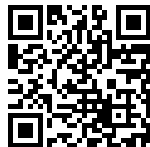

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THE
HISTORY
OF
REYNARD THE FOX.

TRANSLATED AND PRINTED BY
WILLIAM CAXTON,
1481.

EDITED BY
EDMUND GOLDSMID, F.R.H.S.

—
VOL. I.
—

PRIVATELY PRINTED, EDINBURGH.
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BY
WILLIAM LAYTON

LONDON: GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD.

VOL. I

NEWCASTLE: WILKINSON & CO. LTD.



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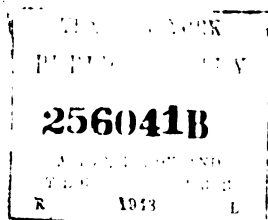
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BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Editions of the Story.

A.—ISSUES IN TRANSLATOR'S LIFETIME.

1. 17 Aug. 1479. Gouda 4to. *Hystorie van Regnaert die vos.* [COLOPHON] Hier eyndet die hystorie van reynaert die vos, ende is gheprent ter goude in hollant by mi gheraert leeu den seuentienden dach in augusto Int iær M.CCCC. en LXXIX.

Of earlier date than any other *printed REYNARD* in any language whatsoever. The copy in the Greville Collection is thought to be the only one in existence.

2. June 1481. Westminster 4to. The printing of CAXTON'S translation finished. Very rare.
3. [1489. Westminster 4to.] A second Edition printed by CAXTON. Without printer's name, or place, or date. The only known copy is in the Pepysian Library, Cambridge. See Catalogue of *Caxton Celebration*, 1877, p. 21. No. 156.

B.—EDITIONS SINCE HIS DEATH.

(Only the principal Editions are given).

4. *The Historye of Reinard the Foxe.* London. By RICHARD PYNSON. Fo.

Magy 5 July 17. 3 - 2 vol.

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5. The Booke of Raynarde the Foxe. London. By THOMAS GUALTIER. 1550. 8vo.
6. The History of Reynard the Fox. London. 1639. 4to.
7. Ditto. 1640. 4to
8. The most delectable History of Reynard the Fox. London (Part I., 1667, 1694, 1701; Part II., 1672, 1681.) 4to.
9. The Shifts of Reynardine. London, 1684. 4to.
- 10, 11, 12. Three metrical versions appeared in 1681, 4to.; 1706, and 1708, 12mo.
13. The Crafty Courtier; or, Fable of Reynard the Fox, in verse. London, 1706. 8vo.
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20. Reynard the Fox, in English Rhyme. London, Longman, 1844. Broad 8vo.
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25. Reynard the Fox. London, Willoughby, 1854. 16mo.
26. Reynard the Fox. London, Nattali, 1855. 8vo.
27. Reynard the Fox. Edinburgh, 1855. 4to.
28. Reynard the Fox. Dresden and London, n. d. (1855). 4to.
29. Reynard the Fox. London, Bogue, 1856, 4to.
30. Reynard the Fox. Southgate, London, Arber, 1878.
31. Reynard the Fox. Edinburgh. Privately printed, 1884. *The present edition, forming Volumes X. and XI. of the "Bibliotheca Curiosa."*

N.B.—Those editions printed in LARGE TYPE are *Reprints* of Caxton's translations.

NOTE.—For particulars of the origin, changes, and mutilations undergone by the "History of Reynard the Fox," consult Marchand, *Dict. Historique*, vol. i. p. 276, article *Gilée*; Dibdin's *Ames Typographical Antiquities*, i. 114; Douce's *Illustrations of Shakespeare*, ii. 347; *Foreign Quarterly Review*, viii. 215 and 381, and xvii. 286; *Edinburgh Review*, liii. 159; *Gentlemen's Mag.*, N.S., iv. 188; *Le Roman du Renart*, *Supplément, Variantes et Corrections*, par P. Chabaille; and Mr. Thom's *Introductory Essay to the Percy Society's Edition* (No. 21 of above list).



INTRODUCTION.

[Being extracts from Thomas Carlyle's Article on German Literature in the *Foreign Quarterly Review*, 1831.]

THE story of *Reinecke Fuchs*, or to give it the original Low German name, *Reineke de Vos*, is, more than any other, a truly European performance: for some centuries, a universal household possession and secular Bible, read everywhere, in the palace and the hut; it still interests us, moreover, by its intrinsic worth, being on the whole the most poetical and meritorious production of our Western World in that kind; or perhaps of the whole world, though, in such matters, the West has generally yielded to, and learned from the East.*

. . . So much for the outward fortunes of this remarkable Book. It comes before us with a character such as can only belong to a very few; that of being a true world's-Book, which through centuries was everywhere at home, the spirit of which diffused itself into all languages and all minds. The quaint Æsopic figures have painted themselves in innumerable heads; that rough deep-lying humour has been the laughter of many generations. So that, at worst, we must regard

* P. 381.

this *Reinecke* as an ancient Idol, once worshipped, and still interesting for that circumstance, were the sculpture never so rude. We can love it, moreover, as being indigenous, wholly of our own creation : it sprang up from European sense and character, and was a faithful type and organ of these.

But independently of all extrinsic considerations, the fable of *Reinecke* may challenge a judgment on its own merits. Cunningly constructed, and not without a true poetic life, we must admit it to be : great power of conception and invention, great pictorial fidelity, a warm, sunny tone of colouring, are manifest enough. It is full of broad, rustic mirth ; inexhaustible in comic devices ; a World-Saturnalia, where Wolves tonsured into Monks, and nigh starved by short commons, Foxes pilgriming to Rome for absolution, Cocks pleading at the judgment-bar, make strange mummery. Nor is this wild Parody of Human Life without its meaning and moral : it is an Air-pageant from Fancy's Dream-grotto, yet Wisdom lurks in it ; as we gaze the vision becomes poetic and prophetic. A true Irony must have dwelt in the Poet's heart and head : here, under grotesque shadows, he gives the saddest picture of Reality ; yet for us without sadness ; his figures mask themselves in uncouth, bestial vizards, and enact, gambolling ; their Tragedy dissolves into sardonic grins. He has a deep, heartfelt Humour sporting with the world and its evils in kind mockery ; this is the

poetic *soul*, round which the outward *matériel* has fashioned itself into living coherence. And so, in that rude old Apologue, we have still a mirror, though now tarnished and time-worn, of true magic reality: and can discern there, in cunning reflex, some image both of our destiny and of our duty; for now, as then, "Prudence is the only virtue sure of its reward," and Cunning triumphs where Honesty is worsted; and now, as then, it is the wise man's part to know this, and cheerfully look for it, and cheerfully defy it:

Ut vulpis adulatio

Here thro' his own world moveth,

Sic hominis et ratio

Most like to REYNARD proveth.

If *Reinecke* is nowise a perfect Comic Epos, it has various features of such, and, above all, a genuine Epic spirit, which is the rarest feature.*

. . . Nevertheless, the old Low-German original has also a certain charm, and simply as the original would claim some notice. It was reckoned greatly the best performance that was ever brought out in that Dialect; interesting, moreover, in a philological point of view, especially to us English; being properly the language of our old Saxon Fatherland; and still curiously like our own, though the two, for some twelve centuries, have had no brotherly communication.†

* P. 385.

† P. 388.



**This is the table of the historye
of reynart the fore**

[THE FIRST PART.]

I n the first booke the kynge of alle bestes the lyon helde his court capitulo. primo	
How Isegrim the wolf com- playned first on the fore ca	.ij.
The complaynt of curtoys the hound and of the catte Cybert capitulo	.iij.
How grymbert the dasse the fores susters sone answerd for the fore to the kynge capitulo	.iiij.
How chantecler the cok com- playned on the fore ca.	.v.
How the kynge sayde touchyng the complaynt ca	.vi.
How bruyne the here spedde wyth the fore capitulo	.viij.

How the here ete the hony capitulo	.viii.
The complaynt of the here upon the fore capitulo	.ix.
How the kynge sente Tybert the catte for the fore ca	.x.
How grymbert brought the fore to the lawe ca	.xi.
How the fore was shryuen to grymbert capitulo	.xii.
How the fore cam to the court and excused hym ca	.xiii.
How the fore was arestid and Jugged to deth ca	.xiiii.
How the fore was ledde to the galwes capitulo	.xv.
How the fore made open confession to fore the kynge and to fore alle them that wold here it capitulo	.xvi.
How the fore brought them in danger that wold haue brought hym to deth And how he gate the grace of the kyng capitulo	.xvii.

- How the wulf and the bere
were arested by the labour
of the fore capitulo .xviij.
- How the wulf and his wyf
suffred her shoyes to be
pluckyd of And how the fore
dyde them on his feet for
to go to come capitulo .xix.
- How kywart the hare was
slayn by the fore capitulo .xx.
- How the fore sente the hares
heed to the kynge by bellyn
the Ramme capitulo .xxj.
- How bellyn the ramme and
alle his lynage were Jugged
to be gyuen to the wulf and
to the bere capitulo .xxij:





¶ Her begynneth th[e h]ystorpe of
regnard the foxe



IN this historie ben wreton the parables/
goode lerynge / and dyuerse poyntes to
be merkyd / by whiche poyntes men
maye lerne to come to the subtyl knowe-
leche of suche thynges as dayly ben vsed and had
in the counseyllys of lordes and prelates gostly and
worldly / and / also emonge marchantes and other
comone peple / And this booke is maad for nede
and prouffyte of alle god folke / As fer as they
in redyng or heeryng of it shal mowe vnderstande
and fele the forsayd subtyl deceytes that dayly ben
vsed in the worlde / not to thentente that men
shold vse them but that euery man shold eschewe
and kepe hym from the subtyl false shrewis that
they be not deceyuyd / Thenne who that wyll haue
the very vnderstandyng of this mater / he muste ofte
and many tymes rede in thys boke and earnestly
and diligently marke wel that he redeth / ffor it is
sette subtylly / lyke as ye shal see in redyng of it/
and not ones to rede it ffor a man shal not wyth
ones ouer redyng fynde the ryght vnderstandyng
ne comprise it wel / but oftymes to rede it shal
cause it wel to be vnderstande / And for them that
vnderstandeth it / it shall be right Ioyous playsant
and prouffitable



**How the lyon kynge of alle bestis
sent out his mandementis that alle
beestis sholde come to his feest
and court capitulo primo**



Twas aboute the tyme of penthecoste
or whytsontyde / that the wodes
comynly be lusty and gladsom /
And the trees clad with leuys and
blossoms and the ground with herbes
and flowris swete smellyng and also the fowles
and byrdes syngen melodyously in theyr armonye /
That the lyon the noble kynge of all beestis wolde
in the holy dayes of thys feest holde on open
Court at stade / whyche he dyde to knowe ouer
alle in his lande / And commanded by straye
conmyssyons and maundements that euery beest
shold come thyder / in suche wyse that alle the
beestis grete and smale cam to the courte sauf
reynard the fox / for he knewe hym self fawty and
gylty in many thynges ayenst many beestis that
thyder sholde comen that he durste not auenture
to goo thyder / whan the kynge of alle beestis had
assemblid alle his court / ther was none of them
alle but that he had complayned sore on Reynart
the foxe.

