories owe the most to Marie, Jamieson (Source Material, p. 28, n. 1) cites Philip Harry, "A Comparative Study of the Aesopic Fable in Nicole Bozon," University Studies of the University of Cincinnati, Ser. 2, 1, no. 2 (Cincinnati, 1905).

This discussion is based upon Flinn, ch. XV, and he in turn is heavily indebted to Fernand Mossé, "Le Roman de Renart dans l'Angleterre du Moyen Âge," _Les Langues Modernes_, XLV, no. 2 (1951), 70-84.


The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, 2nd edn. (Cambridge, Mass., 1957), p. 303. All quotations from Chaucer are from this edition, and all are from the Canterbury Tales unless otherwise noted.


MacQueen says that "Henryson includes much satirical contemporary reference, some of which is still recognizable, although the relevance of much of it has no doubt been completely lost" (p. 94). I share the more conservative view of Denton Fox, "Henryson's Fables," _BLH_, XXIX (1962), 338, 340.

The Bannatyne MS reads "facound and purperat" in 1. 58, and "Tak" for "Lak" in 1. 60.

Stearns, p. 128, finds in him a much greater sympathy for the commoner than I.

Cf. Stearns, p. 129.

See Stearns, pp. 98-105; MacQueen, pp. 18, 19, 158.

58 See also Rhet. I, 2 (1357b), and Rhet. ad Alexandrum 8 (1429a).

59 For Bromyard see Welter, pp. 328-34.

A fable is inherently allegorical: the moral, if there is one, purports to explain the concretions in the narrative, or at least to guide the reader in finding the "true meaning." But even in collections filled with the most pious of sentiments, medieval fabulists busy themselves at the outset to explain away the element of fiction, which, they fear, might divert the reader or mislead him. The rhetorical convulsions of Walter's Prolog (q. v.) bring forth the commonplace simile used to justify fiction, that of the shell which encloses a "nucleum bonum." The Gualterian Isopet de Lyon and the Morall Fabillis imitate him much more gracefully, and they likewise use the image of flower and fruit, akin to Chaucer's "Taketh the fruyt, and lat the chaf be stille" (VII, l. 3443). The author of the Isopet II de Paris casts aside decorum and with intense self-assurance wishes evil upon the unappreciative reader:

Qui cest livre vodra entendre  
Mout de bien i porra aprender  
Qui mieus li vaudra assavoir  
Qu'amasser grant plenté d'avoir;  
Et qui tendra ces paraboles,  
Ces exsemples et ces frivoles  
A moquerie ne a truffe,  
Bien ait qui li donra la bufe! (Prolog, q. v., along with the Epilog).

Bromyard, in the more conventional tradition of Augustine and Isidore, rests his case on the grounds that a moral can be drawn even from pagan
stories. Mayno extends Aristotle's dictum on play to justify the embellishing of moral matters with levity, that the "fruit" might more readily be seized. And before Lydgate very rightly apologizes for his inadequacies as a poet, he uses the figure of hidden gems, minerals, and pearls to validate his fabling (11. 22-28).

Henryson devotes the first four stanzas of his Prolog to the question of literalism. He begins by conceding the element of fiction and at the same time aligns himself with those fabulists writing of man's mores:

Thocht fein yeit fabils of ald poetre
Be not al grunded upon truth, yit than
Thair polite termes of sweit Rhetore
Richt plesand ar Unto the eir of man;
And als the caus that they first began
Waes to reprie the hail misleving
Off man be figure of ane uther thing (11. 1-7).

He continues in successive stanzas to employ the figures of flower and fruit, shell and kernel, and, against "all work and no play," the over-used bow. Indeed, as we have seen, from Aristotle on

. . . Clerkis says it is richt profitabill
Amanis ernist to ming ane merie sport,
To light the spreit, and gar the tyme be schort
(11. 19-21)

The one line he chooses to quote verbatim from Walter (Prolog, 1. 2) is this: "Dulcius arrident seria picta locis" (1. 28). The similes function to substantiate the sentence of the opening lines, diminishing the fact that fables are "not al grunded upon truth"—that is, literal truth. They demonstrate the figural truth of fables and give a preliminary example of his moralizing, much as Odo does at greater length in his Prolog. Moreover, for Henryson the process of extracting a
moral is not mystical but rational. In keeping with his philosophical outlook he will often claim to give a reading "Haiwand ane sentence according to ressoun" (I. 1894).\textsuperscript{5} I refer to his personal philosophy because I doubt that he and most other medieval authors of "fein yeit fabils" anticipated the rationalistic attacks of Thomas Sprat and his ilk upon "the delightful deceit of Fables."\textsuperscript{6} Though a proto-empiricist, Henryson, like his forerunners, was more concerned with possible immorality than with the threat of metaphysical speculation.

All fabulists could find a haven in the Bible. And their moral imperative stems in part from an awareness that they were imitating Christ's favorite method of teaching and that the Old Testament likewise contains authentic fables. Twice Odo quotes from Psalm LXXVII (LXXVIII), 2 ("Aperiam in parabolis os meum: loquar propositiones ab initio"), which is repeated in verse 35 of that paradigmatic chapter, Matthew XIII.\textsuperscript{7} Too, he echoes verse 43 from this chapter: "Qui habet aures audiendi, audiat;" and he paraphrases verse 52: "Ait illis: Ideo omnis scriba doctus in regno cælorum, similis est homini patrifamilias, qui profert de thesauro suo noua & vetera." Odo understood this last verse to be an injunction, and he followed the Master's example. In this chapter Christ recites seven parables and explains "The Sower" and "The Weeds" with one-to-one moralizations of the sort found in Odo's Prolog\textsuperscript{8} and in his and Henryson's moralitates. And Odo begins his collection with the Biblical fable recommended by Isidore (I, xl, 6) as relating to mores: Judges IX, 8-15.

A passage equally useful to the apologist was Job XII, 7-8: "Nimirum interroga iumenta, & docebunt te: & volatilia caeli, &
indicabunt tibi. / Loquere terrae, & respondebit tibi: & narrabunt pisces maris." Bozon (q. v.) paraphrases these verses and relates them to the diversity of nature; it must be said that the fabulists, no less than the encyclopedists, were aware of the manifold significations of the created world, and so induction of a kind was acknowledged and approved long before Henryson.  

The matter of the fable was therefore justified by numerous pagan, Jewish, and Christian authorities. But Welter finds that creeping secularism had radically altered most such exempla by the fifteenth century (p. 424). Figures like Poggio and Heinrich Steinhöwel (sources for Caxton's Aesop) were among those in the transition "entre l'esprit religieux et moral du passé et l'esprit sceptique et amoral du présent . . ." (p. 448 and n. 60). This was a period of decline, what with most moral and didactic writings devoid of originality and becoming abusive and profane.  

Henryson, however, must be left out of this transition. He was not at all amoral, and he was no more skeptical than Ockham, 150 years before. And if originality is a valid criterion by which to judge a fable, then I think it safe to assert that he was quite original in this very synthetic tradition.

I speak of Henryson in the framework of the exemplum because I find that Welter's generalizations do account in some measure for Henryson's "allegory," if not for his sensus literalis. He writes that the tendency to moralize the exemplum rather than allow it to function as simply as its name implies was already manifest in the thirteenth century; in the fourteenth, the urge to add an allegorical or symbolic interpretation became very strong, for instance in Holkot,
Bozon, and the Gesta Romanorum (p. 335). In the latter century, the moralization became the principal part, with the exemplum an accessory (p. 350). An extrapolation of this theory to 1475 would help to explain the length and semi-independence of Henryson's moralitaces. He seems clearly to have been familiar with the exemplum tradition, saying at the close of The Taill of the Paddok & the Mous,

\[\begin{align*}
\ldots & \text{gif that ony speiris [asks]} \\
& \text{Of this Fabill, sa schortly I conclude,} \\
& \text{Say thow, I left the laif unto the Freiris,} \\
& \text{To mak exempill and ane similitude (11. 2969-72).}
\end{align*}\]

It suffices for now to say that as a late-medieval fabulist Henryson gave equal weight to story and moral.

And this brings us at last to the question of Henryson's "allegory," one of the most crucial in any consideration of his Fabillis. In the manner of some fabulists and of the Gesta Romanorum, for example, he tells his story and then appends a moralitas in which he equates the animals and objects of the tale with abstractions, thereby moralizing the action. But is this "true" allegory? In light of recent controversies over exegetical methods, one must be careful in approaching the subject, and I have found in the last book of Rosemund Tuve's what seems a wise course. She emphasizes that mere personification of abstractions does not define allegory, that the associations of an image and the use of universals are by far more important than one-to-one relationships (p. 26). She writes that "allegory does not equate a concretion with an abstraction, but shadows or mirrors essences":

Spenser's Duessa is not an image of a false church; instead, the Church (and Queen Mary) have become images of her (p. 106). An allegory
should not be pushed to find perfect consistency; what counts—or what counted, for instance, in Guillaume Deguileville's *Pelerinage de la vie humaine* (14th c.)—is not solely "the pleasure felt in recognition of identity, but more . . . the pleasure we take in recognizing the truth of something experience confirms" (pp. 160, 163). In "truer" allegories like Spenser's,"we must not equate his visibilia with their counterparts, but allow them to retain their symbolical operation and revelatory power—attempts by an author to present the whole significance of that which we lamely and imperfectly name . . ." (p. 173).

By these criteria, then, Henryson's stories are allegorical, in that their "revelatory power" stems from two millennia's worth of traditional associations. Wittig writes, "His fables usually have a twofold moral: one—highly humanitarian and sociological—implicit in the tale; the other, the conventional moralitas, at the end" (p. 40). His moralitates are more than conventional, but it remains that Kinsley, like others, misses the implicit morals and hence claims that many of the fables "are so general in moral import that they seem to have been written either as foils to more pointed parables or simply for the poet's delight" (pp. 16-17). On the contrary, the allegorical content of Henryson's stories is clear, and in this regard his moralizing is superfluous. For us, and no doubt for the original audience, the stories have no need of explanation. (Perry notes that most morals tend to be perfunctory or far-fetched, especially when unnecessary ["Fable," p. 19].) Yet, Henryson's moralitates are functional and must not be neglected—because they add to the meanings and complete the poems, not because we need them to tell us that a bad lion equals a
bad king. They are dependent upon the story, and not vice versa. They heighten the morality of the tales and, in a sense, become part of them, Henryson's part. Critics have long been unsure in handling Henryson's moralizing. Some, like Stearns, would emphasize the seeming gap between story and moral by asserting that most of the "moral sentence" is reserved for the moralitas (p. 107). Bauman agrees in substance with this position and contrasts Lydgate's habit of interweaving the moral with Henryson's holding it off for the end (p. 117). But he goes too far, I think, in claiming that Henryson did so to avoid interrupting the entertainment of the tale. Considering the tradition, the simple truth is that Lydgate was writing bad fables and that Henryson, by properly reserving the moralitas for his own purposes and allowing the story to do its own work, was writing good ones. Even MacQueen is a bit confusing on this point. He writes, "It is a sign of the artistic independence which he [Henryson] finally reached that in this alone of his long poems [The Testament of Cresseid], he was content to leave the allegory to speak for itself . . ." (p. 93). Yet he also claims that Henryson, as a disciple of Boccaccio (and hence, I would add, of Isidore), was aware that a moralitas "is always to be found in poetry," but that every detail of a story need not have an allegorical meaning and that the explicit morals of the Fabillis often focus upon an incident which the poet chose to emphasize (p. 100). Henryson was not artistically enslaved: had he not wished to make expansive use of the moralitas he could have been as perfunctory as Walter, or even totally flippant (like Thurber, perhaps) in bowing to this prescribed form. It is safest to conclude that Henryson knew full
well what he was doing and, with Fox, to view the moralitas as "an integral part of a completely unified whole" (p. 338), though I have reservations about the word "integral." Fox says further:

The break in each poem, between the fable proper and the moralitas is of course a reflection of the gap between the actual and the ideal. But this gap is more apparent than real, since the moralitas and the fable are intertwined in innumerable ways. And though the moralitas is necessary to complete the fable, its abstractions do not supersede or cancel the tangible world of the animals. We are left, at the end, with a single whole: the fable and the moralitas, the visible world and its significance, have become one (p. 356).

At the very least, one can fall back upon the words of Terry, who claims that in late antiquity and the Middle Ages "The author's conscience about the propriety of a story is satisfied as soon as he has affixed a moral. So it happens that fable, as we have defined it, is a small nucleus, around which, in the course of centuries, by a kind of snowballing process, a large periphery of heterogeneous material has accumulated" ("Fable," p. 28).

Discussion of the allegorical aspects of the Fabillis calls for an important distinction—one observed, according to Miss Tuve, by later allegorists (p. 15). For them it did not matter where the allegorical parallel was found; what mattered was "whether a metaphorically understood relation is used to take off into areas where a similitude can point to valuable human action, or to matters of spiritual import" (pp. 12-13). The latter is strict allegory (quid credas), the former, that used by Henryson, moral allegory (quid agas): Miss Tuve gives as an example Christine de Pisan's Epitre d'Othéa (ca. 1400), consisting of one hundred textes, each with a glose and an allegorie showing two
ways of reading the texte. In that of Perseus riding upon Pegasus to
the rescue of Andromeda (pp. 33-36), aspiring knights are told within
the texte to emulate this hero. The gloze equates Perseus with the
good knight, Pegasus with good renown, and Andromeda with those in
distress. This is a moral-allegorical reading. The allegorie then
equates the characters with abstractions relating to the Church Militant.
For her, then, "allegory" is separate from moralization in that it
discusses "the ultimate destiny of man as bon esprit" (p. 40). Henryson
likewise observes this distinction, and only rarely does a moralitas
show traces of allegorie.

A more definitive term for Henryson's kind of moralizing might be
what Miss Tuve calls "imposed allegory"; she even speculates about
"a little pocket of late fifteenth-century taste that enjoyed this
particularly strenuous kind of allegorical reading . . ." (p. 237).
But it would appear that such distortion of the text has its roots in
Scriptural exegesis, and the Gesta Romanorum will often similarly
bend a story out of shape for a moral. Among examples from the fif­
teenth century Miss Tuve cites Jean Molinet's Romant de la rose morali­
sie cler et net (ca. 1482), with its many "dodges and shifts" to
moralize a character like Faux Semblant, or to make Jupiter good on
one page and bad on another (pp. 237, 238). (She might have compared
the treatment of Alexander in the Gesta.) Unlike Christine, another
imposer of allegory, Molinet "erased" the literal level instead of
"fulfilling" it (p. 293). In a similar manner, Colard Mansion (ca.
1500) wove moralizations into Ovid, as opposed to the practice of
earlier writers like Bersuire, who did not attempt to supplant Ovid
but to comment on him—once more Miss Tuve speculates that around 1500 there was a brief "little pocket of taste" which asked for "'profitable' ingenuities and equations" (pp. 311-13). (It is a sad comment upon us that, as Kinsley says, Henryson's "moral applications . . . are often too ingenious for modern taste . . ." [p. 18].)

The problem that all of this poses for Henryson criticism is the extent to which he was guided by the various traditions of "imposed allegory." The long-standing cultural commerce between France and Scotland makes it possible that he was acquainted with Miss Tuve's "pocket of taste" (and with the Isopets and the Roman de Renart as well); yet the British tradition might just as likely account for his type of moralizing. If we consider Lydgate as an exemplar, we find that he too makes odd one-to-one relationships between the animals of his fables and the abstractions in his morals. But they are not as elaborate as Henryson's; rather, he most often expands upon events within the story to point out moral lessons—so much so, that the reader sometimes forgets where he is. Hence Lydgate, while still clinging to the tradition of tale and moral in tandem, has much in common with the allegorizers who overhauled Ovid and the Roman de la Rose. Henryson, to the contrary, only infrequently preaches within a tale. He prefers to entice the reader with a good story salted with all manner of wisdom and then to extend its significance in the moralitas. The story is seldom devoid of some kind of explicit sentence, but this "message" will usually be less hortatory than prefatory: it will often forge a tenuous link with the moral.

Toliver has observed that the frequent disparity between story and
moral in Henryson often leads to irony and that the two elements illuminate each other, the former obliquely and the latter directly focusing on man (pp. 300, 302). In general this theory is sound, except that, as my survey of the traditions is designed to show, the story is truer than the moral because it is more suggestive and, if you will, universal. (We might one day rid ourselves of bad kings, and yet the lion will have its moral meanings until we enter the City of God literally.)

I mean to study a large body of animal lore connected with moral allegory, to give an idea of the suggestiveness of each fable, and thereby to establish as best I can the degree of "imposition" and "irony" in each moralitas. Again, the Physiologus will not be of much help, since its animals do little apart from what they supposedly do in the wild, and their natures are treated for purposes of allegoric, generally without the larger social concerns of the beast tale. On the other hand, Henryson's preoccupation with quid agas in part explains his use of Renardian material and its "built-in" social commentary. In seeking what legitimately can be read out of each tale, I have been aided by a fuller consideration of Henryson's philosophical context than has been customary with past critics. I have taken him at his word when he expounds upon matters philosophical and hence have considered both his Aristotelianism and his Ockhamism, which are harmonized in the Fabillis.

Aristotle's metaphysics, no less than his writings on ethics and on the fable per se, influenced Henryson's fable theory. However, the influence is of a general nature, and, except in one case, Aristotle alone cannot be credited as a "source." In fact, Henryson's world-view
has the approbation of the Sapiential Books of the Bible—and perhaps also of the fifteenth-century Ckhamist, Nicholas of Cusa. Henryson dwells at length upon his personal philosophy in the proem to The Preiching of the Swallow, and to a lesser extent in the general Prolog.\textsuperscript{16}

To begin with, the opening stanzas of The Preiching in a sense expand upon Wisdom VII, 15-20, by means of other Sapiential writings and philosophical commonplaces. He opens the fable thus:

\begin{quote}
The hie prudence, and wirking nervelous,  
The profound wit off God omnipotent,  
Is sa perfyte, and sa Ingenious,  
Excellent ffar all mannis argument . . . (11. 1622-25).\textsuperscript{17}
\end{quote}

To this should be compared Wisdom VII, 15-16, and especially Ecclesiasticus XVIII, 2-4: "Quis sufficit enarrare opera illius?/ Quis enim investigabit magnalia eius?/ Virtutem autem magnitudinis eius quis enuntiabit? Aut quis adjiciet enarrare misericordiam eius?"\textsuperscript{18} Henryson goes on:

\begin{quote}
For quhy to him all thing is ay present,  
Rycht as it is, or ony tymc sall be,  
Befoir the sight off his Divinitie (11. 1626-28).
\end{quote}

Again from Ecclesiasticus (XXXIX, 24-25): "Opera omnis carnis coram illo, & non est quicquam absconditum ab oculis eius./ A seculo usque in seculum respicit, & nihil est mirabile in conspectu eius."\textsuperscript{19}

In the next stanza, Henryson uses Plato's figure of the soul's imprisonment in the body to explain why the understanding is clouded by sensuality (11. 1629-35).\textsuperscript{20} And then he turns to the Philosopher:

\begin{quote}
In Metaphysic Aristotell sayis  
That mannis Saull is lyke ane Bakkis Ee,  
Qhilk lurkis still als lang as licht off day is,  
And in the gloming cummis furth to fie;  
Hir ene ar waik, the Sone scho may not se:
\end{quote}
Sa is our Saull with fantasies opprest,
To know the things in nature manifest (11. 1636-42).

MacQueen rightly comments that the image of the bat's eye21 "became a commonplace, although it should be noted that Henryson's use comes very close in context to Aristotle's own" (p. 158). However, next to this, one should place MacQueen's thesis that the poet's "Eurydice and Cresseid both represent appetite and the appetitive; the emphasis in the Fabillis is nowhere very different . . ." (p. 100).22 Indeed, Henryson reproves us as early as the general Prolog, lines 43-56, because "... mony men in operaition, / Ar like to beistis in condi-tioun" (11. 48-49). I need hardly say that this notion was not unique with Henryson and that it is the fundamental donne of the fable.23 Of greater significance is what Henryson added to this theme, perhaps at the prompting of what is in the same context as the bat's eye: "It is right also that philosophy should be called knowledge of the truth. For the end of theoretical knowledge is truth, while that of practical knowledge is action (for even if they consider how things are, practical men do not study the eternal, but what is relative and in the present)."24 Henryson was a practical man insofar as he acknowledged God's transcendence and man's concomitant distance from infinite Good. He was pessimistic because of man's capacity for evil, and yet the historical fact of the Morall Fabillis shows that he held some hope for the improvement of the race.

Like the Cekhamists, Henryson believed that knowledge of God exceeds "ffar all mannis argument":25

For God is in his power Infinite,
And mannis Saull is febill and over small,
Off understanding waiik and unperfite,  
To comprehend him that contenis all.  
None suld presume, be resoun naturall,  
To seirche the secreritis off the Trinitie,  
Bot trow fermelie, and lat dirk ressonis be (11. 1643-49).26

Holkot, for onc, earlie claimed that the doctrine of the Trinity was  
a truth which transcended the Aristotelian principle of contradiction,27  
and yet the Cckhamists often worked within the framework of traditional  
Aristotelianism.28 They insisted upon observation of concrete, individ­  
ual facts and on the importance of experience. Henryson likewise  
turns to creation and shifts to a more optimistic tone:

Yit nevertheless we may haif knawlegeing  
Off God almychtie, be his Creatouris,  
That he is gude, ffair, wyis, and bening (11. 1650-52)—
in the remaining lines of the stanza he cites as illustration the "Jolie  
flouris" (1. 1653). And again he has Scripture on his side: "Ipse enim  
dedit mihi horum quae sunt, scientiam veram, vt sciam dispositionem  
orbis terrarum, & virtutes elementorum. . . . A magnitudine enim  
speciei & creaturae, cognoscibiliter poterit creator horum videri"  
(Wisdom VII, 17; XllI, 5). In three more verses from Wisdom (as well  
as the passage from Job quoted earlier29) we find parallels to the  
remaining stanzas under consideration: "Initium & consummat(t)ionem  
& medietatem temporum, vicissitudinum permutationes, & consummationes  
temporum./ Morum mutationes, & divisiones temporum, anni cursus, &  
stellarum dispositiones./ Naturas animaliam, & iras bestiarum vim  
ventorum, & cogitationes hominum, differentias virgulorum, & virtutes  
radicum" (VII, 18-20). Henryson similarly marvels at the harmony of  
the universe (11. 1657-63), argues that by contemplating beasts and
man we can know something of God's attributes (11. 1664-70; the passage from Job especially applies here), and sees in such evidence as the changing seasons proof that creation was made to benefit man (11. 1671-77)—"As daylie by experience we may se" (1. 1677). His beautiful praise of the seasons follows.

MacQueen delves far back into the Middle Ages to explain the stanzas I have quoted: "The concept of God seeing all time as perpetually present is Boethian, and the latter part of the prologue is based partly on Boethius, partly on scholastic philosophy and devotion" (p. 158). Chief among these scholastics, he says, are the twelfth-century Victorines, who founded their meditation upon contemplating the harmony of the universe, which can lead men to love of God. Beside lines 1643-51, quoted above, he places the following from Hugh of St. Victor and calls it a "fairly specific parallel": "Et inventa est in tribus his Trinitas ineffabilis quae in Creatore quidem unum sunt, sed per creaturae speciem divisim se ad cognitionem effundunt. Suscepit enim formam potestatis rerum immensitas; sapientiae pulchritudo, bonitatis utilitas [And the ineffable Trinity is found in these three things which in the Creator are assuredly one, but through a divided likeness of a creature they pour themselves forth to understanding. For the immensity of things took the shape of power, beauty the shape of wisdom, usefulness the shape of goodness]." But why this passage? Henryson might as easily have come by the following from the eclectic "Sentences" of Peter Lombard: "Ex perpetuitate namque creaturarum intelligitur Conditor aeternus; ex magnitudine creaturarum omnipotens; ex ordine et dispositione sapiens; ex gubernatione bonus. Haec autem
omnia ad unitatem Deitatis pertinent monstrandam\textsuperscript{32} [For from the continuity of creatures the eternal Maker is known, from the large amount of creatures the Omnipotent, from order and arrangement the Wise, from governance the Good. But all these things pertain to showing the unity of the Deity]." Or compare Hilkot: "Licet enim ex cogitatione creaturarum assurgere possimus aliquid in noticiam quantum ad multa, videlicet quod potens, bonus, omnipotens et clemens est . . ." (Lect. 123A, q. v.).\textsuperscript{33} And I am not convinced that the parallel from Hugh is "fairly specific"; I regard the Biblical parallels as having closer verbal similarity and as being sufficient for the basis of Henryson's thought, if not the actual source.\textsuperscript{34}

Beyond this, Henryson's views are more in line with the later Ockhamists than with the more speculative Victorines. In particular, I would suggest that his nominalism has much in common with the theories of Nicholas of Cusa (d. 1464).\textsuperscript{35} This philosopher held in a fashion to the Platonic concept termed by Lovejoy the "principle of plenitude."\textsuperscript{36} He posited an infinite universe and stressed the multiplicity of the world (in contrast to God's unity). Copleston writes that for him "Each individual thing manifests God in a particular way; and from this it follows that no two individual things are exactly alike," although they form a harmonious order (pp. 162-63). To a greater extent than his predecessors, he emphasized study of finite things because from their natures we can approximate, and only approximate, the nature of God.

In Nicholas' \textit{De docta ignorantia} (1440) there are, indeed, "fairly specific parallels" to Henryson, some of them striking. While placing
the Trinity at the center of his theology, Nicholas could head a chapter
"Quomodo intellectus trinitas in unitate/ supergreditur omnia [How the
understanding of the Trinity in Unity transcends all things]."37 On
the matter of coming to know of God he writes, "Consensere omnes sapi-
entissimi nostri & divinissimi/ sanctissimique doctores visibilia
veraciter invisibilium imaginis esse: atque creatorem nostrum ita
cognoscibilet a creaturis videri posse/ quasi in speculo & in enig-
mate [All our greatest philosophers and theologians unanimously assert
that the visible universe is a faithful reflection of the invisible,
and that from creatures we can rise to a knowledge of the Creator, 'in
a mirror and in a dark manner,' as it were]" (I, xi).

It is in Book II, chapter xiii, that the greatest similarities to
Henryson appear. To quote again the opening of The Preiching:

    The hie prudence, and wirking meravelous,
The profound wit off God omnipotent,
Is sa perfyte, and sa Ingenious,
Excellent ffar all mannis argument . . . (11. 1622-25).

Nicholas opens the chapter in this manner: "Qvoniam sapientum consors
sententia est/ per ista visibilia/ & magnitudinem/ pulchritudinem/
atque ordinem rerum/ nos duci in stuporem artis & excellentiae diviniae
[That the vast bulk, the beauty and the ordered adjustment of this
visible world must fill us with amazement at the incomparable skill of
its creator, goes without question among wise men]."38 Talking of God
the Artificer, Nicholas says, "... per musicam/ proportionauit taliter/
vt non plus terrae sit in terra quam aquae in aqua/ & aeris in aere/ &
ignis in igne/ vt nullum elementorum in aliud sit penitus resolubile
[with music He allotted its (the world's) parts that there should be
no more earth in the earth than water in the water, than air in the air
or than fire in the fire, so that no element could be wholly transmuted
into another]." He discourses at length upon the elements, and
Henryson likewise lists "The fyre, the Air, the watter, and the ground"
(1. 1661) as evidence of God's wisdom. Further evidence is that God
made all creatures on behalf of man "In number, wecht, and dew propor-
tioun" (1. 1674). So also for Nicholas, God "omnia in numero/ pondere/
& mensura creauit [created all things in number, weight and measure]."
Nicholas marvels at the universal order: God gives "omnia stellis
differentem claritatem/ influentiam/ figuram/ & colorem atque cal-
rem . . . & its proportionabiliter partium ad invicem proportionem con-
stituens: vt in qualibet sit motus partium ad totum . . . [to each star
its own splendor, its own power to influence, its own shape, colour and
heat. . . . And lastly, He in each star so adjusts and proportions the
parts to each other that there is in each a movement of parts that
secures the whole]." A Ptolemaist, unlike Nicholas, Henryson equally
admires God the Opifex:

The firmament payntit with sternis cleir,
From eist to west rolland in cirkill round,
And everilk Planet in his proper Spheir,
In moving makand Harmonie and sound . . . (11. 1657-60).

And having told us to "lat dirk ressonnis be" regarding the Trinity
(1. 1649), he now says, "Till understand it is aneuch, I wis,/ That
God in all his werkis wittie is" (11. 1662-63). Similarly, Nicholas
states, "In his tam admirandis rebus/ tam variis & diversis per doctam
ignorantiam experimur/ iuxta promissa: nos omnium operum dei nullam
scire posse rationem/ sed tantum admirari . . . [In such a high
diversity of endlessly admirable things learned ignorance has taught us never to hope to penetrate to the reasons of all the works of God, but only to admire]." Finally, parallel to Henryson's claim that man, so small in comparison to God, is unable "To comprehend him that containis all" (1. 1646), we have Nicholas' God, who "cum sit maximitas absoluta: vti est omnium operum suorum auctor & cognitor/ ita & finis, vt in ipso sint omnia: & extra ipsum nihil [is the absolute maximum and the author and comprehender of all His works, as He is also the end of them all, for in Him are all things, and outside Him is nothing]." 39

Whatever it was that influenced Henryson, he decidedly revels in plenitude and diversity—notably in his long catalog of beasts (11. 866-921)—but not for strictly theological purposes (quid credas). And before attempting to pin him down to philosophical and literary sources, here and elsewhere, one should keep in mind the plenitude of analogues. Bozon writes in qualification of the passage from Job that beasts teach morality "ne mye en parlant, mès chescun en sa nature diversement overant. . . ." Even the Victorines have something to offer, a concept more important for fable theory than the passage on the Trinity quoted by MacQueen. After citing verses from Psalms CIII and XCI (CIV and XCI) in praise of creation, Hugh of St. Victor writes, "Universus enim munus iste sensibilis quasi quidam liber est scriptus digito Dei, hoc est virtute divina creatus, et singulae creaturae quasi figurae quaedam sunt non humano placito inventae, sed divino arbitrio institutae ad manifestandum invisibilium Dei sapientiam [For this whole visible world is a book written by the finger of God, that is, created by divine power; and individual creatures are as
figures therein not devised by human will but instituted by divine authority to show forth the wisdom of the invisible things of God." In his Prolog, the author of the *Speculum sapientiae* reduces this famous figure to one equally beautiful: "Totus etenim mundus visibilis est schola et racionibus sapientiae plena sunt omnia." From these and similar writings, from Bromyard's Aristotelian stressing of particulars, from Biblical authority, and from the very content of the fable, one must conclude that an exaltation of the created world is implicit in the form. But the explicitness of Henryson's *Fabillis* is unusual, to say the least. It reflects an optimism close to that of Cusa and the "Renaissance." Like the schoolmen before him, he attempted to convince his audience of the possibility and value of learning. But he also had an uncommon sympathy for the postlapsarian intellect, along with a Burnsian empathy for creatures even more poorly endowed. Rather than compose a fashionable "regiment," he returned to the vernacular a type of literature which more happily combines "sentence" and "solas." He paraded animals instead of bare-boned rules, confident that "indeed all the visible world is a school." (And indeed, Jacques de Vitry would have found his animals excellent for keeping schoolboys awake.) He allowed the diversity of their natures to present the many facets of knowledge and ignorance, both moral and practical, and so he could branch out by analogy into further significations in most of his moralitates. This certitude of infinite multiplicity, along with a trust in common associations, is the key to his fable allegory.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER II

1All quotations from Lydgate's "Isopes Fabules" are from The Minor Poems, Part II: Secular Poems, ed. Henry N. MacCracken, EETS, O. S. CACII (London, 1934).

2Fox finds a pun in "fein y eit fabils" (= "tall stories") and claims that Henryson thus forcefully concedes the untruth of the literal level (339). For his discussion of "figure," see p. 341. In l. 6, Bannatyne reads "be vyce of mysdoing" for "the hail misleving."

3Another clerk is Boccaccio. See Robertson, p. 352; also MacQueen, pp. 96-100, on Boccaccio and particularly for the implications of the shell and kernel figure. Fox argues in his review (348) that MacQueen has not proved Henryson's direct knowledge of Boccaccio. Robertson (p. 345) notes a similar figure in the Prolog to Nigel's Speculum Stultorum, ll. 5 ff. (see the note on p. 141 of the edition cited). See also Edwin H. Zeydel, ed. and trans., Ecblasis Cuiusdam Captivi per Tropologiam, University of North Carolina Studies in the Germanic Languages and Literatures, XLVI (Chapel Hill, 1964), 11. 39-41. Cf. Harold E. Toliver, "Robert Henryson: From Moralitas to Irony," ETS, XLVI (1965), 301; and Fox, 339. I cannot agree with Stearns, who says, "... in his Fables he relegates most of his moral sentence to the end of each story, and it is difficult to escape the impression that he intends his fables to be at least as entertaining as they are instructive" (p. 107). The stories are no less delightful for their inherent morality.

4By itself, this line is not conclusive evidence that Henryson knew Walter, for it appears to have become proverbial. See Hans Walther, ed., Proverbia Sententiaeacque Latinitatis Medii Aevi, 4 vols. (Göttingen, 1963- ), item 6400.

5I follow Elliott's omission of a comma after "sentence."

6From his History of the Royal Society, quoted in Basil Willey, The Seventeenth Century Background (Garden City, N. Y., 1953), p. 211.

7See also Psalm XLVIII (XLIX), 5. I use a Vulgate Bible printed at Basel by Thomas Guarinus (?) in 1590.

8I should note that this Prolog is derived from that in Jacques de Vitry's Sermones communes. Odo's method of exegesis is like that described by Owst, p. 66.
I do not mean to imply here and elsewhere that the Ockhamists discovered induction. See the *Ethica Nichomacea* VI, 3.

See Welter, Part III, section 2.

Ibid., Part II, ch. 3.

Noted by Bauman, 111-12. However, he wrongly interprets the matter of the prolog as deriving solely from the exemplum tradition, disregarding what it had in common with and derived from the fable. Jamieson (Source Material, p. 24) has noted the Bannatyne postscript to *The Confession of the Fox*: "Explicit exemplum veritatis et falsitatis." Traces of the exemplum tradition appear in other ways within the stories. Stanley J. Kahrl ("Allegory in Practice: A Study of Narrative Styles in Medieval Exempla," *MP*, LXIII [1965-66]) writes concerning the lack of a well developed ending to many exempla: "This apparent pointlessness is necessary to the exegete, for his story acts as a bridge rather than as a terminal" (107). The ordinary omission of such a device in fables points up one of their differences from exempla; but the curtness of some of Henryson's endings—they are never too curt—shows that he wanted attention paid to the moralitas. For example, he says of the unfortunate wolf in *The Fox, the Wolf, and the Husbandman*, "qua ha hailit him out, I wait not, off the well./ Heir endis the Text; thair is na mair to tell" (11. 2423-24). Of the vox and of the wolf and the French original show that there was more, if Henryson had wanted to tell it.


Again, see Owst, p. 66.

Cf. Rosc, p. viii.

I consider the lines preceding the first fable to be the general prolog since they are in the Gualterian pattern. This much I concede to the usual ordering of the Fabillis, and Jamieson (Source Material, p. 30, n. 2) agrees with this assumption. However, the Bannatyne MS version begins with *The Preiching*.

I use the Bannatyne reading of "argument" for "Judgement" for the reason mentioned in n. 25.

See also Job IX, 10.

Sec also *Ecclesiasticus* XVII, 13; Job XXVIII, 23-24.

See MacQueen, p. 157; Phaedo 62b, 66c. And cf. *The Parson's Tale*, X (1), 11. 260 ff. Jamieson (Source Material, pp. 144-46) shows how deep-rooted the notion was in Christian thinking. In the same leceto in which he tells how man can know something of God through
creation, Robert Holkot cites James IV on the concupiscent flesh as a hindrance to knowing God (Super Sapientiam Salomonis [Speir: P. Drach, 1483], Lect. 123A).

21Metaphysicae(II), 1 (993a).


25Again, "argument" is the Bannatyne reading. It seems more in accord with the Ockhamism expounded by Henryson than does "Jugement." For a convenient discussion of Ockhamism, see Frederick C. Copleston, Medieval Philosophy (New York, 1961), chs. IX-X.

26I use the Bannatyne reading of "dirk" for "all." As the following stanzas show, Henryson was not trying to do away with all reasoning.

27Copleston, p. 141. Ockham could not fit the Trinity into a strict syllogism: see Heiko A. Oberman, The Harvest of Medieval Theology: Gabriel Biel and Late Medieval Nominalism (Harvard, 1963), p. 85. More significantly, "... Robert Holcot reaches the sixteenth verse of the seventh chapter in his Wisdom commentary, he seizes the opportunity to underscore his main theme which he had so passionately presented on the preceding pages as well as in his Sentences commentary: Wisdom is a gift of God: therefore man's claim that he can have a natural knowledge of God is false" (Oberman, pp. 235-36). Oberman refers to Lect. 98. It is numbered "97" in the edition he uses (Hagenau, 1494) because his text, unlike mine, does not number the Prolog as Lectio Prima. One should balance the traditional view of the "skeptical" Holcot, as expressed in Beryl Smalley, English Friars and Antiquity in the Early Fourteenth Century (Oxford, 1960), pp. 133-202, with that of Oberman, pp. 235-48.

28See Ockham's effusive praise for Aristotle in the Prolog to the Expositio super vii libros Physicorum.


30He does not specify a passage in Boethius. Jamieson (Source Material, p. 143) cites Consolatio Philosophiae V, pr. 6.

31Pp. 158-59. The passage is from De sacramentis I, ii, 13. The translation is mine.
Peter studied with the Victorines and like them found the Trinity ineffable: cf. ibid., 38; also dist. XXXIV, cc. iii-iv.

