

Renascence Editions

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The Curial.

Translated and printed by William Caxton (1484. Original in French by Alain Chartier).

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Here foloweth the cople of a lettre whyche maistre Alayn Charetier wrote to hys brother / whyche desired to come dwelle in Court / in whyche he reherset many / myseryes & wretchydnesses therin vsed / For taduyse hym not to entre in to it / leste he after repente / like as hier after folowe / and late translated out of frensshe in to englysshe / whyche Cople was delyuerid to me by a noble and vertuous Erle / At whos Instance & requeste I haue reduced it in to Englyssh.



Yght welbelouyd brother, & persone Eloquent / thou admonetest and exhortest me to prepare & make ready, place and entree for the vnto the lyf Curiall / whyche thou desirest / And that by my helpe and requeste thou myghtest haue therin offyce / And herto thou art duly meuyd by comyn error of the people / whiche repute thonours mondayne & pompes of them of the courte / to be thynges more blessyd & happy than other / or to thende that I Iuge not wel of thy desyre / Thou wenest parauenture / that they that wayte on offices / ben in vertuous occupacions, & reputest them the more

worthy for to haue rewardes & merites / And also thou adioustest other causes that meue the therto / by the example of me / that empesse my selue for to serue in the courte Ryall / And to thende that thou myghtest vse thy dayes in takyng companye wyth me / and that we myghte to-gidre enioye the swettenes of frendshyppe / whyche long tyme hath ben bytwene vs tweyne / And thys knowe I wel / that thy courage is not wythdrawen fer from my frendshyppe / And the grace of humanyte is not dreyed vp in the / whyche compryseth hys frendes as presente, And leueth not at nede to counseylle & ayde them absente to hys power / And I trowe that thyn absence is not lasse greuous to me / than myn is to thy self / For me semeth, that thou beyng absente, I am there where the places and affayres desione vs / But by cause god of fortune hath so departed our destynee / that thou awaytest frely on thyn owne pryuate thynges / And that I am occupied on thynges publicque, & seruyses in sorowful passions / that whan I haue on my self compassion / Thenne am I enioyed of thyn ease / & take grete playsir / in this, that *thou* auoydest the myserries that I suffre euery day / And yf I blame or accuse fortune for me / I preyse and thanke her on that other parte for the / For so moche as she hath exempte the fro the anguysshes that I suffre in the courte / And that she hath not made vs bothe meschaunte /

Thou desirest, as thou sayst, to be in the courte wyth me / And I coueyte yet more to be pryuely and syngulerly wyth the / And also for me thou woldest gladly leue thy fraunchyse and pryuate lyf / I ought more gladly for the loue of the, leue thys seruytude mortell / For as moche as loue acquyteth hym better in humble tranquillyte than in orguyllous myserye / late hyt suffyse to the & to me / that one of vs tweyne be Infortunat / And that by my meschaunte lyf thou mayst see and knowe more certaynly that one and that other fortune / But what demaundest thou / Thou sechest the way to lese thy self / by the example of me / And wylt lepe fro the hauen of sewerte / for to drowne thy selfe in the see of peryl and myserye / Repentest thou the to haue lyberte / Art thou annoyed to lyue in peas / humayne nature hath suffred suche vnhappynes / that she appetyteth and desireth to haue that thyng / whyche she hath not / Thus misprysest thou the peas of thy corage / and the sure estate of thy thought / And by therroure of mespryement whyche thou hast gotten / the thynges whyche of their owne condicion ben more to be mesprised / than they that ben shewde by the lyf of another / I meruaylle me moche / how thou, that art prudent and wyse of goodes / art so ouerseene and fro thy self, for to dar expose thy self to so many perillis. And yf thou wylt vse my counseyl / Take none example by me for to poursewe the courtes / Ne the publicque