The first complaynt made by
 Isegrym the wulf on Reynart
 capitulo ·ij·



Segrym the wulf wyth his lynage and frendes cam and stode to fore the kyng / And sayde hie and myghty prynce my lord the kyng I beseche yow that thurgh your grete myght / right / and mercy that ye wyl haue pyte on the grete trespas and the vnresonable mysdedes that reynart the foxe hath don to me and to my wyf that is to wete he is comen in to my hows ayenst the wylle of my wyf / And there he hath be pyssed my chyldren where as they laye in suche wyse as they therof ben woxen blynde / wherupon was a day sette / and was Iudged that reynart sholde come and haue excused hym hierof / and haue sworn on the holy sayntes that he was not gylty therof / And whan the book wyth the sayntes was brought forth / tho had reynart bythouht hym other wyse / And wente his waye agayn in to his hole / as he had nought sette thereby / And dere kyng this knowen wel many of the bestes that now be comen hyther to your court / And yet hath he trespased to me in many o her thinges / he is not lyuyng that coude telle alle that I now leue vntolde / But the shame and vyllonye that he hath don to my wyf / that shal I neuer hyde ne

suffre it vnauengyd but that he shal make to me
large amendes /

The complaynt of Courtoys the hounde capitulo iij

Whan thise wordes were spoken so stode
there a lytyl hounde and was named
courtoys / and complayned to the
kyng / how that in the colde wynter
in the harde froste he had ben sore forwynterd/
in such wyse as he had kepte nomore mete than
a puddying / wyche puddying reynard the foxe
had taken away from hym

Tho spak thybert the catte

Wyth this so cam Tybert the catte wyth
an Irous moed / and sprang in emonge
them and sayde My lord the kyng / I
here hier that reynart is sore com-
playned on / and hier is none but that he hath
ynowh to doo to clere hym self / that courtoys hier
complayneth of that is passyd many yeres goon /
how be it that I complayne not / that pudying was
myne / ffor I haddie wonne it by nyghte in a mylle /
The myllar laye and slepe / yf courtoys had ony
parte hieron / that came by me to /

Thenne spak panther / Thyнке ye Tybert that

it were good that reynard sholde not be com-
 playned on / he is a very murderer / a rouer / and
 a thief / he loueth noman so wel / not our lord
 the kyng here that he wel wold that he shuld
 lese good and worshyp / so that he myght wyne
 as moche as a legge of a fat henne / I shal telle
 yow what I sawe hym do yesterday to Cuwaert
 the hare that hier standeth in the kynges pees
 and saufgarde / he promysed to Cuwart and
 sayde he wold teche hym his credo / and make
 hym a good chapelayn / he made hym goo sytte
 bytwene his legges and sange and cryle lowde
 Credo. Credo. my waye laye ther by there that I
 herde this songe / Tho wente I ner and fonde
 maister reynard that had lefte that he fyrst redde
 and songe / and bygan to playe his olde playe /
 ffor he had caught kywaert by the throte / and had
 I not that tyme comen he sholde haue taken his
 lyf from hym like as ye here may see on kywaert
 the hare the fresse wounde yet / ffor sothe my
 lord the kyng yf ye suffre this vnpunyshyd and lete
 hym go quyte that hath thus broken your peas /
 And wyl do no right after the sentence and
 Iugement of your men / your Chyldren many
 yeris hereafter shal be myspreysed and blamed
 therefore /

Sykerly panther sayd Isegrym ye saye trouthe /
 hit were good that right and Iustyse were don /
 for them that wolde fayn lyue in peas /

**How grymbart the dasse the fores
susters sone spack for reynart and
answerd to fore the kyng.
capitulo. .iiij.**

Tho spack Grymbart the dasse / and was
Reynarts suster sone with an angrey
moed / Sir Isegrym that is euyl sayd it
is a comyn prouerbe **An Enemyes**
mouth / saith seeld wel / what leye ye / and wyte
ye myn Eme Reynart / I wold that ye wolde a
venture that who of yow tweyne had moste tres-
paced to other sholde hange by the necke as a
theef on a tree / But and yf he were as wel in
this court and as wel wyth the kyng as ye be /
it shold not be thought in hym / that it were
ynowh / that ye shold come and aske him for-
gyuenes ye haue byten and nypte myn vnclē wyth
your felle and sharp teeth many mo tymes than I
can telle / yet wil I telle some poyntes that I wel
knowe / knowe not ye how ye mysdeled on the
plays / whiche he threwe doun fro the carre /
whan ye folowed after fro ferre / And ye ete the
good plays allone / and gaf hym nomore than the
grate or bones / whyche ye myght not ete your
self / In lyke wyse dyde ye to hym also of the
fatte vlycche of bacon / whiche sauourd so wel /
that ye allone ete in your bely / and whan myn
Eme askyd his parte / tho answerd ye hym agayn
in scorne / Reynart fayr yonglyng I shal gladly

gyue you your part / but myn eme gate ne had
nought / ne was not the better / Notwithstandyng
he had wonnen the flycche of bacon wyth grete
drede / for the man cam and threw hym in a
sacke / that he scarsely cam out wyth his lyf /
Suche maner thynges hath reynart many tymes
suffred thurgh ysegrym.



ye lordes thynke ye that this is good / yet
is ther more / he complayneth how that rey-
nart myn eme hath moche trespaced to
hym by cause of his wyf / Myn Eme hath leyn by
her but that is wel seuen yer to fore / er he
wedded her / and yf reynart for loue and curtosye
dyde with her his wille / what was that / She was
sone heled therof / hierof by ryght shold be no
complaynt were Isegrym wyse. he shold haue leste
that he doth to hym self no worshyp thus to
sklaundre his wyf / She playneth not / now
maketh kywaert the hare acomplaynt also / that
thynketh me a vyseuase / yf he rede ne lerned a
ryght his lesson / sholde not reynard his maister
bete hym therefore / yf the scolers were not beten
ne snyten and reprised of their truantrye / they
shold neuer lerne /



ow complayneth Courtoys that he with
payne had gotten a puddyng in the
wynter / at suche tyme as the coste is
euyll to fynde Therof hym had be better to haue
holde his pees / for he had stolen it / Male que-

sisti et male perdidisti hit is ryght that it be euil
loste / that is euil wonne who shal blame Reynart /
yf he haue taken fro a theef stolen good hit is
reson who that vnderstandeth the lawe and can
discerne the right / and that he be of hye burthe
as myn Eme reynart is whiche knoweth wel how
he shal resseyue stolen good / yet al had he cour
toys hanged whan he fonde hym with the menowr /
he had not moche mysdon no trespaced / Saut
ayenst the crowne / that he had don Iustyse wyth
oute leue wherfore for the honour of the kynge
he did it not / all hath he but lytyl thanks / what
skathed it hym that he is thus complayned on /
Myn Eme is a gentil and a trewe man he may
suffre no falshede / he doth nothyng but by his
prestes counsyle And I syye yow syth that my
lorde the kynge hath do proclamed his pees he
neuer thoughte to hurte ony man / ffor he eteth no
more than ones a day / he lyueth as a recluse / he
chastiseth his body and wereth a sherte of heer /
hit is more than a yere that he hath eten no
flesshe / as I yesterday herd saye of them that cam
fro hym he hath lefte and geuen over his Castel
maleperduys / And hath bylded a cluse / thereyn
dwelleth he / and hunteth nomore / ne desyreth
no wynnyng but he lyueth by almesse and taketh
nothyng but suche as men gyue hym for charyte
and doth grete penance for his synnes / and his is
woxen moche pale and lene of prayeng and
wakyng ffor he wolde be fayn wyth god /

Thus as grymbert his eme stode and preched
 these wordes / so sawe they comen down the hylle
 to hem chauntecler the cock and brought on abiere
 a deed henne of whom reynart had byten the heed
 of / and that muste be shewed to the kyng for
 to haue knowleche therof.

**How the Cocke complayned on
 reynart capitulo .v.º.**



Hauntecler cam forth and smote py-
 teously his handes and his fetheris and
 on eche side of the byer wenten tweyne
 sorouful hennes that one was called
 cantart and that other goode henne Crayant they
 were two the sayrest hennes that were bytwene
 holland and arderne / These hennes bare eche of
 them a brennyg tapre whiche was longe and
 strayte / These two hennes were coppens susters /
 And they cryed so pitously / Alas and weleaway
 for the deth of her dere suster copen / Two yonge
 hennes bare the byere which kakled so heuily and
 wepte so lowde for the deth of copen their moder
 that it was ferre herde / thus cam they to gydre to
 fore the kyng /



nd chantecler tho seyde / Mercyful lord /
 my lord the kyng plese it yow to here our
 complaynte / And abhorren the grete
 scathe that reynart hath don to me and my chil-

dren that hiere stonden / it was so that in the
begynnyng of appryl whan the weder is fayr / as
that I as hardy and prowde / bycause of the grete
lynage that I am comen of and also hadde / ffor I
had viij fayr sones and seuen fayr daughters whiche
my wyf had hatched. and they were alle stronge
and fatte and wente in ayerde whiche was walled
round a boutte / In whiche was a shadde where in
were six grete dogges whiche had to tore and
plucked many a beestis skyn in suche wyse as my
chyltren were not aferd / On whom Reynart the
theef had grete enuye by cause they were so sure
that he cowde none gete of them / how wel oftymes
hath this fel theef goon rounde aboute this wal /
and hath leyde for vs in suche wyse that the dogges
haue be sette on hym and haue hunted hym
away / And ones they leep on hym vpon the
banke / And that cost hym somewhat for his
thefte / I saw that his skyn smoked neuertheles
he wente his waye / god amende it /