I use the text printed in Uberman, p. 242, n. 176. One should keep in mind that, as Miss Smallley writes, "Holcot on Wisdom became a standard part of the equipment of every good theological library in the later middle ages" (pp. 141-42).

MacQueen, p. 159, is on safer ground when he says that ll. 1647-49 "come close to Summa Theologica XXXI. i. 'It is impossible to attain to the knowledge of the Trinity by natural reason--but not what belongs to the distinction of the persons.'" Yet he must allow that Aquinas was "in some measure . . . opposed to the methods of Victorine theology." Compare Uberman's paraphrase of the Eckhamist Biel's view: "Man can prove the existence of God more convincingly as the sustainer than as the creator of this world; to this can be added the natural knowledge of such attributes of God as goodness, wisdom, and intelligence. But all this natural knowledge does not add up to more than the knowledge that there is a God" (p. 67). MacQueen says earlier of the multiple moralitas to The Frog and the Mouse that "there is no interpretation on the level particularly suited to contemplatives, the third or anagogical . . ." (p. 112). I do not find this surprising.

See Copleston, ch. XI.


I, x, in the first volume of the Paris, 1514, edition of Nicholas' works, reprinted in facsimile at Frankfurt/Main, 1962. The translations are from Of Learned Ignorance, trans. Fr. Germain Heron (Yale, 1954).

MacQueen compares the passage from Le sacramentis with many of the lines from Henryson I am quoting (pp. 159-60).

Nicholas does not mention the "bat's eye," but he alludes to the similar difficulties of an owl trying to look at the sun (I, i). The marginal rubric "EX SENTENTIA" reminds us that not all of Nicholas' thought was original. On the four elements and their order see Peter Lombard II, dist. XII, c. v; dist. XIV, c. iv, 102, and c. ix, 108. On the seasons: c. x, 110. However, I find no conclusive verbal parallels. Boethius' Consolatio III, pr. 11, should also be compared, along with Cicero's Tusculan Disputations I, xxxviii, 68-70, for a similar argument from design. On the ordering of the elements, see the Consolatio III, met. 9; Chaucer's Parliament of Fowls, 11. 379-81 (derived from Alan of Lille's De Planctu Naturae); the Roman de la Rose, 11. 16707 ff., 19505 ff. The phrase concerning number, weight,
and measure is paralleled in Alan's Anticlaudianus, ed. R. Bossuat, Textes Philosophiques du Moyen Age, I (Paris, 1955), II, 11, 11. 174-75: "Forma, figura, modus, numerus, mensura decentur/ Membris aptatur et habita munera soluit." The concept of Nature as a painter is found in the Physician's Tale, VI, 11. 11-28. To all of the Christian analogues one should compare Augustine: "Cujus legibus rectantur poli, cursus suos sidera peragunt, sol exercet diem, luna temperat noctem; omnisque mundus per dies, vicissitudine lucis et noctis; per menses, incrementis decrementisque lunarisibus: per annos, veris, aestatis, autumni et hiemis successionibus; per lustra, perfectione cursus solari; per magnos orbes, recursu in ortus suos siderum, magnum rerum constantiam, quantum sensibilis materia patitur, temporum ordinibus replicationibusque custodit (God) by whose laws the poles revolve, the stars follow their courses, the sun rules the day and the moon presides over the night; and all the world maintains, as far as this world of sense allows, the wondrous stability of things by means of the orders and recurrences of seasons: through the days by the changing of light and darkness, through the months by the moon's progressions and declines, through the years by the succesions of Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter, through the cycles by the completion of the sun's course, through the great eras of time by the return of the stars to their starting points]" (The Soliloquies, ed. and trans. Thomas F. Gilligan, New York, 1943], 1, 1, 4). In the Soliloquies, Augustine bases his arguments for knowledge and proof of God on observation of the created world.

40 Eruditionis Didascalicae Libri Septem VII, c. iv, in PL, CLXXVI (Paris, 1879), col. 814. Fox, 347, notes this passage and uses the translation by Charles S. Singleton, which I have borrowed. For this figure see Curtius, pp. 319-26.

III THEORY AND PRACTICE

1 The Cock and the Jasper

The final three stanzas of the "general" Prolog make a transition to The Tail of the Cock, and the Jasper. After his apology for fables and request for correction, Henryson turns abruptly to his own "translation": "My Author in his Fabillis tellis how/ That brutal beistis spak, and Understude . . ." (11. 43-44). In the remaining lines of the three stanzas he shows how men may become like beasts; then he concludes the Prolog by mentioning the initial beast to be compared with homo sapiens (or rather, sciens):

And to begin, first of ane Cok he [Bsope] wrate,
Seikand his meit, quhilk fand ane Jolie stone,
Of quhome the Fabill ye sall heir anone (11. 61-63).

In so saying, he echoes Lydgate (1. 50), and it would seem that he intended this fable to be first in order, as it is in the other Gualterian collections.

Not a good story in itself, by virtue of Henryson's additions and his moralitas it becomes a fitting example of his art. Stated simply, the fable tells of a cock who prefers his food to a gem which he has discovered. The moral of the story, what is "in" it, is that good things are wasted on those who are unwilling or unable to appreciate them. The moral is so obvious that the early fabulists, beginning with Phaedrus (q. v.), did not bother to state it and instead directed
the fable at those lacking the wit to understand sentences. Hence the fable eventually found its way to the head of most collections, where the precious stone would be understood to signify what the author had to teach. Caxton's straightforward version reads, "And by the stone is to understand this fayre & playsaunt book" (I, i).³

The gem of this fable has never been standard, ranging from Phaedrus' pearl to the jasper of the Gualterian version. This fact should have served warning not to read a specific meaning into the jewel as it operates in the story, but the consensus now finds that it is wisdom, and that the cock is the foolish man who eschews this great gift. As a result, critics condemn as specious the cock's argument that he has no need of a jasper. But to place this ill-favored rooster before a scholarly tribunal is not to allow the tale to function in the way it was manifestly designed. The prosecution usually rests its case upon the theory that the cock exemplifies carnal man, the brute attacked in the general Prolog, where it is said that Aesop

Put in exemplill and in similitude
How mony men in operatioun
Ar like to beistis in condiouen.

Na merveili is ane man be lyke ane Beist,
Qhilk lufis ay carnall and foull delyte;
That schame can not him renye nor arreist,
Bot takis all the lust and appetyte,
And that throw custum and daylie ryte;
Syne in thair myndis sa fas+ is Radicate
That thay in brutal beistis ar transforamate (11. 47-56).

The lines are difficult, though more fluent with Elliott's punctuation (which I have adopted) than with Wood's. Also, the Bannatyne MS offers significant variants, and I have accepted its version of lines 50-56.⁴ I venture this transliteration: "(Aesop) showed by example and
similitude how many men, in their doings, are in a beast-like state.

It is no marvel that a man might be like a beast, which (or: a man who) always lives in carnal, foul delight that (or: , a man whom) shame cannot challenge or check, but (instead) delight (or: he) accepts all his lust and appetite which, through custom and daily habit, afterwards is so firmly rooted in the mind that he is transformed into a brutal beast." The point I wish to emphasize is that in neither version is Henryson condemning all men as beasts, but only those who become comparable to beasts (one should recall Duessa and Queen Mary).

His intention is that of Boethius:

. . . Therefore it happens that you cannot judge him a man whom you see transformed by vices. A violent robber burns with avarice for another's wealth: you will say that he is like a wolf. An arrogant and restless man works his tongue in lawsuits: you will compare him to a dog. A hidden waylayer enjoys having stolen in deceit: he is made equal to the little fox. Immoderate in wrath, a man roars: he is believed to bear the soul of a lion. A terrified and timid man fears things which ought not to be feared: he may be held similar to a stag. A sluggish and stupid man is inactive: he lives like an ass. A fickle and wavering man changes completely in zeal: he is no different from a bird. One is plunged in foul and unclean lusts: he is held back by the pleasure of a filthy swine. Thus it happens that he who is of forsaken goodness has ceased to be a man; since he cannot turn into the divine state, he turns into a beast.5

Nevertheless, critics have paired these stanzas with the claim that the cock chooses food over "wisdom," a carnal act, to demonstrate that the cock represents carnal man.6 They find his arguments compelling but morally wrong. Yet a cock is not "bad" for disdaining a jasper, whereas a man does wrong in disdaining knowledge for any reason, as Henryson states forcefully in the moral; hence the poet finds no need
to moralize at the end the assorted delicacies which the cock favors: they symbolize diversions and earthly necessities and speak for themselves. Henryson has taken pains to make the rooster a rooster (despite the anthropomorphic, high-flown rhetoric), thus "invincibly ignorant" and no more culpable than any other rooster. For example, in a line unique with Henryson the cock is "Richt cant and crous, albeit he was bot pure [poor]" (1. 65). This line does more than simply underscore his limitations: the details give him substance because they accord with what a rooster is, just as do the references to his manner of food-gathering (11. 67-68, 92-95). A cock indeed has no use for jewels, and the high style of his apostrophe ("Quhar suld thow mak thy habitatioun?/ Quhar suld thou dwell, bot in ane Royall Tour? . . ." [11. 106-07]) has obscured, for some, the fact that he has no more knowledge of the jewel than that it is of great monetary value--this limited awareness is conventional from Phaedrus on, as is the choice for food. He says,

It is pietie l suld the find, for quhy
Thy grit vertew, nor yit thy cullour cleir,
It may me nouther extoll nor magnify (11. 85-87),

and "Thy cullour dos bot confort to the sicht,/ And that is not aneuch my wame to feid" (11. 100-01). By contrast, Lydgate's rooster has actually read a lapidary and found the meaning of the stone (under "jacinth," apparently), and so he is praised in "Lenuoy" for despising wealth and worldliness!

The meaning, the "grit vertew," has escaped Henryson's unlettered bird, which accounts for the stanza that has baffled scribe and critic alike (11. 120-26). Only the Bannatyne MS rightly places it in the
moralitas instead of at the end of the story. It belongs in the moralitas because it counterpoints the cock's ignorance by dealing with the stone's "properties sevin" and by addressing itself specifically to the jasper's "collour" to show that it does more than "comfort the sight." Also, it follows the stanza which promises to tell the fable's "Inward sentence and Intent" (l. 117); and its opening line ("This Jolie Jasp had properties sevin") parallels what has been conventionally taken for the beginning of the moralitas ("This gentill Jasp, richt different of hew" [l. 127]), suggesting that the two stanzas are part of the same rhetorical unit. Whether, as Fox has suggested (p. 346, n. 20), the stanza's apparent incompleteness may be a sign that it was to be cancelled, cannot be determined. It is in all the versions, and it does function to point out the nature of the cock's ignorance.

Henryson may have borrowed the idea of a semi-ignorant rooster from the Isopet de Lyon:

Las! ta bontey ne ta valour
Ne me fait ne froit ne chalour.
Estrange est a moi ta nature
En toi ne truis point de pasture (I, 11. 17-20, q. v.).

MacQueen has shown the likelihood of Henryson's familiarity with this Isopet, or a form of it, and to his evidence I would add the following identical rhymes of phrases with identical sense: "To get his dennar set was al his cure": "Scraipand amang the as, be aventure" (11. 67, 69); "Une Jaspe, per aventure,/ Ai trovee, don n'avoit cure" (11. 3-4).

But the Isopet, unlike this tale, spells out the inherent moral in the moralitas, at the same time making an explicit identification: "Sapience
qu'est espaynde/ Entre Fous, c'est chose perdue" (11. 29-30). Perhaps seeing the hint of Matthew VII, 6, in these lines, Henryson writes in his moral of the fool,

His heart wammillis wyse argument to heir,
As dois ane Sow, to quhome men for the nanis,
In hir draf troich wald saw precious stanes (11. 145-47).

But in all of the Prolog and the fable, this is his only use of the word "wise"—the Bannatyne MS reads "gud"—and it is significantly connected with "argument." Elsewhere in the moralitas he identifies the jasper with "cunning," "science," and "prudence" (11. 128, 137, 143, 148, 154, 158), as well as "deidis of vertew" (11. 129). A Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue (DOST) cites his use of "cunning" here as meaning "knowledge, learning, skill," and the MED concurs in these senses for the late Middle Ages. "Science" had the meaning of acquired knowledge as opposed to belief or opinion. And "prudence," then as now, means "practical knowledge" in this context. Henryson is plainly speaking about the kind of knowledge that can be learned in school or otherwise by experience, and not about Biblical sapientia. The opposition here is not between wisdom and folly (the cock is no fool), but rather between the learned and the ignorant: "Quha is enemie to science and cunning,/ Bot Ignorants, that understandis nocht?" (11. 148-49). Yet Fox dismisses the three key words in a note: "The context makes it clear that he is referring to wisdom which leads to spiritual profit" (p. 345, n. 16). To support his identification of the jasper with wisdom, he cites Augustine, Gregory the Great, Bede, Alcuin, Hrabanus Maurus, and two English lapidaries (p. 346). But a check of his references shows that these Fathers and schoolmen, mainly commenting
upon Revelation XXI, 11, do not link the stone with sapientia. Nor do the lapidaries mention wisdom, despite some minor parallels to Henryson's "seven properties."

Wisdom may follow from understanding, but Henryson is stressing the practical knowledge that must come first. He says that the jasper betokens prudence and "cunning," which cause men to reign in honor, to be happy, and to be virtuous (11. 127-33). Then:

Quha may be hardie, riche, and gratious?
Quha can eschew perrell and aventure?
Quha can Governe ane Realme, Cietie, or hous,
Without science? no man, I yow assure.
It is riches that ever sall Indure,
Quhilk Maith, nor moist, nor uther rust can screit;
To mannis saull it is eternal meit (11. 134-40).16

As MacQueen has shown (pp. 102-03), the last three lines plainly echo Matthew VI, 19-20, wherein Christ preaches against worldliness (but not in favor of wisdom). For other echoes he turns to the Sapiential Books: "Henryson identifies 'science' of the Moralitas [sic] with Biblical Wisdom; by his choice of diction he draws an implied ironic parallelism between the prudent 'digging out' Wisdom, and the cock scraping the jasp out of the dunghill" (p. 101). We are asked to compare this scraping and lines 127-28 ("This gentill Jasp, richt different of hew,/ Betakinnis perfite prudence and cunning") with Proverbs II, 3-6: "Si enim sapientiam invocaueris, & inclinaueris cor tuum prudentiae:/ Si quaesieris eam quasi pecuniam, & sicut thesauros effoderis illam:/ Tunc intelliges timorem Domini, & scientiam Dei invenies;/ Quia Dominus dat sapientiam, & ex ore ejus prudentia & scientia;" and with VIII, 12: "Ego sapientia habito in consilio, & eruditis intersum cogitationibus." With line 136 in the stanza quoted
above he compares VIII, 15-16: "Per me reges regnant, & legum conditores justa decernunt./ Per me principes imperant, & potentes decernunt iustitiam" (p. 102). But this me is the ego of verse 12, who "dwells in counsel." All of these verses exalt knowledge as much as wisdom, and MacQueen must concede that the resemblance "is thus striking enough, but at the same time it remains somewhat unspecific . . ." (p. 102). What is striking is that Henryson does not mention wisdom (the Isopet de Lyon mentions both wisdom and knowledge, as does Lydgate in his Prolog). If he was consciously echoing these verses, then he chose to speak only of their praise of knowledge and learning—hence the reference to "wise (or, 'good') argument." And as his proem to The Preiching of the Swallow (ll. 1622-49) makes clear, he does not identify sapientia and scientia. He is like Holkot, who "does not believe that man through his own power can acquire a saving knowledge of God: sapientia is a free gift of God. The transcendence and sovereignty of God is preserved and posited beyond the reach of man's scientia" (Oberman, p. 243).17

The moralitas pays excellent tribute to learning and to the prudent-ial conduct that knowledge engenders. Henryson's most notable addition to the story-element, an exemplum, provides a glimpse of his intent in the moral, at the same time giving ballast to the action:

As Damisellis wantoun and Insolent,
That fane wald play, and on the streit be sene,
To swooping of the hous thay tak na tent,
Thay cair na thing, swa that the flure be clene.
Jowellis ar tint, as oftymis hes bene sene,
Upon the flure, and swojit furth anone---
Peradventure, sa wes the samin stone (ll. 71-77).18

I am not as convinced as MacQueen (pp. 105-06) that the stanza "demands
a definite Biblical reference" to the parable of the Lost Silver (Luke XV, 8). Nor can I agree with Fox that the damsels "provide an excellent parallel to the cock: like him they pay no attention . . . to a jewel of great value because they are entirely preoccupied with their animal appetites" (p. 342). Henryson does scold them for minding the World too much. Of greater relevance to the fable is their heedless, imprudent method of sweeping: the implication is that they would pay attention to the jewel if they found it. Remember Henryson's question in the moralitas (Bassandyne): "Quha can Governe anc Realme, Cietie, or hous,/ Without science?" (11. 136-37). All of one's affairs, large or small, rest upon knowledge and its proper use. Rhetoric demanded that "hous" come last in order here, but for the "Damisellis wantoun" it should clearly have taken precedence over matters of the "streit."

In any case, the vignette makes more credible the appearance of a jasper in the conventional dunghill ("Peradventure" shows some hesitancy to be definite about this departure from Walter), and it appeals to our experience ("as oftymis hes bene sene") to validate Henryson's example of imprudence. Similarly, apart from his Chanteclerian rhetoric the cock does little to test our suspended disbelief. If Henryson had wanted us to see in him more than is apparent, like the ineffable Lydgate he might have given in the story a lengthy excursus on the symbolic nature of the cock à la Physiologus, all to serve as a warning against sloth. Likewise he could easily have moralized the cock's food (conventional since Phaedrus), if it were to symbolize more than a lesser good. And he could have made much of the fact that the cock's world is dominated by a dunghill. Such ramifications are left to the
reader's mind.

Fox claims that "the cock symbolizes the man who has abandoned his higher reason and consequently his superior place in the chain of being in favor of animal cunning and selfish common sense" (p. 344). We are taken in by his logic because "He immediately recognizes the nature and value of the stone, and he unselfishly admits that he is unworthy to possess such a treasure" (p. 343). (Compare the populist Stearns: the cock rejects the gem because he knows that he is not an aristocrat, "remaining true to the logic of his station in life . . ." [p. 108]. "The Cock is a poor person of character and integrity" [p. 109].) Fox apparently reads the story-element in the same way as Lydgate, and to erase the discrepancy between story and moral which must follow from his reasoning, he finds an implicit condemnation of the cock in the story (pp. 343-45). It lies in the contrasts between the cock's pride and his location, between his speech and his barnyard nature, and between his grubbing for food and his rejection of the jasper: "I lufe fer better things of les availl" (1. 90); as well, the cock knows "the nature and the value of the stone." But at best the cock is only dimly aware of the stone's true nature (thus Henryson's explanation). And the contrasts, for the most part conventional (Walter: "plus amo cara minus" [1. 8]), mainly point up the distance between a jewel and a rooster, no matter how eloquently he crows. MacQueen, while holding that the cock condemns himself by answering his animal appetites rather than taking the jewel, allows that his speech "by itself indicates no more than his wilfulness and foolishness; it does not show the precise terms in which these failings are to be judged. This is the function,
primarily of the *Moralitas*, but also of the stanza which sets forth the seven properties of the jasp . . ." (p. 109). But since these "precise terms" are not inherent in the matter of the story, we cannot hold the cock accountable. The *Moralitas* is "imposed" in that it seizes not upon the rooster's traditional "pride" or his actual animal nature, but rather upon the bare fact of his rejecting the stone. In this respect the cock, "desyrand mair the sempill corne/ Than ony Jasp, may till ane fule be peir" (ll. 141-42). He does choose a thing of this world, but the jewel is another—in the story. And although the allusions to Matthew in the *Moralitas* do condemn the things of this world, as Fox indicates (p. 345), they do so only insofar as these things distract one from learning, from avoiding the invincible ignorance of the cock.

The cock acts only as its nature bids, and so the *Moralitas* makes a logical extension of his nature to include the vincibly ignorant human, the fool "Quhilk at science makis bot ane moik and scorne,/ And na gude can: als lytill will he lcir" (ll. 143-44). In this regard, Holkot shows another point of contact between man and animals, one more relevant to Henryson's purposes than carnality: vincible ignorance, he says, "est innaturalis malicia quia omnis natura scire desiderat" (Lect. 29A). It would not do for a pedagogue to call his charges brutal, carnal beasts unable to recognize the value of learning. In these sad times "(allace) this Jasp is tynt [lost] and hid" (l. 155). But it can be found, even in a dunghill: "Thairfore I ceis, and will na forther say./ Ga seik the Jasp, quha will, for thair it lay" (ll. 160-61). "Knowledge is where you find it," he seems to be saying, and
at this point he properly defies an ancient tradition by not directing his audience specifically to the sentence of his own work.

2 The Preaching of the Swallow

As with The Cock and the Jasp, the story in The Preaching of the Swallow exemplifies much of what is discussed in the lines which preface it. This nominalistic proem first describes the limitations of man's knowledge and then exalts creation to demonstrate the ways of knowing. But perhaps because he deals at length with "science" in The Cock and the Jasp, Henryson now turns to the application of knowledge in the form of prudence, the "practical wisdom" that is another facet of the jasper.

He ends the philosophical section of the proem by an appeal to experience:

All Creature he maid ffor the behufe
Off man . . .
. . . . . . . . . . . . . .
As daylie by experience we may se (ll. 1671-72, 1676).

In the next five stanzas he gives a pageant of the seasons as evidence of this statement, alluding to such deities as Flora and Ceres. MacQueen observes (pp. 161-62) that this praise is not so conventional as to be stale,21 and in Fox's analysis (p. 350) the imagery becomes more concrete as we approach the last season described, spring. "That samin seasoun, in to ane soft morning" (l. 1713), is the one in which the speaker himself has witnessed the swallow's preaching, and so Henryson has brought us skilfully from God through time to a particular experience which he claims is his own.22 It is not a dream-vision but the same convention (the wakeful first-person narrator as observer)
that enables Dunbar to overhear "the tua mariit wemen and the wedo."
In view of his statements at the beginning of the fable, it is more
fitting that he should ground the story upon a supposedly material
event than that he frame the story with a dream (as he does, to good
purpose, in The Tail of the Lyoun & the Mous). 23

The first sixteen stanzas are Henryson's chief addition to an
otherwise brief fable. But he also expands the dialogue between the
birds so that it becomes a true debate, with well-developed argument,
counterargument, and a display of emotion. 24 He has chosen to make his
swallow a Christian preacher, identifying him as such in the moralitas,
and hence the bird has leave to harangue upon the text, "Nam leuinus
laedit quicquid praevidimus ante [For whatever we have foreseen ahead
harms less grievously]" (1. 1754). This line is reminiscent of Walter's
"Nam prouisa minus ledere tcela solent" (XX, 1. 10, q. v.), but it is
proverbial, and Henryson may have seen it in Cato's Distichs. 25 This
role also accounts for the unusual amount of moralizing within the
story; Henryson goes so far as to give the moral which is "in" the fable:

Grit full is he that puttis in dangeir
His lyfe, his honour, ffor ane thing off nocht;
Grit full is he, that will not glaidlie heir
Counsall in tyme, quhill it availl him nocht;
Grit full is he, that hes na thing in thocht
Bot thing present, and efter quhat may fall,
Nor off the end hes na memoriall (11. 1860-66). 26

G. G. Smith, Wood, and Elliott all place this passage outside the
swallow's preaching and thus in the poet's voice, but I see no reason
that it could not be part of the sermon. Nevertheless, it has a
marked affinity with the Latin moral appended to Walter's fable
("Walter-A" XXV, q. v.), moreso than to any of the Guatlerian Isopets. 27
And its inclusion within the story points up, again, that Henryson will reserve the *moralitas* for his own purposes.

In the story, the swallow manifests her prudence by warning the other birds that, if they do not tear up the farmer's flax, they will be captured by the nets surely to be made from the crop--this in answer to the lark's mocking question, "Quhat haif ye sene that causis yow to dред?" (1. 1742). The newly-sown field is more than it seems:

> For Clerkis sayis it is nocht sufficient  
> To considder that is befoir thyne Ee;  
> Bot prudence is ane inwart Argument,  
> That garris ane man prouyde and foiirse  
> Quhat gude, quhat evill is liklie ffor to be,  
> Off everilk thing behald the fynall end,  
> And swa ffमperrell the better him defend (11. 1755-61).  

The first two lines distantly recall the "Bakkis Ee" of the proem (1. 1637), but the passage derives from Boethius: "Neque enim quod ante oculos situm est suffecerit intueri, rerum exitus prudentia metitur . . . [For neither will it have sufficed to consider what is placed before the eyes; prudence takes measure of what is to come of things]." This "practical wisdom" is also an Aristotelian concept, distinct from "scientific knowledge" (the "science" of *The Cock and the Jasp*), another of the five "states by virtue of which the soul possesses truth by way of affirmation or denial." However, the two are not unrelated: just as "scientific knowledge involves demonstration," so "practical wisdom [is not] concerned with universals only--it must also recognize the particulars. . . ."

This antique wisdom is lost upon the unseeing birds, who respond with a few saws: they say that

> scho fischit lang befoir the Net;  
> "The barne is eith to busk [dress] that is unborne;
All growis nocht that in the ground is set;
The nek to stoup, quhen it the straik sail get,
Is sone aneuch; deith on the fayest [most fated] fall" (11. 1763-67).32

Fox comments, "Except for the swallow, the birds fit in perfectly with the natural world, both in the way they are described and in the way they talk. . . . Like the cock in the fable of the jasp, they show their complacent faith in their rural sagacity by speaking in proverbs . . ." (p. 351). The fatalism of these platitudes borders on predestinarianism, and a lesson in the ways of Fortune is to come.

At this point the birds fly off, and the speaker takes up his staff and walks home, "Swa fcrliand [amazed], as I had sene ane farie" (1. 1775). Some parenthetical comments on this line are in order because it is possible that important bits of folklore have escaped the notice of Bauman. The word "fairy" has a tangled history, and its use in this line is variously glossed. The DGST cites it here as meaning "A vision as of fairies; an illusion."33 That Henryson was aware of the sense "the fairy folk; fairy-land" is seen in his Orpheus and Eurydice: "Scho said, 'allace! euridicess, your quene,/ Is with the phary tane befoir my une!'" (11. 118-19). Commentators have long noticed the similarity between the line in the Fabillis and one in Piers the Plowman:34 "But on a May morwenyng on Malverne hilles/ Me befel a ferly, of fairie me thoughte" (Prolog, 11. 5-6).35 The experience of both poets is in the spring (either April or May for Henryson, since he does not set out again "quhill June" [1. 1776]). Now, Fairyland is essentially timeless, but the tales of enchanted fairy rings show that the green-clad folk are bound to the seasons, and May
Day, like Hallowmas, is an occasion for actually seeing them or for getting into Fairyland. These months of May and November have additional significance because, according to Briggs, "the fairies show interest both in cattle and crops" (p. 106). Perhaps "farie" connoted such things to audiences in 1380 and 1480, perhaps not. The line seems to be an alliterative formula, but Henryson, unlike Langland, says that he was as amazed as if he had seen a "farie." In other words, a bird-debate is as unlikely as an encounter with the fairy-folk, which is to say that both are impossible. For Henryson, as for the Wife of Bath ("Experience ... is right ynongh for me"), Middle-earth has not for a long time been "fulfild of fayere." I would add in this connection that, unwittingly or not, Henryson used as his seer a bird long associated in folktales and bestiaries with prudent foresight.

The speaker returns when the flax has blossomed and finds the swallow preaching in earnest:

O, blind birdis! and full off negligence,
Unmyndful of your awin prosperite,
Lift up your sicht, and take gude advertence
(11. 1790-92).

The birds exemplify a willing blindness, different from that of the bat in the proem, but is there cause for them to heed the swallow? There is, and not simply because they should pay some attention to her reasonable (and, as things turn out, correct) claim that "The awner off yone lint ane fouler is" (1. 1811). They need not have read the proem to find that, in contrast to them, the swallow is following Henryson's precepts and thus "by his [sic] knowledge of the natural world . . . is able to foretell the ill fortune of the other birds at the hands of the
fowler" (MacQueen, p. 156). Nor need they have read Physiologus to
know of the swallow's traditional prudence; for Henryson has introduced
within the story the motif of Fortune ("Unmyndful of your awin prosper-
itie"), with the implicit assumption that all of these humanoid birds
should have been aware of mutability. But they see the flax only as
it is at the moment: food. On this point Fox writes:

The jasp and the swallow fables have an obvious resem-
bliance: in both of them birds turn aside from a prof-
fered higher good in order to seek food, and so incur
loss or destruction. This plot, which can be paralleled
in many of the other poems, indicates very neatly the
fundamental conflict of the Fables, the conflict between
the natural and the supernatural worlds, between the
actual and the ideal (pp. 355-56).

I have stated my objections to an overemphasis of carnality, and I
would qualify Fox by stressing, again, that ignorance precedes appetite
in both fables.41 Likewise, the birds do not, as Fox would have it,
"come to grief through their arrogant faith in their natural reason"
(p. 349), which Henryson had said should not be used "To seirche the
secreitis off the Trinitie" (l. 1648), but rather because they will-
ingly limit this knowledge. The cock and the swallow's congregation
choose grain because they are ignorant of nearly everything except
what meets the eye; and they are hungry, which is excusable if one
insists upon judging them as animals, or even as people. When winter
comes the birds gobble up the fowler's bait because they are "ffor
hunger famischit neir" (l. 1867). They are indeed more carnal than
the prudent swallow, as is shown by the contrast between her Christian
diction and their homely saws.42 But the Platonic imprisonment dis-
cussed in the proem (ll. 1629-35) accounts only for man's basic
ignorance of God, and in the general Prolog Henryson says that men become like beasts only when lust and appetite (Bannatyne) or sin (Bassandyne) is rooted in their minds from habitual indulgence (ll. 50-56). The carnal "sinfulness" of the birds is not stressed, but we may assume that, because one of their number is aware of Fortune, in the world of this story all have the capacity for such knowledge.

Henryson says as much after the birds disregard this second warning:

Thir small birdis haveand bot lytill thoocht
Off perrell that micht fal be aventure,
The counsell off the Swallow set at nocht (ll. 1818-20).

Like the cock, they have only limited knowledge of the meaning of what is before them, but since their broader world is clearly mutable (as we see by the changing seasons), they are to blame for what befalls them. Compare Boethius: "If it is rare that the earth's own appearance stands firm, if it wavers in so many changes, believe in the transitory fortunes of men! believe in fleeting goods!" The birds' estimate of the situation might "be aventure" have proved correct, but they should have provided for the unforeseen instead of boldly awaiting the harvest "Magre yone Churll" (l. 1806). That their ignorance in this regard is vincible is shown in the swallow's lament at the close of the story:

And quhen the Swallow saw that thay wer deid,
"Lo" (quod scho), "thus it happinnis mony syis
On thame that will not tak counsell nor Reid
Off Prudent men, or Clerkis that ar wyis;
This grit perrell I tauld thame mair than thryis;
Now ar thay deid, and wo is me thairfoir!" (ll. 1881-86).

It is noteworthy that her grief does not stem from having made peace with the fowler, as it does in the Gualterian versions, but rather from having failed as a preacher.44
To as great an extent as in any of his fables, Henryson has prepared the reader for his moralizing; however, Fox rightly observes that "In accordance with Henryson's usual practice, the moralitas makes no reference to the obvious meaning of the fable (and the one found in the moralitas in Walter of England), although this was mentioned earlier: 'Grit fule is he, that will not glaidlie heir/ Counsall in tyme . . .' [11. 1862-63]" (pp. 352-53). Henryson equates the fowler with the Devil (11. 1895-1901), a motif derived ultimately from Wisdom literature. The Devil catches man by sowing the seeds of wicked thoughts; when the soul consents, the thought begins to sprout into mortal sin, blinding the reason; and when the thought is "ripe" the Devil spreads the chaff of vanity and lust to snare the doomed soul (11. 1899-1915). This process is reminiscent of that described by Chaucer's Parson. And the concept of wicked thoughts as a plant bears close resemblance to the tropological reading of the Fall (especially of the "fruit" given Adam and Eve by Satan) as expounded in St. Augustine's De Trinitate XII and incorporated in Lombard's "Sentences" and other theological works. The lines

Ressoun is blindit with affectioun [self-interest],
And carnall lust grousis full grene and gay,
Through consuetude [habit] hantit [practiced] from day to day (11. 1906-08),

recall the words of the general Prolog, wherein Henryson claims that it is no marvel that a man is like a beast if he yields to lust and appetite,

Quhilk throw pe custome and pe dayly ryte
Syn in pe mynd is sa fast radicat
That he in brutall beist be transformat (11. 53-56, Bannatyne).
Reason, already blind to the mysteries of God, loses even the power to understand the true nature of earthly things if it, like the birds, cannot see beyond that aspect which satisfies appetites. In a word, the paradox for Henryson is that the things of this world can hinder the proper exercise of reason, which is to understand the things of this world, and thereby the attributes of God.

Thir hungrie birdis wretchis we may call,  
As scraipand in this worldis vane plesance,  
Greddie to gadder gudis temporall (11. 1916-18).

That man is not necessarily subject to the flesh is seen by figure of the swallow, who "The halie Preichour weill may signifie" (1. 1924).

And that one does not necessarily have to despise utterly all worldly things is seen in Henryson's exhortation toward the end of the moralitas:

Thir hid Nettis for to persave and se,  
This sarie calf [chaff] wyislie to understand,  
Best is bewar in maist prosperite,  
For in this warld thair is na thing lcastand;  
Is na man wait how lang his stait will stand,  
His lyfe will lcast, nor how that he sall end  
Efter his deith, nor quhidder he sall wend (11. 1937-43).

"Best is bewar in maist prosperite" echoes the warning of the swallow to the birds, "Unmyndfull of your awin prosperitie" (1. 1791). Man need only understand earthly objects to be capable of prudence. And he must especially be aware of Fortune's workings, since the Wheel can only turn downwards from "maist prosperite" if one has subjected himself to Fortune by clinging to things of this world for their own sake. But true stability is found only in God, and so the poem closes with a list of items for which we should pray, the last being the fellowship of angels. In his excellent analysis of the fable's circular structure
Fox writes:

This is the same affirmation of a supernatural world that occurs in the opening description of God's excellence, but here heaven is shown as something attainable by men. At the beginning of the poem man is shown as being fettered "in presoun Corporall" [1. 1630], and so opposite to God; at the end he is shown as capable, with God's help, of perfect charity, and so able to live in the company of angels. The problem of mutability and of the transience of summer which the poem has raised so powerfully is finally answered by an affirmation of heavenly bliss and an eternal spring (p. 354).49

In both bird-fables, the Schoolmaster of Dunfermline demands of his audience that they study well what is before them. By examples of invincible andvincible ignorance he warns against failure to appreciate the true nature of finite things. The moral imperative of the _Fabillis_ is nowhere clearer than in these two tales, and it is not strange that he ends one with a challenge to find the jasper, and the other with instruction in prayer. The latter is perhaps a corrective for too much faith in mere learning, because knowledge fails in the ultimate order of things: no one knows

> how lang his stait will stand,  
> His lyfe will lest, nor how that he sall end  
> Efter his deith, nor quhidder he sall wend.

Henryson's optimism is tempered by his learned, orthodox ignorance.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER III

1 Most of the literary parallels I cite throughout this study have been noticed by Henryson's editors (particularly G. G. Smith, I) and by MacQueen in his second and third appendices. Like most others, they are indebted to Liebler. I will try to make it clear when a parallel is my own discovery.

2 The Bannatyne MS reads "his fable;" the Makculloch MS, "pis fabill."

3 I am aware that Caxton is not the true author of either the Aesop or the History, but for convenience I will refer to him as such.

4 The Bannatyne version:
putting example and similitude
how mony men in operation
ar lyk to beistis in pair contidioun

No mervcall is a man be lyk a beist
Qhilk levis ay in carnall fowll deleyte
That schame can not deren3e nor arreist
Bot takis all pair lust and appetyt
Qhilk throw be custome and be dayly ryte
Syn in be mynd is sa fast radicat
That he in brutall beist be transformat

I adopt this reading of 11. 50-56 because (1) 1. 51 is more metrically regular and has a clearer syntactical relationship with 1. 50 ("a beast which"); it still permits the alternative reference to "man;" (2) 1. 52: again, better syntax, allowing an alternative; also, "deren3e," with its literal meaning of "put on trial," fits better with "arreist" as a legal metaphor; (3) the plural "pair" in 1. 53 presents a problem, but perhaps the scribe was himself confused at this point; (4) the semi-colon is justified after the Bassandyne 1. 54 if "Syne" means "sin," but Bannatyne 11. 53-55 make sense only if "Syn" means "afterwards"--the sentence is virtually the same in both readings; (5) the singular in Bannatyne 11. 55-56, referring to "a man," is better than Bassandyne's plural, which can only refer, awkwardly, to "mony men" (1. 48).

5 ... euenit igitur ut quem transformatum utiis hominem aesti­mare non possis. Auaritia feruci alienarum opum violontus ereptor: lupi similem dixeris. Ferox atque inqieces linguam litigiis cxercet: cani comparabis. Insidiator occultus subripuisse fraudibus gaudeat: uulpeculis exaequetur. Irae intertemperans fremit: leonis animum gestare
credatur. Pauidus ac fugax non metuenda formidat: ceruis similis habeatur. Segnis ac stupidus torpet: asinum uiiit. Leuis atque inconstans studia permutat: nihil aubis differt. Foedis immundisque libidinibus immergitur: sordiae suis uoluptat detinetur. Ita fit ut qui probitate deserta homo esse desiderit, cum in diuinam conditionem transire non possit, uertatur in beluam (A. M. S. Boethii Philosophiae Consolatio, ed. Lydovicvs Bieler, Corpus Christianorvm: Series Latina, XCIV [Tvmnholti, 1957], IV, [pr. 3], 16-21. All quotations are from this edition.) Jamieson (Source Material, pp. 35-36) notes this parallel and says that Henryson was apparently the first to bring in explicitly this theological commonplace.