murmures of hye palaysis / But alleway late my perylle be example to the for
to fle and eschewe them / For I dar not afferme / that emonge the bruyt of
them that torne / be ony thyng stedfast ne holsomme / Thou shalt wene & hope
to fynde / exercite of vertu / in myserye thus *commune* & *publycque* / And so
certaynly shalt thou fynde / yf thou makest thy view to fight *constauntly*
against alle vices / But be ware & make good watche that thou be not the fyrst
that shal be ouercome / For I saye the / that the courtes of hye prynces be
neuer disgarnysshed of peple decyuyng by fayr langage / or feryng by
menaces / or stryuing by enuye / or corrupte by force of yeftes / or
blandysshyng by flaterers / or accusyng of trespaces / or enpesshyng & lettyng
in *somme* maner wyse / the good wyl of true men; For our poure humanyte is
lyghtly enclnyed to ensiewe & folowe the maners & condycions of other /
And to doo as they doo. And vnnethe may he escape that is asseged and
assayled of so many aduersaryes / Now late vs graunte that thou woldest
perseuere in vertue / And that thou sholdest escape the vycyous and the
corrupcion of suche vycyous persones / yet in thys case thou haddest
vanquysshed none but thy self / But thys had ben better that thou haddest don
it in thy owne secrete pryue place. And be thou certayn, that for thy vertue
thou shalt be mocqued, and for thy trouthe thou shalt be hated / or that thy
dyscrecion shal cause the to be suspecte / For ther is nothyng more suspecte to
euyl peple / than them whom they knowe to be wyse and trewe /

The reste thenne is thys / that thou shalt haue labour wythoute fruyt / And
shalt vse thy lyf in perylle / And shalt gete many enuyous at the / And yf thou
stryue at theyr enuye / or that thou takest vengeance / I telle to the, that thy
vengement shal engendre to the, more greuouse aduersytees than thou haddest
tofore / And by the contrarye / they that conne dyssymlye, ben preysed, and
vse better theyr tyme in courtes than the other peple / The abuses of the
courte / And the maner of the peple curyall or courtly ben suche that a man is
neuer suffred tenhaunce hym self / but yf he be corrumpable / For vertue
whyche is in so many maners enuyed / yf she be not prowde / she is
mesprysed / yf she bowe not / she is by force sette abacke / yf she be broken
or hurte, she is by force hunted away / who is he thenne that may kepe hym
that he be not corrupt or coromped / or who is he that shall escape without
hauyng harme / Suche be the werkes of the courte, that they that be symple
ben mesprysed / the vertuous enuyed / And the prowdde arrogaunts in mortel
peryllis / And yf thou be sette down and put aback vnder the other courtyours /
Thou shalt be enuyous of theyr power / yf thou be in mene estate / of whyche
thou hast not suffysaunce / thou shalt stryue for to mounte and ryse hyer / and

yf thou mayst come vnto the hie secrets whyche ben strongly for to doublet
 and drede / in the doubtous courteynes of the most hie prynces / Thenne shalt
 thou be most meschaunt / Of somoche as thou wenest to be most ewrous and
 happy / so moche more shalt thou be in grete perill to falle / lyke to hym that
 is mounted in to the most hie place / For to them whom fortune the variable
 hath most hyely lyfte up / and enhaused / resteth nomore but for to falle fro
 so hie doun / by cause she oweth to them nothyng but ruyne / yf thou haste
 take of her alle that thou myghtest / and that she wold gyue / thenne art thou
 debytour of thy self / To thende that she rendre and yelde hym meschaunt
 whom she had enhaused / And that she mocque hym of hys meschef whom
 she had made blynde of vayn glorie of hys enhaunsyng / For the grete wyndes
 that blowe in hie courtes ben of suche condicion / that they only that ben
 hiest enhaused / ben after theyr despoynement / as a spectacle of enuye / of
 detraction / or of hate vnto alle peple / and fynde them self subgettes tyl they
 be shamed and put doun emong the peple / And that they that tofore
 poursiewed to them and flatered / Reporte of them more gretter blames and
 dyvysions than the other / For multytude of peple mespryse alwaye them / that
 fortune hath most aualed and throwen doun / And also is envyous of them that
 she seeth enhaused and lyt vp / Fortune gladly hath sette hys eyen on hem
 that ben in hie degree, and on the soueraynes yet more / And whan she
 playeth wyth smale and poure folkes / that is no certayn / for of the meschief
 of poure peple she retcheth not / ne doth but smyle / But she laugheth wyth ful
 mouth, and smyteth her paulmes to gydre, whan she seeth grete lordes falle in
 to meschyef / she retcheth but lytel for tessaye and preue her fortune in lytyl
 and lowe places / But for to make the grete and myghty to falle and
 ouerthrowe, she setteth gladly her gynnes / And them that ben poure & caste
 doun, maketh she oftymes to ryse & mounte fro certaynte to Incertaynte, and
 fro good rewle to euyl rewle / Them deceyueth she gladly / whom she fyndeth
 esy to deceyue / and variable as she is / But she doth the custommes &
 strength to them that setteth by her. And when she seeth her despysed &
 nought sette by / thenne she leueth them in peas / But she flateryth and
 lawgheth for nought vnto them that haue hie and hole courage / Now she
 essayeth to Iuste ayenst them that ben most stronge / And now she enhaunseth
 them that ben most feble / now she lawheth to one / and she grymmeth to
 other / But the man that hath grete corage & vertuous, mespriseth her
 lawhyges and mowes / And nothyng doubteth her menaces / But the courte
 maketh ouer moche compte of thys fortune / that draweth the peple lyghtly to
 her / Forgetyng theyr pour estate / And forgetyng and not knowyng them self