Thus were we quyte of reynart a longe whyle /
atte laste cam he in lyknes of an here-
myte / and brought to me a lettre for to
rede sealed wyth the kynges seal / in whiche stode
wreton that the kyng had made pees oueral in
his royame / and that alle maner beestis and
fowlles shold doo none harme ner scathe to any
other / yet sayd he to me more / that he was a

cloysterer or a closyd recluse be comen / And that
he wolde receyue grete penance for his synnes /
he shewd me his slaayne and pylche and an heren
sherte ther vnder / and thenne sayd he / syr
Chaunteclere after thys tyme be no more aferd of
me ne take no hede / ffor I now wil ete nomore
flesshe / I am forthon so olde / That I wolde fayne
remembre my sowle I will now go forth / for I
haue yete to saye my sexte / none / and myn euen-
songe / to god I bytake yow / Tho wente reynart
thens sayeng his Credo / and leyde hym vnder an
hawthorn / Thenne / was I glad and mery / and
also toke none hede / And wente to my chyldren
and clucked hem to gydre And wente wythout the
wal for to walke wherof is moche harme comen to
vs / for reynart laye vnder a busshe and cam
kreplyng bitwene vs and the gate / so that he
caght one of my chyldren and leyd hym in his
male / wherof whe haue had grete harme / for syth
he hath tasted of hym / ther myght neuer hunter
ne hounnde saue ne kepe hym from vs / he hath
wayted by nyghte and daye in suche wyse that he
hath stolen so many of my chyldren that of .xv. I
haue but foure / in suche wyse hath this thief for-
slongen them / And yet yesterday was copen my
doughter that hier lyeth vpon the byer with the
houndes rescowed This complayne I to yow gra-
cious kynge / haue pyte on myn grete and viire-
sonable damage and losse of my fayre chyldren /

**How the kyngspack touchyng this
complaynt ca. bj:**

Henne spack the kyng / Syre dassé here
ye this wel of the recluse your Eme he
hath fasted and prayde that yf I lyue a
yere he shal abyé it / Nowe herke
chauntecler / your playnt is ynough your doughter
that lyeth here dede / we wyl gyue to her the
dethes right we may kepe her no longer / we wil
betake her to god / we wylle syngen here vygylie /
and brynge her worshipfully on erthe / and thenne
we wille speke wyth these lordes and take coun-
seyl how we may do ryght and Justyse of this
grete murdre / and brynge this fals theef to the
lawe /

Tho begonne they placebo comino / with the
verses that to longen whiche yf I shold saye / were
me to longe / whan this vigilye was don and the
commendacion / she was leyde in the pytte / and
ther vpon was leyde a marble stone polyshed as
clere as ony glas and theron was hewen in grete
letters in this wyse coppe chanteklers doughter /
whom Reynart the fox hath byten lyeth hier vnder
buried / complayne ye her ffor / she is shamefully
comen to her deth /

after this the kyng sente ffor his lordes and
wysest of his counseyl for to take aduys / how this
grete murdre and trespaas shold be punysshid on

reynart the foxe / Ther was concluded and apoynted
for the beste / that reynart shold be sent ffore and
that he lefte not for ony cause / But he cam in to
the kynges court ffor to here wat shold be sayd to
hym / And that bruyne the bere shold do the
message.

the kyng thought that alle this was good and
saide to brune the bere syr brune I wyl that ye
doo this message / but see wel to for your self /
ffor reynart is a shrewe / and felle and knoweth so
many wyles that he shal lye and flatre / and shal
thynke how he may begyle deceyue and brynge
yow to some mockerye /

tho sayd brune what good lord late it allone /
deceyueth me the foxe / so haue I ylle lerned my
casus / I trowe he shal come to late to mocque me /
Thus departed brune meryly fro thens / but it is to
drede that he cam not so meryly agayn /

how brunne the beere was sped of Reynart the foxe/ capitulo .vij^o.



Ow is brune goon on his waye toward the
foxe wyth astowte moede / whiche sup-
posed wel that the foxe sholde not haue
begyled hym / as he cam in a derke
wode in a forest were as reynard had a bypath
whan he was hunted / ther bysyde was an hie
montayne and lande / and there muste brune in
the myddel goon ouer for to goo to maleperduys /

for reynart had many a dwellyng place / but the
 castle of maleperduys was the beste and the fastest
 burgh that he had / Ther laye he Inne whan he
 had nede and was in ony drede or fere. Now
 whan bruyn was comen to maleperduys he fonde
 the gate fast shette / tho wente he to fore the gate
 and satte vpon his taylle and called Reynart be ye
 at home I am brownyng / the kyng hath sente me
 for yow that ye sholde come to court / for to plete
 your caas / he hath sworn there by his god / come
 ye not / or brynge I yow not with me for
 tabyde suche right and sentence as shal be there
 gyuen / it shal coste you your lyf he wyl hange
 you / or sette you on the ratte / reynart doo by my
 counseyl and come to the court /

Reynart laye within the gate as he ofte was
 wonte to doo for the warmth of the sonne /
 whan reynart herd bruyn tho wente he
 Inneward in to his hole / for maleperduys was ful
 of hooles / hier one hool and there an other and
 yonder an other / narowe. crooked and longe
 wyth / many weyes to goo out / whiche he opend
 and shette after that he had nede / whan he had
 ony proye brought home / or that he wiste that
 ony sought hym for hys mysdedes and trespaces /
 thenne he ran and hydde hym fro his enemyes in
 to hys secrete chambres / that they coude not fynde
 hym / by whiche he deceyuyd many a beest that
 sought hym / and tho thought reynart in hym self

how he myght best brynge the beere in charge and
nede / and that he abode in worship /

IN this thoughte reynart cam out and sayde
bruyne me ye be welcome / I herde you
wel to fore / but I was in myn eue
song therfore haue I the lenger taryed a lytyl /
dere eme he hath don to you no good seruyse and
I can hym no thank that hath sente you ouer this
longe hylle / for I see that ye be also wery that the
swete renneth down by your chekys / it was no
nede / I had neuerthe'ess comen to court to
morowe but I sorowe now the lasse / for your wyse
counseyl shal wel helpe me in the court / and
coude the kyng fynde none lasse messenger but yow
ffor to sende hyther / that is grete wonder / ffor
next the kyng ye be the mooste gentyl and
richest of leeuys and of lande / I wolde wel that
we were now at the court but I fere me that I
shal not conne wel goo thyder / for I haue eten so
moche new mete / that me thynketh my bely wylle
breke or cleue asonder and by cause the mete was
nyewe / I ete the more /

tho spack the bere lyef neue what mete haue ye
eten that maked yow so ful/

dere eme that I ete what myght it helpe yow
that yf I tolde you / I ete but symple mete a poure
man is no lord that may ye knowe eme by me / we
poure folke must ete oftymes such as we gladly
wolde not ete yf we had better / they were grete

hony combes which I must nedes ete for hunger /
they haue made my bely so grete / that I can
nowher endure /

Bruyn tho spacke anone / alas reynart what saye
ye / sette ye so lytyl by hony / me ought to preyse
and loue it aboue alle mete / lief reynart helpe me
that I myght gete a deel of this hony / and as
longe as I lyue I shal be to you a tryew friende
and abyde by yow as ferre as ye helpe me that I
may haue a parte of this hony /

How bruyn ete the hony capitulo.
.viij:

BRuyn eme I had supposed that ye had
iaped therwyth /
so helpe me god reynart nay / I shold
not gladly iape with yow /

thenne spacke the rede reynart is it thenne
ernest that ye loue so wel the hony / I shal do
late you haue so moche that ten of yow shold not
ete it at one mele / myght I gete therwith your
friendship /

not we ten reyner neue sayd the bere how
shold that be had I alle the hony that is bytwene
this and portyngale I shold wel ete it allone

reynard sayde what saye ye Eme / hier by
dwelleth an husbondman named lantfert whiche
hathe so moche hony that ye shold not ete it in
vij. yere whiche ye shal haue in your holde. yf ye

wille be to me friendly and helpyng agenst myn
enemyes in the kynges court /

thenne promysed bruyñ the bere to hym. that
yf he myght haue his bely full· he wold truly be to
hym to fore alle other a faythful frende /

herof laughed reynart the shrewe and sayde / yf ye
wold haue vij hamber barelis ful I shal wel gete them
and helpe you to haue them / These wordes pley-d
the bere so wel and made him so moche to lawhe /
that he coude not wel stande

Tho thought reynart / this is good luck I shal lede
hym thyder that he shal lawhe by mesure.

Reynard sayd thenne / this mater may not be
longe taryed / I muste payne my self for you / ye
shal wel vnderstande the very yonste and good
wyl that I bere to you ward I knowe none in al my
lygnage that I nou wolde laboure fore thus sore /

that thanked hym the bere and thought he taryed
longe /

Now eme late vs goo a good paas and folowe ye
me / I shal make you to haue as moche hony as ye
may bere / the foxe mente of goode strokes but the
caytyf markyd not what the foxe mente / and they
wente so longe to gydre that they cam vnto lant-
ferts yerde / tho was sir bruyñ mery /

Now herke of lantfert is it true that men saye
/ so was lantfert a stronge carpenter of
grete tymbre / and had brought that other
day to fore in to his yerde a grete oke which he

had begonned to cleue And as men be woned he had smeten two betels the rinone after that other in suche wyse the oke was wyde open whereof reynart was glad / for he had founde it right as he wisshed / And sayde to the bere all lawhyng / see nou wel sharply to / in this tree is so moche hony that it is without mesure / asaye yf ye can come therin and ete but lytil for though the hony combes be swete and good yet beware that ye ete not to many, but take of them by measure. that ye cacche no harme in your body for swete eme I shold be blased yf they dyde you ony harme.

what reynart cosyn sorowe ye not for me. wene ye that I were a fole.

mesure is good in alle mete reynart sayde ye saye trouthe. wherfore shold I sorowe goo to the nde and Crepe theryn

bruyn the bear hasted sore toward the hony. and trad in wyth his two formest feet: and put his heed ouer his eeris in to the clyft of the tree. And reynart sprang lyghtly and brak out the betle of the tree. Tho helped the bere nether flateryng ne chydng. he was fast shette in the tree thus hath the neuu wyth deceyte brought his eme in pryson in the tree in suche wyse as he coude not gete out wyth myght ne wyth crafte / hede ne foote /