6See Fox, 344-45; MacQueen, pp. 107-08.

7See Fox, 343-44; MacQueen, p. 107. Fox (344) glosses "crouss" as "self-satisfied" or "jaunty." Henryson may have been thinking of the Scots proverb, "A cock is crouse in his own midding," which is found in Fergusson's Scottish Proverbs From the Original Print of 1641 Together With a Larger Manuscript Collection of About the Same Period Hitherto Unpublished, ed. Erskine Beveridge, STS, Ser. 2, XV (Edinburgh and London, 1924), Ferg. 75, MS 72. Beveridge states that David Fergusson, a minister at Dunfermline, collected them "in the latter half of the sixteenth century" (p. [ix]). The proverb is also found in The James Carmichael Collection of Proverbs in Scots, ed. M. L. Anderson (Edinburgh, 1957), Carm. 37. Note that the abbreviations "Ferg.," "MS," and "Carm." refer to the three collections. Pages xix ff. of the former edition and 117 ff. of the latter show how frequently Henryson used proverbs. When one of them occurs in B. J. Whiting, "Proverbs and Proverbial Sayings from Scottish Writings Before 1600," Mediaeval Studies, XI (1949), 123-205 [A-L], XIII (1951), 87-164 [N-Y], I will cite only "Whiting."

8Bannatyne: "I may nower extoll nor magnify."

9Because of the parallelism, I have to admit that the Bannatyne scribe's eye might have caught 1. 120, next to which he wrote "moralite," instead of 1. 127, where the "moralite" might have begun in the version from which he made his copy.

10Cf. MacQueen, pp. 202-03. Jamieson (Source Material, p. 19) warns against hasty ascription to the extant version of this Isopet because of the paucity of MSS.

11Suggested by MacQueen, pp. 103, 203.

12OED, s. v. "Cunning," n. 1; MED, s. v. "Conninge," ger. 1, 2.

13OBD, s. v. "Science," n. 2.

14OED, s. v. "Prudence," n. 1, 2.
In this connection, I find MacQueen's undeveloped assertion very odd (particularly in view of his source-hunting): "Henryson probably calls the jewel a jasp because in Revelation xxi. 10-11 the New Jerusalem, the City of God, is described as a jasp" (p. 104).

Bannatyne: "Quha can gowern citie and burchgus." Fox reads "freit" (destroy) for "the nonsensical scrait" (345, n. 17).

In the readings for Chapters I and II, see Holkot, Lect. 122A, 123A, 124A. He is indebted to Aristotle's Ethica Nichomaceae VI, 3, 5.

For "Thay cair na thing" Bannatyne reads "Quhat be pairin."

Only by most tenuous extensions can one see praise of the simple life, like Stearns (pp. 108-09), or condemnation of the "rank materialism" of the middle class, like Mary Rowlands, "The Fables of Robert Henryson," The Dalhousie Review, XXXIX (1960), 492. Wittig sees little connection between the pathetic rooster and the identification in the moralitas: "It seems almost as if the poet has allowed his own colourful fable to run away with him, and is now returning to his duty . . ." (p. 40).

See the readings for Chapters I and II for the full context.

He adds that the stanza on autumn (ll. 1685-91), "which combines the traditional Ceres and Bacchus with the first-hand precision of tome pyges [empty casks], France, and (significantly) Italy, is very unusual for the 1480's--or any period of the Middle Ages. Even more than the opening stanzas of the Orpheus and Eurydice it belongs to the Renaissance, as indeed to some extent does the entire concept of a pageant of the seasons" (p. 162).

Cf. Fox, 350.

Cf. MacQueen, pp. 162-63, 165.

See Fox, 351.

Henryson translates Walter in ll. 1739-40. For ll. 1754 see Walther, item 15841c, and the Distichs II, 24, 2.

For "nocht" in ll. 1863 Bannatyne reads "mocht." Jamieson (Source Material, pp. 161-62) cites Proverbs I, 7, and XII, 15, in connection with this stanza.

MacQueen does not record this parallel.

Bannatyne reads "It is sufficient" in ll. 1755, and "at the" for "beheld" in ll. 1760.

Consolatio II, [pr.] 1, 15. Compare the following from James I
Fortune is most and strangest evermore,
Quhare leste [least] foreknowing or intelligence
Is in the man.

30Ethica Nichomacea, trans. W. D. Ross, VI, 3 (1139b), in Works, ed. Ross, IX (Oxford, 1925). The other three are art, philosophical wisdom, and intuitive reason. Aristotle writes that "... it is to that which observes well the various matters concerning itself that one ascribes practical wisdom, and it is to this that one will entrust such matters. That is why we say that some even of the lower animals have practical wisdom, viz. those which are found to have a power of foresight with regard to their own life" (VI, 7 [1141a]).

31VI, 5 (1140a); 7 (1141b). Holkot refers to these matters in Lect. 122.

32The editors do not elucidate 1. 1763. For the proverbs, see Whiting, s. v. "Net," "Bairn (2)," "Ground (2)," "Neck (1)," and "Death (3)."

33DOST, s. v. "Fary," n. 2. It also cites Dunbar's "This Hinder Nycht, Halff Sleeping as I Lay," 11. 11, 111.

34See G. G. Smith, I, p. 27. MacQueen, citing 11. 1720-24, observes that "Like Piers Plowman, the fable begins with country workmen" (p. 163).


37See G. G. Smith, I, p. 27.

38II (D), 11. 1-2, 859.


40Cf. Fox, 349. On the blindness metaphor in regard to the Seven Deadly Sins, see Holkot, Lect. 29B, in the readings for Chapter I and II.

41Nor does the cock "incur loss." He loses nothing that he has; he merely turns away from an object of no value to him, and, allegorically, he remains what he was before: ignorant.

42See Fox, 352.
Consolatio II, met. 3, 13-16:
Rara si constat sua forma mundo,
si tantas uariat uices,
crede fortunis hominum caducis,
bonis crede fugacibus!

For landscape as a symbol of mutability, see MacQueen, pp. 158, 160, and Jamieson, Source Material, pp. 104-05.

Jamieson (Source Material, pp. 141-42) notes that in all other versions the swallow joins the man.

As MacQueen has recorded (pp. 156-57): Psalms CXXIII (CXXIV), 6-7; Proverbs VII, 23; Ecclesiastes IX, 12. Jamieson (Source Material, pp. 163-66) notes many Biblical and exegetical sources for the figure. Both seem to have overlooked Proverbs I, 10-19. For the figure of the bird-snare see Robertson, pp. 94-95, and Chaucer's Legend of Good Women, F, 11. 130-39 (G, 11. 118-26).

Lombard II, dist. XXIV, cc. iv-xiii. See Robertson, pp. 74-75.

See Boethius' Consolation II, pr. 5, and Robertson, p. 473. MacQueen finds that, in the story, the fowler operates similarly to Fortune in the Kingis Quair (p. 156).

For the poem as "a tragedy within a larger comedy" see Fox, 354-55.
IV HENRYSON'S MICE

1 The Lion and the Mouse

Several of the Fabillis have opening stanzas which function as exordia. Such prefaces reinforce the integrity of the individual fable, giving evidence that each should be read as a unified poem. In the Renardian tales they also provide links to establish a continuity of action, but in most they simply introduce the given fable, even though they may echo parts of other tales. The first twelve stanzas of The Tail of the Lyoun & the Mous have this introductory function. In all but the Bannatyne version these lines conclude with the notation that here the Prolog ends. And they resemble the opening of The Preaching in having a description of an encounter involving the speaker; but this time the "event" is witnessed in a dream.

Once more the setting is fair—"In middis of June, that sweet 'seasoun" (1. 1321)—and the poet again praises its natural beauties. But a different note is struck: the speaker says, ". . . to ane wod I went allone but [without] gyde" (1. 1327). This guideless viator bears, I think, more than a fortuitous resemblance to the wanderer at the opening of the Inferno.¹ (I will make nothing of the faint parallel between the first line, "In middis of June . . .," and "Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita." ) Like Dante he meets his poetical mentor, who, strangely, claims Rome as his native land (1. 1371). To my knowledge,
before Henryson only Lydgate, as might be expected, errs in his geography and claims that

\begin{verbatim}
Vnto purpos be poete laureate
Callyd Isopus did hym occupy
Whylom in Rome to plesse be senate,
Fonde out fables . . . (ll. 8-11).
\end{verbatim}

Perhaps this notion stemmed from confusion with "Romulus," or perhaps both poets meant to enhance the "image" of Aesop (in the Fabillis, lines 58 and 1377, Aesop is called or compared to a poet laureate). Equally strange is Aesop's claim that he "In Civile Law studyt full mony ane day" (l. 1374). This is the reading of two versions; however, as might be expected, I prefer Bannatyne's "science" for "Civile Law" despite the metrical deficiencies it causes. And Henryson's author is not the Grecian monster of tradition, the deformed Aesop found in the Life at the head of Caxton; rather, he is "The fairest man that ever befoir I saw" (l. 1348). Furthermore, as the commentators have observed, the description of the fabulist (ll. 1349-62) is very close to that of Mercury in The Testament of Cresseid (ll. 239-52). This implied comparison with the god of eloquence puzzles MacQueen (pp. 169-70), but it should not, in view of the lofty station accorded Aesop in Henryson's time.

Because of these and other dissimilarities with the Inferno, not the least of which is Aesop's sanctification (l. 1374), I will not push the parallels with Dante very far. If the journey in the "wod" is meant to symbolize alienation, then it is not clear what particular spiritual trouble is resolved by the speaker's finding a "gyde." "In the orthodox view," writes Gerhart B. Ladner, "the wayfarer's life was
conducted within a universal order which was in itself good and which was made up of many more particular orders." Such goodness and order are seen in the landscape of this fable, as in that of The Preaching, and the wood is not dark. In fact the setting is very lush and generally of the sort found in many dream-visions, with a notable exception. The speaker falls asleep "Under the schaddow off ane Hawthorne grene" (1. 1343). MacQueen notes that in both The Lion and the Mouse and The Preaching (11. 1729, 1781) the event takes place at a hawthorn hedge and that this is an unusual beginning for a dream-allegory; "Henryson may mean to indicate that his allegory is something more than the usual love-vision" (pp. 167, 168). The smelly hawthorn is indeed unusual in love-visions, and the common moral connotations of the thorn ("the prick of conscience") fit neither fable. Perhaps the hawthorn, contrasting so with the fragrant "Rosis Reid arrayit on Rone [thicket] and Ryce [small branch]" (1. 1335), is to remind the reader that this landscape is as transitory, ultimately, as that in The Preaching. Boethius had used thorns similarly: "When the wood has reddened with the roses of spring from the breeze of warm Zephyrus, foggy Auster might breathe rage; then beauty may leave the thorns." It would seem that Henryson meant to indicate no allegory in his place of rest. This garden signifies one in the real world; it is not part of the dream to come. Hawthorn had been used as boundaries for fields since Roman times, and Henryson may have been thinking of the naturalistic settings of the Roman de Renart: in The Tail of Schir Chantecler and the Poxe, Henryson writes of "Ane thornie schaw . . . off grit defence" not far from the widow's house (1. 419). As always,
Henryson delineates what can be known from what can only be imagined.

In the dream, Aesop comes not specifically to guide the persona but to speak general truths. At first he balks:

Schaikan his heid, he said, "my sone lat be,
For quhat is it worth to tell ane fenycit tale,
Quhen haly preiching may na thing availl?" (11.1388-90).

MacQueen sees here a reference to The Preaching and hence indication that the swallow fable was prior in composition (p. 168). This may be, but, together with the following stanza, wherein Aesop laments universal sin, the effect is that of the theme, "Dies mali sunt." The speaker acknowledges the evil; then he wins the master over with a personal plea: "Quha wait, nor I may leir and beir away/ Sum thing thairby heirefter may availl?" (11.1402-03). Aesop tells the ancient story in his own voice, drawing once more the ancient conclusions about kings and commoners. It may be that Henryson took the role of viator to dramatize the general ignorance of these remedies for political ills: he is now in the position of his students. And the importance of the lesson corresponds to the dignity of this heavenly visitant.

The fable is a series of dilations of the traditional story-elements. As in the Isopet de Lyon (XIX, 1. 4, q. v.), the mice disturb the lion, "all dansand in ane gyis [round]" (1. 1410; cp. 1. 1442). Henryson emphasizes their offense by having them cavort upon the noble personage, not content to have a single mouse run over him (11.1412-18). The "maister Mous" (1.1418) is seized, and though terrified she, like her counterpart in Neckam, pleads her own case. And it is in good order. She first tries, "Bot I misknew, because ye lay so law" (1.1432), and again, "we weind ye had bene deid,/ Ells wald we not
have dancit ouer your heid" (ll. 1445-46). The lion is not amused. This is treason, for even had he been dead and stuffed with straw "Thow suld ffor ffeir on kneis have fallin doun" (l. 1453). This unique parley strikes one as humorous because of the mouse's bathetic complaint and the lion's somewhat excessive hauteur. Henryson could be mocking the pretensions of the Stewarts to Divine Right, as MacQueen suggests (p. 172); yet, while the passage caricatures excess (is right dominant, or might?), it does not deny the essential truth of the claim. The mouse concedes the point and falls back upon an appeal for clemency (ll. 1461-74). She follows it with the Gualterian plea that a lion gains nothing by slaying a mouse (ll. 1475-88). Next, she fears for the king's health: "Unhailsum meit is of ane sarie Mous" (l. 1493)— prudent notice, with but a single analogue, of the king's bodily "Celsitute" (l. 1489). And she concludes with the traditional promise, "Yit and I leif, I may peradventure/ Supple your hienes beand in distres" (ll. 1497-98). The lion yields:

Quhen this wes said, the Lyoun his langage
Paissit [pondered], and thocht according to ressoun,
And gart mercie his cruell Ire asswage,
And to the Mous grantit Remissioun (ll. 1503-06).

The mouse raises "baith hir handis" (l. 1508) and blesses him.

However, the lion is not so just and reasonable in his customary practices. Henryson has him rampage, killing "baith tayme and wyld" (l. 1512), until "This cruell Lyoun" (l. 1515) is snared by men. This justification of his falling under the nets is not to be found in the immediate analogues, and Henryson makes it clear that the beast deserves capture. The lion was unaware that his domain was limited, as he admits
in his ubi sunt complaint:

O Iamit Lyoun, ligand heir sa law,
Quhair is the mycht off thy Magnyfycence,
Off quhome all brutall beist in eird stude aw,
And dret to luke upon thy Excellence? (ll. 1531-34).

He discovers that he is not King of the Scots. As in The Preaching, men serve as punishers of ignorance, and in both fables the victims are those who are for a time in "great prosperity" and who must turn downward on the Wheel. But fate is on the side of the lion: the mouse had claimed that she might "povedventure" help, and sure enough, "Throw aventure, the lytill Nous come neir" (l. 1543). The fable ends with the lion's release and departure; we do not know whether he learned his lesson.

The speaker asks Aesop for a moral, and the vision obliges. Stearns writes that "The moralitas of this fable, unlike that of many others, is an organic part of the story" (p. 119), meaning that the identifications are fairly consistent with the story's action. Nevertheless, Henryson goes beyond the inherent moral, that of Walter (XVIII, q. v.), and some critics would further allegorize this reading. Most see in the negligent ruler of the moralitas (ll. 1573-79) an allusion to James III. Whether or not Henryson meant James as a counterpart for the ruler who lies "in lustis, sleuth, and sleip" (l. 1579), he intended the moralitas as a whole to have a broader significance, like the story itself. We see this broadening in the lion's beautiful forest, which

Is bot the world and his prosperitie,
As fals plesance myngit with cair repleit.
Richt as the Rois with froist and wynter weit
Faidis, swa dois the worlds, and thame desavis
Quhilk in thair lustis maist confidence havis (ll. 1582-86).
As in The Preaching, the setting symbolizes mutability, and the bad king, like the birds, falls because he does not know the proper uses of the things at his command. Henryson is explicit on this matter:

Quha wait how sone ane Lord of grit Renoun,
Rolland in warldlie lust and vane plezsche,
May be overthrawin, destroyit, and put doun
Throw fals fortoun? qhilik of all variance
Is hail maistres, and leidar of the dance
Till Injust men, and blindis thame so soir,
That thay na perrell can provyde befoir (ll. 1601-07).

The theme of Henryson's moralizing is the same as that in The Preaching. Because some men seize the day they lose the wider perspective necessary to understand the mutable world they live in; they thus fall prey to Fortune, who "blinds" them--again this metaphor appears--so that they cannot have prudent foresight and thereby avoid disaster. The lion survived because he once acted "according to reason," an act of foresight, and so fate spared him.

The moralitas describes a political order which balances the natural order of the fable's Prolog. By indirection, Henryson tells us how the ideal king should reign. The mice of the story are equated to rebellious commoners (ll. 1587-93), but Henryson places the blame for their activity upon "Thair Lordis and Princis" who "Of Justice mak nane executioun" (ll. 1589, 1590). In the ideal order, commoners would be guided by the nobles. And though there would be no waylayers of kings, Henryson allows the trappers to get off scot-free:

Thir rurall men, that stentit [stretched] hes the Net,
In qhilik the Lyoun suddandlie wes tane,
Waitit alway amendis for to get
(For hurt men wrytis in the Marbill Stane).
Mair till expound as now I lett allane,
Bot King and Lord may weill wit quhat I mene:
Figure heirof oftymis hes bene sene (ll. 1608-14).
This is a pregnant stanza. Astonishingly, these ambiguous figures are not equated with any specific group in the social order. As rebels they are neither encouraged nor condemned, but merely held up as a warning to bad kings. Stearns is clearly wrong in reading the fourth line as the "colloquial equivalent of 'Dead men tell no tales' . . ." and hence as a reference to the murder of James (p. 17, n. 6). "Hurt" is probably the direct object, and the sense, an alternative which Stearns grudgingly allows, is equivalent to that of the proverb found in the OED and cited by Elliott: "In marble harde our harmes wee alwayes graue." Its date is 1583, but an earlier use is in Thomas More's History of King Richard III (ca. 1513): "For men vse if they haue an euil turne, to write it in marble: & whoso doth vs a good tourne, we write it in duste which is not worst proued by her."  

Although Henryson has Aesop end the allegorization suddenly in this stanza, I doubt that he was overly worried by the implicit radicalism of these warnings. The last line, "Figure heirof oftymis hes bene sene," justifies Miss Tuve's way of reading allegory: men become images of the dramatis personae, and not vice versa. Henryson's sentence is the same as that of the chestnut about putting the shoe on if it fits. The phrase, "oftymis hes bene sene," was used in The Cock and the Jasp (l. 75) to call upon experience as proof how jewels might be lost; and here it need not be applied solely to the turbulent Scotland of the fifteenth century. Stearns suggests that the ciriticism was put in Aesop's mouth so that Henryson might avoid the wrath of feudal lords (p. 18), but I question whether they would have been fooled.

And if they went to church, they probably heard the same things often;
by the time they picked up the *MoralFabilli* they would doubtless have been imured to such reproach.

Before vanishing in the last stanza, Aesop addresses the narrator:

> my fair child,
> I the beseik and all men for to pray
> That tressoun of this cuntrie be exyld,
> And Justice Regne, and Lordis kep their fay
> Unto their Soverane King, baith nycht and day

(11. 1615-19).

Bannatyne reads "perswaid the kirkmen yhandly [constantly] to pray" for line 1616; in either case the ending resembles that of *The Preaching*: in this mutable world prayer is best. At the same time, the moralitas gives a lesson in true patriotism, a painfully relevant lesson. "This country" might be any country, and figure has oftentimes been seen in our day of the near-anarchy that results from negligent governance, and figure also of a puissant ruler who is at the mercy of those wielding the nation's might while he seems to sleep. The workings of the Boethian Fortune are more than poetically true. Though Henryson's lesson apparently had no influence outside his classroom, if there, the mice might one day let the lion moan in the net.

2 The Frog and the Mouse

Henryson's mice present a difficulty that is common to most of his other beasts; indeed, the difficulty is met with frequently in reading fully-developed fables by major artists. It is that the characters are often so seemingly humanized that one can forget that they are animals and thus interpret their actions as if they were wholly human. For example, at the opening of *The Taill of the Paddok & the Mous* the latter creature is dismayed at not being able to cross a river: "Scho
mocht not waid, hir schankis were sa schort,/ Scho culd not swym, scho
had na hors to ryde" (11. 2779-80). Out of context the detail of the
horse strikes one at best as a comic heightening of her predicament or,
at worst, as merely quaint. Yet throughout the Fabillis Henryson
introduces many such details unselfconsciously; in context they are no
more startling than the fact that Chaucer's rooster "gan gronen in his
throte,/ As man that in his dreem is drecched soore" (VII, 11. 2886-87).
Since Henryson has humanized the animals to the point of quasi-rational-
ality, it should not surprise us that one mouse raises "both her hands"
to heaven and that another lacks a horse. Men move freely in the same
landscape and even discourse with the beasts in some fables. Are they
therefore animals? Not in this artificial world, where the more anthro-
pomorphically traits of the animals are magnified until we can view them
in the same perspective as their human counterparts. Though we can
best appreciate the mouse's dilemma in terms of human transportation,25
she is never made human; it is our world that can become a figure of
hers. Hence, although water may have symbolic significance in the
story, MacQueen is not justified in interpreting it according to the
Boethian imagery of the moralitas,26 for the same reason that the
mouse of the moral (who equals the soul) is not identical with the
animal of the story. The cliché that such details as the horse show
Henryson's sympathy for animals27 has more truth in it than does the
critical approach which seizes upon these hapless humanoids to point
out a lesson never intended by the author. When we read that Henryson's
amphibian "Put up hir heid, and on the bank can clym" (1. 2787) we
should not think of Darwin.
Henryson's emphasis once more is not on carnality. The mouse's
desire for the oats, barley, peas, and wheat (l. 2792) across the river
is allegorized into the soul's quest for the New Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{28} In the
story, this grain is much like the other morsels we have encountered;
though an addition to the Gualterian version, it again gives substance
to an animal's actions, in the same way as the frog's explanation of
her gill (l. 2816-17). We are being reminded that they are animals
(and perhaps being taught something of aquatic life). However, in
another addition some striking new lore is presented:

\begin{verbatim}
The Mous beheld unto hir fronsit [frounced] face,
Hir runkillit cheikis, and hir lippis syde [wide],
Hir hingand brows, and hir voce sa hace,
Hir loggerand [loosely hanging] leggis, and hir harsky hyde.
Scho ran abak, and on the Paddok cryde:
"Giff I can ony skill of Phisnomy,
Thow hes sumpart off falset and Invy.

"For Clerkis sayis, the Inclinatioun
Of mannis thocht proceidis commounly
Efter the Corporall complexioun
To gude or evill, as Nature will apply:
Ane thrawart [crooked] will, ane thrawin [crooked] Phisnomy.
The auld Proverb is witnes off this Lorum--
Listortum vultum sequitur distortio morum" (l. 2819-32).\textsuperscript{29}
\end{verbatim}

At first it would seem that the mouse is a proto-Bembo: "Hence, the
ugly are also wicked, for the most part, and the beautiful are good:
and we may say that beauty is the pleasant, cheerful, charming, and
desirable face of the good, and that ugliness is the dark, disagreeable,
unpleasant, and sorry face of evil."\textsuperscript{30} Taking the mouse's argument
together with the frog's reply that Nature is to blame, MacQueen lets
matters drop with the statement, "This echoes the Platonism of Chartres,"
and a glance at Alan of Lille's \textit{Anticlaudianus} (p. 120). The other
commentators are virtually silent (and Castiglione's editors refer one
to the maze of Italian neo-Platonism). Despite the terminology of the second stanza, I doubt that one has to go back to either Chartres or Plato. When Henryson uses a phrase like "For Clerkis sayis" he usually means that he is quoting or paraphrasing someone—he is more reliable on this score than Chaucer—but I can find nothing quite like this idea in the Plato known to the Middle Ages. I confess that I have not made a thorough search of the Chartres Platonists, because I find the core of the idea in a philosophical tradition at least as likely for Henryson, that of Aristotle. The Philosopher judges character by facial features in Historia Animalium (I, 9 [491b]); and in Physiognomonica he writes, "An ill-proportioned body indicates a rogue. . . . But, if bad proportions mean villainy, a well-proportioned frame must be characteristic of upright men and brave."31

Remember, too, that the mouse, in the manner of the ignorant birds of The Preaching, reduces her argument to a proverb, as if the currency of the thought gives it validity. That the notion was probably a commonplace by this time can be seen in Dunbar's assumption preceding his caricature of Walter Kennedy: "... thy frawart phisnomy/ Dois manifest thy malice to all men."32 The frog makes the same qualification that Bembo would later allow: "'Na' (quod the Taid), 'that Proverb is not trew;/ For fair thingis oftymis ar fundin faikin'' (11. 2833-34). As support, she calls upon higher Authority: "Thairfoir I find this Scripture in all place:/ Thow shuld not Juge ane man efter his face" (11. 2838-39). The Bannatyne reading, "Thairfoir I fynd in scripto in a place," is justified by John VII, 24: "Nolite iudicire secundum faciem: sed iustum iudicium iudicate." Even a frog can quote
Scripture to its own purposes. But the paddok goes on to say that even were she "als fair as Jolie Absolon" (l. 2842) she could not be held accountable for her appearance. The mouse does not see behind this unfortunate reference, and, after the frog makes the allusion to Nature, she ends the quarrel: "'Let be thy preiching' (quod the hungrie Mous)" (l. 2851).

It would appear that preaching could not move her in any case. In this she resembles the flax-hungry birds; however, she does show prudence in realizing that to follow the frog's advice by binding their legs would put her at the frog's mercy. She demands an oath, and the frog complies:

O Juppiter, off Nature God and King,
I mak ane aith trewlie to the, that I
This lytill Mous sall over this watter bring (ll. 2869-71).

At once Henryson notes that the mouse, who accepts the frog's word, does not perceive "The fals Ingyne [intention] of this foull carpand [chattering] Pad" (l. 2873). What the mouse has missed is that the frog, correctly identifying Nature as God's servant in her own defense (ll. 2844-46), now swears by a pagan god, albeit he too, as in The Testament (l. 171), is "Nureis to all thing generabill." The frog's oath is something of an equivocation, and the mouse is imprecise when she calls her attacker "Tratour to God" (l. 2883). Her knowledge of this frog is limited to an untenable saw (which ironically proves correct); likewise, her prudence is limited by theological naiveté. It is fitting that she vainly "cryit ffor ane Preist" (l. 2895) before the two are slaughtered by a kite.

The moralitas gives a very coherent reading of this little drama.
It is not a "tragedy" in the medieval sense; yet its lesson is the same as that of the Monk's tragic exempla: "Let no man truste on blynd prosperitee" (VII, 1. 1997). I can suggest only the possibility that Henryson had Chaucer's poem in mind when he wrote the first three stanzas of the moralitas in the Monk's eight-line ballade stanza. However, Fortune is dealt with later. Henryson first warns against the ignorance that causes one to fall in with bad companions: "Grit folie is to gif over some credence/ To all that speikis fairlie unto the" (11. 2920-21). The advice is practical, and Henryson refers to the unfortunately temporary prudence of the mouse: "I warne the als, it is grit nekligence/ To bind the fast quhair thow wes frank and fre" (11. 2926-27).

The "imposition" of allegory is done in his usual "rhyme royal."37 He likens the frog and the mouse to the body and the soul, and the kite to death:

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This lytill Mous, heir knit thus be the schyn,
The Sauill of man betakin may in deid;
Bundin, and fra the bodie may not wyn,
Quhill cruell deith cum brek of lyfe the threid;
The quhilk to droun suld ever stand in dreid,
Of carnall lust be the Suggestioun
Quhilk drawis ay the Sauill, and druggis doun (11. 2948-54).
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The imposition derives from the fact that body and soul cannot have separate existence in this world (the two animals are not joined until they enter the water [= the world, in the moralitas]). MacQueen tries too hard, I think, to find this moralization "in" the story.38 And the orthodox warning against the flesh should not mislead one into thinking that the poem is merely a diatribe against carnality.39 The body is always a spiritual threat, and here as elsewhere Henryson warns against
fleshly delights and the dangers inherent to the world's necessities (he is always aware of the brutal paradox imposed on man by the Fall). But his emphasis is broader: again he is writing about the manner in which one is forced to exist as long as one is in the world. The toiling of the body as it rises and falls in the world (11. 2934-46) is described with imagery recalling that used for Venus' thralls in The Testament (11. 232-38), as MacQueen has observed (p. 54), and this passage on the frog as a symbol of the body ends with, "Now on the quheill, now wrappit to the ground." Fittingly, the water is equated to the world, over which the soul desires to be brought "into hevinnis blis" (1. 2961). For Henryson, as for the mouse, the immediate peril is immersion in this water. By prudent conduct the mouse could have avoided her doom; man can similarly control his body and so have less to fear from Fortune in the world.

Physical death "cummis suddandlie" (1. 2962), however. Prudence can at best delay it. Since everything else must fail, Henryson again finishes with a prayer, reinforcing his exhortation to "mak the ane strang Castell/ Of Faith in Christ" (11. 2966-67). He leaves "the laif unto the Freiris,/ To mak exempill and ane similitude" (11. 2971-72). I do not find the same "irony" in this stanza as does MacQueen, who impressionistically claims that it is directed "not so much at the allegoric method, as at the extremes of length and ingenuity to which the Friars sometimes carried it" (p. 111). This moralitas is more than half the length of the story, and in other fables Henryson shows even more freedom and "ingenuity." If there is any irony here, it lies in his having stolen a march on the Friars.
3 The Two Mice

The Tail of the Uponlandis Mous, and the Burges Mous is one of the few Aesopic fables whose story Henryson has so altered as to give it a substantially wider significance than that of most earlier versions. This fact is owed in large part to Henryson's explicit contemporary references, another element unusual for him: without overly humanizing the mice, Henryson manages some general satire on the perpetually rising middle class.\textsuperscript{41} I say that they are not overly humanized because I wish to counter the arguments too heavily in favor of specific human reference. Beginning with the first stanza (1.168), both mice are often called outlaws and thieves, which, it seems to me, reinforces their nature as mice (all mice are thieves) rather than making them strictly "types of fallen humanity" (MacQueen, pp. 122, 124). Even the magnificent second stanza, with all its economic jargon, ends with an affirmation that the burgher is still a mouse:

This rural mous in to the wynter tyde,
Had hunger, cauld, and tholit [suffered] grit distress;
The uther Mous, that in the Burgh can byde,
Was Gild brother and made ane fre Burges;
Toll fre als, but [without] custom mair or les,
And fredome had to ga quhair ever scho list,
Amang the cheis in Ark, and meill in kist (11. 169-75).

In claiming that the "other mouse" was a "guild brother" and a "free burgess," Henryson is indulging in a hyperbolically metaphorical joke, for her freedom is limited to a box and a chest. There is no Musopolis in the story; her world is very much that of the average town mouse, which is to say that it is dominated by men who strive to end her freedom. This joke borders on the mock-heroic when Henryson has her set out "with pykestaff in hir hand,/ As pure [poor] pylgryme" (11. 180-81).
Kinsley has seen the function of these human characteristics:
"... the Burges Mous comes off worse because she affects the human too much: the Uponlandis Nous has the sturdy, sceptical independence of a Scots peasant woman confronted with newfangled luxury, but in her home, her diet and her preoccupations she remains a mouse" (p. 18).
Yet, in light of the traditional nature of these animals, it does not mean much to say that one mouse is exalted over another in the story. Perhaps, as MacQueen suggests, the satire against the third estate is heightened by the implication that it is composed of thieves (pp. 123-24)—but only insofar as burgesses are figures of this town mouse. I do not think that lines 169-75 imply that all such burghers are thieves.
Similarly, Henryson has not "equated" the country mouse with "the poor of the countryside," as MacQueen claims (p. 122); rather, he has given her some attributes common to poor men, allowing her to remain primarily a mouse. The sleekit beasties are not types of fallen humanity; fallen humanity can become types of them, though not necessarily.
Looking at the mice solely in the context of the story, one cannot but see them as permanent outlaws by nature. From this point of view the only true figures of them would be the devils and damned humans, according to orthodox theology. Homo Viator is an alienus, but he can have hope of reaching the City of God. These mice cannot.
MacQueen is right when he says that critics have tended to concentrate "on animal rather than human detail" (p. 121), but I think that he goes too far in the other direction. Nor do I intend to diminish the humanoid characteristics of the mice. Henryson has struck a very delicate balance between their purely animal and purely human
traits, and the latter are emphasized because Henryson wishes to attack
the vain self-sufficiency of many town-dwellers. One cannot use these
terms in dealing with the hero of The Cock and the Jasp, for instance,
because the cock's animal ignorance was meant to convey a simple
lesson. Here, as in The Preaching and the other two mouse fables, the
world of the story is broad, and the options of the characters have
moral meanings to be judged by internal criteria.

The human side of the mice is the most immediately striking.
Unlike the common Gualterian variety, the burgher leaves to visit "when
scho was full and unfute sair ['unfootso' = comfortable]" (1. 175),
the first note of deceptive security. Her feelings for her sister are
deep, and they are expressed in human terms: "For quhylis thay leuch,
and quhylis for joy thay gret,/ Quhyle(s) kisit sweit, quhylis in
armis plet [embraced]" (11. 193-94). The rustic knows her sister's
voice "as kinnism an will do,/ Be verry kind" (11. 188-89). She lives
in a dark hovel, "As I hard say" (1. 197)—an "oral" touch, but also
another reference to experience, as it is also in line 358; "For
comonly sic pykeris [pilferers] luffis not lycht" (1. 203). This
reminder of their "verray kind" is the same phrase used for Henryson's
fox (1. 2294). And when the burgher disdains the poor fare, she is
reminded by the other that the country life is the natural way for
mice, as their mother had told them: "For landis have we nane in
propertie" (1. 217)—in a word, the town mouse is too accustomed to
the life of men.44 Here, as in the Gualterian argument that "it's the
thought that counts" (11. 225-38), the country mouse shows a temporary
prudence like that of her relative who was involved with the frog.
But she is won over by an appeal to experience, three saws, and a misleading statement on urban security:

"Lat be this hole and cum into my place; I sail to you schaw be experience
My gude friday is better nor your pace [Easter];
My dische likingis is worth your haill expence.
I have housis anew off girt defence;
Off Cat, nor fall trap, I have na dreid."
"I grant," quod scho; and on togidder thay yeid (11. 246-52).

They enter a dwelling "Without God speid" (1. 262), go to dinner
"Withowtin grace" (1. 268), and eat like lords, "Except ane thing, thay drank the watter cleir/ ln steid off wyne, bot yit thay maid gude cheir" (11. 272-73). Writes MacQueen, "The mice are most obviously types of fallen humanity, in their neglect of common Christian observance ..." (p. 124). But do all of fallen humanity neglect such observance as a matter of custom? These are thieving mice, not fallen Christians (despite their use of Christian terms, a habit common to medieval animals and pagans); the detail of the water helps to reinforce their basic nature. However, while ignoring God, at least one of them is aware of Fortune. When the burgher asks if "be ressone" her sister "fand difference/ Betwix that chalmer and hir sarie nest" (11. 276-77), the rustic answers affirmatively but wants to know, "how lang will this lest?" (1. 278). The other, comically imprudent, replies, "For evermair, I wait, and langer to" (1. 279).

At the height of their feasting they cry, "haill yule, haill!" (1. 289). I suspect that Henryson had in mind the Scottish proverb, "It is eith to cry 3ule on ane vder manis coist." As so often happens in the Fabillis, a proverb presages doom; and the stroke comes immediately, just after Henryson echoes The Preaching: "Yit etter joy
oftymes cummis cair,/ And troubill efter grit prosperitie" (11. 290-91).
The steward enters, and with a superb litotes Henryson observes, "Thay
taryit not to wesche, as I suppois" (1. 295). "The Burges had ane
hole, and in scho gois" (1. 297); the rustic faints. "Bot as God wald"
(1. 302) the steward does not see them. Spared once, the country mouse
delivers herself of the Gualterian sentiment that hard beans are better
than perpetual care (11. 319-22). Most versions end at this point, but
Henryson wishes to drive home the lesson of which the country mouse is
only dimly aware. She trusts to luck, dines again, and then is snatched
and worried by Gib Hunter the cat. Spared a second time, "throw
fortune and gude hap" (1. 335), she invokes the Deity ("Almichtie God,
keip me fra sic ane ffeist!" [1. 350]) and returns to the humble
security of the country.

The moralitas is in the same ballade stanza as the tropological
section of The Frog and the Mouse, and it too provides a moral reading
without making explicit identifications: Henryson amplifies the
standard moral, warning against those who "clymmis up maist hie"
(1. 371) and "blind prosperitie" (1. 377), themes we have encountered
before. The closest he comes to an identification is in lines 381-88:

O wanton man! that usis for to feid
Thy wambe, and makis it a God to be,
Lieke to thy self; I warne the weill but dreid,
The Cat cummis, and to the Mous hes Be.
Quhat vaillis than thy feist and royaltie,
With dreidfull hart, and tribulatioun?
Best thing in eird, thairfoir, I say, for me,
Is blyithness in hart, with small possessioun.49

I agree with MacQueen that "The Moralitas is concerned with gluttony
only in so far as it appertains to pride and high position" (p. 126),
but though Gib may be "Fortune as well as Death" in the moralitas (p. 127), he is not such in the story. The country mouse is saved from Gib by Fortune. The cat is a complex symbol in both story and moral, but in both, at his simplest, he acts as the immediate agent who brings blind prosperity to an end. Thus, while nearly all of the allusions in the moralitas are "obviously not to the established town mouse but to her aspiring sister from the country" (p. 126), fair warning is served to both types of humans. Despite her calm and that fortuitous mouse-hole, the burgher does not truly have "position" and "security" (p. 127). She knows how to deal with what she acknowledges as a "perrell" (1. 317), but it is as true for her as for her sister that "Swa interminglit is adversitie/ With eirldie joy, swa that na estate is frie" (11. 368-69). If the moralitas praises the simple life, then it does so only in that the country and poverty lessen one's chances of being turned downward on the Wheel; people who cling to abundance, like the town mouse, have the most to fear from the cat.