as sone as they ben enhaunced / whyche the wyse men do not / whiche for
none auauancement ne hauyng of good, enpayre not them selfe / There assaye
thou for to mounthe / yf thou wylt leue thy lyberte and franchyse / Thenne
oughest thou to knowe / that thou shalt haue habundaunce thy self / whan thou
shalt wylle to poursewe the court / whyche maketh a man to leue hys propre
maners / And to applye hym self to the maners of other. For yf he be
verytable / men shal holde hym atte scole of fayntyse / yf he loue honest lyf /
men shal teche hym to lede dyshonest lyf / yf he be pacyent / & sette by no
proffyt / he shal be left to haue suffraunce / For yf he can nought / men shal
demaunde him nothyng / And also he shal fynde none / that shal gyue hym
ony thyng / yf he entre Inportunatly / They that be Inportune shal put him
abacke / yf he be acustomed to ete soberly / and at a certayn houre / he shal
dyne late, and shal soupe in suche facoun that he shal disacustomme hys tyme
and hys maner of lyuyng / Yf he haue be acustomed to rede and studye in
bookes / he shal muse ydelly alday, in awaytyng that men shal open the dore
to hym, of the chambre or wythdraught of the prynce / yf he loue the rest of
his body, he shal be ennoyed now here / nowe there / as a courrou or renner
perpetuell / yf he wil erly goo to his bedde, and Ryse late at his playsir, he shal
faylle therof / For he shal wake longe and late / and ryse ryght erly / and that
ofte he shal lese the nyght wythout slepyng / yf he studye for to fynde
frendshyp / he shal neuer conne trotte so moche thurgh the halles of the grete
lordes that he shal fynde her / but she holdeth her wythoute, and entreth not
wyth ony / For she is moche better knowen by them that vsen her, whyche ben
experte of reffuse / throwen down by fortune / than by them that entre
ygnoraunt / and not knowen her tornes / Now beholde thenne / and see,
whyche of the two thou shalt chese / or that in my yssuyng and goyng out / I
drawe the to our commune proffyt, or in thyn entryng thou brynge me to our
commune dommage and hurte / And forgete not that who serueth in the
courte / Alway hym behoueth to be a gheste / and herberowed in another
mannes hows / And also he muste ete after thappetyte of other / and
otherwhyle wythoute hungre, and fayn he maye / And in lyke wyse he muste
wake otherwhyle atte the wylle of other / after that he hath begonne to slepe,
and by grete gryef, what thyng is more damageus than to sette vnder fortune
the vertues of nature / and the ryghtes and droytes of lyf humayne / seen that it
is [not] a thyng more free in a man / than to lyue naturelly. emong vs seruantes
of courte / we doo nothyng but luue after thordonance of other / And thou
lyuest in thyn hous lyke an Emperour / thou regnest as a kyng paysyble /
vnder the couuerte of thyn hous / And we tremble for drede to dysplayse the

lordes of hye houses / Thou mayest ete whan thou hast hungre / at thyn houre
 and at thy playsir / And we ete so gredyly & gluttonnously, that otherwhyle
 we caste it vp agayn and make vomytes / Thou passest the nyght in slepyng as
 long as it playseth the / And we, after ouermoche drynkyng of wyne and
 grete paynes, lye doun ofte in beddes ful of vermyne / & somtymes wyth stryf
 and debate /