What prouffyteth bruyn the bere that he stronge and hardy is / that may not helpe them / he sawe wel that he begyled was he began to howle and to braye / and cruted wyth

c

the hynder feet and made suche a noyse and
rumour that lantfert came out hastely / and knewe
nothyng what this myght be / and brought in his
hand a sharpe hoke / bruyn the bere laye in the
clyfte of the tree in grete fere and drede / and helde
fast his heed and nyped both his fore feet / he
wrange he wrastled / and cryed / and all was for
nought / he wiste not how he myght gete out /

reynar the foxe sawe fro ferre how that
lantfert the carpenter cam and tho spack reynart
to the bere / is that hony good how is it now / ete not
to moche it shold do you harme / ye shold not
thenne wel conne goo to the court whan lantfert
cometh yf ye haue wel eten he shal yeue you better
to drynke and thenne it shal not styke in your
throate /

After these wordes tho torned hym reynart
toward his castel and lantfert cam and fonde
the bere fast taken in the tree / thenne ranne
he faste to his neyghbours and sayde / come alle in
to my yerde / there is a beere taken / the worde
anone sprange oneral in the thorpe / ther ne bleef
nether man ne wyf / but alle ranne theder as
fast as they coude / eueryche wyth hys wepen /
some wyth a staf / some with a rake / some with a
brome / some with a stake of the hegge and
some wyth a flayel / and the preest of the chirche
had the staf of the crosse / and the clerk brought a
vane The prestis wyf Iulok cam with her dystaf /

she sat tho and spanne / Ther cam olde wymen that
for age had not one toeth in her heed /

now was bruyn the bere nygh moche sorowe /
that he allone muste stande ayenst them alle whan
he herde alle this grete noyse and crye / he wras-
tled and plucked so harde and so sore / that he gate
out his heed / but he lefte behynde all the skyne
and bothe his eeris / In suche wyse that neuer man
sawe fowller ne lothyer beest / for the blode ran
ouer his eyen / and or he coude gete out his feet /
he muste lete there his claws or nayles and this
roughe hande / This market cam to him euyl / for
he supposed neuer to haue goon / is feet were
so sore / and he myght not see for the blode whiche
ran so ouer his eyen /

Lantfert cam to hym wyth the preest and
forth with alle the parysshe / and began to
smyte and stryke sore vpon his heed and
visage he receyued there many a sore stroke / euery
man beware hierby. who hath harme and scathe /
euery man wil be ther at and put more to / That
was wel seen on the bere / for they were alle fiers
and wroth on the bere grete and smal / ye
hughelyn wyth the coked lege and ludolf with
the brode longe noose / they were booth wroth
That one had an leden malle and that other a
grete leden wapper / therwyth they wapped and
al for slyngred hym / syr bertolt with the longe
fyngers lantfert. and ottram the longe. thys dyde to

the bere more harme than al the other that one had
 a sharpe hoke / and that other a croked staf wed
 leded on th ende for to playe at the balle /
 Baetkyn / ende aue abelquak my dame baue / and
 the preest with his staf / and dame Iulok his wyf
 thise wroughten to the bere so moche harme / that
 they wold fayn haue brought hym fro his lyf to
 deth / they smote and stacke hym al that they
 cowde /

bruyn the beere satte and syghed and groned /
 and muste take suche as was gyuen to hym / but
 lantfert was the worthiest of byrthe of them alle /
 and made moste noyse / for dame pogge of chaf-
 porte was his moder / and his fader was Macob
 the stoppelmaker / a moche stowte man there as
 he was allone / bruyn receyued of hem many a caste
 of stones / Tofore hem alle sprang forst lanteferts
 brother with a staf / and smote the bere on the
 heed that he ne herde ne sawe / and there with
 the bere sprange vp bytwene the bushe and the
 ryuer emonge an heep of wyuis that he threwe a
 deel of hem in the ryuer whiche was wyde and
 deep /

ther was the persons wyf one of them wherfor
 he was ful of sorow when he saw his wyf lye in
 the water / hym lusted no lenger to smyte the
 bere / but called dame Iuloke in the water now
 euery man see to / Alle they that may helpe her /
 be they men or wymen / I gyue to hem all pardon
 of her penance and relece alle theyr synnes / alle

they thenne lefte bruyn the bere lye / And dyde
that the preest badde

Whan bruyn the bere sawe that they ranne all
from hym and ranne to saue the wymen /
tho sprange he into the water and swame
alle that he coude / Thenne made the preest a
grete showte and noyse and ran after the bere
wyth grete anger and said come and torne agayn
thow false thief / The bere swame after the beste
of the streme / and lete them calle and crye / for he
was glad that he was so escaped from them / he
cursed and banned the hony tree / and the foxe
also that had so betrayed him / that he had
cropaen therin so depe that he loste boothe his
hood and his eeris / And so forth he droof in the
stream wel a ij or iij myle / Tho waxe he so wery
that he wente to lande for to sitte and reste hym /
ffor he was heuy / he gromed and syghed / and the
blode lepe ouer his eyen / he drough his breth
lyke as one sholde haue deyde /

Now herke how the foxe dyde / er he cam
fro lantferts hows he had stolen a fatte
henne and had leyde her in his male And
ranne hastely away by a by path were he wende
that noman should haue comen / he ranne toward
the Ryuer that he swette / he was so glad that he
wist not whatto do for Ioye / ffor he hoped that
the bere had be dede / he sayde / I haue now wel

spedde for he that shokle moste haue hyndred me
 in the court is now dede / and none shal wyte me
 therof / may I not thenne by right / be wel glad /
 with these wordes the foxe looked to the ryuer
 ward and espyed where bruyn the bere laye and
 rested him / Tho was the foxe sorier and heuyer
 then to fore was mery / and was as angry and
 sayde In chydyng to lantfert / alas lantfert lewde
 fool god gyue hym a shames deth that hath loste
 suche goode venyson whiche is good and fatte /
 and hath late hym goo whiche was taken to his
 hande many aman wolde gladly haue eten of
 hym. he hath loste ariche and fatte bere / Thus al
 chydyng he cam to the ryuer / where he fonde the
 beere sore wounded / bebled / and right seke /
 whiche he myght thanke none better thereof than
 Reynart whiche spacke to the bere in skorne /

Chiere priestre / dieu vous garde wylle ye see
 the rede thief

sayde the bere to hym self / the rybaud and
 the felle diere here I se hym comen /

Thenne sayde the foxe / haue ye ought forgotten
 at lantferts / haue ye also payd hym for the hony
 combes that ye stale fro hym / yf ye haue not. it
 were agrete shame and not honeste / I wyl rather
 be the messenger my self for to goo and paye hym /
 was the hony not / good / I knowe yet more of the
 same prys. dere Eme telle me er I goo hens / In to
 what ordre wille ye goo. that were this newe
 hode / were ye amonke or an abbot. he that

shoef your crowne / hath nyped of your eeris /
 ye haue lost your toppe And don of your
 gloues / I trowe veryly that ye wyl go synge
 complyn.

Alle this herde bruyn the bere / and wexe alle
 angry and sory for he myght not a venge
 hym / he lete the foxe saye his wylle And
 wyth grete payne suffred it. and sterte agayn in
 the ryuer / and swam down wyth the stream to that
 other syde /

now muste he sorowe how that he sholde come
 to the court / for he had lost his eeris / and the
 skynne wyth the clawes of his forefect / for though
 a man sholde haue slayn hym he coude not go /
 And yet he muste nedes forth / but he wist not how

Now here how he dyde. he satte vpon his
 hammes / and began to rutsele ouer his tayl / and
 whan he was so wery / he wentled and tumbled
 nyghe half a myle / this dyde he with grete payne
 so longe tyl atte laste he cam to the courte. And
 whan he was seen so comyng fro ferre / Some
 doubted what it myght be that cam so wentelyng

The kynge atte laste knewe hym / and was not
 wel payd and sayde This is bruyn the bere my
 frende / lord god who hath wounded hym thus he
 is passyng reed on his heed. me thynketh he is
 hurte vnto the deth where may he haue ben.

ther wyth is the bere come to fore the kynge
 and sayde /

The complaynt of the bere vpon
the fore cap^o ix^o



complayne to yow merciful lorde syre
kyng / so as ye may see how that I am
handled prayeng you t auenge it vpon
reynart the felle beest ffor I haue
goten this in your seruise. I haue loste bothe
my formest feet / my chekes and myn eiris by
his false deceyte and treson.

The kyng sayde how durst this fals theef
Reynat doo this / I saye to yow bruyne and
swere by my crowne / I shal so auenge you on
hym / that ye shal conne me thanke /

he sente for alle the wyse beestis / and desired
counseyl how that he myght auenge this ouer
grete wronge / that the foxe had don / Thenne the
counseyl concluded olde and yong / that he shold
be sente fore and dayed earnestly again for
tabyde suche Iugement as shold there be gyuen
on hym of alle his trespasses And they thought
that the catte tybert myght best do this message yf
he wolde / for he is right wyse / The kyng thought
this counceyl good /



How the kynge sente another
 tyme tybert the catte for the fore,
 and how tybert spedde with reynart
 the fore/ca^o r^o

Thenne the kynge saide sir tybert / ye
 shal now goo to reynart and saye to
 hym this seconde tyme that he come
 to court vnto the plee for to
 answere / for though he be felle to other beestis
 he trusteth you wel / and shal doo by your
 counseyl. and telle yf he come not / he shal haue
 the thirde warnyng and be dayed and yf he thenne
 come not / we shal procede by ryght ayenste hym
 and alle hys lynnage wythout mercy /

Tybert spack / My lord the kynge / they that
 this counseylde you were not my frendes what shal
 I doo there / he wil not for me neyther come ne
 abyde / I beseche you dere kynge sende some
 other to hym / I am lytyl and feble / bruyn the
 bere whiche was so grete and stronge / coude not
 brynge hym / how shold I thenne take it on
 honde /

nay said the kynge sir tybert ye ben wyse and
 wel lerned / Though ye be not grete / ther lyeth
 not on / many do more wyth crafte and connyng /
 than with myght and strengthe /

thenne said the catte / syth it muste nedes be
 don / I must thenne take it vpon me / god yeue

grace that I may wel achieue it / for my herte is
heuy / and euil willed therto /