I cannot make a unity out of the three mouse fables, and I do not think that Henryson intended one. Like all fabulists he used the mice for different significations in each story. But the three tales are united to the whole by a common, if general emphasis. They present various aspects of reason, experience, prudence, and ignorance, supporting the theoretical prefaces which I have discussed. And the metaphor of blindness constantly recurs. One must keep in mind that Henryson's audience, then as now, was aware how each story had to end; the value in presenting such well-worn material lies in the ingenuity with which the fabulist exploits the comparative limitations of his characters.
From our kite's-eye viewpoint we know that the mouse should shun the frog, that the lion would do well to free his prey, and that the rustic had best stay where she is. The Fabillis give us this lofty perspective so that we might, in the act of reading, share the "maker's" wisdom and see Fortuna in all her works. The profit depends upon how well we heed these momentary visions; our delight resembles the final laughter of Chaucer's Troilus: we laugh at ourselves.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER IV

1 One might also compare the opening of Boethius' Consolatio.

2 Henryson, like the author of the Kingis Quair, doubtless knew that Boethius was a "noble senatoure/ Off Rome" (st. 3).

3 MacQueen, who cites evidence that Henryson studied law (p. 20), writes: "The poets of dream visions often project aspects of themselves on to the figures of the dream, and it is obvious that to some extent Aesop, as a projection of Henryson, is talking, not about the Romulus of Gualterus Anglicus, but about Henryson's Morall Fabillis of Esope the Phrygian" (p. 169).

4 Jamieson (Source Material, p. 138) and David Laing, the poet's first modern editor, are the only others to notice this.

5 "Homo Viator: Mediaeval Ideas on Alienation and Order," Speculum, XLII (1967), 239. For Dante's "selva oscura" see 251. I doubt that there is anything more than the faintest echo of an alienation theme in Henryson's fable: the speaker's delight in the setting would seem to argue against it, although his seeming contentment must be balanced against the fact that he has to be taught by Aesop.

6 MacQueen (pp. 165-67) has noted other parallels with the setting of The Preaching.

7 For instance, it appears only once in the Roman de la Rose (l. 3672; in the Chaucerian version, l. 4002); Danger is sleeping underneath it. It is also in the Kingis Quair, st. 31.

8 The Bible is no help, although Proverbs XXVI, 9, might serve as a motto: "Quomodo si spina nascatur in manu temulentii: sic parabola in ore stultorum."

9 Cum nemus Zephyri tepentis
urnis inrubuit rosis,
spiret insanum nebulosus Auster,
iam spinis abeat decus (ll, met. 3, 5-8).


12 See Jamieson (Source Material, pp. 124-27) for this and other additions to the traditional story.

13 Other parallels with Neckam XLV (q. v.) include the mouse's being aided by her fellows in cutting the rope (1. 1550) and Henryson's plea for "Piete" (1. 1555), to be compared with "Flecti uel sola permittas te pictate" (1. 15). Jamieson (Source Material, p. 123) notes the parallels to the mouse's use of companions.

14 Jamieson (Source Material, p. 124) finds it only in Johannes Gobi's Scala Celii.

15 Expanded in the moralitas, 11. 1594-1600. It is much like the mouse's last plea.

16 Stearns, p. 16; Rowlands, 496; Kinsley, p. 16. MacQueen finds the portrait "not altogether unfriendly" and suggests that the ravenous conduct of the lion refers to the king's difficulties in maintaining himself (p. 172). Jamieson (Source Material, pp. 132-33) attacks Stearns for once again failing to recognize the traditional nature of Henryson's complaints and their general application.


18 The Bannatyne MS reads "lusty" for "Injust" in 1. 1606.

19 For "rurall" in 1. 1608, Bannatyne reads "crewall," as does the Charteris printed text.

20 MacQueen thinks that Henryson meant to suggest the Scottish nobility (pp. 170-71). Jamieson (Source Material, pp. 134-35) shows that Henryson added the notion that the seemingly unimportant can also repay evil.


23 Stearns finds that 11. 1612-14 give weight to the impression that Henryson was referring to contemporary events (p. 17).

24 See Owst, pp. 296, 361. Jamieson (Source Material, p. 133) points out that, since Henryson is open in other poems, why should he hide behind Aesop here?

25 See MacQueen, pp. 116-17.
I will present my strictures later. In general, his discussion of Boethian symbolism (pp. 112-18) is excellent.


Cf. MacQueen, pp. 117-18.

Bannatyne reads "persavis" for "proceidis" in 1. 1927, and "frawart" for "thrawart" in 1. 1930. The Latin is "A distortion of morals follows from a distorted face;" for the proverb see Walther, item 6026.


(814a), trans. T. Loveday and E. S. Forster in the Works, ed. Ross, VI (Oxford, 1913). (As with other spurious attributions to Aristotle, I will not go into the question of authorship.) Aristotle also says, "The Sly man is fat about the face, with wrinkles round his eyes, and he wears a drowsy expression" (3 [808a]); and ",... swollen inflated sides signify aimless loquacity, as in frogs" (6 [810b]).

Several other of the frog's characteristics fit Aristotle's criteria for badness. John Metham, in a physiognomical work of around 1450 (in his Works, ed. Hardin Craig, EETS, O. S. CXXXII [London, 1916]) perpetuates Aristotle and lists many traits that reinforce the mouse's judgement:

Browys, qwan thei growe douneward to the eyn, thei be-tokyn an enuyus persone, and a froward. ... They that haue browys hangyn over the eyn, and in her speche meue bothe the eye-lyddys with the ballys, tho personys be ferfful. ... A mowght with thyk lypys, rounde, stondyn owte, the qwycye men clepe a tutte-mought [mouth with a projecting lower jaw] ... yt sygnyffyth. ... myche noying [harmfu], froward and schrewysch, and with-owte dyscrecion and foltysh [foolish]. ... [Fat cheeks betoken] onbownteusnes and frowardnes and dobylnes and hastynes. ... [Fat hams signify] owysdam and frowardnes ... a natural folle. ... [A broken voice shows] foltyshchnes (pp. 123, 132, 133, 139, 142).

To see how much of this had become common lore, compare G. C. Heseltine, ed., The Kalendar & Compost of Shepherds from the Original Edition Published in Paris in the Year 1493, and Translated into English c. 1518 (London, 1930), pp. 150-55. Jamieson (Source Material, pp. 65-66) cites other uses of this lore in literature.


For the concept of Nature as God's vicar see Curtius, p. 119.
(on Alan of Lille); Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls*, l. 379 (borrowed from Alan's *De planctu*); *Roman de la Rose*, ll. 16707 ff., 19505 ff. As Curtius notes (p. 120), Alan refers to God as "superans Iouis [highest Jupiter]" (*Anticlaudianus IV*, 1. 464), but we have no evidence that the mouse read the work. Compare also MacQueen, pp. 120-21.

34In *The Fox, the Wolf, and the Cadgear* (l. 2026) the deceitful fox likewise swears by Jupiter. See MacQueen, pp. 180-81, and Jamieson (Source Material, pp. 68, 248).


36The kite, "Fane off that fang [capture], pyipand with mony pew [cry]" (1. 2901), resembles the one in the *Isopet de Lyon III*, l. 40 (q. v.). Note the irony of the last line of the story: "Giff this be trew, speir [ask] ye at thame that saw" (l. 2909). Henryson is joking about the falsity of the literal level.

37MacQueen finds that the shift in stanza form marks the change from the tropological to the "allegorical" reading of the story (pp. 110-12). The latter is Henryson's usual method, and both sections deal with quid agas.

38... the earthly life of man is symbolized only by the attempt to cross the stream... Nothing else is to be interpreted in temporal terms" (p. 118). He goes on to compare this distortion in time with that of the *Roman de la Rose*. But it violates the simple, inherent moral of the situation to insist, "That the attempted crossing must be interpreted as man's life is shown by the Moralitas..." (p. 118). And I think that MacQueen imposes his own allegory when he claims that the opening discussion is outside time because it shows body and soul, matter and form, before the moment of conception (pp. 118-19). Cf. Fox's review, 347.

39MacQueen finds that "The corruption of the body is the paddock's 'fraud and als invy' [l. 2825]... reflected in her ugly body..." (p. 120).

40For l. 2967 Bannatyne reads "of gud deidis."

41See Bauman, 123. And for the fable's relationship to the "socio-economic background" see Stearns, pp. 34-38.


43For the Gregorian view of the alienus see Ladner, 234 ff. Cf. Oberman: "Biel's theological anthropology is not one of the just but of the viator, who stands in between the beatified and the damned—that is to say—in between those who cannot sin and those who ultimately cannot act meritoriously" (p. 39).
This is how Henryson uses the sister motif, which is found in the *Isopet de Lyon* XII and Bromyard (qq. v.). The first parallel is noted by MacQueen (pp. 204-05) and the second by Jamieson, "A Further Source for Henryson's 'Fabillis,'" N&Q, CCXII (1967), 403. I do not see that the "underlying concept is almost John Ball's" in his famous couplet on the equality of men (MacQueen, p. 122).

See Jamieson, *Source Material*, p. 89.

Whiting, s. v. "Yule (2)."

For Henryson's possible knowledge of the cats mentioned by Lydgate and Cdo see Jamieson, "A Further Source," 403-04. In *Source Material*, pp. 78-79, the only analogue to the appearance of a cat that Jamieson has not mentioned is that in Gaston Raynaud and Henri Lemaître, ed., *Le Roman de Renart le Contrefait* (Paris, 1914), 11, p. 240.

Jamieson (*Source Material*, p. 92) cites examples to prove that this stanza form was used in the fifteenth century chiefly in overtly didactic works. He also gives examples from Henryson's works of these themes (p. 93).


See Fox's review, 347.

In the last stanza Henryson refers to "Solomon," and to the several guesses regarding his source I would add *Proverbs* XIX, 1; XXVIII, 6; and *Acts* II, 46.
1 The Cock and the Fox

To understand the difference between the raconteur who has some concern for morality and the storyteller-moralist, one need only compare the preface and conclusion of Caxton's *Reynard* with the theoretical matter I have discussed above. Caxton's words are much like his famous warning at the head of the *Morte Darthur*: emulate the good herein, and shun the evil. Though unelaborate, it is good advice, for Caxton reminds us that the world holds many foxes: "The name that was given to him abides always still with him. He has left many of his craft in this world which always wax and become mighty. For who that will not use Reynard's craft now is not worth in the world now in any estate that is of might" (p. 184). His book bears him out, and this third-hand *Roman de Renart* shows the many roles the fox can assume.

With his great symbolic value, Reynard moves from one episode to another with as much ease as Henryson's mice: he is different and the same in each; "Renars est mors, Renars est vis," as Rutebeuf put it. But the episodes are not overtly didactic, nor are there moralizations comparable to the ones in such continuations of the epic as *Le Couronnement de Renard*.

Henryson's fox is like those in the later, moralizing additions and in the later iconography. "These descendents of Renard," writes
Varty, "are usually depicted as symbols with didactic purpose rather than as characters in a story which was primarily meant to please" (p. 213). Henryson's Renart likewise manifests the thoroughgoing anthropomorphism that had been an increasing tendency in the added branches. And perhaps the poet changes "Renart" to "Lawrence," the familiar Scots name, for the reason conjectured in regard to Chaucer's "Russell" by Mossé (pp. 26-27) and Flinn (p. 684), namely that the Roman was out of fashion by the fourteenth century. Henryson is also like Chaucer in retaining the cock's name but not that of Pinte or even of the dogs—"chose étonnante," remarks Flinn (p. 684).

The various episodes in the Roman were, as I have shown in the first chapter, ideal for the moralist. And Henryson, perhaps in imitation of the theme of the fox's ubiquity, takes the unusual step of linking the three fables I am about to discuss, doing so in a manner which demonstrates Renart's unfortunate longevity. All three fables are introduced by the opening stanzas of the first, The Tail or Schir Chantecleir and the Foxe:

Thocht brutall beistis be irrationall,
That is to say, wantand discretionoun,
Yit ilk ane in thair kynd naturall
Hes mony divers inclinationoun.
The Bair busteous [fierce], the Wolff, the wylde Lyoun,
The Fox fenyeit, craftie and cawtelous [cunning],
The Dog to bark on nitch and keip the hows.

Sa different thay ar in propertcis,
 Unknawin to man, and sa infinite,
 In kynd havand sa ffell diuersiteis,
 My cunning is excludit ffor to dyte.
 For thy as now [For that reason now] I purpose ffor to wryte
 Ane cais I ffand, qhilk ffell this ather yier,
 Betwix ane Foxe and ane gentill Chantecleir (11. 397-410).
Henryson moves from a general statement about animals to an incident that he has heard of recently. The commonplaces about certain animals may have charmed a young audience, but they also show the plenitude of exemplary beasts from which he could have chosen; he says that his mind boggles at the thought—the animal world seems a university, not a mere schoolhouse. And the line which types the fox is but the first detail which makes him conform to the Renardian model. A few lines later we are again told that he is "craftie and cautelous" (1. 420). Still further in the story he is the "fenyeit Foxe, ffals and dissimulate" (1. 460), and "fals and frivolus" (1. 565). In fact, this story is almost a set-piece catalog of the fox's archetypal traits. He is shown to be crafty, deceptive, and elusive; he dissembles, plays on words, lies, and flatters. Henryson may have picked up directly from the Roman the stylistic habit of tagging the fox with epithets, but he is never again so intent on explicitly portraying the nature of foxes. The words and deeds of this fable do enough.

Donald MacDonald has argued convincingly that Chaucer's Nun's Priest's Tale influenced Henryson's story, and he has also made clear some of the ways in which the Scot compressed much of the detail in the usual versions for his moral purposes. At the same time, Henryson has made significant alterations. His widow is poorer than the victims in Chaucer and the Roman, which makes the fox's theft more despicable. In branches ii and XVI of the Roman (qq. v.) we almost cheer Renart for his sallies against the flatulent Constans and the miserly Berton. In Henryson, the best that we can do is to sympathize with Lawrence's hunger (1. 426)—he is nearly always hungry in the
Roman—and with the seeming justice in his dethroning of the proud Chanticleer. The fox, while as anthropomorphic as Chaucer's, is nonetheless a substantial fox. And Henryson does not play with the mingling of human and animal traits, as the Nun's Priest does, for example, in the discussion of laxatives (VII, 11. 2943 ff.). Nor is he quite so humorous about the literal level, refusing to pass things off with "Thise been the cokkes wordes, and nat myne" (VII, 1. 3265). 13

Chanticleir is the usual rooster, by and large, although he does not have as much to recommend him as his counterpart in the Nun's Priest's Tale. He is more gullible than Chaucer's rooster, but I cannot agree with MacDonald ("Art," p. 110) that his response to Lawrence's first attempts necessarily indicates that he is yielding to the fox's familiarity: "'Knew yc my ffather?' (quod the Cok) and leuch [laughed]" (1. 446). It is as likely signifies his comprehension of the fox's double-entendre: "Your father full oft fillit hes my wame" (1. 441). Chanticleir has an attack of the temporary prudence so common in the Fabillis; Lawrence must turn at once from the unlikely argument that natural enemies were friends to an assault on the special and traditional flaw of the cock: pride. Even so, he does not have an easy time. MacDonald observes, "Henryson's attempt to make this part of the tale more credible involves a development of the fox's character as an expert flatterer that has no parallel in the Nun's Priest's Tale, nor, in fact, in any other version of the story" ("Art," p. 108). 14

Henryson's most notable omission is the debate on dreams between the cock and his chief paramour. Since his purpose is not to moralize on prudent foresight this time, it is irrelevant. 15 But he does
manage some Chaucerian antifeminism, ingeniously adding to Chanticleer's ruin at the same time. Pertok, one of the paramours, leads off the mourning for Chanticleer's capture with a "courtly" lament ("Quha sall our lemmun be? . . ." [l. 502]), but a lament for a rooster inevitably involves some bathos: "Yone wes our drowrie [loved one], and our dayis darling,/ Our nightingall, and als our Orloge [clock] bell" (l. 498-99);16 "With his sweit Bill he wald brek us the breid,/ In all this world wes thair ane kynder thing?" (l. 504-05). Sprutok brings us to earth with the Dunbarian revelation of Chanticleer's sexual inadequacies, using, like many of Henryson's earthy creatures, various saws: "als gude lufe cummis as gais" (l. 512); "Let quik to quik, and deid ga to the deid" (l. 522).17 Pertok, "hat feyn3eit fayt befoir" (l. 523),18 readily agrees. And then Tuppok, "lyke ane Curate" (l. 530), accuses him of adultery and says that "Yone wes ane verrary vengeance from the hevin" (l. 531). However, there is no evidence that she was not one of the "kittokis [wenches] ma than sevin" (l. 533) that wore out his virility. In a word, the three are hypocrites.19

In view of these events, it is difficult to see how the "courtly" swoon of the widow (l. 488-94)20 and the corresponding language of Pertok serve as "a prelude to a second deflation of Chanticleir" which is, however, "not so much of the individual Chanticleir, as of the general rhetorical concept of nobility" (MacQueen, pp. 141, 142). The other hens turn matters directly upon the cock and, unbeknown to him, castigate his major function in this barnyard world. True, the charge of polygamy is absurd in this world (MacQueen, pp. 142-43), but it does nothing to rehabilitate Chanticleir's standing; it merely shows Toppok
to be as shrewish as the rest of the consort, and their human termin-
ology places them in the company of Dunbar's two married women and the
widow--and hence of women figured by them in our world.

MacQueen is inaccurate in saying that "Chanticleir is not a fool:
he can use his wits to rescue himself even from the fox's mouth"
(p. 141). Henryson attributes these wits to a nearly miraculous inter-
vention: "Then said the Cok, with sum gude Spirit inspyrit . . . ."
(1. 558). He is not an absolute fool, but any cock is foolish who
listens to a fox. As Chaucer put it,

For naturcly a beest desireth flec
Pro his contrarie, if he may it see,
Though he never crst hadde seyn it with his ye
(VII, 11. 3279-81).

And once more we are reminded that wisdom, if this be such, is a gift
of God. But fantasy and mysticism are, as usual, underplayed.

MacDonald has shown how Henryson went to greater lengths than his
predecessors to make the escape plausible ("Art," pp. 110-12): the
chase is more intense than that in Chaucer; the fox is aware of genuine
peril and is tiring; the cock's suggestion--to say that he and the fox
have become friends--is less likely than the usual taunt to provoke
the pursuers; and the poet himself must admit that Lawrence "Desauit
wes be menis richt mervelous;/ For falset faiyleis ay at the latter
cnd" (11. 567-68). It should be noted that the second line is a
proverb and that the persona is not above using homely wisdom when it
applies.21

Just as Henryson had to choose among a myriad of animals, so now
he must decide upon a meaning:
Now, worthie folk, suppose [although] this be ane Fabill,
And overheillit wyth typis figurall,
Yit may ye find ane sentence richt agreabill,
Under thir fenyeit termis textuall (11. 586-89).

This is another problem with the literal level of some tales, those which are "overloaded" (cf. OE "helan") with figural types.

Nevertheless,

To our purpose this Cok weill may we call
Nyse [foolish] proud men, woid and vaneglorious,
Of kin and blude quhilk ar presumpteous (11. 590-92).

This choice is not quite as random as Henryson would make it seem. We were told that the cock was "infect with wind and fals vanegloir" (1. 474) when Lawrence claimed that he did not crow as well as his father. Unlike the cock in the fable of the jasper, Chantecleir is manifestly proud, though he is somewhat chastened in the end: "I wes unwyse that winkit at thy will" (1. 579). The burden of the moralizing is given to his flaw; Henryson puts forth the common exemplum of the fallen angels' pride (11. 593-99).

This reading is in the literary rather than the iconographic tradition. Church-carvings depicting this fable or showing the fox stealing geese were intended, apparently, to warn the slothful and gullible against the Devil's wiles, the fox representing the Devil.

In Henryson the fox stands for worldly flatterers: "For quhair is thair mair perrellous pestilence/ Nor [than] gif to learis [liars] haistcie credence?" (11. 605-06). These lines recall the moralitas of The Frog and the Mouse—"Grit folie is to gif over sone credence/ To all that speikis fairlie unto the" (11. 2920-21)—and the emphasis again is on worldly conduct. The final stanza condemns flattery and
pride as equally poisonous (ll. 607-13), and it is only in the story
that one finds a suggestion of which type should always come out worse
in the end. After the conventional breast-beating of the antagonists
(ll. 579-83), the cock flies safely home. The fox, as happens often
in Henryson and infrequently in the Roman, has nothing to show for his
being outwitted. In the moralitas, and only there, is comparison made
between Chanticleer and Satan's followers, the eternal alieni. But it
may be said of Lawrence, as it is of his human counterparts in the
moralitas, that "All worthie folk at sic suld haif despety" (l. 604).

2 The Confession of the Fox

The title of the next fable, The Taill how this foirsaid Tod maid
his Confessioun to Freir Wolf Waitskaith, might be scribal, but the
first stanza removes any doubt concerning sequence:

Leif we this wedow glaid, I yow assure,
Off Chantecleir mair blyith than I can tell,
And speik we off the subtell [strange] aventure
And destenic that to this Foxe befell,
Qhilk durst na mair with waiting [hunting] Intermell
[meddle],
Als lang as Leme [gleam] or Licht wes off the day,
Bot, bydand nicht, full styll Lurkand he Lay (ll. 614-20).

Since Lawrence stole the cock in the morning (ll. 427-28), it is the
same day. Thus his fear of light, apart from its proverbial connota-
tions, is tied in with the chase he has just escaped. The stanza
also reminds us that Chanticleir is re-elevated to prosperity. And it
shows that the poet means to touch upon predestination.

As Lawrence happily perceives the coming of night, casting "his
hand upon his Be" (l. 626) to view the evening star, Henryson begins
instruction in the zodiac. The description of the planets' movements
(11. 630-32) recalls the argument from order in *The Preaching*, an order still somewhat beyond the narrator's ken. He slyly claims that the arrangement about to be given is "as Lowrence leirnit me" (l. 634). This subtle humility is distantly akin to the figure anacoenosis, used by Cicero ad nauseam ("Can anyone tell me exactly how many there were?"). Henryson's ethos aside, Lawrence sees a very symbolic sky:

```
Than Saturne auld wes enterit in Capricorne,
And Juppiter movit in Sagittarie,
And Mars up in the Rammis heid wes borne,
And Thebus in the Lyoun furth can carie;
Venus the Crab, the Moon wes in Aquarie;
Mercuriue, the God of Eloquence,
Into the Virgyn maid his residence (11. 635-41).
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The planets are in descending order, except that the moon should be last. Perhaps Henryson could not resist giving the emphatic position, and an extra line, to his patron.

Like the roosters of Chaucer and Lydgate, Lawrence has a natural knowledge of these things:

```
But [without] Astrolab, Quadrant, or Almanak,
Teichit off nature be Instructioun,
The moving off the hevin this Tod can tak,
Qhhat influence and constellationoun
Wes lyke to fall upon the eirth adoun (11. 642-46).
```

He learns his "destenie" and "weird" (l. 649) from the planets' positions and decides that he had best see a confessor. The sun being in Leo, it is summer, as Elliott notes (p. 136), and this season is a frequent symbol for mutability in Henryson. Also, July and August correspond to the seventh and eighth ages of man, when he begins to decline after his "springtime." Such connotations may have been apparent to Henryson's audience, but, as MacQueen observes, it is probably the position of Saturn that is the immediate cause of
Lawrence's repentence (p. 146). Saturn is Lord of the Ascendant and in a position to exercise unusual power. "When he doth reign there is much theft used and little charity . . ."; he is "likened to age" because he is especially hard on the elderly; he "is enemy to all things that groweth and beareth life of nature . . ."; and he is "cause of hasty death" (Kalendar, pp. 141, 142). MacQueen has shown that the Goat and the Archer ingeniously foreshadow Lawrence's fate and that Virgo, the house of Mercury, controls the "appetitive organs" pierced by the arrow (p. 146).

One cannot be certain what specifically it is in the skies that brings about the seeming change in the fox. He nowhere indicates an awareness of the symbols discussed above, but in any case he has learned that because of his misdeeds things will not go well with him. He laments his past (11. 652-55) and his thieving nature (11. 656-62), but the latter speech "is one of self-pity, not of penitence, and otherwise is chiefly notable for the assumption that theft is an ordinary honest trade pursued under conditions of unusual difficulty" (MacQueen, pp. 146-47). His fear of the noose exceeds his penitential sorrow, and his prudent foresight is short-lived. And his motivations are as curious as the formation of the planets. Behind everything is his "cankerit conscience," as Henryson terms it (1. 663), and when the time comes to confess, Lawrence says that he wants "to declair/ My conscience, that prikkis me sa sair" (11. 689-90). Henryson seems to be consciously exploiting this infusion of a Christian conscience into a purely brutal soul. This fox is the perfect type of the transmogrified man of the general Prolog, whose habitual wrong-doing "in þe mynd
is sa fast radicat/ That he in brutall beist be transformat" (ll. 55-56, Bannatyne). He knows the outward form that he must follow, but the spirit of confession is missing, and Lawrence is killed by a false application of the letter. I agree with MacQueen that "Lawrence has no rational grasp of the realities of his position" (p. 147). Henryson will summon up the bestial man again in the moralitas.

Friedman points out another dimension of the fox's error:

"Medieval manuals of penance give specific injunctions against the practice of judicial astrology because of its emphasis on the created rather than the Creator, as well as because of its denial of free will" (p. 555). He continues, "Henryson's own attitude toward judicial astrology was, if anything, more hostile than that of the Church," and he cites the following from the moralitas of Orpheus and Eurydice:

Qhill he [Titius] levit, he set al his intentioun
To find the craft of divinatioun,
and lyrit it unto the spamen [fortune-tellers] all,
To tell befoir sic thingis as wald befall,
quhat lyfe, quhat deth, quhat destany and werd,
provvydit ware unto every man on erd (ll. 561-66).

Line 565 echoes line 649 of The Confession, as Friedman notes; here, Henryson goes on to condemn this seeking out of things known only to God, much as he had warned against intellectual pride at the opening of The Preaching. He attacks

superstitioun of astrology,
Saif allanerly sic maner of thingis
quhilk upoun trew and certane causis hingis
(ll. 588-91).

Also, he praises "trew astronomy" (1. 596) and deplores the "myst of Ignorance" (1. 602).

Into this confused situation steps the confessor, "Ane worthie
Doctour in Divinitie,/ Freir Wolff Waitskaith, in science wonder sle" (11. 666-67). If the Friar's last name ("one who lies in wait to do harm") were not enough to tell us at once what kind of a priest he is, then perhaps we should attend closely to Lawrence's description of him:

Your bare feit, and your Russet Coull [cowl] off gray,
Your lene cheik, your paill pietious face,
Schawis to me your perfite halines (11. 679-81).

First of all, it is significant that, like many others in the Fabillis, Lawrence is too ignorant to look beyond appearances. And secondly, he might well have applied the knowledge of his own physiognomy to the wolf. He later says of himself:

consider my Complexioun,
Selie and waik, and off my Nature tender;
Lo, will ye se, I am baith lene and sklender (11. 716-18).

Lawrence means that he is hungry, but his "complexion" is that of the choleric man and not unlike that of the wolf. "The choleric hath nature of fire, hot and dry, naturally is lean and slender, covetous, ireful, hasty, brainless, foolish, malicious, deceitful, and subtle where he applieth his wit . . . and commonly he loveth to be clad in black, as russet and grey" (Kalendar, p. 151). The lean and pale face of the wolf does not bode well for the fox, nor is it merely "a nice additional touch" (MacQueen, p. 147). Since Henryson uses human terms to describe animal features, I think that one might reasonably apply physiognomical lore, and thus Lawrence should have recognized in these features a character as deceitful as his own.

Lawrence is not, as Stearns would have it, sympathetically described, but his reverence for Friar Wolf Waitskaith, D. D., is "almost touching" (p. 114). In view of his ignorance, his greeting "with mony
binge [cringe] and mony bek [bow]" (l. 673) is ludicrous, for Lawrence sees what he wants to see, the ideal priest: "Ye ar Mirrour, Lanterne, and sickr way;/ Suld gyde sic sempill folk as me to grace" (ll. 677-78). He is as wrong in his judgment of the wolf as he is in his own worthiness for the sacrament, a fact of which we are reminded by the customary epithets ("this wylie tratour Tod" [l. 670]). Stearns, to the contrary, marvels at the "conscientious integrity" of Lawrence during his confession, finding him perfectly honest about his livelihood (p. 115). Such does not make for true repentence, however, and Stearns' sympathy for Lawrence does not justify his argument, to be discussed later, that Henryson is attacking Penance.

The splendid confession scene provides at once lessons on the proper form and example of bad shriving. The first lesson is that one should not violate the sacrament's secrecy:

Quhen I this saw, I drew ane lytill by,
For it effeiris [befits] noughter to heir, nor spy,
Nor to reveill thing said under that seill (ll. 694-96).

This action is in keeping with the moralizer's ethos, but it is also humorous in that Henryson has somehow come by a record of the confession and reveals it in detail. The remainder of the humor is in the fox's obvious unworthiness of absolution. He does not repent his sins, but he is sorry that he has slain so few lambs (ll. 698-704). When asked if he will forbear his wickedness, he replies:

And I forbear, how sall I leif, allace,
Haifand nane uther craft me to defend?
Neid causis me to steill quhair evir I wend.
I eschame [think it shame] to thig [bcg], I can not wirk, ye wait,
Yit wald I fan e pretend to gentill stait (ll. 707-11).
The last line artfully removes any compassion we might feel toward Lawrence: there are enough foxes in the "gentill stait." But the Friar lets all of this pass when Lawrence agrees to accept a penance that accords with his "complexion." The hypocritical wolf gives him a penance to chasten his flesh.

"Thou sall" (quod he), "forbeir fleisch untill pasche [Easter], To tame this Corps, that cursit Carioun; And heir I reik [grant] the full remissioun" (11. 723-25).

Rowlands writes, "However pious he may have seemed, under his cowl the friar was still a wolf by nature. The confession he allowed Lowrence to make, like himself, preserved the correct outward form, but inwardly meant nothing" (p. 498). Considering that it is summer, however, the penance is a heavy one, and the fox might well have tamed his body had he performed it. But he begs further indulgence, to be allowed some animal parts. The wolf permits this twice a week, "for neid may haif na Law" (1. 731). To which Lawrence answers, "God yeild yow, Schir, for that Text weill I knaw" (1. 732). This "text," fittingly, is proverbial, not Biblical.

The fox's nature must out, even as had the wolf's. Though to fish "haillelie wes his intent" (1. 735), he discovers that he cannot. Such an action is as much against his nature as true repentence. He makes a mockery of the sacrament and even manages to effect a metaphorical transubstantiation when he drowns the goat: "Ga doun, Schir Kid, cum up Schir Salmond agane!" (1. 751). But he has not even adhered to the letter of Penance. When "Unto ane derne [secret place] ffor dreid he him addrest" (1. 755), it is not clear whether he does so out of remorse or because he fears capture. By now he has totally forgotten
the astrological warnings; he lies stroking his belly in the sun's heat and says recklessly, "Upon this wame set wer ane bolt [arrow] full meit" (1. 760). He is slain at once by the goatherd, and he laments, "Me think na man may speik ane word in play, / Bot now on dayis in ernist it is tane" (11. 770-71). MacQueen refers to his "ingenious stupidity" (p. 148), and Toliver shows how his cleverness and humor defeated him because he did not take the world seriously enough (pp. 303-04).

Indeed, bound so fast in his "sins"—we must call them that because of the theological context—Lawrence is basically unaware of the moral implications of his acts. Just as his foolish words lost him Chantecler, his verbal mockery now brings an apt death. The first loss is traditional, the second very un-Renardian. But Henryson has moved from the simple barnyard to a very un-Renardian world which, like that of The Preaching, is infused with matter demanding that the characters be judged according to the inherent morality. Lawrence had to die this time.

The moralitas ignores the wolf. Further condemnation of the bad confessor is unnecessary, and Henryson gives no sign that the sacrament is itself defective. He chooses to talk about "This suddand deith, and unprovysit [unforeseen] end/ Of this fals Tod, without contritioun" (11. 775-76), who figures forth those who "gois now to confessioun/ Yit not repentis" (11. 779-80). In this and the final stanza of the moralitas he gives lack of prudent foresight the same religious twist as in The Frog and the Mouse. The middle stanza makes clear the fox's relationship to the bestial man:

Sum bene also throw consuetude [custom] and ryte, Vincust with carnall sensualitie;
Suppose [although] thay be as for the tym contryte, 
Can not forbeir, nor fra thair sinnis fle; 
Use drawis Nature swa in propertie 
Of beist and man, that neidlingis [of necessity] thay man do, 
As thay of lang tyme hes bene hantit [accustomed] to (11. 782-89).

The language is close to that of the general Prolog, and I would like to point out again that Henryson is talking about "sum," not all men.

The moral proceeds logically from the story, which, as I have said, details the process of confession. This central episode has many analogues, and it is worthwhile to consider the poem within the history of beast-confessions, especially since Stearns was "unable to find in Scottish literature an earlier or more extensive illustration of the ineffectiveness of the act of confession" (p. 28). I trust that I have shown why "Scottish literature" is an inappropriate category for an historical study of the Fabillis; we need a wider background.43

St. Thomas' argument that Penance is a sacrament did not become Church doctrine until the Council of Florence in 1439.44 This doctrine was affirmed and the role of the priest defined by the Council of Trent.45 Before Trent, the forms of the sacrament, as well as the attitudes toward it, varied considerably, and literature has recorded these vicissitudes. The earliest confession in a beast epic is that in the Ecasis Captivi (11th c.?): "Then they take quickly to the road, intone the hymns of David, / Take confession at the same time and climb the top of the mountain; / There they sit down and utter their prayers to the end."46 The matter-of-factness of the episode suggests that the author did not expect the reader to believe that the shriven fox was in "the state of grace," and the lack of a priest indicates a
primitive monastic confession in keeping with early Church practices. The confession scenes in Caxton's Reynard show more complexity and are important because of Henryson's probable knowledge of the work. In the first, Reynard confesses to Grimbert the badger because, he says, "Dear cousin, now am I in great fear for I go in dread and jeopardy of my life" (pp. 71-72). Grimbert absolves him after he recites a lengthy catalog of sins (pp. 72-75). Nevertheless, he impulsively leaps after a capon, and all that prevents him from returning at once to his life of chicken-stealing is Grimbert's reproach and his imminent appearance before the king (pp. 76-77).

Reynard's second confession to Grimbert (pp. 116-21) is much the same. Again he fears the vengeance of the court (p. 118), and again there is a detailed catalog of sins. Of greater significance is his self-psychoanalysis: "I am oftimes rored [stirred] and pricked in my conscience as to love God above all things and my even [fellow] Christian as myself as is to God well acceptable and according to his law. But how ween you that reason within forth fights against the outward will?" (p. 119). For all his penance now, he knows that he will fall again because of the evil influence of the world. He says that the only way to get on in the world nowadays is by deceit. This time, Grimbert does not absolve him. Says the badger: "Your reasons pass my understanding. What need have you to shrive you? You should yourself by right be the priest and let me and other sheep come to you for to be shriven. You know the state of the world in such wise as no man may halt tofore you" (p. 121). As in Henryson we have a fox whose conscience tells him the Christian thing to do, and who likewise is
moved to confession chiefly by fear of punishment. Both foxes, too, realize that they are cursed by having been given a vice as their main craft. Unlike Lawrence, however, Reynard is also plagued by bad example, and he is made a part of the world which he claims to deplore. Henryson ordinarily saves such extensions of the story for his morals. And he seldom feels it necessary to go beyond the customary epithets and provide lengthy condemnations of the sort found in Caxton and the Roman.49

Caxton's Reynard, based ultimately on the twelfth- and thirteenth-century Roman,50 portrays a confessional practice considerably more developed than that in the Ecbaasis. Reynard asks Grimbert to shrieve him because "Here is no other priest to get" (p. 72). Grimbert agrees if the fox will confess in "English" (p. 72), Caxton's translation of "duytsche" and hence a reference to the vernacular (Reynard had said, "Confiteor tibi pater"). For penance, Grimbert "broke a rod off a tree and said, 'Eme [uncle], now shall you smite yourself thrice with this rod on your body and then lay it down upon the ground and spring three times thereover without bowing of your legs and without stumbling and then shall you take it up and kiss it friendly in token of meekness and obedience of your penance that I gave you'" (pp. 75-76). Despite its resemblance to the modern confession, the scene reflects some primitive practices. Most notable is the penance, for it is apparently public in nature, and public self-flagellation was not prohibited until 1349.51 The satire in the passage lies in the inadequacy of the penance and the ignorance of the confessor.

The satire in the wolf's confession to the fox in the thirteenth-
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The century English poem, Of be vox and of be wolf (ll. 157-230),\textsuperscript{52} relies upon Scholastic theology. The fox abuses "the power of the keys" by promising the wolf sheep and goats if he will confess. The fox also gives absolution without assigning a penance, and St. Thomas had argued that without penance the sacrament is incomplete.\textsuperscript{53} And like Lawrence, the wolf is not contrite, being moved only by the promise of food.

Henryson's tale, the latest of all, is the most theologically sophisticated, down to the inclusion of a genuine priest complete with a degree.\textsuperscript{54} Thomas' requirements are enumerated almost point for point, from the proper salutation ("Benedicitie" [l. 693]) to a private penance. And in the debate over the penance we might even have a touch of satire on Scholastic hair-splitting. But I cannot agree with Stearns that confession is parodied for the sake of demonstrating the ineffectiveness of Penance. Henryson has carefully limited both confessor and penitent to the types most unworthy of participating in the sacrament. It is ineffective only because of the nature of this fox, and the moral imperative of the fable is grounded upon the terrible consequences for one who does not avail himself of confession in the proper spirit. The long tradition of beast confessions shows the many possibilities open to Henryson if he had wanted to strike at the heart of the sacrament. His moralitas warns us to temper our laughter with pity.

3 The Trial of the Fox (The Fox, the Wolf, and the Mare)

Henryson's concern is that the reader see something of himself in the antagonists of each story, and general satire on the world at large
is secondary. The reverse is true for Caxton. And although one might well profit spiritually by not imitating Caxton's fox, the effect of the confession-catalogs of Reynard's sins is hardly edifying: their delightfulfulness exceeds their instruction. The Fabillis, too, are delightful, but Henryson does not revel in Lawrence's misdeeds, nor does he catalog his sins. He holds up a mirror to each man's occasional conduct, and though his work shows much less pessimism than Reynard it nevertheless exemplifies the persistence of evil in man's nature. Lawrence, correspondingly, is reborn in the next fable, The Tail of the Son & Air of the foresaid Foxe, callit Father wer: Alswa the Parliament of fourfuttit Beistis, haldin be the Lyoun.

The son and heir of the foresaid fox, a bastard, is named "Worse-than-his-father." That he should be so "followis weill be ressoun naturall" (1. 803) because (as the proverb has it) "Off euill cummings war [worse], off war cummings worst of all" (1. 805). However subjective the latter statement, it is based on the inherent evil of foxes, a fact grounded on the preceding fables. The doctrine is the obverse of that propounded in Henryson's Orpheus and Eurydice:

It is contrair the Lavis of nature
A gentill man to be degenerat,
Nocht following of his progenitour
The worthe rewll, and the lordly estait (11. 8-11).

(It should be noted that the praise of linage in the lines just before these, together with the condemnation of Father War--

This ffoxe, Bastard of generation,
Off verray knide behuifit to be fals;
Swa wes his Father, and his Grandschir als [11. 807-09]--

run counter to the Boethian notion of equality before God and hence
should be weighed against the traditional populist view of Henryson.\textsuperscript{57} Henryson wishes to emphasize the utter depravity of Lawrence's son and seems to offer him little hope of mending his ways. The fox rejoices that his father is dead, buries him in a watery peat hole, and commends his bones to the Devil (1. 830). In revulsion, and perhaps to remind the audience that such hideous activity is to be relished primarily for its homiletic value, the narrator interrupts twice to make unusual internal moralizations. In the first (11. 817-23) he deplores the fox's covetousness and observes that "to the end attent he took no more" than had his father (1. 823). The second is closer in technique to his morals:

\begin{verse}
C fulische man! plungit in warldlynes,  
To conqueis warldlie gude, and gold, and rent [possessions],  
To put thy Saull in pance, or hevines,  
To riche [endow] thy air, qhilk efter thow art went,  
Have he thy gude , he takis bot small tent  
To sing or say for thy salvation  
ffra thow be dede done is thy deuotioun (11. 831-37).\textsuperscript{58}
\end{verse}

Stearns claims that the story up to this point has "little relevance to the fable itself" (p. 18),\textsuperscript{59} but Henryson has established the continuity of the three fox stories, and these moralizings serve as a prelude to the lengthy moralitas. Also, he is further extending his fox-saga to include the general theme of worldliness, thereby bringing it closer to such versions as Caxton's. Indeed, much more of the world now enters the story.

The action shifts quickly to the summoning of a parliament by a unicorn and a bull. (The inclusion of the legendary unicorn might be owed either to Henryson's belief in it or to its prominent place in the Scottish arms—or both: heraldry is important in this fable.\textsuperscript{60})
MacQueen has demonstrated that this is a Scottish Parliament (pp. 149-51), and the lion thus invites comparison with the Stewarts. His claims to royalty—"My celsitude, and hie magnificence" (1. 859), "My Celsitude and my hie Maiestie" (1. 936)—also invite comparison with the fool in The Lion and the Mouse: but this lion is aware of his limited governance:

\[\text{Greeting to God, helth evercestyng} \\
\text{To brutall beistis, and Irrationall,} \\
\text{I send, as to my subjectis grit and small (11. 856-58).}\]

His purpose, moreover, is to maintain the king's peace, which accords well with the ever-present fair season (11. 866-72), in itself a contrast to the fox's dismal peat bog.

The speaker returns to the common name for the fox, and he recites a long catalog of beasts (11. 887-921) "to me as Lowrence leird" (1. 884). It begins with "The Minotaur, ane Monster merovelous" and is never tiring, chiefly because of Henryson's virtuosity: "The Da, the Ra, the hornit Hart, the Hynd" (1. 900); "The tame Cat, Wildcat, and the Wildwod Swyne" (1. 902); "The marmisset [marmoset] the Nowdewart [mole] couth leid,/ Because that Nature denyit had hir sicht" (11. 915-16). The splendor and phantasy of this assembly were perhaps meant to dazzle a young audience (though it has several analogues), and the frequent alliteration suggests a mnemonic purpose. Further, it contributes to the general theme of plenitude and at the same time exalts the beast who can rule over such diversity. Henryson presents a character of a good king, one in an heraldic posture who paraphrases the royal motto of Scotland: "I lat yow wit my micht is merciabill,/ And steiris [disturbs] nane that ar to me prostrait" (11. 929-30).
He is almost a figure of Fortune: "Se nane pretend to pryde in my presence" (1. 935); "The lawest heir I can ffull sone up hie,/ And mak him maister over yow all I may" (11. 938-39). In proclaiming a rather unnatural peace among the animals, the lion singles out the most notorious offender:

Se neir be twentie mylis quhair I am
The Lid ga saiflic by the gaittis syde,
The Tod Lowrie luke not to the Lam,
Na revand beistis nouter Ryn nor ryde (11. 943-46).

Despite the small radius, the vision is Utopian and reminiscent of the New Jerusalem in Isaiah XI, 6-9, and LXV, 25. Yet it is not presumptuous, for the lion is acting like a good human monarch. Father War's misfortune is that he cannot, by nature, be a good "citizen"; his father, similarly, was out of place in a world governed by divine justice and the stars. These aliens give terrible example of the bestial heart that is a consequence of sin.

The elder fox feared eternal retribution; the younger knows that he must answer to those whom he has wronged on earth: "I wait this suddand Semblie that l se/ . . . Is maid to mar sic misdoars as me" (11. 957, 959). He feigns injury and disguises himself, all of which prompts another outburst by the narrator:

O fylit [defiled] Spreit, and cankerit Conscience!
Befoir ane Roy Renyeit with righteousnes,
Blakinnit [pale] cheikis and schamefull countenance!
Fairwull thy fame, now gone is all thy grace,
The Phisnomie, the favour off thy face,
For thy defence is foull and dифfigurate,
Brocht to the licht, basit [abased], blunt, and blait [pale] (11. 971-77).

The physiognomical lore confirms the evil that his father should have seen in Waitskaith. And the stanza provides internal confirmation
that this ruler is worthy of proper obeisance, giving Henryson a springboard for another thrust at worldliness and the chief vice exemplified by the fox:

Thy cheir changis, Lawrence; thow man luke doun;
Thy worschip of this warld is went away.
Luce to this Tod, how he wes in effray,
And fle the filth of falset, I the reid,
Quhairthrow thair followis syn and schamefull deid (11. 980-84).

These first twenty-seven stanzas are the prelude to the ancient Renardian tale of The Fox, the Wolf, and the Mare. All of the animals except a mare have presented themselves. At the lion's command the fox (despite his pretenses) and a wolf are to bring her to court. When they find her, she claims that she has a privilege which the two may see. The fox begs off on the grounds that he is illiterate, but he offers his friend the wolf, who is an expert in the Chancery hand (1. 1014). Then we learn that the "privilege" is written under her hoof. The wolf, "blindit with pryde" (1. 1020), has the top of his head kicked off. She offers the fox a chance to read the letter, but he demurs. Two points should be noticed. First, the mare, rightfully wary of these emissaries, deceives them, and not vice versa. She remains "Contumax [guilty of contempt]" (11. 1004, 1050); her disobedience is never entirely resolved, and I will take up this question in a moment. Secondly, we have no textual evidence that the fox was aware of the impending trick, and it seems that he was spared largely by good luck. The implication is that he was too wily to be fooled by someone who knew his nature ("Schir Tod, tak up the Flyrdome, and the Fon" [1. 1008]), and it is fitting that his punishment should await
a genuine offense against the civil order. On the other hand, comparison with Caxton points up a further difference between the French and the Scottish Renart. In the History, the episode is part of Reynard's second confession to Grimbert (pp. 116-18). It is much the same as in Henryson and is more fully developed than most of Reynard's "sins," perhaps because funnier. But this fox defers to the wolf because he knows the mare's intention. He is not made to appear purely fortunate, nor does he show signs of human, un-Renardian fallibility.

The offense against the civil order is the slaying of a lamb in violation of the king's peace, done just before the fox and the wolf return to court. There, the beasts in congress assembled dissolve in laughter at the fox's witty reply to the lion's inquiry concerning the whereabouts of the mare:

My Lord, speir [ask] not at me!
Speir at your Doctour off Divinitie,
With his reid Cap can tell yow weill aneuch (11. 1051-53).

After this, one of the oldest jokes in beast literature,75 the fox merrily recites the encounter, and the king lets matters drop with a couple of proverbs:

be yone reid Cap I ken
This Taill is trew, quha tent unto it takis;
The greitest Clerkis ar not the wysest men;
The hurt off an happie the uther makis (11. 1062-65).76

Henryson has made his point that booklearning is not everything, but he has also shown how easily even a king can side with a fox, a common motif in the Roman and its continuations.77 The king is perhaps culpable for his choice of emissaries in the first place. However, the lapse, pointed up by the lion's resorting to proverbial lore, is very
brief. The lamb's mother enters the court and pleads her case against Father War. True, to form, he lies, but he cannot come up with a defense as inspired as the ones that so often extricate his counterpart in the Roman from the lion's wrath. He is shriven by "that new maid Doctour" (1. 1092)--the joke was too good to drop--and hanged by an ape, thereby contradicting Varty: "In the many medieval stories about him, Reynard is often threatened with hanging for his crimes, but he is never hanged" (p. 81). 78

The first stanza of the moralitas vindicates the majority of doctors, as well as Henryson's art. He again says that a sober meaning may be found beneath the literal level of fables, a daily practice for

the Doctouris of Devyne,
That to our loving full weill can apply
And paynt thair mater furth be Poetry (11. 1101-03). 79

Here is the antidote to the pretenders in this and the preceding fable, and it indicates that Henryson meant no harm to the Friars mentioned at the close of The Frog and the Mouse.

The allegorization in the rest of the moralitas is generally "imposed," and yet it is consistent within itself. The equation of the lion with the World (11. 1104-10) is startling at first, but it catches up the exhortation against worldliness early in the story (11. 831-37); and the king's power to raise and lower his subjects, which I have already likened to that of Fortune, is equally similar to that of the World (compare the body-frog "swymand air and lait/ In to this world" [11. 2937-38] as the figure is elaborated in The Frog and the Mouse, lines 2941-47). The identification of the contumax mare is even more startling, and it is complicated by a textual crux. All
versions save the Bannatyne have her equal to

Men of gude conditioun,
As Pilgrymes Walkand in this wildernes,
Approvand that for richt Religioun . . . (11. 1111-13).

In the more Catholic Bannatyne MS she is

men of contemplatioun
Cff pennance walkand in pis wildernace
As monkis and othir men of religioun.

Similar variants occur in other identifications, and if Bannatyne transcribed the authentic text, then Henryson is directing himself to the clerical abuses of his time, as MacQueen has accordingly analyzed the passages (pp. 151-52). But something of a general moralization remains in either case. The wolf is likened to sensuality, which makes us bestial when we bend to the World and forsake reason (11. 1118-24), a familiar theme. As protection, we too have a hoof, "the thocht of deid" (1. 1125), with which to destroy sensuality. In so doing, we prevent temptations (the fox) from coming near. The Bannatyne MS specifies the temptations as vain thoughts which say to men of religion, "Cum to be warld agane."

Henryson perhaps weighted the moralitas in the mare's favor because she seems at fault to some extent in the context of the story. But it is difficult to contrive a set of values by which to judge her there. The setting of the three fables becomes progressively more complex, but one must not lose sight of the fox's central position in all three. The core of the last fable is Father War's relationship to the lion, and the handling of his crime is crucial. It is not in a mare's nature to disturb the peace, regardless of other offenses; the best way to deal with a fox, especially the worst of his line, is to
hang him. The world of the sequence grows so narrow for the fox that he is defeated not by an inspired ruse or by an unfortunately accurate arrow; rather, he is tried in a fair and orderly manner and convicted by his own "gorrie gumis" and "bludie snout" (l. 1084). We have come a long way from the amalgam of Robin Hood and Tom Jones found in the early branches of the Roman de Renart.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER V

1The History of Reynard the Fox, ed. Donald B. Sands (Harvard, 1960), pp. 45, 188. Sands has modernized the spelling. All quotations are from this edition.


3See also p. 59.

4See Flinn, pp. 98, 107-08.


6Bannatyne reads "It excedis" for "is excludit" in 1. 407. Bauman finds in this passage the oral techniques of "relation as personal experience" and telling the audience "just when it occurred," but he must allow also "reminis the reader that Henryson's literature is still a fundamentally written one . . ." (117, 118). For the literary tradition see E. P. Bargan, "Cock and Fox: A Critical Study of the History and Sources of the Mediaeval Fable," MP, IV (1906-07), 33-65.

7I can agree with Jamieson (Source Material, p. 172) that the opening stanzas manifest something of the "Affected Modesty" topos found in the general Prolog, but I doubt that the "Inexpressibility" topos, which seems to have been used mainly in panegyrics, was intended. See Curtius, pp. 83-85.

8For examples, see the readings for this chapter. Jamieson (Source Material, p. 194) observes that the character of the fox in the next fable, the same fox as in this tale, has been prepared for by this fable.

9"Henryson and Chaucer: Cock and Fox," Texas Studies in Literature and Language, VIII (1966-67), 451-61. The chapter on this fable in Jamieson's Source Material anticipates a good deal of MacDonald. See also Bauman, 115 n.; Speirs, p. 45; and Flinn, pp. 685-86.


12 Cf. MacDonald, "Henryson and Chaucer," 460.

13 See also VII, 11. 2880-81, 3064-66, 3210-13.

14 MacQueen argues that the dialogue involves an exposing of the cock's false pretensions to nobility (pp. 135-39).

15 See MacDonald, "Art," 107.

16 MacDonald, "Henryson and Chaucer," 456, has noticed that the "orloge" probably came from Chaucer (VII, 11. 2854).

17 For the first proverb see Whiting, s. v. "Love (1);" for the second, s. v. "Quick." Much of the three hens' parley resembles the speech of the second married woman in Dunbar's "Tua Marit Wemen and the Wedo," 11. 168-79.

18 This Bannatyne reading makes more sense than Bassandynye's "with feynyeit faith befoir." See Jamieson, Source Material, pp. 178-79 n.

19 Cf. Stearns, pp. 65-68.

20 Her actions in this episode manifest the fabliau tone of the Roman de Renart.


23 Henryson implies a connection with Fortune (1. 594). It is explicit in the exemplum of Chaucer's Monk—who, strangely, does not mention pride (VII, 11. 1999-2006).

24 See Varty, pp. 26-27, 42.

25 Henryson avoided clerical satire by not using the alternative motif of the fox in the guise of a religious. Odo, Fab. L (q. v.), and Caxton, History (ch. 5) did not avoid it. See Varty, pp. 51-52, 55.


27 John B. Friedman, "Henryson, the Friars, and the Confessio Reynardi," JEGP, LXVI (1967), 550-61, analyzes the nature of the clerical satire and relates the poem to many of its analogues. Much of this article was anticipated by Jamieson, Source Material, pp. 199-201.

28 MacQueen seems to have missed this: "From the beginning of the
fable, Lawrence obviously regards himself as a nocturnal creature, to whose thieving activities daylight is hostile, night favourable. During the day he lies low, and it is only when the sun has set and Venus shows her 'lustye visage' [I. 624] that he ventures from his den" (p. 145).

29Lydgate, 11. 64 ff. See Wood, p. 232, n. 642.

30See Kalendar, p. 162.

31Compare Chaucer's Reeve, "a sclendre colcrik man" (I, 1. 587). The color of the wolf's cowl is perhaps meant to signify that he is more than a Franciscan.

32"A little short visage of yellow colour signifieth a person deceiving, untrue, malicious, and full of harm. A visage long and fair signifieth a man hot, disloyal, spiteful, and full of ire and cruelty" (Kalendar, p. 153). Compare Aristotle's Physiognomonica, 3 (807b) and 6 (812a), where paleness denotes cowardice. Human physiognomy aside, Friedman is right when he observes that Waitkaith's description gives "the very qualities which identify the Friar as a wolf" (557).


34He suggests that Henryson is writing about the dispossessed gentry (p. 117).

35MacQueen's analysis shows that the absolution is not as gratuitous as one might think (pp. 147-48).

36Friedman has missed this. He says that it is "surely not a hard penance, for during Lent the Fox should have abstained from meat anyway . . ." (559).


38MacQueen has noted the superiority of Henryson's version over the others (p. 208). See also Friedman's analysis for the theological implications (559-60).


40Friedman sounds much like Stearns when he says that Friars are not mentioned "probably because it would have been dangerous to attack the powerful Scottish orders directly . . ." (561). As will be seen, I agree with Jamieson (Source Material, p. 208) that only one Friar is being criticized here, in contradistinction to Stearns.
41 "contritiounn" is the Bannatyne reading for Bassandyne's Protestantized "provision."

42 I use the Bannatyne reading for the Bassandyne "now hes gude professioum." It is not surprising that the Protestantizers did little to alter the story-element.

43 For the following discussion I am greatly indebted to an unpublished paper by Mr. John Manning, "'Confiteor Tibi, Pater,' Said the Fox."


46 Post iter arrippiunt, Davitica carmina prendunt, Se simul excutiunt, montana cacumina scandunt; Inibi considunt, fini concepta reducunt (II. 420-22). I use the text and translation from Zeydel's edition.


48 Again, see MacQueen's third appendix.

49 See the readings for this chapter, and compare the Ecasis, 11. 370-75.


51 Lea, II, p. 93.

52 Based on the Roman de Renart, branche IV, ed. Martin (II, ed. Roques).

53 Summa Th., Suppl. Q. XV, art. 1.

54 See Friedman, 556-57, 558-59.

55 Compare Caxton, wherein Reynard tells his wife to look out especially for Reynkin, their youngest: "He belikes [resembles] me so well, I hope he shall follow my steps" (p. 70).

56 See Whiting, s. v. "Evil (3)," and compare Ferg. 679, MS 1112, and Carm. 1219: "Of ane ill, comes many."
Consolatio III, pr. 6, mot. 6. Cf. Chaucer's "Gentilesse." By
the same token, it may be, as MacQueen suggests, that Henryson had in
mind an application to the promotion of the natural sons of the
Scottish nobility to major ecclesiastical positions (p. 153).

Wood's "richt" in l. 834 is evidently a misprint for "riche,
Elliott's reading. The final couplet is the more Catholic version of
Bannatyne; Bassandyne reads, "To execute, to do, to satisfie/ Thy
letter will, thy det, and legacie."

He finds that it seems to refer to a specific person and cites
an historical parallel (pp. 19-20).

The editors of the poem do not appear to have noticed the
heraldic jest in these verses [11. 873-79], in which Henryson sets the
three leopards of England to pitch the tent of the Scottish lion"
(Bruce Dickens, "Contributions to the Interpretation of Middle Scots


In l. 856 Bannatyne reads "ay lestand but ending."


A joke about the literal level repeated from the previous fable:
his informants die at the end of each story.

See the tables for this section and MacQueen, pp. 211-14. He
argues for Caxton as the primary source for the parliament and trial.
Jamieson (Source Material, pr. 227-33) cites the analogues in the
Kingis Quair, the Book of the Duchess, and the Parliament of Powlis as
evidence of the animals' connection with Fortune within the story; he
equates them with the degenerate man described in the general Prolog
and claims that this is an iconographic representation of man's sub-
servience to the World and Fortune (i.e., the lion). The lion,
therefore, cannot be praiseworthy. But one should not equate him with
such abstractions within the story; the equation with the World is a
reading derived from the moralitas in any case. Jamieson also main-
tains that the first four beasts, all unnatural, are emblematic of the
bestial man in the general Prolog. Perhaps, but they are soon lost in
the welter of quite ordinary animals. I find in the diversity a more
general symbolic reference than just to the human race. Here we need
not read the mole's blindness as man's; the general Prolog is best
illustrated by the fox.

See MacQueen, pp. 150-51.

tyrant, but he seems to me no more than an absolute monarch who is
trying to maintain order.
In l. 944, Bannatyne reads "wolf" for "gaittis."

This stanza and the next are not in the Bannatyne MS.

Paul F. Baum, "The Mare and the Wolf," MLN, XXXVII (1922), 350-53, notes several analogues. See also Diebler, pp. 50-56. Jamieson, "A Further Source," 404-05, argues for the influence of Cdo upon Henryson. Bauman argues against the usual notion that Henryson read Caxton's Reynard and says that "Except for the presence of a horse instead of an ass, Henryson's version conforms exactly to the standard type of the oral tale, and oral tradition could feasibly have provided him with his version" (121). This conjecture, of course, cannot be proven.

Bannatyne reads "brynt through pryde."

"Sir Fox, stop this rocking and this nonsense" (Elliott's gloss, p. 138).

See MacQueen, p. 149.

Ibid., pp. 209-10.

It dates at least from the "Aegrum" (8th c.). See the readings and tables for this section. Many of these examples are from versions of "The Lion's Share," and Jamieson (Source Material, p. 219) suggests that this fable inspired Henryson to add the motif of the fox's refusal to read the letter because he has learned by example.

For the proverbial nature of l. 1064 see Wood's note to the line. For l. 1065 see Whiting, s. v. "Hurt."

See Varty, pp. 88-89.

The fox is often illustrated as being hanged, usually by geese and occasionally with an ape in attendance; Varty sees in this the Wheel of Fortune motif (pp. 81-83).

For l. 1103 Bannatyne reads "And preue thare preching be a poesye."

His reading of the story seems even more violent when compared to that of Cdo (q. v.), who reproaches the ass for kicking the fox. But then Henryson wanted strongly to attack worldliness, and the lion is a better symbol than the mare.
VI POSTSCRIPT ON THE OTHER FABLES

The fables which I have discussed have much in common with the remaining five, forming with them a variegated whole. Before turning to the rest, however, I would like to point out some passages in Henryson's other poems that show traces of his Cekamist outlook, his ethos as a moralizer and a schoolmaster, and his favorite themes. A "philosophical poet," he shared much of his thought with most of his predecessors, and yet he could give uncommon treatment to the oldest motifs (Cresseid's ubi sunt complaint is a worthy example). Among the more "Henrysonian" of his traits is the explicit conviction of his work's ultimate veracity. On the question of fiction he does not, like Bromyard, constantly remind us that animals lack the gift of speech; morally, he does not feel compelled to express Chaucer's sentiment (which everyone ignores) about his Miller's Tale:

"... whoso list it nat yheere, / Turne over the leef and chese another tale" (I, 11. 3176-77). Henryson goes so far as to question the master when, in justifying The Testament, he asks, "Quha wait gif all that Chauceir wrait was trcw?" (I. 64). The "uther quair" (I. 61), his alleged source, is likewise suspect on the literal level, even though it fills in what Chaucer left out concerning the sad end of Cresseid. For Henryson, a fictional narrative is always to be handled with care, and it is something of a wonder that he did not append a
moralitas to The Testament. Yet tradition provides no precedent for a moral to the Troilus legend in its full form; Henryson doubtless realized that the horrible fate of Cresseid, along with his sententiae at the end, were warning enough, just as his Fabillis, because of artful contrivances within the stories, could have stood without morals. The story of Orpheus and Eurydice, however, is a "fenyeit fable" (1. 416) out of Boethius, and the well-known commentary by Nicholas Trivet served as the basis for a moralitas.

Henryson made his writings profitable not only by grounding them upon morality but also, as we have seen in the Fabillis, by using them as vehicles for pedagogical instruction. The Orpheus contains two stanzas of musical jargon (11. 226-39) which defines the harmony of the spheres and, presumably, enlightens the reader. Also, in listing and explaining the Muses he is very fastidious:

Thersycore is gud instructionoun
of every thing--the thrid sister, I wiss,
Thus out of grew [Greek] in latyne translait Is
(11. 40-42).

Similarly, the famous catalog of the planetary deities and their attributes in The Testament has more than a symbolic function.

The thesis that man's knowledge is limited, an underpinning of the Fabillis, appears in other Henryson. "Ane Prayer for the Pest" begins with this invocation:

O Eterne god, of power infinyt,
To quhois hie knawledge na thing is of obscure
That is, or was, or evir saibe, porfyt,
in to thy sicht, quhill that this warld indure (11. 1-4).

Man's intellective powers, in any case dim, are sometimes further "blinded" by sensuality. The Platonic and Aristotelian terminology of
The Preaching is echoed in The Testament (11. 505-11) and the Orpheus (11. 428-34). In addition, Orpheus looks back and loses his wife because (ironically) he "So blindit was with grit effectioun [self-interest]" (1. 388), and the moralitas tells us why his search through the heavens was in vain:

\begin{quote}
Bot scildin thair [the hevin abuve] our appetyte is fundin,
It is so fast within the body bundin;
Thairfoir countwart we cast our myndis E,
Blindit with lust, and may nocht upwartis fle;
Sould our desyre be socht up in the spheiris,
Quhen it is tederit in thir warldy breiris,
Quhyle on the fiesch, quhyle on this warldis wrak [goods];
And to the hevin full small intent we tak (11. 451-58).
\end{quote}

The familiar metaphors reappear, and perhaps these briars explain the symbolism of the hawthorn in the Fabillis. A proverb, and the testing of knowledge by experience, occur in Orpheus' last words:

\begin{quote}
"Now find I weill this proverb trew," quod he,
"'hart on the hurd [hoard], and handis on the soir;"
Quhair Luve gois, on forss rone turne the E.'
I am expart [experienced], and wo is me thairfoir,
Bot for a Luke my lady is forloir" (11. 408-12).
\end{quote}

I must admit that these passages are not enough even to prove common authorship. The truth is that Henryson's three major narrative poems are worthy continuators of lengthy traditions because they expand conventional matter brilliantly and without losing sight of what makes each tradition unique. It would have been surprising if Henryson had used such diverse material for identical purposes, and it is a tribute to this thoroughgoing moralist that his preaching fit a variety of molds. We have seen how eight of his fables, while governed by general unifying principles, nevertheless form a storehouse of topoi that enhance his poetry and sweeten his instruction. So it is with those