Retourne, brother / Retourne to thy self / And lerne to know the felicite /
 by the myseres that we suffre / But no-man preyseth ynough the ayses that he
 hath in his pryuate and propre hous / but he that to-fore mespryseth
 thanguysshes that he hath suffred in admynystracion publycque / Arystotle the
 phylosophre gloryfyed in hym self / that he had left the hye palays of kyng
 Alysaundre / And had leuer to leue there hys discyple Calistenes / than there
 lenger to dwelle / Dyogenes also, whiche in hys time, aboue alle other men
 loued lyberte and fraunchyse, Refused the grete rychesses and wor[l]dly Ioyes
 to whyche he was callyd / he fledde them for to enhabyte and dwelle frely
 wythin the tonne / wherin he slepte / And also durst somoche auaunte hym /
 that he was more puyssaunt prynce, in that he myght reffuse of goodes, than
 the said Alysaundre hath power to gyue hym. For the veray phylosophre / that
 can wel mespryse thambycious vanyte of the peple of the court / techeth to his
 counseyllours / that ther is more of humanyte in smale thynges and eases /
 than in the courtes of prynces / And the benes of Pictagoras / And the wortes
 that Orace ete / rendrid and gafe better sauour / than that Sardanapalus fonde
 in the grete and delycious wyne Aromatyques that he dranke / for as moche
 as the delyces were medled with the galle of poyson / Feures / & anguysshes
 mondaynes / that he had alway vpon hys herte / not only our lyf / but
 thexaction of our lyf / hys tormentis adioyne to our lyf in suche wyse that / she
 ne hath glorie mondayne / ne pompe caduque wythoute aduersyte / Oftymes
 the peple make grete wondrynges of the Ryches robe of the courtyour / but they
 knowe not by what labour ne by what dyffyculte he hath gotten it /

The peple otherwhyle honoureth and worshypeth the grete apparaylle of a
 puyssant man, But they accompte not the pryckkyng that he hath felte in the
 pourchassyng of it / Ne the greys that he hath gotten in shewyng of yt /
 Othertymes beholde the peple thordynaunces and grete houshold of the hye
 and grete lordes / but they knowe not of what dyspence they ben charged for
 to nourysse them / Ne consydre nothyng the tyle / of whyche they knowe
 certaynly / that they haue in them no merites / Yf we calle an hare / a lyon / or
 saye that a fayr mayde is fowle / or a fowle / croke-backed / haltyng / or euyl
 shapen, to be as fayre as Helayne / that shold be a grete lesynge / and worthy

of derysion / And allewaye emonge vs courtyours enfayned / we folowe more the names of thoffyces / than the droytes and ryghtes / we be verbal / or ful of wordes / and desyre more the wordes than the thynges / And in thys we ben contrarye to the wyse Cathon / whyche desired more to exercise hym self vertuously in commune offyce and publycque / than to haue the name / And in suche wyse gouerneth he hym self / that whan he was called / he was allewaye founde worthy to haue better than he was callyd to / And somoche more was he honowred / as whan he fledde most the worldly honours / But by the contrarye we coueyte to be honowred / how wel that we ben not worthy / And so take the honours as by force and strengthe / er we ben called therto. And herof foloweth that we lese by good ryght / that whyche we Iuge to our self, and that we dar demande indewly / And to saye truothe, the honours flee fro vs / whyche we poursewe ouer folyly /

Therefore, brother, I counseyll the / that thou delyte the / in thy self / of thy vertue / For she yeldeth Ioye and preysynge to them that lyue wel / late thy grete suffysaunce reteyne the wythin thy lytyl Cenacle / And repute not thy self vertuous by heryng saye, as done men of the courte / But do payne to be verytable by theeffecte of the werke / wherto coueytest thou the gloryes of palayes, whyche for theyr wretched myserye haue nede that men haue pyte on them / Ne poursewe it not in fayt / But by the playnt of myn vnhappynes / folowe not me / by cause I am oftymes cladde wyth the beste / But haue pyte and compassion of the peryls / of whyche I am asseged / and of thassaultes of whyche I am enuyronned nyght and day / For I haue nede to beholde on what foot that euery man cometh to me / And to note and marke the paas and the peryl of euery worde that departeth fro my mouth, to thende that by my vtteraunce I be not surprysed / and that in spekyng vnpourueydly, I ne gyue mater to ony man to make false relacion / ne to interprete euyl my worde / whyche I maye neuer reuoke ne put in agayn / For the courte is the nourysshe of peple / whyche by fraude and franchyse / studye for to drawe from one and other suche wordes / by whyche they may persecute them / by that / whyche by the perylles of other / they may entre in to the grace of them that haue auctoryte to helpe / or to annoye / and whyche take more playsyr in false reportes / than in verytable and trewe wordes / yf thou haue offyce in courte / make the redy to fyghte / For yf thou haue ony good / other shal desyre to take it fro the / and thou shalt not escape wythout debate / Somme shal machyne by somme moyen to deceyue the / And the behoueth to tormente thy self to resist hym / And after whan thou shalt haue employed thy body / thy tyme and thy goodes for to deffende the / Another newe one cometh to the courte, & shal