Tybert made hym / sone redy towards maleper-
duys / and he saw fro ferre come fleying one of seynt
marytus byrdes / tho cryde he lowde and saide al
hayl / gentyl byrde / torne thy wynges hether-
ward and flee on my right side / the byrde flew
forth vpon a tree whiche stode on the lift side of
the catte / tho was tybert woo / ffor he thought
hit was a shrewd token and a sygne of harme / for
yf the birde had flown on his right side / he had
been mery and glad / but now he sorowed that
his Iourney shold torne to vnhappy / neuertheles
he dyde as many doo / and gaf to hym self better
hope than his herte sayde / he wente and ronne to
maleperduys ward / and there he fonde the foxe
allone standyng to fore his hous /

Tybert saide / The riche god yeue you good
euen reynart / the kyng hath menaced
yow / for to take your lyf from yow / yf
ye come not now wyth me to the court /

The foxe tho spack and said / Tibert my dere
cosyn ye be right wel come / I wolde wel truly
that ye had moche good lucke / what hurted the
foxe to speke fayre / though he sayd wel / his
herte thoughte it not and that shal be seen / er
they departe /

reynart sayde wylle we this nyght be to gydre /
I wyl make you good chyre and to morow erly

in the dawning we wyl to gydre goo to the court /
 good neue late vs so doo / I haue none of my kyn /
 that I truste so moche to as to yow / hier was
 bruyne the here the traytour he loked so shrewdly
 on me / and me thoughte he was so stronge / that
 I wolde not for a thousand marke haue goon with
 hym / but cosyn I wil tomorow erly goo with
 yow /

Tybert saide / it is beste that we now goo / for
 the mone shyneth also light as it were daye / I
 neuer sawe fayrer weder /

nay dere cosyn / suche myght meet vs by daye
 tyme / that wold make vs good chiere / and by
 nyghtte paraenture myght doo vs harme / it is
 suspecyous to alke by nyghte. Therefore a byde
 this nyght here by me

Tybert sayde / wat sholde we ete / yf we
 abode here /

reynart sayde / here is but lytel to ete ye
 maye wel haue an hony combe good and swete /
 what saye ye / Tybert wyl ye ony therof.

tybert answerd I sette nought therby haue
 ye nothyng ellis yf ye gaf me a good fatte mows /
 I shold be better plesyd /

A fatte mows said reynard / dere cosyn what saye
 ye / here by dwelleth a preest and hath a barne
 by his hows ther in ben so many myse / that a mn
 shold not lede them a way vpon a wayne / I haue
 herd the preest many tymes complayne that they
 dyde hym moche harme

O dere reyner lede me thyder for alle that I
may doo for yow /

ye tybert saye ye me trouthe / loue ye wel myes/
yf I loue hem wel said the catte / I loue myes
better than ony thyng that men gyue me· knowe
ye not that myes sauoure better than veneson / ye
than flawnes or pasteyes wil ye wel doo. so lede
me theder where the myes ben· and thenne shal
ye wynde my loue. ye al had ye slayn my fader
moder and alle my kyn.

Reynart sayd ye moke and Jape therwyth·
the catte saide so helpe me god I doo not.

Tybert said the foxe wiste I that veryly I wolde
yet this nyght make that ye shuld be ful of myes.
reynart quod he· ful that were many.

tyberte ye Iape /

reynart quod he in trouthe I doo not / yf I hadde a
fatte mows / I wold not gyue it for a golden noble /
late vs goo thenne / tybert quod the foxe I wyl
brynge yow to the place / er I goo fro you /

reyner quod the foxe [*or rather* the cat] / vpon
your sauf-conduyt / I wolde wel goo wyth you to
monpelier /

late vs thenne goo said the foxe we tarye alto
longe /

Thus wente they forth withoute lettyng to the
place / where as they wold be to the prestes barne
whiche was faste wallid aboute with a mude waj
and the nyght to fore the foxe had broken in and
had stolen fro the preest a good fatte henne /

and the preest alle angry had sette a gryn to fore the hool to auenge hym / for he wold fayn haue take the foxe / this knewe wel the felle theef the foxe And said sir tybert cosyn crepe in to this hool / and ye shal not longe tarye but that ye shal catche myes by grete heepis / herke how they pype. whan ye be ful / come agayn / I wil tarye here after you be fore this hole / we wil to morowe goo to gyder to the court. Tybert why tarye ye thus longe come of / and so maye we retorne sone to my wyf. whiche wayteth after vs / and shal make vs good chiere

Tybert saide / reynart cosyn is it thenne your counseyl that I goo in to this hole. These prestes ben so wyly and shrewysssh / I drede to take harme /

O ho tybert said the fox I sawe you neuer so sore aferde / what eyleth yow /

the catte was ashamed and sprange in to the hoole. And anon he was caught in the gryn by the necke er he wyste / thus deceyuyd reynart his ghest and cosyn /

As tybert was waer of the grynne / he was a ferde and sprang forth/the grynne wente to/ thenne he began he to wraven / for he was almost ystranglyd / he called he cryed and made a shrewd noyse /

reynart stode to fore the hool and herde al / and was wel a payed and sayde / tybert loue ye wel myes / be they fatte and good / knewe the preeste

herof or mertynet/they be so gentyl that they wolde
 brynge yow sauce / Tybert ye synge and eten / is
 that the guyse of the court / lord god yf ysegrym
 ware there by yow in suche reste as ye now be
 thenne shold I be glad / for ofte he hath don me
 scathe and harme /

tybert coude not goo awaye / but he mawede and
 galped so lowde / that martynet sprang vp / and /
 cryde lowde / god be thanked my gryn hath taken
 the theef that hath stolen our hennes / aryse vp we
 wil rewarde hym /

Wyth these wordes arose the preest in an
 euyl tyme and waked alle them that were
 in the hows / and cryde wyth a lowde
 vois / the foxe is / take

there leep and ranne alle that there was the
 preest hym self ranne al moder naked / mertynet
 was the first that cam to tybert / the preest toke to
 locken his wyf an offryng candel and bad her lyght
 it atte fyer / and he smote tybert with a grete staf /
 Ther receyuid tybert many a grete stroke ouer alle
 his body / mertynet was so angry that he smote the
 catte an eye out / the naked preest lyfte vp and
 shold haue gyuen a grete stroke to tybert / but
 tybert that sawe that he muste deye sprange
 bytwene the prestes legges wyth his clawes and
 with his teeth that he raught out his ryght colyon
 or balock stone / that leep becam yl to the preest
 and to his grete shame.

His thyngē fyl doun vpon the floer / whan
 dame Iulocke knewe that / she sware by
 her faders sowle / that she wolde it had
 coste her alle th offryng of a hole yere / that the
 preest had not had that harme hurte and shame /
 and that it had not happed and said / in the
 deueles name was the grynne there sette / see mer-
 tynēt lyef sone / this is of thy faders harnēys /
 This is a grete shame and to me a grete hurte / for
 though he be heled herof yet he is but a lo:ste man
 to me and also shal neuer conne doo that swete
 playe and game /

The foxe stode wythoute to fore the hole and
 herde alle thyse wordes / and lawhed so sore that
 he vnnethe coude stonde / he spack thus al softly /
 dame Iulock be al styllē / and your grete sorowe
 synke / Al hath the preest loste one of his stones
 it shal not hyndre hym he shal doo wyth you wel
 ynōwh ther is in the world many a chapel / in
 whiche is rongen but one belle / thus scorned and
 mocked the foxe / the prestes wyf dam iulock that
 was fu! of sorowe /

The preest fyl doun a swoune / they toke hym
 vp and brought hym agayn to bedde. tho wente
 the foxe agayn in to his borugh ward / and leste
 tybert the catte in grete drede and Ieopardye / for
 the foxe wiste none other but that the catte was
 nygh deed / but whan tybert the catte sawe them
 al besy aboute the preest tho began he to byte and

gnawe the grenne in the myddel a sondre / and sprange out of the hool and wente rolling and wentlyng towards the kyngs court or he cam theder it was fayr day and the sonne began to ryse / And he cam to the court as a poure wyght / he had caught harme atte prestes hows by the helpe and counseyl of the foxe / his body was al to beten / and blynde on the one eye / when the kyng wyste this / that tybert was thus arayed / he was sore angry and menaced reynart / the theef sore / and anone gadred his counseyl to wyte what they wold auyse hym / how he myght brynge the foxe to the lawe and howe he sholde be fette

Ho spack sir grymbart whiche was the foxes suster sone and saide ye lordes / though my eme were twyes so bad and shrewessh / yet is ther remedye ynough / late hym be don to / as to a free man whan he shal be Iuged / he muste be warned the thirde tyme for al and yf he come not thanne / he is thenne gylty in alle the trespasses that ben leyd ayenst hym and his or complained on /

grymbart who wolde ye that sholde goo and daye hym to come / who wil auenture for hym his ceris / hys eye or his lyf whiche is so fel a beast / I trowe ther is none here so moche a fool /

grymbert spack / so helpe me god I am so moche a fool / that I wil do this message myself to reynart / yf ye wille commande me /

**How grymbert the dasse broughte
the fore to the lawe to fore the kyng/
capitulo .xj^o.**

Now go forth gymbart and see wel to fore
yow reynart is so felle and fals and so
subtyl / that ye nede wel to loke aboute
yow / and to beware of hym /

Grimbert said he shold see welto /

thus wente grymbart to maleperduys ward / and
when he cam theder / he fonde reynart the foxe at
home / and dame ermelyn his wyf laye by her
whelpis in a derke corner /

Tho spack grymberd and salewed his eme and
his aunte / and saide to reynart eme beware that
your absence hurte yow not in suche maters as be
leyde and complayned on yow but yf ye thynke it
good / it is hye tyme that ye come wyth me to the
court / The wythholdyng you fro it can doo yow
no good there is moche thyng complayned ouer
you / and this is the thirde warnyng / and I telle
you for trouth yf ye abyde to morow al day / ther
may no mercy helpe you ye shal see that wyth in
thre dayes that your hows shal be byseged al
aboute / and ther shal be made to fore it galowes
and racke / I saie you truly ye shal not thenne
escape neyther with wyf ne wyth chylde / The
kyng shal take alle your liuys fro yow / therefore
it is beste that ye goo wyth me to the court / your

D

subtyl wyse counseyl shal parauenture auyalle you /
 ther ben gretter auentures falle er this for it may
 hadde ye shal goo quyte of all the complayntes
 that ben complayned on you / and alle your
 enemyes shal abyde in the shame / ye haue
 oftymes don more and gretter thingis than this.