I will now discuss. For example, in The Taill of the Scheip and the Loig Henryson closes his attack on injustice with the motif of "The World Upsidedown" (11. 1307-20), a topos which Curtius traces back to Archilochus (p. 95). In a fable with similar purposes, The Taill of the Wolf and the Lamb, he directs the reader to the here and now with a prayer that God may save "our King" (1. 2775). And in The Taill of the Wolf and the Wedder he shows that he is conscious of the antiquity of his material and of its universal and eternal relevance, both spiritually and prudentially:

\[
\text{Esope that poete, first Father of this Fabill,\\nWrait this parable--quhilk is convenient [apt]\\nBecause the sentence wes fructuous [fruitful] and agreabill,\\nIn moralitie exemplative prudent--}\\n\text{Quhais problems bene verray excellent;\\nThrow similitude of figuris, to this day,\\nGevis doctrine to the Redaris of it ay (11. 2588-94).}
\]

The Sheep and the Dog and The Wolf and the Lamb pair nicely, and they also contrast with the semi-idyllic proceedings in The Trial of the Fox. The sheep in both fables are victims of systematic injustice; Henryson demonstrates the ideal in The Trial, and he is now as meticulous in showing the worst of things. With an inexorable process that leads to the sheep's literal fleecing, he elaborates the old tale of the sheep called to a consistory by the fraudulent dog. Henryson applies the same attention to detail that ballasted the fox's trial. Bauman accuses him of padding out a simple story (p. 118), but the legal niceties function like the penitential lore in The Confession: the poet is condemning the emptiness of mere form. The condemnation is seldom implicit, and one of Henryson's best jokes is the delibera-
tion of the bear and the badger over the point raised by the sheep, namely whether the wolf can judge him in such an out-of-the-way place and while the court is not in session. "Of Civile Law volumis full mony thay revolve [turn over]" (l. 1216), and the arbitors of course decide in the wolf's favor. The indictment against this legal charade carries on into the moralitas, where the animals are equated with various functionaries who pervert justice in civil courts.8

The lamb harassed by a wolf because he allegedly fouled the water likewise appeals to the law, and Scripture as well, presenting the heedless wolf with valid reasons why he should not fall victim to a one-man kangaroo court (l. 2679-92). Both Bovidae are also equated to the poor, for whom, it would seem, justice is rare. The point is emphasized in The Sheep and the Dog by the unusual device of continuing the sheep's story in the moral. The speaker has "passit by/Quhair that he lay" (l. 1283-84), and he has heard him deliver a complaint that God is asleep (l. 1295); the speaker adds that "this warld overturnit is" (l. 1307).9 Henryson, having broadened the perspective to include a God who has seemingly absconded,10 ends the fable by focussing the identification upon himself:

We pure [poor] pepill as now may do no moir
Dot pray to the, scn that we ar opprest
In to this eirth, grant us in hevin gude rest (l. 1318-20).

Such personalization leads one to feel that the theme of "Dies mali sunt" was more than a convention in regard to the execution of Scottish justice.

These Aesopic fables deal with many other themes I have presented. The Sheep and the Dog refers to the pragmatic aspect of prudent fore-
sight and recalls the town mouse's false security:

... Tyrannical men, quhilkis settis all their
cure
Be fals meinis to mak ane wrang conquest,
In hope this present lyfe suld ever lest (11. 1260-62).

Reason and knowledge are the province of The Wolf and the Lamb. The lamb shows how his accuser's charge "contrair is to resoun" (1. 2643) and in an exercise of logic points out, "I drank beneth yow far; /

Ergo, ffor me your Bruke wes never the war" (11. 2649-50). The wolf has no real case; he must allow the lamb a heritage of rationality ("thy language Rigorous/ Cummis the off kynd . . ." [1. 2655-56]) as a prelude to a threat to kill him for his father's logical annoyances. All subtlety vanishes when the wolf refuses to permit a fair trial:

"Na' (quod the Wolff), 'thow wald Intruse [intrude] ressoun,/ Quhair wrang and reif [theft] suld dwell in propcrtie'" (11. 2693-94). But he insists upon trying to prove his case in a pseudo-legal manner, even though he clearly has the lamb in his power. Wittig writes on this, "His legalistic subtleties [sic] tear the disguise of allegory, and out comes a sharp satire on the abuse of law against the innocent" (pp. 36-37). In the moralitas Henryson condemns misuse of knowledge and once more contrasts man's intellective powers with God's:

O man of Law! let be thy subteltie,
With nice gimpis [tricks], and fraudis Intricait,
And think that God in his Divinitie
The wrang, the richt, of all thy werkis wait (11. 2721-24).

The goddess Fortuna is again paid due reverence. The powerful lord chastised in the moralitas of The Wolf and the Lamb is reminded to "think that na thing cruell nor violent/ May in this world perpetuallie Indure" (11. 2765-66), and that his evil will be returned in
kind. Henryson vaguely predicts a "revolution," but it is an orthodox one involving the root meaning of the word as it is linked to the Wheel. In the final Aesopic fable to be considered, The Wolf and the Wether, Fortuna is more explicitly invoked. This fable is much like the famous tale of the ass in a lion's skin, dealing with another animal who attempts to change links in the Great Chain. The moral of this story of a wether who puts on a dog's skin to keep the wolf away warns the poor that their presumption will end when "sum man tit [tips] thair heillis over thair heid" (1. 2601). The rich are given an analogous warning, one which evokes an earlier culture: "Hall benkis [benches] ar rycht slidder [slippery]" (1. 2608). In short, he counsels "men of everilk stait/ To knaw thame self, and quhome thay suld forbeir" (11. 2609-10).

The Wolf and the Wether is notable for its exemplification of Henrysonian "blindness." The dull-wittedness begins with the wether's self-delusion about being a watchdog and the shepherd's ready acceptance of the scheme: "Quha sayis ane scheip is daft, thay lieit of it" (1. 2492). Things might have worked out if this castrated sheep had remembered that he was not really a dog. He succeeds in making the wolf drop the stolen lamb during the chase, but he refuses to end the pursuit: "It is not the Lamb, bot the, that I desyre" (1. 2535). When a briar bush tears off the skin and he must face the outraged wolf—who had been so terrified that he defecated on the run--the wether first lies, claiming by way of explanation that he meant only to play. Quite a game, says the wolf. A proverbial joke gains the wether nothing: "Ane flear [flee-er] gettis ane follower commounly" (1. 2576).
Because of his Lawrence-like failure to apprehend the seriousness of his endeavor, and because the hungry wolf was at least true to his nature, the wether can scarcely be mourned when the wolf breaks his neck. He might not unfairly be compared to the judges in The Sheep and the Dog, whom Henryson condemns for being "so blindit with affec-
tioun" (1. 1305) that they will not heed the truth. "In all things he counterfeit the Dog" (1. 2497).

The remaining two fables, both Renardian, are separate from the sequence discussed in the previous chapter. Those three concluded with the line, "And thus endis the talking [story] of the Tod" (1. 1145), a phrase which may indicate that the other Renardian fables were later in composition. But it also seems formulaic and hence a reference only to the last fable in the series. Compare "And thus endis the preaching of the Swallow" (1. 1950), as well as "And thus endis the taill of orpheus" (1. 633). Henryson apparently resisted the temptation to join all five in a continuous narrative about the Lawrence family—a lamentable choice, since the Scots History of Reynard the Fox would doubtless have been better than Caxton's. Having killed off two foxes, he might also have found it awkward to resurrect a third immediately. At any rate, the two fables, though still generally governed by the "introduction" to The Cock and the Fox, are independent of the story in the first Renart-group. And in both tales of the second group, the fox lives.

The Taill of the Wolf that gat the Nekhering [blow on the neck] throw the wrinkis [tricks] of the Foxe that begylit the Cadgcar [peddler] has no direct parallel in Caxton's History, and the evidence
is strongly in favor of Henryson's use of the Roman for it. The History does allude to the central episode (how the fox feigns death in order to throw fish from the peddler's cart, and how the wolf is beaten when he tries to do the same), but only in very sketchy form (pp. 49, 72). Caxton could rely upon allusion to this wide-spread story (Aarne-Thompson tale type 1) and still achieve an effect, but Henryson, no doubt perceiving an apt moral, expanded it fully. As Bruce Dickins suggests, Henryson may have thought to elaborate the Bestiary story of the fox playing dead in order to catch crows or ravens. Yet he has made the story thoroughly Renardian by adhering to the characteristics displayed in The Cock and the Fox: the fox is, of course, crafty; he promises to be the wolf's servant (11. 2014-20), an offer which the cock wisely spurned (11. 572-78); he lies to the wolf; he is boldly scornful of the cadgear; and so on. Also, Henryson gives him a traditional Renardian name, "Russell" (1. 1962)—the one used by Chaucer—before reverting to "Lawrence" (1. 1993).

The first seven stanzas of the fable, a dialogue between the fox and the wolf, recapitulate many of the naturalistic traits of Lawrence. He becomes the peculiarly literary beast when he begins to discuss food-getting. He affects the sanctimony that marked his brother in The Confession: "it is Lentring, ye se;/ I can nocht fisch e, ffor weiting off my feit" (11. 2000-01). But as the faithful "Stewart" to one who is "silver seik [short of cash]" (11. 2035, 2036), he consents to delude the cadgear, "Giff I can craft to bleir yone Carllis Be" (1. 2041). He does blind the carl, and in the conventional manner:

The quhyte he turnit up off his Enc tway;
His toung out hang anc handbreid off his heid,  
And still he lay, als straucht as he wer deid  
(11. 2053-55).

If Henryson knew Physiologus, or Odo,²⁵ he would have been aware that this posture symbolizes the Devil's method of capturing souls. It is certain that the cadgear has not heeded the sermons and that he is also ignorant of the fox's naturalistic wiles. He cries in joy, "Heir lyis the Devyll . . . deid in anc dyke" (1. 2063).²⁶ He learns the irony of this statement the hard way, and when Lawrence makes off with his herrings, he promises him a "Nekhering" if he will abide (1. 2089). The faithful servant relays this promise to his master, who demonstrates his own ignorance by trying to duplicate the fox's trick in order to get a blow on the neck. He "hang his toung furth as the ffoxex him bad" (1. 2163). But the cadgear has learned his lesson—"I wes begylit anis;/ Be I begylit twyis, I schrew us baih" (11. 2175-76)—and he conveys to the wolf this new knowledge about foxes by beating him until he is "verray blind" (1. 2183). Earlier, the wolf showed his intellectual blindness by accepting the fox's blessing, imprudently believing it a guarantee that he would "de na sudder deith this day" (1. 2157); Satan made a similar promise to Eve. Morality aside, the wolf should have settled for the authentic herrings stolen by Lawrence, as Henryson reminds us in another gnome: "He that of resoun can not be content,/ Bot covetis all, is abill all to tyne [lose]" (11. 2189-90).²⁷ Nor does the fox escape condemnation within the story: twice Henryson deplorces the betrayal of his "Maister" (11. 2193-94, 2199-2200), a theme also taken up in The Frog and the Mouse.
The story is largely separate from the continuum in the first Renart-group, but the *moralitas* is not. Here we learn that the World (fox) tricks man (wolf) by means of gold (the fish) into the hands of Death (cadgear). From an agent of the world in the moral of *The Trial*, Lawrence is transformed into the very source of evil. In taking advantage of the wolf he acts out a parody of the master-good servant relationship, just as the World "is Stewart to the man,/ Quhilk makis man to haif na mynd of Deid" (11. 2210-11). The wolf is guided by proverbial wisdom at the outset, saying to the fox, "For everie wrink, forsuiith, thow hes ane wylc" (1. 1987), but then in anticipation of the fish he "quyte forgettis the Foxe and all his wrinkis" (1. 2167). Playing the Renardian role of the oft-beguiled Isengrim, he is an apt figure about which to moralize. In the story, he is also much like the Lawrence of the three-fable sequence and so must lose; fittingly, since the World cannot perish the Lawrence of this fable remains. Henryson's fox is at his most Renardian in this instance, but, as we learn in the *moralitas*, in a fine stanza that contains much of what Henryson has to say about getting on in the world, there is a solution to the pervasive evil of the World's vanity:

The micht of gold makis mony men sa blind,
That settis on Avarice thair felicitie,
That thay forget the cadgear cummis behind
To stryke thame, of quhat stait sa ever thay be.
Quhat is mair dirk than blind prosperitie?
Qhairefoir I counsell mychtie men to haif mynd
Of the Nekhering, Interpreit [interpreted] in this kynd (11. 2224-30).

*The Taill of the Foxe, that begylit the Wolf, in the schadow [reflection] of the Mone* is a medley of stories out of fable collections.
and the Renart-cycle, a good example of Henryson's abilities at synthesis, and a fable which, intentionally or not, brings the poet's fox-saga to a symbolically appropriate close. As in the above tale, a human (the husbandman) has a major role. And unlike the fairly insubstantial men in the first group, the cadgear and the husbandman figure significantly in the moral imbedded in their stories, for both are victims of some of the foibles which had characterized the earlier Lawrence. This fox begged for an arrow in his belly; the greedy cadgear sings, "huntis up, up, upon hie" (1. 2083) while the "dead" Lawrence is dropping fish from the cart. And the husbandman is likewise punished for his rash oath to the spirited oxen, "The Wolff... mot have yow all at anis" (1. 2244).

The wolf, whom he had not seen, takes him up "at anis." Against the farmer's protestations that he spoke in anger, and his insistence upon legal process, the sanctimonious wolf ("God forbid, Schir, all hechtis [promises] suld haldin be!" [1. 2276]) answers with an unctuous appeal to principle—until he cites "Scripture": "For it is said in Proverb: 'But lawte/ All uther vertewis ar nocht worth ane fle'" (11. 2285-86).31 This is a "ghost," and I take it for an unwitting corruption of James II, 17 (or 20): "Faith without works is dead." I suggest this passage from the Bible not only because it parallels the hypocrisy in the wolf's faithlessness, but also because it anticipates Henryson's discussion of faith and works in the moralitas. The fable is very much concerned with "lawte," both in the broader sense of "trust" and in its theological meaning. That the wolf and the husbandman have little notion of the implications of trusting in a
fox is to be seen in the peculiar ceremony when they agree to abide by Lawrence's decision in the question of the oath's validity: "The Wolff braid [stretched] furth his fute, the man his hand,/ And on the Toddis Taill sworne thay ar to stand" (11. 2313-14). Again, something of a parody of the master-servant relationship is manifested; the fox betrays both claimants, and he does so with the assumption that the ultimate Master pays little heed to earthly affairs. In bargaining with the farmer he says, "For God is gane to sleip; as for this nycht,/ Sic small thingis ar not sene in to his sight" (11. 2332-33). Unlike the sheep's metaphor, this is heresy. The sheep referred only to the way things appear in times of great injustice, but the fox, denying God's omniscience, truly believes that he can sin with impunity. Indeed, like his French cousin he is privileged to escape earthly punishment. But the moral imperative of the fable is not contradicted, for, as we shall see, the fox is not to be taken for a type of man.

After Lawrence relieves the farmer of half a dozen hens, having promised to cozen the wolf, the man goes off, the fable breaks, and "we turne unto the uther tway" (1. 2375). The fox must dispatch the wolf to complete his scheme, and this he does nicely, but in a way that requires the moralitas for a full understanding of its relationship to the rest of the story. The fox lures the wolf down a well in quest of a "cheese" (the reflected moon), and as he rises in the other bucket he says to his harried companion, "thus fa'iris it off Fortoun:/ As ane cummis up, scho quheillis ane uther doun!" (11. 2418-19).32 MacQueen writes of the wolf, "A comic stupidity almost always forms part of his [Henryson's] concept of the evil man" (p. 174).
Henryson's failure to take this opportunity to punish the fox once more for his brashness would be inconsistent only if Lawrence had the same moral function in this fable as he had in the first group. But plainly we are not to view him now as the wicked man who is inevitably punished; rather, he symbolizes wickedness itself, or, as the moralitas has it, the Devil. "Renardian" traits, implicitly diabolical before, are now defined as such. Many of Lawrence's characteristics, ranging from the fact that in this fable he "come lourand [skulking], for he luft never licht" (l. 2294) to his easy lying throughout, match well with those usually ascribed to Satan. The rather imposed moral says that the Devil (fox) leads the wicked oppressor of the poor (wolf) to hell (the well) by means of covetousness (the cheese), whereas the good man (farmer), though always tempted, can put off the Devil with "warkis that fra ferme faith proccidis" ("the hennis," l. 2437). Some chickens! The story does not justify all of this reading, particularly insofar as it exalts the mere tracing of hens to avoid the loss of oxen and ignores the farmer's acceptance of Lawrence's rationale about the sleeping God. The injunction to have faith and to perform good works is meant to highlight the fox's failure on both counts.

This moralitas rounds out the five Renardian fables, whether or not one views them in a particular order. The first two stories demonstrate the destructiveness of the Flesh, in that the elder Lawrence is a caricature of the man who is a victim of the moral and intellectual blindness that goes along with excessive indulgence in fleshly appetites. In the third, a "good man" (the mare) appears in the center of the moral conflict and bests the two agents of the
World: Father War and the wolf. But Father War acts like a creature bound to habit, and he dies as a result of his fondness for lambs. These fleshly instincts are characteristic of the traditional Renart and are emphasized in this group. The "Renart" in the other two fables also has these habits, but the emphasis shifts to his likeness with the World and the Devil as sources of temptation. He assails a human and a wolf in both, and because the focus is on man and his reactions when tempted, Lawrence is allowed to slip away unscathed. In other words, his evil traits are symbolically disassociated from those of any living men, the nature of their human presence being taught in the first Renart-group. The Fox, the Wolf, and the Cadgear thus has the wolf representing a weak man, and he is destroyed by the World (Lawrence). The Fox, the Wolf, and the Husbandman effectively concludes matters with the good man (the farmer) resisting the diabolical Lawrence and with the wicked man (again the wolf) succumbing to him. In these five fables, Henryson has given specific lessons on how to fend off the Triple Temptation.

I would like to finish by taking up again the relationship of story and moral in the Fabillis. Toliver's article deals brilliantly with this subject, and the following sentences, I think, reveal his key points:

The moralitas ... is designed not so much to clamp down on truant sympathy for truant behavior as to reveal another dimension in the tale, a dimension which dissolves both sympathy and moral judgment in an ironic solution. ... We approach man the animal directly in the moral ... and obliquely in the fable. ... [Regarding The Fox, the Wolf, and the Cadgear] the lack of absolute agreement between the moral and the medium is not as
important as it might seem: each affords an insight into the other (pp. 300, 302, 305).

The "lack of absolute agreement" becomes apparent when one tries to apply the allegorical machinery of the *moralitas* too rigidly to the story; how, for example, can the World (fox) cheat Death (cadgear) of gold (the fish)? And it is true that each *moralitas* has an intention generally separable from that of the story. But I am not certain that the "solution" in the morals is always "ironic," except in the sense that they are usually unexpected. Toliver has given us the best analysis of Henryson's humor, but at the expense of the fundamental "high seriousness" of the *fabillis*, their moral imperative. The comedy in each is subordinate to the inherent moral, which Henryson most often ignores at the end in favor of "another dimension." Man is dealt with "obliquely" in the story only in the sense that the beasts are caricatures of "man the animal," creatures to whom several centuries' worth of meanings have accrued. In their own way, these pregnant symbols are the most direct means for approaching man, if poetry has any relevance to "life."

Elliot holds the view that "In the two fables of fox, wolf, cadgear (carter) and fox, wolf, and husbandman, the interplay of 'character' is so manipulated as to 'realize' the animals and make puppets of the humans" (p. x). They are no more puppets than their counterparts in the fabliaux and the *Roman de Renart*. The fact is that cadgears and farmers can scarcely help being less interesting than Renart. And in Henryson's fox-fables the role of the human characters takes on greater importance as the allegorical function of Lawrence-as-human diminishes. In the two fables mentioned by Elliott the human
condition is handled "obliquely" only in the sense that men and animals have yet to talk with one another; the morals inherent in the situations, like those in the other fables, are true-to-life. Henryson's purpose is to show how moral problems can be overcome, and if his humans are more often victims than heroes, then he has followed in some measure the "moral realism" expected by modern criticism. Yet he does not utterly destroy his humans, for all their comic bumbling. The Renardian tales, to the same degree as their morals, show that man is generally a weak fool—whether or not he is in the guise of another animal—but also that evil is weaker than he might suspect when confronted with "foxes." The pessimism of the *Roman* and of Caxton's *History* does not allow this kind of humanity, for the French Renart is ultimately invincible. But in the more complex world of the *Fabillis* the evil man is punished, though evil itself lives on; the good man falls, but he too survives.

The finest manifestation of this optimism lies in the most significant human in the *Fabillis*: the inobtrusive persona, whose intelligence searches to the limits which his humility defined, whose wit precludes despairing at his (and our) modern universe, and whose convictions regarding *quid agas* will be relevant as long as we remain on the side of the apes. I stated earlier that all fabulists could find refuge in the Bible, and that among the chief authorities therein was Job: "Ask the beasts, and they will teach you." I would say that Henryson was his own best pupil.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER VI

1See MacQueen, pp. 49-50, 157-58; Stearns, pp. 98-105. The general Prolog is likewise echoed often in the Crpheus; e.g., 11. 620-27. Jamieson (Source Material, p. 146) notes the "blindness" parallels in the Crpheus.

2Wisdom receives more emphasis in the Crpheus than in the Fabillis because Henryson follows Trivet in making Crpheus (the intellecutive part) the son of Phoebus (wisdom) and Calliope (eloquence).

3See Whiting, s. v. "Heart (2)."

4For a fine historical treatment of the Crpheus see Kenneth R. R. Gros Louis, "Robert Henryson's Crpheus and Eurydice and the Traditions of the Middle Ages," Speculum, XLI (1966), 643-55. Also, MacQueen and Stearns have given valuable background material for this poem and The Testament.

5It is the principal theme of Henryson's "The Want of Wyse Men."

6I use Elliott's punctuation. He glosses 1. 2591: "Providing instances moral and prudent." MacQueen observes that this is "one of the most Lydgatean stanzas he ever wrote" (p. 186).

7MacQueen argues for the influence of the Isopet de Lyon IV (pp. 203-04). For a comparison of the two and an excellent analysis of Henryson's version see Jamieson, "Revaluation," 22-28.

8See Stearns, pp. 29-32, and MacQueen, pp. 127-31, for the historical background.

9Jamieson (Source Material, p. 104) is perhaps correct in assigning all of the latter part of the moralitas (11. 1298-1320) to the sheep instead of the narrator.

10In this context, the thought does not seem to have had the force of heresy. Elliott's note to 1. 1295 indicates that it was fairly commonplace. See also Jamieson (Source Material, p. 105) and James Moffatt, The Bible in Scots Literature (London, n. d.), p. 52.

11See Stearns, p. 122, and MacQueen, pp. 131-33, for analyses of his argument.

12Bannatyne reads "outragius" for "Rigorous."
More of Henryson's genealogical theory?

See MacQueen, pp. 134-35, for an analysis of the moralitas. He notes how it refers particularly to Scotland.

It is proverbial; see Whiting, s. v. "Hall Benches."

This fable is not in the Bannatyne MS. Its relation to the Caxton version is discussed by MacDonald, "Art," 102-06; he also discusses the irony and humor of the situation. See also Bauman, 114. The only analogue known to Jamieson (Source Material, p. 11) apart from those I list in the readings is a fragmentary variant from the twelfth century in BM Add. MS. 8166 ff., 41b-42b. He discusses the blindness theme on p. 283.

See MS 189, Carm. 103.

Cf. MacQueen, pp. 187-83.

Jamieson (Source Material, pp. 277-78) has noted much of this internal evidence for the wether's self-delusion, but he insists that we must come back to the story after reading the moralitas if we are not to sympathize with the wether at the outset, just as we might be deceived by the depiction of the rooster in The Cock and the Jasp. He admits a certain amount of subjectivity in this approach, and I must say that my reaction to both stories was quite different. Throughout his chapter on this fable, Jamieson recounts Henryson's numerous additions to Caxton's version.

They are not in the Bannatyne MS. See Crowne's article on the matter.

Bauman denies this (109, 119-20, 121-22); but see Anthony W. Jenkins, "Henryson's The Fox, the Wolf, and the Cadger again," Studies in Scottish Literature, IV (1966), 107-12, for a convincing refutation. See also MacQueen, pp. 215-16.

Quoted in Wood, p. 245, n. 1952; see White, pp. 53-54. Wood adds that the episode is actually closer to the two instances of the fox playing dead in the Roman (pp. x1-xlii). See also Diebler, pp. 65-70, and Jamieson, Source Material, p. 239.


On this theme, see Toliver, 304-05.

Fab. XLIX; Parab. XCIX. Jacques made a similar comparison in Serm. vulg. CCCIV. See Diebler, p. 69; Varty, pp. 90-91; and Jamieson, Source Material, p. 253.

Subtleties like this belie Speirs, who cites this episode as
evidence that "Henryson's humour throughout the Fables . . . is quite simply 'folk' humour" (p. 41). On the other hand, MacQueen (p. 183) advances the proverb, "Selcrome lyes the divel dead by ane dycksyd" (Whiting, s. v. "Devil [5]"), as evidence that the cadgear is ignorant of worldly wisdom. Yet the association of the fox with the Devil indicates the probability that Henryson meant to suggest theological ignorance as well. This detail is not in the Roman.

27See Whiting, s. v. "Covet."

28See MacQueen, p. 178, for a comparison with The Trial and a possible pun on "Stewart."

29See Whiting, s. v. "Wrenk." MacQueen describes how the wolf is like the frog in being aware of his adversary's nature but soon forgetting it (pp. 178-79).

30See MacQueen, pp. 216-20.

In his note to these lines, Wood asserts that he can find no such proverb in Scripture. See also Stearns, p. 120. One might compare the passage cited by Sheppey (L1V) in his moral to the next episode, that of the well: "Qui operit odium fraudenter, revalabitur malitia eius in consilio" (Proverbs XXVI, 26). Bozon (128) cites Proverbs I, 10, 11. Jamieson (Source Material, p. 262 n.) may be correct in claiming that one cannot prove that the wolf intends the Book of Proverbs, but the phrase "in Proverb" differs from Henryson's many references to non-Biblical proverbs in its omission of an article or pronoun. Whiting gives the proverb s. v. "Lewty (2)."

32As MacQueen notes (p. 215), this taunt occurs in Caxton's History, p. 160, and his Fables, p. 207. It occurs as late as "Old Mr. Rabbit, He's a Good Fisherman," in Uncle Remus, His Songs and His Sayings.

33Odo (Fab. XIX) interprets the fox of this episode as the Devil. The well is a convenient figure for hell.

34Jamieson (Source Material, p. 262) discusses light and darkness metaphors in connection with the Devil.

35Jamieson (Source Material, p. 272) is amazed at the gap between story and moral and doubts the authenticity of much of the moralitas, and especially of this line. He finds that it manifests a Protestant spirit; but faith and works seem equally emphasized, and I find no trace of unorthodoxy.

36MacQueen (pp. 183-84) attempts to explain away the inconsistencies by citing Chaucer's Pardoner's Tale as an instance of gold belonging to Death. However, he does not account for the World's theft of it.

APPENDIX: TRANSLATIONS AND TABLES OF SOURCES AND ANALOGUES

Key to Abbreviations
(A short-title reference is made to works already cited in the text.)

General Abbreviations


App.: sec BP.

Ba: "Aesopic Fables of Babrius in Iambic Verse" in BP.

Bozon: Nicole Bozon, Les Contes Moralisés, ed. Smith and Meyer.


Caxton-F: Caxton's Aesop, ed. Lenaghan.

Caxton-R: The History of Reynard the Fox, ed. Sands.

Conrad of Hirsau, Dialogus super Auctores, ed. R. B. C. Huygens, Collection Latomus, XVII (Berchem-Bruxelles, 1955). The extracts are from pp. 25, 26, 27.

Ec(basis) Cap(tivi), ed. and trans. Zeydel.


Holkot: Robert Holkot, Super Sapientiam Salomonis (Speir: P. Drach,
1483). The texts of the following lectiones are also in Oberman: 123A (first selection, except for the quotation from the Bible) on p. 242, n. 176; 124A on p. 243, n. 179.


Jacques de Vitry: [Sermones communes] Die Exempla des Jacob von Vitry, ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Erzählungsliteratur des Mittelalters, von Goswin Frenken, Quellen und Untersuchungen zur lateinischen Philologie des Mittelalters, fünfter Band, erstes Heft (München, 1914).


----------: Sermones de tempore. The text of the extract from the Prolog is in Welter, p. 68.

Le Couronnement de Renart, ed. Foulet.


Mayno de Mayneri, Dialogus creaturarum, ed. Grässse. The extract from the Prolog is on p. 128. See Welter, pp. 357-60 (Grässse is in error in his dating and ascriptions).

Odo of Cheriton, "Prologus in Parabolis," "Prologus . . . Authentico Prologo Praepositus," Fabulae, and Parabolae, in Herv IV. Where possible, I have collated the fables with the versions in Perry's Aesopica and have accepted his readings.

Ph: "The Aesopic Fables of Phaedrus the Freedman of Augustus" in BP.


RR: Le Roman de Renart, ed. Martin (with some readings from the Roques edn.)

RR Contrefait: Le Roman de Renart le Contrefait, ed. Raynaud and Lemaître.

Sheppey: John of Sheppey, Fabulae, in Herv IV.

Speculum sapientiae, ed. Grässse. The extract from the Prolog is on pp. 3-4. See Welter, pp. 433-35.
Abbreviations for "The Phaedrian Tradition" (all in Herv II)

A: Fabulae Antiquae ex Phaedro . . . ex S. Martialis Lemovicensis Monasterii Codice (pp. 131-56).


C: Romuli Vulgaris Fabularum Libri Quatuor (pp. 193-233). "Romulus."

D: The Fables of Vincent of Beauvais in the Speculum Historiae IV, cc. ii-viii (pp. 234-45).

E: Rom. Vulg. Breviatae Fabulae (pp. 246-61).

F: Monachii Romuleae et Extravagantes Fabulae (pp. 262-301).

G: Bernac Romuleae et Diversae Fabulae (pp. 302-15).

Walter: The Fables of Gualterus Anglicus (pp. 316-51). I have collated these and "Walter-A" with the versions in Bastin (see "Isopets") and in Kenneth McKenzie and William A. Oldfather, eds., "Ysopet-Avionnet: The Latin and French Texts," University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, V, no. 4 (1919). I have chosen the best readings, usually those of Bastin.

Walter-A: Ibid., App. I: Fabularum Subditiciae Moralitates (pp. 352-65). These additions to the morals were used in the Gualterian Isopets.


Walter-C: Gualterianae Fabulae (pp. 383-91).

Neckam: Alexander Neckam's Novus Aesopus (pp. 392-416). I have collated this version with that in Bastin (see "Isopets") and have generally adopted her readings.

H: Romuli Vindobonensis Fabulae (pp. 417-54).

I: Vindobonae Romulae Fabulae (pp. 455-73).

J: Romuli Florcntini Fabularum Libri Tres (pp. 474-512).


L: Rom. Anglici Nonnullis Exortae Fabulae (pp. 549-63).
Readings for Chapters I and II

A. Latin Prologs

1. Walter

The present poem tries to please, to be useful:
Embellished with jests, serious things please more sweetly.
That little source produces fruit with a blossom; flower
And fruit purchase good will; the latter is bright, the former fragrant.

5 If the fruit pleases more than the flower, gather the fruit;
if the flower
More than the fruit, gather the flower; if both, take both.
Lest slothfulness lull my sluggish thought,
My mind induced a work, in which it stays awake.
So that the value of a harvest from a cheap little field may increase,
10 Shower dry little words, God, with Thy dew.

The lightness of foolish words bears a worthy burden,
As a dry shell conceals a good kernal.

2. Walter-A

To speak more fruitfully, may the Virgin Mary be near me;
May her Son Himself make good my failing.
For when we, perplexed, do not know what to do,
Those two send the help of heaven.

3. Cdo

I will open my mouth in parables, I will speak themes from the beginning. It is read in the Book of Ruth [II, 16]: "Cast down your handfuls on purpose and let them remain, that Ruth may gather without shame." Thus said Booz to the reaper. He is called "Booz" in whom is strength, and he signifies Christ, in Whom is the strength of Godliness, the all-powerful strength which bound the strong one, namely...
the Devil, and "carried off all his weapons and divided his spoils," as is read in Luke XI [, 22]. The former is, as is read in Isaiah LXIII [, 1], "the beautiful one in his robe, walking in the greatness of his strength," since the robe of the body was now more beautiful than the moon, brighter than the sun. He was going from heaven to earth, assuming flesh; from earth to hell, freeing the human race; from hell to earth, regaining flesh; from earth to heaven, sitting at the right hand of the Father. That "Booz" has His reapers, namely apostles, disciples, prelates, to whom the care of souls was committed. These ought to reap the corn of souls, i.e. the counsels and exempla of the Scriptures, by which souls are restored and sustained. Afterwards they ought to reap the souls themselves and offer them to God; concerning which is in Luke X [, 2]: "The harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few." Ask therefore the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into His harvest. No sacrifice pleases God so much as the zeal of souls. If you offer one single soul to God, He will say to you, "Well done, good servant," etc.; since God prizes one soul more than the whole world. But very many reap most diligently the tenth part of the corn [namely, of the body] and offerings; they offer the souls to the Devil by reason of a wicked life or negligence. Concerning which is in the Book of Wisdom VI [, 5-8]: "The harshest judgment will be made against those because they are exalted; the mighty shall be mightily put to the test; to the stronger a stronger torture impends." The maxim might have said, as it were, a harsh judgment will be made against the Jews and Saracens; a harsher against heretics; but the harshest judgment against false prelates, though now they may glory in a multitude of riches, in ornamented steeds, in delicious foods. "Ruth" stands for "the deficient one," and she signifies laymen who are wanting in themselves unless they are refreshed by prelates, since "[if] anyone shall have sent them away hungry, they will faint on the way" (Mark VIII [, 3]). Therefore, guides of souls, "cast down your handfuls on purpose, that Ruth may gather without shame," not only in church but in the courtyard, in chambers, at lunch, at dinner, on the road wherever it might be. The head of the household ought to make known from his repository new and old maxims and exempla, by which the faithful soul may be refreshed. In Ecclesiasticus IX [, 15]: "Let all your exposition be about the laws of the Almighty." And the alms will be greater than if bodies are filled up. Whence Gregory: "It is more to refresh the mind about to live forever by the food of a maxim than to satisfy by earthly bread the stomach of flesh about to die." And since, as Gregory says, "seeing that exempla sting more than maxims," I will open my mouth in parables, I will put forth both similitudes and exempla, which are more freely heard, more firmly in the memory than recommended maxims, and by which, when understood, the wise man will be wiser. He who has ears to hear, let him hear; he who has eyes, let him consider the writings; he who has the spirit, let him announce to the faithful, so that he may grant instruction of morals and the profit of souls to all. And since the treatment is by parable, with a parable of the Book of Judges [IX, 8-15] let us take up the exordium.
4. Odo (Prologus Praepositus)

Blessed Basil, gathering youth together, used to teach them purity of soul and invulnerability of body, a gentle pace, a moderate voice, the well-ordered phrase, unturbulent food and drink, taciturnity to those older, attention to those wiser, deference to the exalted, unfeigned charity to equals and those lesser, to speak little, however to understand a great deal, not to be rash in speech, not to superabound in talk, not to be pliant to laughter, to be distinguished for reverence, not to argue with irreverent women, to have the sight downwards, the soul above, to flee contradictions, not to assume pedagogical distinction, to value as nothing all honors of the age. However, if anyone is able to help others, he may expect repayment for good works before God, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

5. Jacques (Sermones de tempore)

From the lives of the holy Fathers and exempla and principles and similitudes according to the natures of animate things and the properties of inanimate things, divine sayings adapted for laymen and simple folk.

6. Bromyard

Also, in this little work it does not seem groundless to insert proverbs and exempla from diverse sources. . . . For instance whenever from the moral of the Gentiles' fables the form of the instruction is elicited; and also it is divine law to be taught from the enemy and to enrich the Hebrews from the spoils of the Egyptians. Nevertheless they are more often set down through exempla taken from the habits of men than from animals or other ignorant things—inasmuch as it is to men that it must be spoken and preached—exempla more familiar and of believable persuasion. For through more familiar things the knowledge of strange things ought to be acquired. Also, the exempla are more frequently applied against particular vices because the general move less and merely fly to the ears, just like general friends, who are merely received in the courtyard; the particular indeed fly to the heart, just like special friends, who are received within. Concerning this, one may rejoice (Ruth I, 1 £i. e., II, 13): "I have found," she said, "favor in your eyes, and you were placed near the heart of your servant." . . .

7. Speculum sapientie

According to Aristotle's saying in his Problemata, although "everyone may rejoice in exempla in learning," nevertheless this is more pleasing in moral teachings, since the building of morals, just as with the artificial image of things, gradually is manifested by
similitudes of virtue, so much that from natural, animal, and moral things and the properties of things the quality of human life is exemplified as if from real images. And in fact the whole visible world is a school, and all things are full with the principles of wisdom. Because of this, dearest sons, teach the moral lessons of your youth not from the poverty of our droplets but from the vein of the teachers we now will relate to you, wishing to write them with God's helping grace that you may understand more clearly, learn more easily, taste more agreeably, remember more firmly through fables of figures. But since by four principal virtues—namely, prudence, magnanimity, justice, and modesty—the edifice of an upright life is enclosed and secured... therefore we shall proceed with a four-part work... .

8. Mayno

... the Philosopher says in Ethics IV that, in the preservation of this life, a certain repose of the soul is had together with play or jocundity, which certainly is virtuous... Let us heed this in such jocund actions and words, lest, while we wish to ease the mind, we undo all the harmony of good works through a certain disregard. Therefore that book [of mine]... so embellishes jocund matter that, the gravity of morals and aptness of doctrine being pleasing from these things, it is adorned by authority of the holy teachers...

B. Other Latin Theory

1. Conrad

I should have said that his [Aesop's] matter, the very context of the fables, was taken from consideration of human morals or acts; for he drew the matter of his work from human nature, which is known to be so subject to corruption, change, or suffering that, never remaining in the same state and by diversity of wicked morals overstepping the laws properly of nature through malice, skill, and folly and a mad mind, it may be compared not undeservedly to beasts, a brute, rocks, and trees...

The author's intention is manifest from the matter itself, because through this compact work he wished with diverse fictions both to delight and to recall the nature of men to them, as if it were free from comparison to the reasoning of living beasts. The final cause of the reading is profit...

[Avianus] intended... to depict the ignorance and folly of men who err and so incite the wayward conscience through these similitudes toward any state of good morals.
2. Holkot

Lect. 29A
[On vincible ignorance:] And this ignorance is a grave sin. And it is ignorance aimed at with understanding; it is clearly not permitted. But there is another ignorance clearly striven for and is such through which a man not only does not wish to know, he wishes to be ignorant of the lowest thing. And such a man not only takes no heed to know, he disdains to know the lowest thing; and this is an unnatural vice because all nature wishes to know.

Lect. 29B
It should be noted that all sin arose to make a man quite blind spiritually: that, along with Sophonias I [., 17]: "They will walk like blind men because they have sinned against the Lord." Whence the seven capital vices occasion the seven mortal blindnesses to which correspond the bodily blindnesses mentioned in Sacred Scripture. (He devotes the rest of the lectio to developing this theme regarding the Seven Deadly Sins.)

Lect. 122A
[After referring to Nich. Eth. VI(3)] . . . knowledge is of the nature of an explained conclusion. Whence nothing is properly said to be known in relation to it strictly speaking with knowledge, except what it posit to be proved by explanation.

Lect. 123A
For it is clear from the knowledge of creatures how much we can rise up somehow to the conception of God regarding many things, namely that He is mighty, good, omnipotent, and merciful. That along with Romans I [., 20]: "For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are perceived, being understood through things that were made." Nevertheless, for learning clearly His plans and precepts by which He wishes to preserve us in this life, we cannot reach them without revelation of Himself. . . . Therefore this revelation, which is true wisdom, is necessary to man because no man can know the plan of God from his natural knowledge, nor what God might wish. . . . [Nich. Eth. III (3 [lin3a])] where it shows that a plan ought to precede choice and that that which can be planned can also be chosen.

Lect. 124A
Because, in the first place, [Salomon] shows that to attain knowledge of the supernatural exceeds the limits of human ability. Secondly, that the knowledge of such things can in no way be possessed except by gift of divine generosity. . . . On the first point, it is proven thus. If we men cannot know that which is less, neither will we be able to know that which is greater; but it is less to know the creatures of God and to have natural understanding of those who are with us on the earth than to know the divine will which is in heaven. . . . Therefore we do not know how to understand those daily things which are done on earth. . . . It is easy as far as principles are concerned. . . . But
it is difficult as far as the conclusions are concerned which are drawn from the principles, in which one wanders from many things. . . . Therefore, since we are inadequate in those things, it remains that without the gift and revelation of God we cannot reach the things to which no understanding, no experience leads. . . . However, who will know Your understanding, that is, the plan of Your prescient and future ordaining, unless through a gift of Your generosity? [Cf. Wisdom IX, 17.]