supplante thy benediction / And shal take it glyefully fro the / Thus shalt thou lese wyth grete sorowe / that whyche thou haste gotten wyth grete labour / Or yf thyn offyce abyde wyth the / so shal thou not abyde longe wythout drede and fere of hym, or of other enuyous whyche shal laboure to take it fro the / Tofore that thou hast ony offyces Thou boughtest peas and moderacion to lyue / And as sone as thou shalt haue it / thou shalt be deffyed of an other / which shal enforce hym for to gyue largely for to take it fro the; And the behoueth, maulgre thy self / that thou gyue as moche as he / to thende that thou kepe it / And that it abyde wyth the /

Behode thenne, brother, beholde / how moche thy lytyl hous gyueth the liberte and franchyse / And thanke it that it hath recuyd the as only lorde / And after that thy dore is shette and closed, ther entreth none other but suche as pleseth the / Men knocke oftymes atte yates of ryche and hye palayses / Ther is alleway noyse and murmure / In grete places ben grete and moche peples / of whyche somme ben hard pressyd / The halle of a grete prynce is comunely Infecte and eschaufed of the breeth of the peple / The vssher smyteth wyth hys Rodde vpon the heedes of them that ben there / Somme entre by forse of threstyng / And other stryue for to resyste / Somme tyme a poure man meschaunt that hath to-fore be sore sette abacke, is further sette forth than an other / And the most fyers and prowde whom a man durste not tofore touche / is put further aback, and is in more gretter daunger / There knoweth noman in certayn yf hys astate be sure or not / But who someuer it be, alway he is in doubte of hys fortune / And whan thou wenest to be most in grace / Thenne remembre the [wordes] of the poete that sayth / that it is no grete preysynge / for to haue ben in the grace of a grete prynce / And to thende that thou mayst the better knowe now the courte / I wyl dyscryue and dyffyne it to the /

The courte, to thende that thou vnderstande it / is a couente of peple that, vnder fayntyse of Comyn wele, assemble hem to gydre for to deceyue eche other / For ther be not many of them but that they selle, bye / or exchange somtyme theyr rentes or propre vestementis / For emonge vs of the courte / we be meschaunt and newfangle / that we bye the other peple / And sommtyme for theyr money we selle to them our humanyte precyous / we bye other / and other bye vs / But we can moche better selle our self to them that haue to doo wyth vs / how moche thenne mayst thou gete / that it be certayn / or what sewrte / that it be wythout doubte and wythout peryll / wylt thou goo to the court for to selle or lese / the goodnes of vertues whyche thou haste gotten wythoute the courte / I saye to the, whan thou enforcest the to entre / thenne

begynnest thou to lese the seynorye of thy self / And thou shalt nomore enioye the droytes and ryghtes of thy franchyse and liberte / Certes, brother, thou demandest that / whyche thou oughtest to deffye / And fyxest thyn hope in that / that shal drawe the to peryl and perdicion / And yf thou come / the courte shal serue the with so many contryued lesynges on that one parte / And on that other syde, she shal delyuere to the so many cures and charges / that thou shalt haue wythin thy self contynnuell bataylle / thought / and anguysshes / And for certayn a man may not wel saye / that he is wel happy / that in tyme of tempeste is bought, and in so many contrarytees assayed and proued /