REynart the foxe answerd / ye saye soth / I
 trowe it is beste that I goo wyth you for
 ther lacketh my counseyl parauenture the
 kynge shal be mercyful to me yf I maye come
 to speke wyth hym / and see hym vnder his
 eyen / though I had don moche more harme /
 the court may not stonde without me / that shal
 the kynge wel vnderstande. Though some be so
 felle to me ward / yet it goth not to the herte /
 alle the counseyl shal conclude moche by me /
 where grete courtes ben gadred of kynges or of
 grete lordes / where as nedeth subtyl counseyl /
 ther muste reynart fynde / the subtyl meanes /
 they maye wel speke and saye theyr aduys but
 the myne is beste / and that goth to fore alle
 other / in the courte ben many that haue sworn
 to doo me the werst they can / and that causeth
 me a parte to be heuy in my herte / ffor many
 maye doo more than one allone / that shal hurte
 me / neuertheles neuwe it is better I goo wyth
 yow to the court and answeere for my self / than
 to sette me / my wyf / and my chyldren in a
 venture for to be loste / aryse vp late vs goo

hens / he is ouer myghty for me / I muste doo as
 he wylle / I can not bettre it I shal take it
 paciently and suffre it.

REynert saide to his wyf dame ermelyn I
 betake yow my chyldren that ye see wel
 to hem / and specyally to reynkin my
 ynogest sone / He belyketh me so wel I hope he
 shal folowe my stappes And ther is rosel apassing
 fayr theef / I loue hem as wel as ony may loue
 his chyldren / Yf god gyue me grace / that I
 maye escape I shal whan I come agayn thanke
 yow wyth fair wordes Thus toke Reynart leue of
 his wyf /

A gods / how sorouful a bode ermelyn wyth
 her smale whelpis / ffor the vytayller and he that
 sorowed for malperduys was goon his way / And
 the hows not pourueyed ne vitaylled.

How reynard shroef hym capitulo. xij.

Han reynart and grymberth had goon a
 whyle to gydre / tho saide reynart /
 dere cosyn now am I in grete fere / for
 I goo in drede and ieopardye of my
 lyf / haue so moche repentaunce for my synnes
 that I wil shryue me dere cosyn to yow / here is
 none other preest to gete yf I were shryuen of my
 synnes / my soule shold be the clerer /

grymbert ansuerde / Eem wil ye shryue you /
 thenne muste ye promyse firste to leue your
 steelyng and rouynge

reynart saide that wiste he wel / now herke dere
 cosyn what I shal saye / Confiteor tibi pater of
 alle the mysdedes that I haue done / And gladly
 wil receyue penance for them /

Grymbert sayde what saye ye / wylle ye shryue
 yow , thenne saye it in englissh that I may under-
 stande. yow

reynart sayde I haue trespaced ayenst alle the
 beestis that lyue in especyal ayenst bruyne the bere
 myn Eem whom I made his crowne al bloody /
 And taughte tybert the catte to catche myes for I
 made her leepe in a grenne wher she was al to
 beten , also I haue trespaced gretly ayenst chan-
 teclere with his children / for I haue made hym
 quyte of a grete dele of hem

Hhe kyng is not goon al quyte / I haue
 sklandred hym and the quene many
 tymes / that they shal neuer be cleer
 therof yet haue I begyled ysegrym the wulf ofter
 than I can telle wel I called hym eme / but that
 was to deceyue hym / he is nothing of my kyn /
 I made hym a monke / Eeimare / where I
 my self also became one / And that was to his
 hurte and no prouffyte / I made bynde his feet to
 the belle rope / the ryngyng of the belle thought
 hym so good that he wolde lerne to ryng wherof

he had shame / ffor he range so sore that alle the
folke in the strete were aferd therof and meruayl-
led what myght be on the belle / And ranne thyder
to fore he had comen to axe the religyon / wher-
fore he was beten almost to the deth / after this I
taught hym to catche fyssh where he receyuid
many a stroke / also I ledde hym to the richest
prestes hows that was in vermedos / This preest
had aspynde wherin henge many a good flitche of
bacon / wherin many a tyme I was wonte to fyl
my bely / in this spynde I had made an hole / in
whiche I made ysegrym to crepe / There fonde he
tubbes with beef and many goed flytches of bacon
whereof he ete so moche withoute mesure / that
he myght not come out at the hole where he wente
in / his bely was so grete and ful of the mete /
and whan he entred his bely was smal / I wente
in to the village and made there a grete showte
and noyse / yett herke what I dyde thenne I
ranne to the preest wher he satte at the table and
ete / And hadde to fore hym as fatte capone as a
man myght fynde / that capone caught I and
ranne my weye wherwith al that I myghte / the
preest cryed out and said / take and slee the foxe /
I trowe that neuer man sawe more wonder / the
foxe cometh in my hows and taketh my capoone
fro my table / where sawe euer man an hardyer
theef / and as me thought he toke his table knyf
and casted it at me / but he touched me not I
ranne away / he shoof the table from hym / and

folewed me cryeng kylle and slee hym / I to goo
and they after and many moo cam after which
alle thought to hurte me /



Ranne so longe that I cam where as
isegrym was / and there I lete falle the
capoone / for it was to heuy for me /
and ayenst my wille I lefte it there / and thenne
I sprange thurgh an hole where as I wolde be /
and as the preest toke vp the capone. he espyed
isegrym and cryde smyte down here frendes here
is the theef the wulf / see wel to that he escape vs
not' they ranne alle to gydre wyth stokkes and
staues and made a grete noyse that alle the
neyghbours camen oute. and gauen hym many
a shrewde stroke / and threwe at hym grete
stones / in suche wyse that he fyl down as he
had been deed / They slepid hym and drewe
hym ouer stones and ouer blockes wythout the
village and threwe hym in to a dyche and
there he laye al the nyght / I wote neuer how
he cam thens / syth I haue goten of hym / for as
moche as I made hym to fylle his bely / that he
sware that he wolde be myn helpe an hole yere.



ho ledde I hym to a place where I tolde
hym ther were vij' hennes and a cocke
whiche satte on a perche and were moche
fatte / And ther stode a faldore by / and we
clymmed ther vp / I sayde to hym yf he wolde

bileue me / and that he wolde crepe in to
 the dore / he sholde fynde many fatte hennes /
 Isegrym wente al lawhyng to the dore ward
 and crope a lityl in / and tasted here and
 there / and at laste he sayde to me reynarde ye
 borde and iape with me / for what I seche I fynde
 not thenne said I / eme yf ye wyl fynde crepe
 forther in / he that wil wyne / he muste laboure
 and auenture / They that were wonte to sytte
 there / I haue them a waye thus I made hym to
 seche ferther in / and shooue him forth so ferre /
 that he fylle down vpon the floer for the perche
 was narow / and he fill so grete a falle / that they
 sprange vp alle that slepte / and they that laye
 nexte the fyre cryden that the valdore was open
 and somthyng was falle and they wiste not wat
 it myght be /

They roose vp and lyghte a candel / and
 when they sawe hym they smeton beten
 and wounded hym to the deth / I haue
 broughte hym thus in many a iepardye / moo than
 I gan now rekene / I sholde fynde many moo /
 yf I me wel bythoughte / whiche I shal telle you
 here after / Also I haue bydryuen wyth dame
 erswynde his wyf / I wolde I had not don it / I
 am sory for it / hit is to her grete shame / and
 that me repenteth /

grymbert saide / Eme I vnderstande you not /
 he sayde I haue trespaced with his wyf /

ye shryue you / as though ye helde somewhat
bchynde / I wote not what ye mene ne where
ye haue lerned this langage /

Ach dere eme it were grete shame yf I shold
saye it oppenly as it happed / I haue leyn by
myn aunte / I am your eme I shold angre you yf
I spak vylanye of wymmen / neuu now haue I
tolde yow alle that I can thynke on / sette me
penaunce / and assoylle me / ffor I haue grete
repentaunce /

Grymbert was subtyl and wyse / he brake a
rodde of a tree and saide / eme now shal
ye smyte your self thryes with this rodde
on your body / And thenne leye it doun vpon the
grounde / and sprynge thre tymes ther ouer with-
out bowyng of your legges and wythout stom-
blyng / and thenne shul ye take it vp and kysse it
frendly in token of mekenes and obedience of
your penance that I gaf yow / herwith be ye quyte
of alle synnes that ye haue don to this day for I
forgeue it yow al /

The foxe was glad /

tho sayd grymbert to his eme / Eme see now
forthon / that ye doo good werkis / rede your
psalmes / goo to chirche / faste and kepe your
halydayes / and gyue your allmesse / and leue
your synful and yl lyf / your thefte and your treson
and so maye ye come to mercy /

the foxe promysed that he wold so doo / and

thenne wente they bothe to gydre to the court
ward /



Lytel besyde the waye as they wente stode
a cloyster of back nonnes. where many
ghees / hennes and capones wente with-
oute the walles / and as they wente talkyng the
foxe brought grymberte out of the right waye
thyder and wythout the walles by the barne went
the polayle / The foxe espyed them and saw a
fatte yong capone whiche wente allone fro his
felaws / and leep and caught hym that the fethers
flew aboute his eeris but the capone escaped /

grymbert sayde what eme cursyd man what wil
ye doo / wille ye for one of these poletes falle
agayn in alle your synnes of whiche ye haue
shryuen yow / ye ought sore repente you /

reynart answerd / truly cosyn I had al forgotten /
praye god that he forgeue it me for I wil neuer do
so more /

thenne torned they agayn ouer alityl brydge /
yet the foxe alway loked after the polaylle / he
coude not refrayne hym self / that whiche cleuid
by the bone / myght not out of the flesshe / though
he shold be hanged / he coude not lete the lokyng
after the polayll as fer as he myght see them /

Grymbert sawe his maner and sayde / fowle
false deceyuour / how goo your eyen so after the
poleyll /

The foxe sayde / cosyn ye mysdoo to saye to me

ony suche wordes / ye brynge me out of my deuocion and prayers / late me saye apater noster fore alle the sowles of polaylle and ghes that I haue betrayed / and ofte wyth falsheed stolen from thyse holly nonnes /