C. French Prologs and Epilogs

1. Marie (Prolog)

12 Romulus, who was Emperor,
Wrote for his son and bade him
And by example showed him
How he ought to take care
16 That no one would be able to outwit him.

2. Isopet de Lyon (Prolog)

The book here present
Contains matter of great profit.
A saying which is adorned with joys
4 Is more willingly heard.
For this was made like an ingenious lace-work,
Which mixes intelligence with joys.
Tully taught to do thus
8 To attract more the hearts of people.
I have frequented a little garden;
It bears flower and fruit in great plenty;
The fruit is good, the flowers fresh,
12 Delightful, pleasant, and beautiful.
The flower is an example of the fable,
The fruit profitable doctrine.
The flower is good for delighting;
16 Gather the fruit, if you wish to profit.
If the one pleases you, you can take it,
Or both, if you wish to learn more.
My intelligence, which sleeps willingly,
20 Moved my heart, which wanted to, to work.
God, give me
The dew of Thy grace, so that it might make
My dry tongue sound well
24 And harvest well from a lowly field.
Make this work, in light words,
Carry in an honorable manner,
Just as the shell that is dry
28 Conceals the good kernel in itself.
3. **Isopet II de Paris**

**Prolog**

He who is willing to heed this book
Will be able to learn much good there
Which, namely, will be worth more to him

4 Than to amass great plenty of goods;
And he who will regard these parables,
These exempla, and these frivolities
As mockery or folly

8 Has done well by him who will give him a blow!

**Epilog**

He who made these tales
Put much of his trouble there,
Whereby he repents;
For the fools who will hear it
Will say generally

6 That it's worth nothing.

If a wise man had made it
It would be regarded in charity
And as an authority;
One knows well who made this:
Because of this the fools hold it

12 In contempt and despise it.

A clerk of great knowledge
And great wisdom
First made it,
And I have put it in French
To be understood by children

18 And laymen.

God will give a blessing
To the clerk or beginning clerk
Who reads this writing,
If he says for my father,
For me, and for my mother,

24 Requies sit eis!
Amen.

4. **Isopet de Chartres (Epilog)**

25 Aristotle has bidden me all this,
So that I was no fool
And was allowed to rime.
He has told me that I might learn wisdom
And his philosophy

30 If I did not wish to sew or polish.
40 But Aristotle draws me back:
Willingly I would make the matter
If he would give me leave.

But on the other hand I dream
Of Dagobert, who held as folly

45 Such fabling and such casuistry;
But I answer: "The obscure thing
Seeks open witness with great care,"
Said Aristotle in ancient Attica.

Dagobert, it is true: these are fables,

50 But I have good, stable witnesses
All coming with truth.
God makes them profitable for us;
And let us all be fair in sharing.
In heaven, the sweet inheritance!
Amen.

5. Bozon (Prolog)

In this little book one can find many good examples from diverse
matter by which one can learn to avoid sin, to embrace goodness, and
above all things to praise the Lord God who gives us the opportunity
to live well by the nature of creatures who are without reason. On
this says Job XII [cf. 7, 8]: "You who know not at all to avoid evil
and to seek out good, ask the beasts and they will teach you, the birds
who fly and they will tell you, the substance of the earth and it will
answer you, the fish of the sea and they will inform you" (not at all
by speaking, but each acting in its nature diversely) how by the one
you can do well, and how by the other you can withdraw from evil.

Readings for Chapter III

I. The Cock and the Jasp

A. Latin Versions

1. The Phaedrian Tradition

Ph III, 12: I tell this to those who do not understand me

A I: Those who, if they had talent, could have reached for honor.

B V, vi-vii: Aesop tells these things to you who do not understand me.

C I, i: Aesop tells this first fable about himself. . . . Aesop tells
these things to those who do not understand.
B I: Because every fool disdains every good and precious thing as if it were worthless.

F I: Aesop tells these things to those who do not understand them.

Walter I: The Cock and the Jasper

While he was digging in the dung with his hard mouth, while he was seeking food,
While he was stunned by a discovered jasper, the cock said:
"Precious thing in a vile place, and of an innate beauty,
Abiding in this filth, you hold nothing from the harvest for me.

5 If you whom the dirt has buried had now a discoverer
Who was bound to be, splendor might live by his skill.
Neither am I fit for you nor you for me; neither am I useful to you,
Nor are you useful to me; things less dear I love more."

You may understand the foolish man as the cock, the gift of wisdom
10 As the beautiful jasper; to the foolish man that crop has no taste.

Walter-A I:
There usually is an infinite number of fools;
A fool shows his folly everywhere.
By far one is sufficiently better accustomed to the positions of the wise
Than he is not accustomed to the positions of the foolish.

Walter-C I: Thus are many who speak of virtues, morals, and the like:
"O, how beautiful, how precious are such things!" And nevertheless, because they do not understand these very things, by having abandoned them they place their beak in the dung of prodigality and other sins.

H II: Aesop tells this fable to these who do not understand him. . . .
Aesop tells these things to those who do not understand him sufficiently. What use is it for a fool to have wealth, when he cannot buy wisdom?

I XVIII: Aesop tells these things to those who do not understand sufficiently.

J I, i: Aesop himself first told this fable about himself. . . .
Aesop tells these things to those who do not understand.

K I, i: Aesop told this first fable about those who disdain wisdom, so that they might discover good of some kind. . . . Aesop tells these things to those who do not understand whatever good they have.

M I: Moralitas. Thus Aesop exposes fools who do not care to discover wisdom, because they do not understand that it is greatly necessary to them.
N I: By its fitting maxims this first fable that Aesop wrote
Is wise for those who disdain a wise man
Or one keen of mind or anything else worthy of reward.

\[\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots\]
Just as the foolish feathered one despised royal gifts,
So stupid fools slight all that is best.

O I, i: Moralitas.
This story censures foolish lovers
Who, although they are abundantly shining with virtues,
Are ignoring grace and not appearing pleasing,
Until soon they become foolish concerning intelligent men.

2. Jacques, Sermones vulgares

LIV: no moral given by Crane.

3. Bromyard

A, c. XXVI, 32 (Why the wicked do not heed the words of God.)

And it is about them just as is told according to the fables of
the cock who, when he discovered a precious stone in the dung, said,
"I would more willingly have found one grain, because neither are you
useful to me nor am I to you." For people having a stomach occupied
by other things do not find flavor in those things; but they say,
"How good might be the food, if anyone had the appetite." Jeremiah
XXII [., 21]: "I spoke to you in your abundance, and you said, 'I will
not hear,'" or rather because the Devil stops up ears. . . . For on
account of these things, by account of things similar to these, people
both shut out the light and close the window of the heart against the
true sun, that they may rest more quietly in their sins; on which see
Job XXIV [., 13-17].

B. French Versions

1. The Gualterian Tradition

Isopet de Lyon I: The Hen and the Jasper

With her strong beak, the hen worked
In a dunghill for her food.
By chance she found
4 A jasper, for which she did not care.
She was downcast when she found it
And said how it did not agree with her at all:
"Ah," she said, "precious thing
8 That is so vilely enclosed here,
Truly, I have here a very great loss.
You are of no use to me;
But if anyone can find you
12 Who would know how to recognize your excellence,
Your value which is denied here
Would be prized and held dear.
Formerly you were richly placed
16 In a present by a great lady.
Alas, your excellence nor your worth
Make me neither cold nor hot.
Your nature is foreign to me;
20 In you I find no feeding at all.
Rather you were replaced by grains of corn or barley,
For they better make me open my gullet."

Now hear the moral,
24 And take it on authority:
The rich jasper is knowledge,
Which the foolish hen could not have.
The comparison then is good
28 Between the fool and the hen, which is without reason.
Wisdom that is strewn
Among fools is a lost thing.
Thus seek a fine proverb
32 At the end of the other fables,
And think well to retain it,
For great profit can come to you from it.

Isopet I: The Moral
This rock signifies
Wisdom and the cock folly.
Sense and folly, it seems to me,
20 Do not get along well together.

They say that the infinite number
Above the number of fools is not at all obtained.
The fool shows his folly
24 Everywhere he goes when renowned for it.
Their hearts always guide
The conduct of wise people.
The fool changes like the moon;
28 There is no stability in him.

2. Others

Marie I
So it is for many people,
If all does not go according to their wish,
As for the cock and the gem.
20 We have seen it for man and woman:
They value neither good nor honor;
They take the worse, they scorn the better.
Bozon [26] (That the bitterness of the world pleases, and the word of God displeases, many.) Fabula ad idem.

The cock found a golden ring in a dunghill. "What's this?" he said, "what are you doing here? I neither sought you nor desired you. I'd rather find a grain of corn than you and a hundred such." Thus one short sermon burdens several more than being at work and in corporal affliction seven days in the week. Scripture says on this: "When God rained from heaven that sweet food called manna, the sons of Israel knew all of this, and they said that they would rather be in Egypt with leeks and onions than remain there with this sweet food" [cf. Exodus XVI, 3]. [He next quotes Numbers XI, 6, 5.]. . . .

C. Tables

Phaedrian: BP, App. 503 (Ph III, 12); Caxton-F I, 1.

Other: Lydgate 1.

II. The Preaching of the Swallow

A. Latin Versions

1. The Phaedrian Tradition

A XX: No moral.

C I, xix: He who does not heed good counsel will find evil in himself, as this fable proves.

E XVIII: That to disdain good counsel is characteristic of evident unhappiness.

Walter XX: The Swallow and the Flax

So that it might bring forth flax from the flax-seed, the soil Nourished the seed; but the swallow impressed the birds with fear: "This field, this seed threatens evil fetters for us; Pluck the scattered seeds instead of your pomegranates."

5 The flock shunned the sound warnings and charged Empty fears; the seed rose from the soil, and the young plant flourished.

Again the swallow warned that danger approached; again The birds laughed. The swallow appeased the man for himself And, living with men, pleased him with friendly singing;

10 For foreseen weapons are wont to injure less.

Now the flax was harvested, now the nets were made, now the man Tricked the birds, now the bird, conscious of guilt, reproached itself.

He who scorns useful counsel takes the useless.
He who is too secure comes rightly under the nets.
Walter-A XXV:
The sensual man attends well to the present state of affairs,
And the cautious man ought to be mindful of the past.
Let the diligent man consider and provide for the future;
Forsaking useful counsel, he rightly falls.

Walter-C XVIII: The moral is identical to that of Walter XX.

Neckam XVIII: The Farmer and the Swallow
A rural man sowed flax in a field; therefore
The clever swallow, seeing this, reported it to the birds
And advised that the seeds of the flax be pulled up and destroyed.
The capricious birds disdained the counsel.
5 The crop rose; again the swallow prevailed upon
The feathered ones that the injurious crop be pulled up,
Lest, making nets from the ripe flax,
The deceitful men ensnare the birds.
The careless birds are reported to have laughed and not to have
interposed
10 Any diligence for the coming evils.
Fearing the nets, the swallow fled the company of the birds,
And she dwelled in human homes without fear.
Because they disdained her sound advice,
The careless birds were tricked by nets.
15 Thus those who do not wish to beware of evils predicted for them,
Whenever they appear, want to be wary too late.

H XIX: He who does not heed good counsel will come upon evil.

I XIX: Thus injuries await those who despise healthful counsel.

Pills disdain to believe the words of the wise;
When they understand that they themselves have been deceived,
then they regret it.

J I, xx: He who does not heed good counsel will himself come upon
evil, as the fable proves.

K I, xviii: It is clearly understood through the following fable that,
whoever does not heed the good counsel of a wise man, to him the
time will come when he may repent this and nothing is of help to
him.

M XVIII: Moralitas. It is good to be pleased with counsel, for sound
counsel is more useful in a castle than is a broken fortification.

N XVI: No one quick in mind should disdain the true teachings of a
wise man.
And yet fools thus rightly [or: without right] insult wise teachers;  
Thus weariness vexes the foolish minds of those men.

O I, xviii: Moralitas.  
This story denotes that a crowd of fools  
Disdains the knowledge of those skilled in law [or: the skill of those trained in law];  
Who, when they have been seized by the snare of sorrows,  
Now lament that they have disdained the counsel of good men.

2. Jacques, *Sermones vulgares*  
CI: Whence one ought to look after himself and provide for an undertaking.

3. Bromyard  
C, c. XI, 47 (Counsel)  
Those seeing therefore partly the incorrigibility of lords and that they cannot be inclined toward good and, by logical consequence, partly that they are of no use, even seeing their own danger . . . let them flee such meeting places and similar things, because in a proposed event the cause of the prediction ends, for which prophets and patriarchs stood with evil men. Therefore, by their example, let them not stand with them but flee. By the example of the swallows who, according to the fables, abandoned the fellowship of the birds by building nests, dwelling both with men and in homes, because they [the birds] did not wish to destroy the flax in blossom by their [the swallows'] counsel before snares were made from it to seize the birds. Thus let them abandon those not wishing to use counsel for avoiding the Devil's snares. By the example of Samuel, who abandoned the depraved Saul: 1 Kings XV. By the example of Elias, who fled Achab: 111 Kings XIX. And by the example of the Apostles, namely Paul and Barnabus, saying in Acts XIII [, 46]: they say, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you Jews first, but because you rejected it and judged yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turned to the Gentiles."

B. French Versions  
1. The Gualterian Tradition

*Isopet de Lyon XX: (The Swallow and the Little Birds)*  
[hiatus]  
The swallow went away mocked;  
She came to terms with the good man.  
By singing and by fine service
4 She did so much that she won his love.
    She lived with him in his house
    Without peril, all open and free.
    She could easily avoid
8 Her mischance, who had provisions.
    And if she could not at all fly from there,
    At least the peace was not so harsh for her.
    For he receives less grief
12 From the blow who provides for it beforehand.
    The season came to sew the flax;
    The man carried it into his house.
    Nets and snares to seize the birds
16 Were made from it; then he had them stretched in the field.
    Many birds foolishly came
    There, and they were held.
    Now they recognized their folly,
20 When they saw their lives in peril.

He who does not take the counsel of the wise
Believes the fool, and harm comes to him for it.
He falls in the snare of misfortune
24 Who is too assured of his life.
Fear tempers foolish happiness
And so restrains foolish boldness.
Fear frees one from many evils,
28 For foresight makes one live.

**Isopet I** XXV: The Moral
It ought well to be the worse for those
Who rely too much on their own wits
44 And who do not heed good counsel.

Those who wish to conduct themselves well
Ought to discern the present times,
Remember the past,
48 Not be prideful of great glory,
And ought to consider the times
To come, to keep counsel.
For those who are well counseled,
52 If they neglect it, ought to be forgotten.

**Isopet III de Paris XIX: Moral**
He who sees the things to come and gives counsel to remedy the
misfortunes which can happen, and one does not wish to believe him, if
it miscarries afterwards for those who had not wished to believe him,
he is well occupied and one ought not to mourn for them.

He who relies too much upon his own wits
And it miscarries for him because of it, no one weeps for him.
2. The Tradition of Neckam

Isopet II de Paris XVII

It is no marvel to me
If he who does not believe counsel
51 Repents it often.
When one speaks reason to him,
He is a fool and good-for-nothing
54 If he hears and does not heed it.

One ought to take counsel
Right at the start:
57 It is the way of the wise.
For he who waits too much
Scarcely escapes
60 Loss in the end.

Isopet de Chartres XV: The meaning of the fable

If anyone wise shows you evil
Before it happens further on,
21 You ought to avoid it by a good work.
Later you will wish in your heart
To have escaped it secure,
24 If evil discloses itself to you.
[Followed by the Latin moral from Neckam XVIII.]

3. Marie XVII

This likeness is very true:
30 When fools do not wish to believe the wise,
Who know how to give them good counsel
And wish to keep them from their evil,
If harm is about to come to them for it
Then it is too late to repent it.

C. Tables

Greek: BP, App. 39, 437, 437a; Handford 75.


Other: Mayno 119.

[Notif of bird as counselor to others:
Babrian: BP, App. 325 (Ba 88); Avianus XXI; Herv III, s. v. "21.
Le Paysan, l'Alouette et ses Petits."
Phaedrian: BP, App. 576; Herv II, s. v. "221. L'Ciseleur et les
Ciseaux;" Caxton-F IV, 7.]
Motif of bird as bad counselor:
Phaedrian: BL, App. 656; Herv II, s. v. "139. La Grue, la Corneille et le Maître" and "142. L'Hirondelle et les Moineaux."
Other: Marie 83.]

Readings for Chapter IV

I. The Lion and the Mouse
A. Latin Versions
1. The Phaedrian Tradition

A XVIII: Let no one presume to harm the least men.

B II, xi: On indulgence to innocent men. He who sins from simplicity has indulgence if he asks; and when he can, let him return the equivalent, as this fable proves. . . . Therefore it is written: do not harm the least thing.

C I, xvii: If an innocent man sins and entreats, it is proper that he receive indulgence, unless perhaps when he is exacting vengeance. Therefore let us hear this fable. . . . This fable warns that no one should harm the least men.

D c. III, ix: On the same things against men vainly boastful, proud, presumptuous, defiers. . . . Also, for the purpose of exhorting no one to harm the least men. . . .

E XVI: That the poor and powerless person commonly pays out the equivalent of a favor from greater persons.

F XIV: If a man unknowingly has sinned and entreats, he ought to receive indulgence, unless perhaps when he rages. Let us hear a similar fable of Aesop appointed on this matter for us. . . . This fable of the author warns everyone not to harm the least thing.

G V: It teaches not to despise paupers, because they can mutually give help and repay the equivalent and gnaw away the ropes of sins.

Walter XVIII: The Lion and the Mouse
The cool forest was pleasing to the sleeping lion;
Here the manifest throng of mice ran to and fro to play.
Stepped upon by a mouse, the lion seized the mouse; the latter entreated,
The former weighed the plea, his anger entreated the plea.
5 Yet before, this stirred in his mind: "What praise will you procure
From a slain mouse? It shames the greatest to conquer small things.
If a lion deems a mouse worthy in death, is it not disgrace
To the lion and honor to the mouse he seized?
If the greatest conquers the least, so to conquer is to be conquered.

10 To be able to conquer is fitting, to conquer is a crime.
If nevertheless this is honor and praise so to conquer, this praise
And this honor will become less from the smallest enemy.
Victory weighs according to the value of the vanquished: the victor
Will be as great as was the glory of the vanquished."

15 The mouse went away and returned thanks; if he were able to return it,
He promised help. Only a day, a small delay, came to pass.
For the lion came under a net, and it did no good to use men,
But it did him good to speak of his injuries with complaining roaring.
The mouse returned, found him, understood the situation, gnawed the bonds;

20 In this way he repaid help for help; thus the lion, safe, went away.
The skill of the smallest tooth was capable of so great a thing,
Of him to whom the lion himself, giving a favor, gave it to himself.

You who are capable of the greatest things, do not despise the power of the small;
For anyone can be useful, if he is unable to harm.

Walter-A XVIII:
He is strong in wisdom to whom nature has denied power;
Useful counsel prevails over warlike deeds.
Accomplished goodness hopes to have for itself a thing in return,
And, gladdened, it perishes at no time.

Walter-C XVI: The moral is identical to that of Walter XVIII.

Neckam XLI: The Lion and the Mouse
It is said that once in the hidden caves of a wood
A lion pressed upon by powerful sleep lay down.
Several mice coming around him on all sides
Were not afraid to make noise by running.

5 Finally a playful one leapt over him,
And soon the watchful, raging lion felt him
And, extending his foot, seized the wretched mouse by the foot.
The latter, moaning, asked for indulgence with the following cry:
"Spare, I beg you, a wretch, O most strong one; I do not seem

10 Fitting prey to be seized by your great might.
Huge bulls, raging bears too, it befits you
To throw to the ground, and the rest of the wild beasts with
savagery.
Your valor might consider itself in disgrace to destroy a mouse.
Upon me so much anger does not have its place.
15 You should even allow yourself to be persuaded by kindness alone,
who might bring forth all higher things by nobility.
It can be enough punishment under so great a judge
That fear torments me more harshly than death."
Persuaded by the supplicating words and tears of the one entreat-
ing,
20 The noble lion presently gave the longed-for indulgence.
After a short time, while the lion was traversing the same woods,
He fell down into a well-set trap unknown to him;
Which, when he could overcome it neither by force nor skill,
He began to rage with immoderate roaring.
25 Both cattle and wild beasts taunted the captured lion;
The mouse alone grieved, because of the indulgence he had received.
Running up at once, "The life which you gave me,
A small one," he said, "I will now return, great lion, to you."
He spoke, and, gnawing the ropes in his customary manner,
30 He released him, by repaying a fair equivalent.

That same powerful one who reads this, may he also learn to spare
the least things,
Since the least can often help the great.

H XVII: If an innocent man sins, but not willingly, indulgence must
be given to him all the more, unless perhaps when he avenges
himself. . . .

I XVII: This fable warns that no one should harm the lowest person.

You should never prevent yourself from dismissing the faults of
small ones
When they request indulgence; for at the proper time they repay
services.

J I, xvi: If an innocent man sins and begs indulgence, one should
give it, lest perhaps one avenges himself in the future. Therefore
let us hear this fable. . . . This fable warns that no one
should harm the least men.

K I, xvii: The following fable makes known that every innocent man,
although he might have sinned once unknowingly, ought to receive
indulgence. For if his guilt is not forgiven him, somewhere at
some time either by God or by man he will be avenged. . . . This
fable warns that no one, although he be powerful, may harm an
innocent man.

M XVII: Moralitas. Thus the rich and powerful man ought to pity the
pauper and dismiss his offense, because the pauper can be
necessary to the rich man.
N XV: That no one should harm the innocent or infirm, by authority
Of the books an old lesson now teaches us.

Thus no strong one should despise the small in body;
For the worthy, learned will repays the kindnesses of a deed.

C I, xvii: Moralitas.
The meaning of this fable warns that the powerful,
pressed down, should not harm the innocent with their strength;
For, when those lacking earlier primacy are lying low,
Then they are begging more relief from the least ones.

P VIII: Thus, etc. [? Thus many will be enemies because of favors
received.]

2. Jacques, Sermones vulgares

CXLV: . . . Therefore leaders ought not despise wretched persons or
assail them. . . .

B. French Versions

1. The Gualterian Tradition

Isopet de Lyon XIX: The Lion and the Rat
To enjoy himself in a pleasant wood
The lion slept under the foliage.
About him in the fresh grass
4 The rats carried on their dance.
The noise aroused the lion,
He stopped sleeping, and he dozed.
As fortune guided him,
8 He seized one of the rats—
This one ran over him.
He held it, thought if he should kill it.
Softly the rat begged him
12 That for God he should spare his life.
The lion tempered his anger,
Within his heart began to say:
"Lion, what glory would you have acquired
16 If you killed a rat?
It is not praise to the powerful, but shame,
If he surmounts a little thing.
If the lion deigns to kill
20 The rat, this is shame to him.
The rat would always be honored
If he is killed by so great a hand.
If the lord has victory
24 Over the little one, he wins little glory.
To be able to conquer is agreeable to me,
But to conquer is not honorable for me.
If there is honor, it is as much less good

As the person is more wretched.

In bringing down a weak enemy
The strong cannot win valor.
Victory ought to be praised

According to that which is conquered.
The one who conquers is as honored
As the vanquished was vigorous."

Thus the lion let go

The rat. The latter thanked him for it.
He promised aid to the lion.
In the middle of the day he set forth;
On the morrow he who among beasts has the name of king

Was seized by a net.
There he could be idle enough;
Strength was of no use;
Quietly he was complaining.

Meanwhile he saw the rat coming,
Who wished to return the recompense
Of him who let him go.

With his teeth the cunning one cut

The snare; his lord got out.
Thus escaped the other,
Who was quite trapped.
The lion rewarded the rat;

He betook himself to depart.
In good faith he promised
That he would always be his friend.

If you are raised up through power,
Burden yourself willingly to aid.
The story of the lion tells you this:
It is good to help the wretched,
For many times such a one

Who cannot hinder can deliver you.

Isopet I XVIII: The moral

Goodness that is rendered any time
Cannot be lost.
He who is able enough does not despise

The poor if they are little able;
For to my thought such cannot
Harm, who very well can aid.

Those to whom God has not given power,
The strength of their counsel and good love,
Found in them at the same time,
Is worth good thought.
One who never sees courtesy
60 Commonly is not merry;
In this world or the other will that be
Which will repay goodness.

Isopet III de Paris XIV: Moral
Although a great and powerful lord has the power to harm the poor, he ought not to do so, but he ought to give them pleasure and courtesy; for if he causes them displeasure, he will never have honor but will be less esteemed and loved for it; and it might happen that he will come to adversity and have need of aid from those for whom he had caused displeasure in the past, who might be able to aid him and save his life. They never perform a courtesy
Who at some time are not thanked.

2. The Tradition of Neckam

Isopet II de Paris XXXVII
By this you can know
That the great can well have need
42 Of the weak indeed.

Isopet de Chartres XXXVII: The meaning of the fable
This fable of the lion
Does not wish that we forget
51 Those who have had mercy from us.
The great ought to bear with the least:
If forthwith he wishes to forbid,
54 His heart is very much villainous and black.

But do not think that one will not find
Some little man who will be able
57 To help and comfort the great.
Who is not more great on the surface
Who harms well by his poor strength
60 And well can bring aid.
[Followed by the Latin moral of Neckam XLI.]

3. Others

Marie XVI
45 By this fable we teach
That the rich man who has power over the poor
Should take a lesson from it—
If he mistreats them from ignorance—
So that he will have good thanks for it.
50 It can happen in the same way
That he will have great need of them
And they will know better how to counsel him
In his need, if he is overcome,
Than the best of his friends.
Bozon 129 (Against ambitious and unfair and perverse judges.) \textit{Fabula ad idem}.

Once a lion wished to rest, and a mouse came and woke him up. Then the lion said to the mouse, "I've all but killed you!" "That would be," said the other, "little valor for you." "True," said the lion, "go away from here; be pardoned!" The mouse left, and the lion slept. On the morrow it chanced that the lion was captured in a pit. The mouse came and found him wailing and piteously lamenting. Then the mouse said, "You were courteous to me, and I am going to save your life." And he assembled his companions and cut the cords of the net by which the pit was covered, and they showed him how he ought to break the cord and escape. Thus are some great lords, some prelates and bailiffs who have mastery on earth: if they are lenient to others as long as their might and power last, by these they will be aided when they have need. For our Lord said this: "He who has mercy for others will find mercy from God." [He next quotes Matthew V, 7.]

C. Tables

Babrian: \textit{BP}, App. 150 (Ba 107); Handford 39.

Phaedrian: \textit{BP}, App. 150; Caxton-F 1, 18.

Other: Mayno 24. [For Bromyard Jacobs cites "i.5.4" and Diebler "2,5,4." I cannot find it.]

II. The Mouse and the Frog

A. Latin Versions

1. The Phaeidian Tradition

A IV: Those who harm others destroy themselves.

B I, iii: He who plans misfortune for another's well-being will not escape punishment. . . . So therefore, as long as anyone works danger, he destroys himself.

C I, iii: He who plans misfortune for another's well-being does not escape punishment. On this hear the following fable. . . . And so, truly it concerns those who plan misfortune for another's well-being.

D c. II, ii: On Aesop, etc. (? From Aesop and his morally fictitious fables against calumniators and tricksters, the covetous and heedless, Eusebius and the Actor. . . . Against calumniators. . . .) . . . . Against those also who prepare plots against another's well-being. . . .
B III: That he who plans misfortune for another's well-being generally will fall into the pit which he made.

F III: He who plans against another's well-being will not escape punishment. Thus hear a fable. . . . So truly it concerns those who plan against another's well-being.

G X: And this is against those who plan evil for others.

Walter III: The Mouse and the Frog

The mouse's journey being interrupted by a lake, a talkative frog met the mouse, and after he had agreed to help him wished to harm him.

For all creatures a discordant mind prevails over words of ruin; Flowery speech embellishes guilty souls.

5 The frog allied the mouse to himself with words, ventured To bind his feet with a rope, to break his faith with deceit. Foot therefore joined foot, but heart retreated from heart. Lo, they swam; the one was drawn, and the other drew. The frog was immersed so that he submerged the mouse with him; making

10 A shipwreck with his friend, that faith sank. The frog pursued the diver, but the mouse emerged and resisted The shipwreck: the same fear moves men. A kite was near, and he seized the wretched little pair with his fierce claw:

One lies dead, both lay dead, burst organs flow.

15 Thus those who claim that they are useful, and are in the way, perish. One may learn that suffering returns to its author.

Walter-A III:

The waylayer falls into the trap which he made; The deceiver himself falls into his own trap; A stone thrown down gives a blow to the thrower, When he leaps forth with a poisonous hand.

Walter-C III: The moral is identical with that of Walter III.

Neckam VI: The Mouse and the Frog

Wishing, and not daring, to cross over a stream, a timid mouse, Humbly entreatng, begged aid from a frog. The latter promised his help, and with a cord the hostile frog tied the mouse's foot to his foot.

5 And so, pulling the wretched mouse through the stream by swimming, He plunged himself in the water and thus killed him. Exulting at the wretch after this and restraining joy, While he thought himself safe under his water, The floating mouse was seized by a kite, and drawn by the cord
10 The dangling frog was seized with his companion.

Whoever betrays one believing in him is betrayed; he,
Like the frog, rightly perishes in his own trap.

H III: He who digs a pit for another often falls into it himself. In
other words, he who plans misfortune for another's well-being will
not escape it.

I II: Thus truly it concerns those who plan misfortune for another's
well-being.

J I, iii: The author speaks about those who plan evil for another's
well-being. . . . And so it concerns those who plan misfortune
for another's well-being.

K I, iii: Those who plot against another's well-being and advantage
will not escape such punishment either at this time or even at
some other time, as the following fable declares. . . . Thus
indeed it concerns all who plot against others.

M III: Moralitas. This ["He who devises abuse for his companion not
undeservedly falls into a trap"] should have been told to the
wicked and false that they may deceive less, and not be deceived
themselves, because he who moves closest to a trap at some time
or another falls into it himself.

N III: Moreover, punishment of such a kind regularly follows
wickedness.

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

It is just and always will be to all the guilty.

O I, iii: Moralitas.
That fable proves that [or: censures] the wretched blunderer
who sets snares for the virtuous
[var.: And he] Soon falls down into the ruinous trap:
The law is just that strikes back the cunning fraud with sorrow.

P II: Thus the greater and the lesser debating among themselves.
Thus too the Devil destroys the soul and the body.

2. Odo and Sheppey

Odonis Fab. XXIb: The Mouse, the Frog, and the Kite. Against foolish
rectors.
Once a mouse wanted to cross over the water, and she asked a frog
if she might cross it. The frog said, "Tie yourself to my shin; in
this way I'll lead you over." She did so. And a kite came and carried
them both away.

This is when a parishioner is given anything foolish and insufficient;
the Devil comes and carries away both chaplain and parishioner.
Odonis Fab. Add., Coll. Tertia IV (XXXIX): [The story is virtually identical to the Parabola below, and apparently under the same motto as II (XXXVII). The moral: "Thus does the world to its lovers."

Likewise, the world is similar to the little frog, who by flattery promised the mouse that he would lead him over the water to harbor, if he would allow himself to be tied to his foot. When this was done, the frog entered the water with the mouse, and in the middle of the stream he sank the mouse.

Sheppecy Fab. II: Against tricksters and frauds. [Cdo XXI somewhat lengthened, with overtones of Walter: e. g., the struggle of the mouse. No moral.]

3. Jacques, Sermones vulgares

III: Therefore these who receive the care of souls and promise leadership to others, however themselves attend neither to themselves nor to the entire flock, deservedly are compared to the frog. . . .

4. Bromyard

P, c. XIII, 37 (Numbers 33 [to] 40: to things and beasts people themselves may be compared.)
Fourthly, those having trouble from their quarrelling parishioners, and the parishioners disputing with them and contradicting and having mutual hate amongst themselves, they are like the frog and the mouse whom Aesop's fables involve: that a frog, who claimed that he knew how to swim well, met a mouse wishing to cross the water. Indeed, the frog, accepting the service itself of leading across, tied the mouse to himself with a cord. Truly, in the middle of the water the frog and the mouse began to quarrel between themselves, the frog pulling downwards and the mouse pulling upwards, because of which a kite, coming by surprise, carried them both away.

So in the plan concerning those who accept the leadership of others above them beyond this great sea, and concerning those whom they ought to lead: if they have strife and hatred amongst themselves, or if those who ought to lead others seek the lowest things by sinning, frequently it happens that both are carried away by the Kite of hell and that both fall into the pit: because by witness of Psalm XLVIII [11]: "Together the senseless and stupid will perish," because they declaim together that they were made useless.
B. French Versions

1. The Gualterian Tradition

Isopet de Lyon III: The Rat and the Frog

The rat went through the land
To seek her poor subsistence;
But when she wandered to a bend
She could not pass to her den:
The water closed the way to her.
She was very bewildered at this thing.
The frog, full of words,
8 Came before her and embraced her
And said to her: "You're very unhappy;
Beautiful sister, be comforted!
I will put you in safety;
12 This I promise you without falsehood.
I am very learned in swimming;
Soon I will have put you beyond the water."
The rat believed the frog,
16 And she thanked her greatly for this.
The tongue which is not in accord with the heart
Is worse than any rage.
Words that are anointed outside
20 Conceal the evil that goads the heart.
Under the appearance of a favor the frog
Tied herself to the rat in faith;
She tied their feet with a cord,
24 But faith was at variance with deed.
Foot was joined to foot,
But their thoughts were separated.
The frog swam together with the rat
28 And wickedly deceived her.
The frog, full of lies,
Plunged in order to harm the rat.
He imperils faith in himself
32 Who deceives and tricks his friend.
The frog made an effort to dive;
The other took pains to swim above.
Fear made the rat take
36 Force to save her life.
Each made an effort
To contest; meanwhile came
The bird of prey flying above.
40 This one was not sad or sorrowful;
He found his prey prepared,
Ravished it with his fierce nails
Tore both of them savagely,
44 And ended this tournament.
In finishing this battle
He won his victuals.

Thus all those come
48 To a bad end who do not love de cuer fin,
Who call themselves "friend"
And do not have the law of loving well.
That treason returns against
52 Its master is a reasonable game.
It happens that the misdeed
Carries the pain to him who did it.

Isopet I III: The moral
He can perish in such a way
28 Who pretends to help
And wants to be an injurer:
Deceit ought to fool its master.

In the text and in the gloss we find
32 That those who make a pit for evil
Many times fall there into their snares,
Those who never tire of doing evil.
The rock strikes back the one
36 Who is pleased to throw it
At another through his great treachery;
For his deceit comes back upon him.

2. The Tradition of Neckam

Isopet II de Paris VI
Whoever is willing that one trust
40 In him and assures him of it
Caught to help him, or tell him
That he is not on his side;
For he who works treason
44 Caught to have an ill reward for it.

Isopet de Chartres V: The meaning of the fable
The fable well teaches us this:
Treason is the work of the Devil.
21 No one ought to betray another;
All should be able to have punishment for it,
Just as the frog had by his cord;
24 Therefore, we should hate treason.
[Followed by the Latin moral of Neckam VI.]

3. Marie III

Such is the fate of clever villains:
They always have good companions
So long as these render goods and honor—
If it should cost them nothing of their own—
So that these are extremely happy
If they are deceived by the others.
But it happens often enough

That from the same sorrow
Which they think to obtain for others
They have their body in danger.

C. Tables

Phaedrian: BP, App. 384; Caxton-F Life (p. 69) and I, 3; Handford 45.

Cothers: Mayno 107; Lydgate 3.

III. The Two Mice

A. Latin Versions

1. The Phaedrian Tradition

A XIII: Because it is better to live by oneself in one's own little poverty than to be gnawed by the anxiety of wealth.

B II, i: Firstly on poverty. It is better to live secure in poverty than to be tormented by the weariness of wealth. Indeed, Aesop's short fable proves this.

C I, xii: That it is better to live secure in poverty than to be tormented by the weariness of wealth is proved by this short fable of the author... This fable reprehends those who attach themselves to better things so that they might enjoy some goods, those to whom fortune did not give this. Let men prize the frugal life, and they will be secure in their small chapel.

E X: That it is better and more secure to live in poverty than to be tormented by the weariness of wealth.

Walter XII: The Two Mice

A country mouse received a town mouse, made fit
His food and room; and he was mindful of less food.
A great desire was satisfied by a small meal;
A noble countenance made worthy a cheap feast.

5 The meal having ended, the rustic heeded the burgher:
The companion of the burgher held out the wealth of the city.
Lo, they approached the food; friend brought in friend;
He paid much attention to the meal; he carried the courses to the table.
Kindness of face improved and seasoned the food;
10 The beauty of his countenance satisfied his guest more than did the banquet.

Lo, a key murmured at the bolt, the door creaked.
Both were afraid, both fled, both did not hide.
This one hid; this one, with awkward running, went begging for refuge;
The trouble of the mouse was sewn on by a snake from the wall.

15 Charming fortune spared the fearful one enclosed by the store of food.
That fear nevertheless fevered him, with a trembling witness.
The concealed one went out; he soothed his frightened friend thus:
"Rejoice, take food, this meal tastes of honey."
He who feared confessed, "This poison lies hidden in the honey,
And from fear I do not think sweet venom good.
The inclination which fear veils is not safe;
To a frightened one, honey is not sweet in the mouth.
I prefer to nibble a bean rather than to be nibbled by constant worry.
Daily worry makes food lose value.

20 Rejoice in this wealth, you who rejoice with a spinning of the mind;
For me, splendid peace enriches poverty.
You alone have those goods which to you alone are sweet;
A quiet life will give value to my food."
He finished the speech, he returned; he preferred safe things to fearful things,
And because he feared the greatest, he more safely sought the lowest.

If ruin comes, poverty is the richest [or: safest] thing:
A harsher use impoverishes boundless wealth.

Walter-A XII:
A pleasing, small mouthful of bread is better for me
Than to take with sauciness a banquet from a plate:
I do not wish to fear the surfeit of a fatted calf;
I do not wish to fear the plenty of honey-sweet food.

Walter-C XI: The moral is virtually identical to that of Walter XII.

H XII: The pauper lives more securely than the rich man. . . . This fable reproaches those who imagine themselves better because of better things, because often this does not result in prosperity.
Let men prize the frugal life, and they will live secure in their small chapel.

I XI: This fable reproaches those who imagine themselves better because of better things, because often it does not result in prosperity.
Let men prize the frugal life, and they may be made secure.

J I, xii: It is better to live secure in poverty than to be tormented
by the weariness of wealth, as this short fable of the author
proves. . . . This fable reproaches those who attach themselves
to better things so that they might enjoy good things which
fortune did not give. Let men prize the frugal life, and they
will be secure in their castles.

K 1, xi: By this subsequent fable it is easily shown that it is better
by far to live secure in poverty than to have great wealth with
daily terror. . . . This fable restrains those paupers who
attach themselves to better things so that they might enjoy some
good things, those to whom fortune did not give these things;
let them only just prize the frugal life, and they may be secure
in their castles.

M XI: Moralitas. Peaceful and carefree poverty is better than perilous
wealth and empty glory.

N IX: On the poor man always delighting in the poor life
And on trembling success this fable now touches.
. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .
Herein the poor wish thus to live the frugal life.
May they not seek anxiety in luxury [. . .]
Which the happy future with great gifts [. . .]

O I, xi: Moralitas.
That story teaches us respectability,
Because poverty is drawn into peace of mind,
And wealth produces curiosity;
Therefore you will beware of wealth which exalts good fortune.

2. Cdo and Sheppey

Odonis Fab. XVI: The Household Mouse and the Rural or Field Mouse.
Against simonists and usurers.

A certain town mouse asked a country mouse what he ate. He
answered these things: "Hard beans, sometimes dry grains of wheat or
barley." And the town mouse said, "Your food is dry. It's a wonder
you don't perish from hunger." The rustic asked, "And what do you
eat?" "Indeed, I eat fat morsels, sometimes white bread." Again he
added, "You may come to my lunch and eat well." It pleased the rustic,
and he went to the home of the other mouse. The men sitting at dinner
threw away grains and morsels. The town mouse said to the rustic,
"You may leave the hole; behold how many good things are thrown down." The rustic left and seized one morsel, and the cat leaped after the
mouse, and he scarcely escaped into the hole. The town mouse said,
"Behold, brother, how frequently I eat good morsels; you may stay with
me for several days." The country mouse answered, "The morsels are
good, but do you have such company every day?" And the burgher asked