And yf thou demandest / what is the lyf of them of the courte, I answere the, brother / that it is a poure rychesse / An habundance myserable / an hyenesse that falleth / An estate not stable / A sewrte trembling / And an euyl lyf / And also it may be called of them that ben amoureuse, a deserte lyberte / Flee, ye men, flee, and holde and kepe you ferre fro suche an assemblee / yf ye wyll lyue wel and surely / and as peple wel assured vpon the Ryuage / beholde vs drowne by our own agreement / And mespryse our blyndenes / that may ne wylle knowe our propre meschyef / For lyke as the folysshe maronniers / whyche somtyme cause them self to be drowned / by theyr dyspourueyed aduysement / In lyke wyse the courte draweth to hym and deceyueth the symple men / and maketh them to desire and coueyte it / lyke as a Rybaulde or a comyn womman wel arayed / by her lawhyng and by her kyssynge / The courte taketh meryly them that comen therto / in vsyng to them false promesses / The courte lawheth atte begynnyng on them that entre / And after she grymmeth on them / And somtyme byteth them ryght aygrely / The courte reteyneth the caytyuys whiche can not absente and kepe them fro thene / and alday adnewe auctoryse and lordshippe vpon suche as they surmounte / The courte also by error forgeteth ofte them that beste seruen / And dyspende folyly her propre good for tenryche them that ben not worthy / and that haue ryght euyl deseruyd it / And the man is vnhappy that is taken in / and had leuer to perysshe / than to yssue and goo out / And ther to lose hys cours of nature / wythout euer to haue hys franchyse and lyberte vntyl hys deth / Beleue surely, brother, and doubte nothyng, that thou excersyest ryght good and ryght prouffitable offyce yf thou canst wel vse thy maystryse that thou hast in thy lytyl hous / and thou art and shal be puyssaunt as longe as thou hast, and shal haue of thy self, suffysaunce / For who that hath a smal howshold and lytle meyne, and gouerneth them wysely & in peas / he is a lorde / And somoche more is he ewrous & happy as he more frely maynteneth

it / As ther is nothyng so precious vnder heuen / as for to be of sufficient comynycacion wyth franchyse /

O fortunyd men / O blessyd famyllye, where as is honeste pouerte that is content with reson, without etyng the fruytes of other mennes labour / O wel happy howse, in whyche is vertue wythout fraude ne barat / and whyche is honestly gouerned in the drede of god and good moderacion of lyf / There entre no synnes / There is a true and ryghtful lyf / where as is remorse of euery synne, and where is no noyse / murmure ne enuye / of suche lyf enioyeth nature / and in smale eases lyueth she longe / and lytyl and lytyl she cometh to playsaunt age and honeste ende / For as seyth Seneke in his tragedyes / Age cometh to late to peple of smale howses / whyche lyue in suffysaunce / But emong vs courtyours that be seruantes to fortune / we lyue disordynatly / we wexen old more by force of charges than by the nombre of yeres / And by defaulte of wel lyuyng, we ben wery of the swetnes of our lyf / whyche so moche we desire, and haste to goo to the deth, the whyche we somoche drede and doubte / Suffyse the thenne, broder, to lyue in peas on thy partye / & lerne to contente the by our meschiefs / Ne mesprise not thy self so moche / that thou take the deth / for the lyf / Ne leue not the goodes that thou shalt be constrayned to brynge / For to seche to gete them after wyth grete wayllynges and sorow / whych shal be to the, horryble and harde to fynde / Fynably I praye the / counseylle and warne the / that yf thou hast taken ony holy and honeste lyf / that thou wyl not goo and lese it / And that thou take away that thought, And despyse alle thy wyl for to come to courte / And be content to wythdrawe the wythin thenclose of thy pryue hous / And yf thou haue not in tyme passed knowen that thou hast ben ewrous And happy / thenne lerne now to knowe it fro hens forth / And to god I comande the by thys wrytyng, whyche gyue the hys grace / Amen.

Thus endeth the Curial made by maistre Alain Charretier,
translated thus in Englyssh by Wylliam Caxton.

Ther ne is dangyer / but of a vylayn,
Ne pride / but of a poure man enryched,
Ne so sure a way / as is the playn,
Ne socour / but of a trewe frende,
Ne despayr / but of Ialousye,
Ne hye corage / but of one Amoureuse,
Ne pestilence / but in grete seygnorye,
 Ne chyere / but of a man Ioyous.
Ne seruyse / lyke to the kyng souerayn,
Ne fowle name / but of a man shamed,
Ne mete / but whan a man hath hungre,
Ne entrepyse / but of a man hardy,
Ne pouerte / lyke vnto maladye,
Ne to haunte / but the good and wyse,
Ne howse / but yf it be wel garnyssed,
 Ne chyere / but of a man Ioyous.
Ne ther is no rychesshe / but in helthe,
Ne loue / so good as mercy,
Ne than the deth / nothyng more certayn,
Ne none better chastysed / than of hym self,
Ne tresour / lyke vnto wysedom,
Ne anguysshe / but of ay herte coueytous,
Ne puyssaunce / but ther men haue enuye,
 Ne chyere / but of a man Ioyous.
What wylle ye that I saye?
Ther is no speche / but it be curtoys,
Ne preysyng of men / but after theyr lyf,
 Ne chyer but of a man Ioyous.

Caxton.