Grymbert was not wel a payd but the foxe had euer his eyen toward the polayl / til atte laste they cam in the waye agayn. And thenne torned they to the courte warde / how sore quaked tho reynard when they aproched the court / ffor he wiste wel that he had for to answeere to many a fowle feet and theft that he had doon /

**How the fore cam to the court /
and how he excused hym to fore the
kyng / capitulo .xiiij^o**



AT the first when it was knowen / in the court that reynart the foxe and grymbaert his cosyn were comen to the court / Ther was none so poure nor so feble of kynne and frendes / but that he made hym redy for to complayne on reynart the foxe /

reynart loked as he had not ben aferd / and helde hym better / than he was for he wente forth proudly with his neuu thurgh the hiest street of the courte / right as he had ben the kynges sone and as he had not trespaced to ony man the value of an heer / and wente in the mydel of the place stondlyng to fore noble the kyng and sayde / God

gyue yow grete honour and worship / Ther was
 neuer kyng / that euer had a trewer seruant / than
 I haue ben to your good grace and yet am.
 Neuertheles dere lorde I knowe wel that ther ben
 many in this courte that wolde destroye me yf
 yewold byleue them / but nay god thanke yow /
 hit is not fyttyng to youre crowne to byleue thise
 false deceyuars and lyars lyghtly / To god mote it
 be complayned / how that thise false lyars and
 flaterers now adayes in the lordes courtes ben moste
 herde and byleuyd / the shrewes and false deceyuers
 ben borne vp for to do to good men alle the harme
 and scath they maye / Our lorde god shal ones
 rewarde them their hyre /

the kyng sayde / pees reynard false thief and
 traytour / how well can ye brynge forth fayr talis /
 And alle shalle not helpe yow a strawe / wene ye
 wyth suche flaterynge wordes to be my frende / ye
 haue so ofte seruyd me soo as ye now shal wel
 knowe / The pees that I haue comanded and
 sworn / that haue ye wel holden / haue ye /

chauntecler coude no lenger be styll but cryde
 alas what haue / I by this pees loste /

be styll chaunteclere holde your mouth late me
 answeere this fowle thief /

How shrewd felle thief saide the kyng /
 thou saist that thou louest me wel that
 hast thou shewd wel on my messagers
 these poure felaws / Tibert the cat and bruyne the

bere / whiche yet ben al blody whiche chyde not
ne saye not moche / but that shal this day coste
the thy lyf / In nomine pater· criste. filij.

sayd the foxe dere lord and myghty kyng· yf
bruyns crowne be blody / what is that to me /
when he ete hony at lantferts hows in the vyllage
and dyde hym hurte and scathe / there was he
beten therefore yf he had willyd he is so stronge of
lymmes / he myght wel haue be auengid er he
sprang in to the water / Tho cam tybert the catte
whom I receyued frendly / yf he wente out without
my counseyl for to stele myes to a prestes hows /
and the preest dyde hym harme sholde I abyde
that thenne myght I saye I were not happy / not
so my liege lorde / ye may doo what ye wille /
thowh my mater be cleer and good. ye may siede
me / or roste / hange. or make me blynde. I may
not escape yow. we stonde alle vnder your cor-
reccion. ye be myghty and stronge. I am feble /
and my helpe is but smal / yf ye put me to the
deth. hit were a smal vengeance /

whiles they thus spack. sprange vp bellyn the
rame and his ewe dame olewey and saide my lord
the kynge here oure camplaynt / bruyn the bere
stode vp wyth al his lygnage and his felaws.
Tibert the catte Isegrym the wulf. kywart the
hare / and panther the boore· the camel and brunel
the ghoos the kyde and ghoot / boudewyn the asse.
borre the bulle / hamel the oxe. and the wesel.
Chantecler the cock. pertelot wyth alle theyr

children all this made grete rumour and noyse.
 And cam forth openly to fore their lorde the
 kyng. And made that the foxe was taken and
 arested /

**How the foxe was arested and
 Iudged to deth capitulo 'xliii'**

Ere vpon was a parlament / and they
 desired that reynart sholde ben deed
 and what somme euer they sayden
 ayenst the foxe / he answerde to eche to
 them / neuer herde man of suche beestis / suche
 playntis of wyse counseyl / and subtyl Inuencions
 and on that other syde / the foxe made his excuse
 so wel and formably theron that they that herde
 it wondred therof / they that herde and sawe it /
 may telle hit forth for trouthe / I shalshorte the
 mater and telle yow forth of the foxe / The kyng
 and the counseyl herd the witnessis of the com-
 playntes of reynarts mysdedes / hit went with
 hem as it ofte doth the feblest hath the worst /
 They gafe sentence and Iudged that the foxe
 shoulde be dede and hanged by the necke / tho
 lyfte not he to pleye alle his flateryng wordes /
 and deceytes coud not helpe hym / The Iugement
 was gyuen and that muste be don / grymbert his
 neuue / and many of his lignage myght not fynde
 in their hertes to see hym dye but token leue
 soroufully / and romed the court.

Hhe kynge bithoughte hym and marked how many a yonglyng departed from thens al wepyng / whiche were nyghe of his kynne / and sayde to hym self / hier behoueth other counseyl herto / Though reynart be a shrewe / ther be many good of his lignage /

thybert the catte sayde / sir bruyn and sir Isegrym / how be ye thus slowe. it is almost euen / hier ben many busshes and hedges. yf he escaped from vs. and were delyuerd out of this paryl he is so subtyl and so wyly and can so many deceytes that he shold neuer be taken agayn / shal we hange hym how stonde ye al thus er the galewis can be made redy it shal be nyght /

Isegrym bethought hym tho and seyde / hier by is a gybet or galewis / And wyth that worde he sighed / and the catte espyed that and sayde / Isegrym ye be aferd / ys it ayenst your wylle / thynke ye not that he hym self wente and laboured that bothe your brethern were hanged / were ye good and wyse ye sholde thanke hym / and ye sholde not therwith so longe tarye /

How the fore was ledde to the galewis / cap^o ·xb^o·

Isegrym balked and sayde / ye make moche a doo sir tyberte hadde we an halter which were mete for his necke and strong ynough / we shold sone make an ende /

reynert the foxe whiche longe had not spoken /
saide to Isegrym shorte my payne / Tyberte hath
a stronge corde whiche caughte hym in the prestes
hous / whan he bote of the prestes genytoirs /
he can clyme wel and is swyft late hym bere vp /
the lyne / Isegrym and bruyn thys becometh yow
wel that ye thus doo to your neuwe / I am sory
that I lyue thus longe / haste you ye be sette
therto / it is euyl doo that ye tarye thus longe /
goo to fore bruyn and lede me Isegrym folowe
fast. and see wel to and be ware that reynart go
not away.

tho sayd bruyn it is the best counseil that I
euer yet herde / that reynart there seith

Isegrym commanded anon and badde his kyn
and frendes. that they sholde see to reynart that
he escaped not. ffor he is so wyly and fals. They
helden hym by the feet. by the berde. and so
kepte hym that he escaped not from hem /

The foxe herde alle thise wordes / whiche
touchid hym nygh / yet spak he and sayde / Och
dere eme / me thynketh ye payne your self sore /
for to doo me hurte and scathe / yf I durste I
wolde pay you of mercy / though my hurte and
sorow is playsant to you / I wote wel yf myn
aunte your wyf bethought her wel of olde ferners.
she wolde not suffre that / I shold haue ony
harne / but now I am he / that nowe ye wille
doo on me what it shal please yow / ye bruyn and
thibert / god gyue you shames deth but ye doo

to me your werst / I wote wherto I shal / I
may deye but ones I wolde that I were dede
al redy I sawe my fader deye he had sone
donne /

Isegrym sayde late vs goo / ffor ye curse vs bi
cause we lengthe the tyme / euyl mote he fare yf
we abyde ony lenger /

he wente forth wyth grete enuye on that one side
and bruyn stode on the other syde / and so lede
they hym forth to the galowes ward / Tybert
ranne with a good wil to fore / and bare the corde
and his throte was yet sore of the grynne / and his
croppre dyde hym woo of the stryke that he was
take in that happed by the counseil of the foxe /
and that thought he now to quyte /

Tybert ysegrym and bruyn wente hastely
wyth reinert to the place / there as the
felons ben wonte to be put to deth / Nobel
the kynge and the quene / and alle that were in
the court folowed after for to see the ende of
reynart / the foxe was in grete drede yf hym
myshapped / and bethought hym ofte / how he
myghte saue hym fro the deth / And tho thre
that so sore desireden hys deth how he myght
deceyue them / and brynge them to shame / and
how he myght brynge the kynge wyth lesyngis ffor
to holde with hym ayenst hem / This was alle that
he studyed / how he myght putte away his sorowe

wyth wyls / And thought / thus though the kyng
 and many one be vpon me angry / it is no wonder
 for I haue wel deseruid it / neuertheles I hope for
 to be yet hir best frende / And yet shal I neuer do
 them good / how strong that the kyng be / and
 how wyse that his counseil be / yf I may brouke
 my wordes / I knowe so many an inuencion / I
 shal come to myn aboue / as fer as they wolde
 comen to the galewes /

Ho saide ysegrym / sir bruyn thinke now on
 your rede crowne whiche by reynarts mene
 ye caughte we haue now the tyme that we
 may wel rewarde hym / Tybert clyme vp hastily
 and bynde the corde faste to the lynde / and make
 a rydyng knotte or a strope / ye be the lyghtyst /
 ye shal this day see your wylle of hym / Bruyn see
 wel to that he escape not, and holde faste. I will
 helpe that the ladder be sette vp / that he may goo
 vpwart thereon.

bruyn said. do. I shal helpe hym wel

The foxe sayde now may my herte be wel heuy for
 grete drede ffor I see the deth to fore myn eyen.
 and I may not escape my lorde the kyng and
 dere quene and forth alle ye that here stande. er
 I departe fro this world I pray you of a bone.
 that I may to fore you alle make my confession
 openly and telle my defaultes also clerly that my
 sowle be not a-combred / and also that noman

E

here after / here no blame for my thefte ne for my
treson my deth shal be to me the esyer / and praye
ye alle to god that he haue mercy on my sowle.