what kind. And the rustic said, "One big mouseward who almost ate me
all up." The town mouse answered, "Truly, it's so, since he killed my
father and mother, and many times I barely escaped." And the rustic said, "Truly, I wouldn't want to have the whole world with such danger; you stay with your morsels. I wish to live better with bread and water in security than to have all delights with such company: 'I prefer to nibble a bean rather than to be nibbled by constant worry.'"

Thus if very many rectors of churches, who are unworthy and simoniacal and usurous, would understand with how much danger they eat, seeing that upon morsels unjustly acquired sits the devil, sits the cat who devours souls, they would prefer to eat barley bread with good conscience than all delights with such company.

Sheppey Fab. XLVIII: Against gluttons and dandies. [Cdo generally abridged. The country mouse calls its relative "bona soror." The town mouse speaks of "fratres et sorores" being devoured along with the parents. The quotation from Walter is not included. Moral: "Because it is written, 'A plain small mouthful with joy is better than an abundant house victim to quarrels'" (Proverbs XVII, 1).]

3. Jacques, Sermones vulgares

CLVII: . . . Then he got away, just as a man should leave Babylon and a dangerous dwelling most of all, where the stronger were wont to suppress the weaker.

4. Bromyard

M, c. VIII, 31 (Next, by another not unpleasant fable, of the town mouse and the country mouse, it is made known that subdued paupers can easily spurn rich ministers.)

Again, they will be able to answer them just as in the same fables it is read that the country mouse answered the town mouse, her sister. For the burgher is represented as having visited and asked the rustic what she ate and drank and where she slept; who answered that beans and hard things of this sort were her food, and water her drink, and a furrow or hole in the earth her bed; and all these things she showed to her. The other said truly that her food was the whitest bread and everything the best which was found in the cellar or larder of a king and lords, claimed she was furnished with her food and drink, also used the beds of lords freely; because of which accessible excellence she disdained the rustic, as if ignorant that in order to have exactly similar things she would not come to the town; whence she invited her, so that, coming with her, she might know by experience pleasures and excellences. Therefore by entering together the riches of a certain cellar and eating the pleasing things found there, as for instance cheese and suchlike, it came about that the steward entered more often, at whose entrance the terrified ones sought holes with great fear—the food was abandoned. Not only were they terrified by such an entrance, but also implements were prepared for capturing mice perhaps
altogether, so that they who ate his food might punish themselves because of these things. Therefore, the rustic seeing so much disturbance that she could not eat peacefully, moreover considering in every way fears of a trap and the danger of guilty things because she lived on another's goods, taking leave of the other she said, "I prefer to gnaw a bean than always be gnawed by guilt. And from fear I do not think sweet venom good; I prefer to gnaw a bean free and be happy than abound in pleasures enslaved and be sad." Thus it is in general, when the simple faithful see that the sinners and the wealthy in the world obtain and cast about riches and food and clothing, pleasures, and excellence of both homes and horses, or rather all which they have to a great extent by an evil acquisition, with the peril of their souls and with fear of conscience; than which it might be better to eat a bean and drink water with joy of conscience and with security. Let them say in their hearts with the country mouse, "I prefer my rural poverty with security and joy, rather than those splendid feasts and clothing with remorse of conscience and with the snares of so many men and devils, and fear of the pains of hell," knowing it since "a small mouthful of bread with joy is better than a house full of riches with strife" . . . (Proverbs XVII [1, 1]). Also when men are faithful for the services or deeds in which profit is promised them, which they cannot gain with security of conscience, provided that they only have to answer those inviting in a predicted way.

B. French Versions

1. The Gualterian Tradition

Isopet de Lyon XII: The Tame Rat and the Wild

A rat brought up in the city
Was vexed to remain.
To recover her appetite

4 She was going to amuse herself a little.
She found the field rat;
The one brought her into her house.
To make a feast for her guest

8 She strove; the table was prepared.
The food was quite little;
It much resembled hermit's food.
She gave her barley, beans,
Grains of corn courteously.
The joy of her face made
Poverty seem riches.
In her face showed well

12 The generosity of her heart.
Hear this: you who wish to have
Honor are to receive guests;
If you have enough, give enough;

20 Give up the little willingly.
Whether few or a little does not matter;
Give the one and the other willingly.
If you give, give joyfully,

24 Whether or not the person is worthy:
That is the summit of courtesy.
Above everything, for a noble man
To whom one gives it, a beautiful countenance pleases;

23 An open manner remakes all.
Of the wicked you see openly
The more one gives, the more one loses.
He is never content with anything,

32 But anger always pursues him.
Because of this, do not concern yourself with such people;
Do your duty, be worth what you are.
The table removed, thus said

36 The tame rat to her host:
"Sister, your charity much pleases me;
Come with me to my city.
Here you lead a very poor life;

40 My house is very well provided.
There is nothing, seeing that it pleases you,
That you won't find for your comfort."
The other heard what this one promised her,

44 Took to the road with her.
They entered within a cellar,
Found much food.
The tame one invited the other,

48 Wild one and made a joyful face.
She prepared the food,
So much that the other marvelled at it;
Between them they thought of their delight.

52 Meanwhile in the opening of the lock
Sounded the key, and the door howled.
They, who were very frightened, fled.
The tame one, who was learned in it,

56 Put herself quickly in her hole.
The other remained quite frightened,
So that she well thought to lose her life.
She ran here, she ran there, she knew not where to flee;

60 She hid herself in the wall by luck.
There she kept herself; Fortune protected her
So that the porter did not notice her,
Closed his door, and turned away.

64 The rat lep t from her hole,
Went to her companion, who trembled;
She was fevered by fear, it seemed.
Fair and softly she comforted her

68 And exhorted her strongly to eat:
"This food is savory,
Sister, just like congealed honeycomb."
The other answered: "I have no wish for it;

72 This sweetness stings me greatly.
In this crumb there is venom, no doubt;
He who tastes it puts himself in peril.
In a mouth too worried
76 Food is not very savory.
Comfort cannot be without fault
For him whom fear and care trouble.
I would rather nibble my poor bean
80 Than be in danger every hour.
These riches are good to you
Who do not fear cries and threats.
You are so accustomed to the uproar
84 You do not become excited if you are disturbed.
It is to me sovereign riches
That no one assaults or disturbs me."
She left, her words were finished;
88 She sought the more secure life.

For him who fears the shame of falling from too high
It is wise if he does not climb too high.
Happiness and sufficiency make
92 Wealth, not abundance.
It is poverty, not wealth,
If one spends goods in sadness.

Isopet I XII: The moral
Poverty that one takes cheerfully
Is great wealth; likewise,
I call poverty great wealth
76 That must be spent in sadness.

A good morsel of bread is worth more
Than to eat a fat pig
Being received sadly,
80 However well-nourished one may be from it.
I would not wish a fat calf
And have fear in a courtyard.
I would not know how to love honey
84 If I had a bitter heart from fear.

Isopet III de Paris VIII: Moral
The condition of a poor man who has enough and lives happily and receives favorably what he has is worth more and is more to be praised than the condition of a rich man who abounds in goods and wealth and is always in fear and unsure, sad and without pleasure and in peril.
It is worth more to eat beans in happiness
Than an abundance of food fearful in sadness.

2. Marie IX

This fable says for a moral:
Everyone loves better his own little thing
That he has in peace and without fear
Than another’s wealth with displeasure.

C. Tables

Babrian: BP, App. 352 (Ba 108).

Phaedrian: BP, App. 352; Caxton-F I, 12; Handford 41.

Others: Mayno 112; RR Contrefait; vol. II, pp. 239-41; Lydgate 3
(country vs. city motif).

Readings for Chapter V

I. The Cock and the Fox

A. Latin Versions

1. The Phaedrian Tradition

A XXX: Those who talk when it is not a necessity for them and sleep when they ought to be awake.

F XXVIII: There are many men who, not forethinking their words, frequently speak such words, whence afterwards they are led into penitence and receive injuries. Whence hear a fable... Thus many men, when they say many things, do not escape injury.

G XXI: It teaches not to say much.

M L: Moralitas. It is no small thing to speak at the right time and to be quiet at the right time, for death and life are in the hands of the tongue. [Cf. Geoffrey of Vinsauf, Poetria Nova, 1. 2060.]

2. Odo and Sheppey

Odonis Fab. L

[The story is paraphrased in BP, App. 611.] ... The fox is anyone poor and fraudulent, who, so that he might eat well, begs the host to let him in the cloister, so that he could live simply among the simple monks; otherwise, if he remained in the world he would perish. He says that God wants his soul with the monks. Moreover, the religious, moved by pity, allow him to enter. He remains quiet during the probationary period; when he makes his profession, he will disturb all his companions by demanding more food, more clothing, by envying others, by slandering others, by entreating others, by leading others into sin, by reproaching others.
Sheppey Fab. XX: On the sins of hypocrisy. [The story and moral of Cdo abridged.]

3. Bromyard

I, c. XIII, 28 (A certain very delightful little fable of a fox and a cock is plainly clear concerning the same abominable cunning tricks and imposters regarding man, and also concerning reciprocal frauds sometimes by the will of God to be hidden from and cheated.)

... Just as the exemplum of the fable concerning a fox and a cock shows indeed that through their own and reciprocal snares at some time they are seized and deceived. For a fox, wishing to deceive a cock and seize him, thus, it is said, just as if a speech were made, "If," he said, "you would close your eyes while you sing you would sing much better, and you would be the most beloved bird"; because when he did it he was seized by the fox, and therefore he instructed him to close his eyes so that while he did not see him drawing near he would secretly leap upon him. Indeed, with the others crying aloud above the fox to the effect that he had carried away another's cock, the cock instructed him to answer them that the cock was his; and therefore that they should cease the harsh shouting, indeed, in opening his mouth and saying, "The cock is mine," the cock flew above the dwelling, out of the mouth of him whom he instructed to speak on that account so that he might flee while his mouth was open; it came at last from deceits to a quarrel in which they mutually reviled themselves. For the cock said, or was able to have said if it had had understanding and speech, "Cursed be he who persuades another to close his eyes when he ought to see imminent danger." The fox in turn was able to say, "Cursed be he who persuades anyone to speak when he ought to be quiet." Thus the wicked mutually deceive themselves, and they advise many things to be said and done, and they ask things which pertain to the beguiling of souls; for as long as the deceitful man by deceitful suggestion or by a wicked defense, so that since he cannot defend himself with the truth, he is turned to wickedness or whithersoever by another veil drawn in these turnings because of fear: hatred, pleasure, property. They are often wont to overthrow the honest feelings of men. . . .

A, c. XI, 9 (Foxes justly accused and turning the blame against the accusers are discussed.)

[After the fable of the sick lion.] . . . [The fox,] wishing to deceive the cock, lying down, closed one eye as if it had been injured by a straw. He begged the cock to pull the straw from his eye; the cock, fleeing his malice, withdrew. The fox, seeing himself cheated, set down a plea in the lion's curia (he closed his eye, rubbing it) that while he himself was sleeping the cock tore out his eye. The cock begged them to seek after the truth, namely whether his eye had been closed by violent necessity or a cunning will. Discovering that it was truly closed by his own malice, they deprived him of both. Thus those seized in deceit on account of an accusation will be destroyed by a two-fold contrition. One is owed to the fault of an excuse, the other
to a false accusation. Therefore by a two-fold contrition they will destroy him, as is manifest about Aman accusing Mardochai and the Jews (Esther III).

B. French Versions

1. Le Roman de Renart

Br. II [III, 4065-4119, 4320-4458, ed. Roques]

It happened that Renart, who was so very much full of wicked skills
25 And who knew so much of guile every day,
Came to a town.
The town was in a forest;
In it were many chickens and cocks,
Ducks and mallards, ganders and eggs.
30 And the lord, Constans des Noes,
A villein who was quite rich,
Dwelled quite near the hedge-enclosures.
His house was full
Of chickens and capons;
35 His lodging was well-furnished;
There was enough for everyone:
Salted flesh, bacon, and fliches.
The villein was rich in corn,
All was well in the lodgings
40 Because his gardens were rich.
There were plenty of good cherries
And several fruits of many kinds.
There were apples and other fruit.
Renart went there for his pleasure.
45 The courtyard was well-enclosed
By oaken stakes, sharp and stout;
Outside was hawthorn.
Inside Lord Constans had placed
The chickens because of the stronghold.
50 And Renart betook himself to this side;
Quite slyly, his neck lowered,
He went right toward the enclosure.
Renart wanted to get to them,
But the strength of the thorns
55 Much interfered with his business
So that he could not succeed in it,
Neither to hide nor to leap;
He did not wish to fail in regard to the chickens.
He crouched in the middle of the path;
60 Much did he burn, he was very angry.
He considered that if he jumped,
Because he would fall somewhat from above
He would be seen, and the chickens
Would hasten under the thorns,
65 And he would soon be attacked
Before he seized any.
He was in great fear of that possibility.
He wished to draw the chickens to him
Who were grazing before him
70 And Renart went east in this place.
Near the corner of the hedge he espied
A broken stake; he went within.
There, where the palisade was open,
The villein had planted cabbage.
75 Renart went there, passed beyond,
Allowed himself to fall in a heap
So that people would not see him.
But the chickens who had espied him fall
Were angered at it.
80 Each sought to flee.

... . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .
And when he [Renart] was reassured--
280 Renart was very calculating
And marvelously intelligent--
When he saw that this one slept,
Renart, who distressed everyone
And who knew much about wicked tricks,
285 Approached toward him without delay.
One step at a time, quick without running,
Renart went along with his neck lowered.
If Chanticleir waited for him
So that he could hold him in his teeth,
290 He would make him repent his game.

When Renart saw Chanticleir,
At once he wished to seize him with his teeth.
Renart, who was hasty, failed,
And Chanticleir sprang away.
295 He saw Renart, knew him well,
Alighted on a dunghill.
When Renart saw that he had failed,
He thought himself very unlucky.
Wherefore he began to consider
300 How he might be able to deceive
Chanticleir; for if he did not eat him,
Then he had wasted his time.
"Chanticleir," said Renart,
"Don't flee, don't worry;
305 I'm very happy when you're well,
For you're my first cousin."
Chanticleir then was reassured;
He sang a song for joy.
Renart said to his cousin,
310 "Do you still remember Chanteclin,
Your good father who engendered you?
No cock ever sang so well;
They heard him from a great distance.
He sang a song very well, loudly,
315 And had a very long breath;
His two eyes closed, his voice was powerful.
It did not seem from a distance
When he sang and made a refrain."
Said Chanticleer, "Cousin Renart,
320 Do you want to attract me by a trick?"
"Truly," said Renart, "I do not wish that;
But sing now, and close your eyes.
We are of one flesh and one blood:
I would rather lose a foot
325 Than that you should have sorrow,
For you are such a close relative."
Said Chanticleer, "I don't believe you.
Draw back from me a little,
And I will sing a song.
330 There will not be a neighbor around here
Who doesn't hear my falsetto."
Then Renart smiled to himself.
"Now, then, sing loudly, cousin!
I will know well if you were ever born
335 Of Chanticlein, my uncle."
Then he began loudly;
Then Chanticleir uttered a cry.
One eye was closed and the other open
Because he greatly feared Renart.
340 He often looked that way.
Renart said, "That was nothing.
Chanticlein sang differently,
With a long breath, his eyes closed;
They heard him well for twenty fields."
345 Chanticleir thought that he spoke truly.
Then he let go his melody,
His eyes closed, with great gusto.
Then Renart no longer wished to be patient:
Over a red cabbage
350 Renart took him by the neck.
He fled and made great joy
Over the prey that he had met.
Pinte saw that Renart carried him thence,
Was sorrowful, very discomfited.
355 Thus she began to lament
When she saw Chanticleir carried off
And said: "Sir, I told you well,
And you mocked all I said
And so held me for a fool.
360 But now the speech is true
By which I warned you.
Your wisdom has mocked you.
I was a fool when I told it to you,
And fools do not believe before they are seized.

Renart, who injures you holds you.
Alas, sorrowful, I am nearly dead
Because, if I lose my lord here,
I have lost my honor always."

The good lady of the house

Opened the door of her garden;
Because it was evening, she wanted
To return her chickens under roof.
She called Pinte, Bise, and Roussete.
Neither one nor another went to roost.

When she saw that they had not come
She wondered much what they did.
She called her cock with a loud shout.
She looked at Renart, who led him away.
Then she went ahead to rescue him,

And the fox began to run.
When she saw that she could not catch him
She betook herself to shout.
"Help!" she shouted loudly.
The villeins, who were playing ball,

When they heard this shout
All went there;
They asked what she was up to.
Sighing, she recounted to them:
"Alas, what evil has befallen me!"

"How?" they said. "Because I have lost
My cock, whom the fox carried off."
Constans said, "Foul, dirty old woman,
Why then didn't you catch him?"
"Sir," she said, "you speak in vain;

By the holy God, I couldn't catch him."
"Why?" "He wouldn't wait for me."
"So you struck him?" "I had nothing."
"What about this stick?" "By God, I couldn't
Because he went away at such a fast trot

That two Breton dogs couldn't catch him."
"Where did he go?" "To the right."
The villeins ran promptly.
They all shouted, "Cver here! over here!"
Renart, who went before, heard it.

He came to the hole and jumped down
So that his rear struck the ground.
They heard the jump he made;
They all shouted, "Cver here! over hear!"
And Constans said, "Now, after him quickly!"

The villeins ran rapidly.
Constans called his mastiff,
Whom everyone called Malvoisin.
"Bardol, Travers, Humbaut, Rebors,
Run after Renart the Red!

In the chase they made they saw him
And perceived Renart.
They all cried, "Look, the fox!"
Now Chanticleir was in danger
If he did not know deceit and craft in return.

"What!" he said, "Sir Renart,
Don't you hear what shame this villain
Says to you who cries at you?
Constans follows you at a trot.
Pray, hurl him one of your taunts

In the opening of this gate,
When he says, 'Renart carries him off,'
You can say, 'In spite of you.'
Nothing would better discomfit him."
No one is so wise that he does not act foolishly.

Renart, who deceived everybody,
Was deceived this time.
He cried loudly:
"In spite of you," said Renart,
"I'm carrying away my share!"

When the other felt the mouth loosen
He flapped his wings, escaped,
And went flying upon an apple tree.
Renart was underneath on a dunghill,
Angry and vexed and grieved

At the cock which had escaped him.
Chanticleir burst out laughing at him.
"Renart," he said, "how does it seem to you
This time? what do you think of it?"
The glutton quivered and trembled,

And he said in perfidy:
"The mouth," he said, "was shamed
Which concerned itself with making noise
When it should have been silent."
"So be it," said the cock, "as I wish.

The evil inflammation puts out the eye
Which concerns itself with slumbering
When it should be watchful.
Cousin Renart," said Chanticleir,
"No one can trust you.

May your kinship be cursed!
It was about to do me harm.
Perjured Renart, get out of here!
If you are here any longer
You will lose your gown."

Renart did not care for his talk;
He no longer wished to speak; then he turned away,
Neither reposed nor remained.
He was famished, near death.
Through a thicket close to a plain
He fled along a path.
He was very sorrowful; he lamented much
Over the cock that had escaped him,
Since he was not well sated of him.

Br. XVI [XVIII, 15483-93, 15500-657, ed. Roques]

15 It was in May, in that time
When flowers blossom on the hawthorn,
The meadow and the woods grow green again,
And the birds sing endlessly
Both all night and all day,

20 And Renart stopped
At Malpertuis, his stronghold.
But he was in great distress
Because he had no food at all.
His household was in such a bad condition

25 That they cried bitterly from hunger.

Whereupon he went out of his house
And swore that he would not return
Until he brought back

35 Food for his house to feed on.
The highway turned to the left,
And he went across the forest
Because it neither befitted nor pleased him
To keep on a road or a path;

40 He knew the whole forest well
Because he had gone there many times.
He went in a way that led down
From the woods to a meadow.
"God," said Renart, "holy Mary,

45 Where was so beautiful a garden found?
I believe it is an earthly paradise.
Here would make a good dwelling
For him who had enough to eat.
See the woods here and the brook!

50 Truly, I have never seen so beautiful.
See how it is green and flourishing!
Sacred hope thus aids me
So that I would quite willingly enjoy myself
If I did not have great need,

55 But need makes the old one trot."
At these words he began to gallop,
And he went away sad and sorrowful,
But the hunger which he had in his teeth,
Which chased the wolf from the woods,

60 Made him leave against his will.
He went downward through the meadow,
Looked much at the mountains and valleys
To know if he might see there
A thing that would satisfy his heart:

65 Bird or hare or rabbit.
He went so far that he entered on a road
which went towards a town.
He followed the road, and when he saw
The town he swore by his head
70 That whether it be beautiful or ugly
He would go straight to this town.
He well thought that he would find there
Something that would be helpful to him.
He forsook the road and the path
75 When he had come near the town,
He who knew plenty of guile
So that he did not wish to be seen.
By the bushes, by the elders
He went, his neck lowered.
80 He went earnestly invoking God
That He keep his body from prison
And send him food,
With which he might make happy his wife
And his children and his household.
85 Now, I do not wish to be silent
Concerning that in the town was a dwelling
Of a villein rich in goods,
Which, if the book speaks truly
Where I found this story written,
90 From here to Troy the Little [Troyes]
No villein had it so comfortable.
His house was near a hedge-enclosure,
Which was richly garnished
With all the goods the earth boasts,
95 Such as cows and bulls,
Sheep and milk and eggs,
Different kinds of things to eat,
Chickens and capons,
Things he had planted there.
100 Now Renart would get what he wanted,
If he could enter within.
But I think and believe by my teeth
That he will dwell outside
Because both the garden and the house
105 Were entirely closed about
With stakes sharp and heavy and long;
And a streamlet ran around;
Within were shrubs
Of many kinds (this you know)
110 That were laden with fruit.
The retreat was very beautiful.
Its lord was Berton the Elder,
A villein foolish and rich
Who was very miserly and mean,
115 Who did not care about spending,
Devoted himself to amassing,
Would rather let his moustache be plucked
Than eat one of his capons
Or cause to have cooked
120 Either a capon or a chicken;
He would rather have them sold at market.
If Renart could lay hands there,
I well think that he would have some,
However, they were kept or saved.
125 The villein was in his house,
Where there was no one but him.
His wife had gone to sell her spinning;
The others were all outside
Tending to their business.
130 Renart came running to that part,
Who well thought (don't doubt me)
That the house was well furnished
With that which he needed.
Between two corn stalks, by a path,
135 He came to the hedge,
Was very frightened to enter there
Because he saw the capons in the sun
And Chantecler, who blinked his eyes,
Both his pullets and his chickens
140 Who were near a bunch of thorn bushes
In a pile of straw where they were scratching.
They paid no heed to all this:
They thought that they were very secure.
But Renart, who was a foul beast,
145 Fried and burned in gluttony.
He well saw that by neither craft nor deceit
Would he enter there.
He went around and came raging
To see and to try
150 If he might ever find an opening
By which he might put himself inside.
He went so much to the right and left—
Renart the Red, the Wicked—
That, towards the hedge,
155 He found one stake by luck
Which was rotted.
There where the stream ran through
From the garden when it rained.
Through this he entered within
160 Quite softly, and swore by his teeth
That for those whom he was supposed to nourish
He would work his jaws there
On either capons or chickens.
He covered himself under a thorn bush
165 Because he did not wish to be seen;
He neither tottered nor moved.
He kept very quiet and listened.
Chanticleir, who feared nothing
And who thought himself quite secure,
170 Went without danger
Looking in the middle of the garden
And calling his chickens.
And he looked around and pursued so much
That he came before the place
175 Where Renart was hidden.
When Renart saw him he was happy
And swore that, if God saved him,
He would make one wicked leap at him.
When the latter intended to scratch
180 Renart rose and descended
Toward him to seize him, but he failed,
For Chanticleir leaped away.
Now Renart was very unfortunate
When he saw that he had failed:
185 There was nothing to do but be angered by it.
The cock began to run about
Both here and there, up and down.
Chanticleir saw that he was no longer near
And began to cry out loudly.

2. Marie LX

36 Fools do this: they speak
The most when they ought to cease;
They are silent when they ought to speak.

C. Tables

Phaedrian: BP, App. 562, 562a; Caxton-F V, 3.
Renardian: RR Contrefait VI, 31089 ff.; Chaucer's Nun's Priest's Tale.
Others: BP, App. 611 (Odo Fab. L); Ysengrimus IV, 811-V, 316.

[Motif of creature surviving fox:
Greek: BP, App. 241 (Handford 132), 252 (Handford 82).
Latin: BP, App. 671; Caxton-F Pog. 7.]

II. The Confession of the Fox

A. Latin Versions

1. The Salmon-Lamb Motif (Phaedrian Tradition)

Walter-A XLVII: Fable not given; Hervieux refers to Walter-B I.
Walter-B I: The Wolf and the Sheep

The wolf was hard pressed with the weight of an illness and begged the gods above
Not to ordain that his health should sink down.
It was hastened in to a votive offering by a river of tears that had risen,
And the wolf gave up the eating of flesh from then on.

Lo, a wether met the wolf and greeted him;
To whom the wolf said, "Hail, plump salmon, hail!"
"O my lord, I am not a salmon but a fertile lamb,
For my race does not swim well in water."
To whom said the wolf with his eyes turned away: "To me you appear to be a salmon."
10 The rascal devoured him with his mouth as if he were a salmon.

Whoever wishes to injure furnishes demonstrations of trickery;
The deceitful life directs its steps to hell.

L XIV: Thus it is concerning some, who in the custom of evil men thus have a perverse soul, so that against the wish of their enticements neither an oath nor a vow has worth; in fact, to the contrary, when the opportunity is found they relapse right away.

M XL: Moralitas. I do not find morals in this wolf; I know this, however, that God can behold the wicked oaths of the wolf.

2. The Insincere Penance Motif

Cdonis Fab. Add., Col. Tertia II (XXXVII): Those who do not propose to abstain from sin... [The story is translated to 1. 5 in BP, App. 641.] He was on his last day, since he wished to go from that land to the other.
Thus do very many who do not wish to go to confession except right on the last day of Quadragesima. And when they stand before the priest, they look back at him with one eye, and with the other at women or other unsuitable things, and they wish to leave the land of penance and enter the land of sin and impurity.

Moreover, certain people, like Absolon, are shaved once a year, because notwithstanding that sins are confessed once, yet hairs begin to grow immediately, because they return immediately to the sins and thus make sport with priests. This is a fox's confession, which is accustomed to be called in France "the confession of Renart."...

3. The Motif of Asking for Death (Phaedrian Tradition)

F XXXVI: Many seek higher things for themselves and search out greater things, and ascending above their station they aim at the heights
and seek pleasures; but the higher they climb, the lower they frequently fall. thence hear a fable... [See BP, App. 699, p. 595.] This fable teaches not to wish to be spoken that which is not, nor to pursue higher and greater things, but contentment for every single person in his station.

B. French Versions

1. The Salmon-Lamb Motif

a. The Gualterian Tradition

Isopet I XLVII: The moral

If anyone wishes to perform and to dream fraud,
He nourishes the thought so cheerfully
That from malice it behooves him
28 To cherish it, and he thinks now how
He would be able to deceive another;
He abandons truth for falsehood.
But the trickster will go to hell,
32 And everyone lives if he will squat there;
In this world he cannot die,
For everyone wants to succor him.

Isopet III de Paris XLI: Moral

When traitors, tricksters, and robbers have any adversity and perceive that if they are hypocrites and fakers that one will never take account of them, they devour simple people of good faith and destroy them.

Those who lead a wicked life,
If they act the hypocrite do not trust them.

b. Marie L

So it goes for the man of wicked heart:
He cannot abandon in any way
25 His excess or his gluttony.
Never, at the expense of his lasciviousness,
Neither the man or woman who is lascivious
Will keep vow or promise.

[2. The Insincere Penance Motif]

3. The Motif of Asking for Death

Le Roman de Renart, Br. VII [XIV, 14271-74, ed. Roques]
Renart had a very large meal,
110 And he often swore by his head
4. Fortune and the Nature of the Fox (Le Roman de Renart)

Br. VII [XIV, 14167-226, ed. Roques]

He is foolish who believes his foolish thoughts;
Much fails because of foolish thoughts.
He is foolish who believes in foolish hope,
Because everyone is in a difficult balance.

5 Fortune plays with the world:
One comes, the other goes;
She makes one well, puts another in difficulty,
And makes one poor and another rich.

Such is the custom of Fortune

That she loves one, hates another.
She is not at all a friend to everyone;
She puts one above, another below,
And for those she raises higher--
Both who do better and are worth more--

She makes the wicked leap to dance
Either to enter or to leave.

Lord, this world was lent:
The one has little, the other plenty,
And he who has more must have so much more;

They are so much above the poor.
And he who borrows little returns little:
They allow him to live well.
Such as now has great power,
Before a year has passed

He will be of little power--
You all know this to be true.

By my head, this is no joke:
One very well comes from high to low,
In faith, and from very great depths

He climbs well into the heights.
Because of this it is right that I be silent.
Other people are greatly pleased with it:
I think that one should sell great goods
Because that would be reasonable.

For he who works according to reason
Will not be able to come to goods.
He is very foolish who is greatly prideful
Of things which are lent to him:
The costume is the garment of another,
Which clothes him from cold and makes him warm.

He is foolish who through his good luck
Is secure in this world,
For I tell you well without feigning,
The pot goes to the well so much that it breaks
45 Sooner or later, near or far,
Out of feeble need.
This example I have shown you
By Renart, who refuses so much
And who works against nature.
50 No one will ever have justice from him:
He takes the wrong, he takes the right;
It is a marvel that he will not give up.
But truly he will never cry out
Before he has miscarried;
55 For his devil leads him,
And he is entirely in the power of him
Who does not wish to leave him
Until he has disgraced him.
For a while he can reign,
60 But afterwards he makes him fall:
He has him hanged or maimed,
Buried in fire and enflamed,
Or to his great shame governed
So that he makes him come to nothing.
65 Truly, to him who serves such a baron
A bad name comes.
I do not say that folly is everywhere;
It is not right that I say it,
Because, according to the hour and the time,
Folly and sense avail greatly (Roques, 14225-26).

Br. IV [II, 3257-88, ed. Roques]
Now it suits me to tell such a thing
By which I can make you laugh;
Because I know well, it is clear,
That you do not care about a sermon
5 Nor to hear the life of a relic.
Of this you have no desire,
But of such a thing that pleases you.
Now look that each one keep quiet,
Because I am about to speak well
10 And am ready, if God watches me.
If you wish to hear me,
You will be able to learn such a thing
That would be well to retain.
And they hold me for a fool,
15 But I have heard tell in school,
"From a foolish man, wise words."
It is not profitable to make long prologs;
Now I will tell (I don't wish to be silent any longer)
A branche and a single pleasantry
20 Of him who knows so much trickery:
It is of Renart—you know him well,
And well you have heard tell of him.
No one keeps pace with Renart;
Renart leads everyone;
25 Renart entices, Renart embraces,
Renart is well-schooled in evil;
You hear that no one runs with him,
No one will ever be his friend.
Very wise and intelligent is
30 Renart, and he is not quarrelsome.
But in this world there is no one so wise
That in the best of times he does not go to folly.

C. Tables


The insincere Penance Motif (Cdo): BP, App. 641 (Fab. Add., Col. Tertia II [XXXVII]).


Fortune and the Nature of the Fox (Renardian): Caxton-R chs. 6, 17, 27.

[Other confessions:
Latin: BP, App. 628 (Cdo Fab. LXXXI), 628a, 628b (G XXXIX);
Renardian: RR I, IV, VII, VIII; Caxton-R chs. 12, 27.]

III. The Trial of the Fox (The Fox, the Wolf, and the Mare)

A. Latin Versions

1. The Story

Cdonis Fab. Add., Coll. Prima VII (XLI): The Ass not Wishing to Come to the Lion's Parliament... [The story is translated in BP, App. 638.]

Secretly. [Misticem. Morally, I understand through the lion Reason, which arranges all things that man should do; through the wolf Fortitude; through the fox Prudence; and through the ass Weighty Flesh desirous of pleasures, which scorns to obey Reason and blinds and confounds Prudence drawing too near, etc.

2. The Motif of the Mare Kicking the Wolf (Phaedrian Tradition)

F XXXVI: See above, pp. 206-07.
3. The Motif of the Ass Kicking the Wolf

a. The Phaedrian Tradition

F XXVI: There are many who boast of evil things, ask from where the answers are recited, and wish to be made teachers when they have not been students. Whence hear a fable. . . . Likewise, all fools, while they wish to appear learned, frequently fall into evil.

G VIII: And this teaches not to inquire too much nor to believe every spirit.

b. Jacques, _Sermones vulgares_ XXXIII

Swiftly, indeed, a man dies, unable to live a long while and unknowing of when he will die; in truth it is fitting that he hasten to necessities with many interruptions. However, curious seekers and those who stupidly inquire into things which do not pertain to them are like the fox. . . . Thus seekers of majesty will be oppressed with glory. . . .

c. Bromyard

F, c. VII, 2 (Chiefly that a brother in a spiritual fraternity with his brother confers three benefits and kindnesses and services, which are opposed by three more frequently permanent kinds of ingratitude in the carnal fraternity. . . .)

Truly the second evil in false fraternity is that one does not come to the assistance of the other, except the rich brother, or honor his parent and speaks of it boastfully and listens. Just as the mule who, by reckoning and telling of her parentage and always named her war-horse father and never her mother mule, but rather despised her, so they name on purpose the powerful uncle or parent, are truly ashamed of and despise the poor father or brother. Proverbs XIX [, 7; cp. 26]: "the brothers of a poor man hate him"; and on the other hand good brothers in turn help one another in those things in which they can . . ., concerning which that small sign is verified by I Machabees III [, 2]: "And all his brothers will help him."

4. The Red Cap Motif

a. Cdo and Sheppey

Cdonis Fab. XX: [Generally the fable of the "lion's share" (see BP, App. 149, 339); but when asked by the lion who taught him to divide so well, the fox answers: "... Lord, that red cape of my companion, after his head was peeled as demonstration."]

Thus the Lord struck down our first parent for the sin of disobedience, namely with many infirmities, hunger, thirst, nakedness, and
finally death; on which account the red cape of Adam ought to punish us, because we must never offend God. In Proverbs [cf. XIX, 25]: "After he is punished by pestilence the fool will be wiser." . . .

Sheppey Fab. V: [The fox answers similarly, referring to "that one with the red head." . . .]

b. Jacques, Sermones vulgares CLVIII

. . . "Lord, the one for whom you made a red cap taught me to divide thus." It is manifest therefore how useful the advice is to leave Babylon and [not] to see often the fellowship of evil men and to serve the Lord in peace and security. . . .

c. Bromyard

E, c. VIII, 25: [A reference to "... the priest with the red crown. . . ." This point is not specifically moralized.]

B. French Versions

1. The Story (Le Roman de Renart)

Br. XIX [XVI, entire, ed. Roques]: [This is About Isengrin and the Mare (Roques edn.)]

Now I will tell you how it befell Isengrin when night came:
He went running amid the woods,
And as he ran he considered

5 That the man and the wolf are foolish
Who ever go anywhere alone,
Since they might be able to have company
Because they often have need of aid,
And such a person can accompany one

Who will greatly encumber one.
When he was thinking this in his mind
Then he went to a thicket.
He saw a mare in a meadow
Where she grazed near a stand of corn.

15 The wolf went rapidly
Right to the mare through the field.
When he came to her, he greeted her thus:
"God save you," he said, "Rainsent, my friend."
"And God save you, Sir Isengrin;

20 Whence do you come so early in the morning?"
"Lady," he said, "I have escaped
From wicked hands where I was vexed.
Father Martin made a device
To catch me and so seized me;
25 I was in prison all night.
   If I had had a companion
   I would have extricated myself from there.
   I have told it to you on account of this:
   If you wish to accompany me, 
30 We will have very great profit;
   I will give you enough to eat
   Of whatever you might hold more dear,
   Either good corn, or good cats,
   Or good barley for some bread.
35 You might have very great need of me
   Because I am going to try to provide;
   Our company would be good.
   For consider, lady,
   The villein for whom you kill yourself
40 And who makes you draw the cart;
   You earn all his goods;
   You will never have any of them
   Except the worst that he has,
   And that for which he doesn't care.
45 Ha! Rainsent, my sweet friend,
   Come in my company
   And you will be out of danger of others.
   It will not be necessary for you to cart
   Nor to carry a burden here and there;
50 But you will live always in peace."
   "Sir Isengrin, if I were able,
   I would hold your company dear,
   But I can't run or go;
   Because of this I want to graze here:
55 In my right rear foot
   Yesterday while I walked carting
   A thorn stuck me.
   If you will pull it out of me with your teeth,
   Never will my company
60 Be parted from you.
   You might be able to have great need,
   Since I will do your every wish,
   For if you wish to cry 'mastiffs'
   I will know well to kick,
65 To bite with my teeth, to strike with my feet;
   All who come up will be judged;
   Whoever I can strike well
   Will not be desirous of a kick."
   Isengrin said: "Show your foot,
70 The one where you feel the thorn;
   I will have it removed from you quickly;
   Another doctor now would be wicked."
   She lifted her foot, and he trusted her;
   With his nails he cleared it all.
While Isengrin leaned over to clear it
And cleaned and tended the foot,
Rainsent slackened the foot
And struck Isengrin
Between the chest and muzzle,

80 Threw him over the entire meadow.
Rainsent, fleeing, departed,
Went grazing with lifted tail.
And Isengrin very quietly lay down
For a long while after, and later he said:

85 "Alas, miserable wretch!
If I had evil yesterday, now I have worse today;
I do not know whom to trust anymore,
Nor can I find faith in anyone."
Thus lamented Isengrin.

90 Here this branche ends.

[2. The Motif of the Mare Kicking the Wolf]

[3. The Motif of the Ass Kicking the Wolf]

4. The Red Cap Motif

a. Le Roman de Renart

Br. I [I, 708-15, ed. Roques]
"Bruns, are you well ahead,"
Said Renart, "in Lanfroi's honey,
Which you have eaten without me?

695 Your bad faith will appear in you;
Truly, it will miscarry for you
Because you will not have a priest in the end.
Cf what order do you wish to be,
So that you can wear a red hood?"

Br. IX [X, 9784-96, ed. Roques]
"To alleviate and to entice
I [Renart] gave him [Isengrin] one fragment of an eel,
Over which he licked his moustache.

545 He said that he wished to have a crown,
And I made it truly large.
There was never razor except force:
I pulled his skin off brutally
With one pot full of boiling water.

550 The crown was so well-made
That skin and fur fell from it
Where the water tore,
Scorched both head and face
So that he looked like a scorched cat."
[The incident is described at length in III, 165 ff. (XII, 13097 ff., ed. Roques).]
b. Bozon 131: [Essentially the fable of "the lion's share," involving a horse and a colt. The red cap motif is missing. The moralization is about greedy heirs when they are made executors for their father.]

C. Tables

The Story
  Odo: BP, App. 638 (Fab. Add., Col. Prima VII [XLI]).
  Renardian: Caxton-R ch. 27.

The Motif of the Mare Kicking the Wolf
  Latin: BP, App. 699, p. 593 (F XXXVI); Ysengrimus V, 1129-1322;
         Caxton-F V, 10.

The Motif of the Ass Kicking the Wolf (Latin): BP, App. 693; Caxton-F V, 1.

The Red Cap Motif
  Renardian: Caxton-R chs. 8, 15, 32, 34.

[Motif of wolf or lion doctor kicked by a horse
  Babrian: BP, App. 187 (Ba 122).
  Phaedrian: BP, App. 187; Herv II, s. v. "160. Le Lion médecin";
         Caxton-F III, 2; Handford 111.
  Other: Jacques, Sermones vulgares CLII.

The contumax motif
  Babrian: BP, App. 336 (Ba 95); Handford 61.

Parliaments or catalogs of animals
  Latin: "Aegrum" 7 ff.
  Renardian: RR I; Le Cour 1720 ff.; Caxton-R chs. 1, 31.
  Other: The Kingis Quair sts. 155-57.]

Tables for Chapter VI

I. The Sheep and the Dog

Phaedrian: BP, App. 478 (Ph I, 17); Herv II, s. v. "37. La Brebis, le Chien, et le Loup"; Caxton-F I, 4.

Odo: BP, App. 596 (Fab. XXIII).
II. The Wolf and the Lamb

Babrian: BP, App. 155 (Ba 89).

Phaedrian: BP, App. 155 (Ph 1, 1); Herv II, s. v. "173. Le Loup et l'Agneau"; Caxton-F I, 2; Handford 28.

Odo: Fab. XXIV; Sheppey Fab. I.

Isopets: Is. de Lyon 2; Is. II 10.

Others: Marie 2; Jacques, Sermones vulgares CXXV; Bozon 49; Mayno 51; Bromyard A, c. XII, 45; Lydgate 2.

[False charge motif (Greek): BP, App. 16; Handford 93.]

III. The Wolf and the Wether

Latin: BP, App. 705 (FLV); Caxton-F V, 15.

["Know thyself": Caxton-R ch. 29.]

IV. The Fox, the Wolf, and the Cadgear

Renardian: RR III, 1-152, IX, S42-54, XIV, 557-646; Le Cour ?; Rle Nouvel XVII; Caxton-R chs. 4, 12.

[Pretense of death motif: Odo Fab. XLIX, Parab. XCIX; Jacques, Sermones vulgares CCCIV.

Subservience motif: RR V; Caxton-R ch. 40.]

V. The Fox, the Wolf, and the Husbandman

The Story (French, not all of which contain the full story of Henryson's fable): RR IV, IX; RR Contrefait IV, 27813 ff.; Of be vox and of pe wolf; Caxton-R ch. 33; Caxton-F Alf. 9.

The Motif of the "Shadow of the Moon" in the Well


Odo: BP, App. 625 (Fab. LXXIV; not an analogue but the source for Bozon); Bozon 46.

Other: Marie 58.
The Well Motif
Odo: BP, App. 593 (Fab. XIX); Sheppey Fab. LIX.
French: Cast., Conte XXI.
Others: Bozon 128; Bromyard A, c. XXV, 19.

The Hasty Oath Motif (Renardian): RR IX; Caxton-R chs. 20, 30.


[The motif of the fox bargaining against his companion
Other: Bromyard J, c. VI, 29.]
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________. [Reply to Francis L. Utley's review (MLQ, XII [1951], 493-97) of the above work], *MLQ*, XII (1951), 498-99.