**How the fore made openly his
confession to fore the kyng and to
fore al them that wold here it**
cap^o xvj^o

Alle they that stoden there had pyte whan
reynart saide tho wordis and said it
was / but a lytyl requeste yf the kyng
wolde graunte it hym / and they prayde
the kyng to graunte it hym /

The kyng gaf hym leue /

reynart was wel glad and hoped that it myght
falle better / And said thus / now helpe spiritus
domini / for I see hier noman but I haue trespaced
vnto / Neuertheles yet was I vnto the tyme that I
was wened fro the tete / one the best chylde that
coude ouwher be founden / I wente tho and pleyde
wyth the lambes by cause I herde hem gladly
blete / I was so longe wyth hem that at the laste
I bote one / there lerned I fyrst to lapen of the
bloode hit sauourd wel / me thought it right good
And after I began to taste of the flessch / therof I was
lycourous / so that after that I wente to the gheet
in to the wode / there herde I the kyddes blete
and I slewe of them tweyne / I began to wexe

hardy after I slewe hennes / polayl and ghees /
 where euer I founde hem. Thus worden my teeth
 al blody after this I wexe so felle and so wroth /
 That what somme euer I founde that I myght
 ouer / I slowe alle / Ther aftercam I by Isegrym
 now in the wynter / where he hydde hym vnder a
 tree. And rekened to me that / he was myn eme
 whenne I herde hym thenne rekene allvance we
 becomen felaws whiche I may wel repente / we
 promysed eche to other to be trewe and to vse
 good felawship / and began to wandre to gyder /
 he stal the grete thynges and I the smalle and all
 was comyn bytwene vs / yet he made it so that he
 had the beste dele I gate not halfe my parte /
 whan that ysegrym gate a calf / a ramme or a
 weder thenne grimmed he / and was angry on me
 and droof me fro hym / and held my part and his
 to / so good is he.



Et this was of the leste / but whan it so
 lucked that we toke an oxe or a cowe /
 thenne cam therto his wyf wyth. vij.
 children so / that vnto me myght vnnethe come
 one of the smallest rybbes / and yet had they eten
 alle the flesshe therof / ther with all muste I be
 content not for that I had so grete nede. ffor I
 haue so grette scatte and good of syluer and of
 gold that seuen waynes shold not conne carye it
 away /

whan the kynge herde hym speke of this grete

good and riches he brenned in the desyre and
couetyse therof and sayde reynart where is the
rychesse becomen / telle me that·

the foxe saide my lord I shal telle yow / the
rychesse was stolen / and had it not bestolen / it
shold haue cost yow / your lyf and shold haue
ben murdred whiche god forbede and shold haue
ben the gretest hurte of the worlde /

whan the quene herde that she was sore aferde
and cryde lowde / alas and weleaway reynart what
say ye / I coniure yow by the longe waye that
youre soule shal goo / that ye telle vs openly the
trouthe herof as moche as ye knowe of this grete
murdre that sholde haue be doon on my lorde /
that we a:le may here it

now herkene how the foxe shal flatre the kynge
and quene / and shal wynne bothe their good
willes and loues And shal hyndre them that
laboure for his deth / he shal vnhynde his packe
and lye and by flaterye and fayr wordes shal
brynge forth so his maters / that it shal be
supposed for trouthe /

IN a sorouful contenance spack the foxe to
the quene I am in suche caas now that I
muste nedes deye / and hadde ye me not so
sore coniured / I wil not Ieoparde my sowle / and
yf I so dyde I shold goo therfore in to the payne
of helle / I wil saye nothyng but that I wil make
it good / for poutously he shold haue ben murthred

of his owen folke. neuertheles they that were most pryncyp.l in this feat. were of my next kynne· whom gladly I wold not bewraye. yf the sorrow were not of the helle.

The kynge was heuy of herte and saide / reynart saiste thou to me the trouthe.

ye said the foxe. see ye not how it standeth with me. wene ye that I wil dampne my sowle. what shold it auaylle me yf I now saide other wise than trouthe. my deth is so nyghe· ther may nether prayer ne good helpe me Tho trembled the foxe by dyssymlyyng as he had ben a ferde

The quene had pyte on hym. And prayde the kyng to haue mercy on hym in eschewyng of more harme / and that he sholde doo the peple holde their peas and gyue the foxe Audience. and here what he shold saye /

Tho commanded the kynge openly that eche of them shold be styлле / and suffre the foxe to saye vnberisped what that he wolde.

thenne saide the foxe / be ye now alle styлле. syth it is the kynges wille. and I shal telle you openly this treson. And therin I wil spare noman that I knowe gyilty.



How the fore brought them in
daunger / that wolde haue brought
hym to deth. and how he gate the
grace of the kyng. capitulo .xviij^o:

Now herkene how the foxe began. in the
begynnyng he appeled grymbert his
dere cosyn. whiche euer had holpen
hym in his nede / he dyde so bycause
his wordes sholde be the better byleued. and that
he forthon myght the better lye on his enemyes /
thus began he firste and saide.

my lorde my fader had founden kyng ermeryks
tresour doluen in a pytte. and whan he had thys
grete good. he was so prowde and orguillous that
he had alle other beestis in despyte whiche to fore
had been his felaws he made tybert the catte to
goo in to that wylde lande of ardenne to bruyne
the bere for to do to hym homage. and bad hym saye
yf he wolde be kyng that he shold come in to
flaundes / bruyne the bere was glad hierof / ffor he
had longe desired it / And wente forth in to
flaundes where my fader receyued hym right
frendly / anone he sente for the wyse grymbert
myn neuwe / And for ysegrym the wulfe / and
for tybert the catte / Tho these fyue camen
bytvene gaunt and the thorpe callyd yfte / there
they helden their counseyl an hole derke nyght

longe / what wyth the deuels helpe and craft and
 for my faders richesse they concluded / and swore
 there the kyngys deth / now herkene and here this
 wonder the foure sworn vpon ysegryms crowne /
 that they sholde make bruyn a kyng and a lorde /
 And brynge hym in the stole at akon and sette
 the crowne on his heed / and yf there were any of
 the kynges frendes or lignage / that wolde be
 contrarye or ayenst this / hym sholde my fader
 wyth his good and tresour fordryue and take from
 hym his myght and power /

IT happed so that on a morowtyde erly
 that grymbert my neuwe was of wyne
 almost dronke / that he tolde it to dame
 sloepcade his wif in counseyl / and badde her
 kepe it secrete / but she anone forgate it / and
 saide it forth in confession to my wyf / vpon and
 heth where they bothe wenten a pylgremage / but
 she muste firste swere by her trouthe and by the
 holy thre kynges of coleyne that for loue ne for
 hate she sholde neuer telle it forth but kepe it
 secrete but she helde it not / and kepte it no lenger
 secrete but tyl she cam to me / and she thenne
 tolde to me alle that she herde / but I muste kepe
 it in secrete / and she tolde me so many tokenys /
 that I felte wel it was trouthe and for drede and
 fere myn heer stode right vp / and my herte be-
 cam as heuy as leed / and as colde as Ise / I
 thought by this a lyknesse whiche hier a fore

tyme byfille to the frosshis / whiche were free /
 and complayned that they had none lorde / ne
 were not byd Wongen / for a comynthe without a
 gouuernour was not god / and they cryden to
 god with a lowde voys / that he wolde ordeyne
 one that myght rewle them / this was al that they
 desired / god herde theyr requeste / for it was re-
 sonable and sente to them a storke / whiche ete
 and swolowed them in as many as he coude
 fynde / he was alway to hem vnmercyful / tho
 complayned they theyr hurte / but then it was
 to late / they that were to fore free and were a
 ferde of no body / ben now bonde and muste obeye
 to strengthe theyr kyng / hyer fore ye riche and
 poure I sorowed that it myght happen vs in lyke
 wyse /



Hus my lord the kyng I haue had sorowe
 for yow wherof ye can me but lytyl thanke
 / I knowe bruyne the bere for suche a shrewe
 and rauener / wherfor I thoughte yf he were kyng
 we shold be alle destroyed and loste / I knowe our
 souerain lord the kyng of so hie byrthe / so
 myghty so benygne and mercyful / that I thought
 truly it had ben an euyl change for to haue a
 foule stynkngye theef and to refuse a noble myghty
 stately Lyon / ffor the bere hath more madde folye
 in his vnthrifty heed and al his auncestris / than
 any other hath / thus had I in myn herte many a
 sorowe / and thought alway how I myght breke

and fordoe my faders fals counseyl whiche of a chorle and a traytour and worse than a theef wolde make a lorde and a kynge / alway I prayd god that he wolde kepe our kyng in worship and good helthe and graunte hym long lyf / but I thought wel yf my fader helde his tresour / he shold with his fals felaws wel fynde the waye that the kyng shold be deposed and sette a syde / I was sore be-thought how I myght beste wyte where my faders good laye / I a wayted at al tymes as nygh as I coude / in wodes in bushes in feeldis / where my fader leyde his eyen / were it by nyghte or by daye / colde or weet I was alway by hym to espye and knowe where his tresour was leyde /



N a tyme I laye down al plat on the grounde / and sawe my fader come rennyng out of an hole / Nowe herke what I sawe hym doo / whan he cam out of the hole / he loked fast a boute yf ony body had seen hym / And whan he coude nowher none see / he stopped the hole with sande and made hit euen and playn lyke to the other grounde by / he knewe not that I sawe it / and where his footspore stood / there stryked he with his tayl and made it smothe with his mouth that noman should espye it / that lerned I there of my fals fader and many subtyltees that I to fore knewe nothyng of / thenne departed he thens and ran to the village warde for

to do his thyngis / and I forgate not but sprange
 and lepe to the hole ward / and how wel that he
 had supposed that he had made al faste I was not
 so moche a fool but that I fonde the hole wel /
 and cratched and scraped with my feet the sande
 out of the hole / and crepte therin / there fonde I
 the moste plente of siluer and of golde that euer I
 sawe / hier is none so olde that euer so moche
 sawe on one heep in alle his lyf / Tho toke I erme-
 lyne my wyf to helpe / and we ne rested nyght
 ne day to bere and carye a waye with grete labour
 and payne this riche tresour in to another place
 that laye for vs better vnder an hawe in a depe
 hole / in the mene whyle that myn husewyf and I
 thus labouryd my fader was with them that wolde
 betraye the kynge / now may ye here what they
 dede / bruyne the bere and ysegrym the wulf sente
 alle the londe a bout / yf ony man wolde take
 wages / that they shold come to bruyne / and he
 wolde paye them their souldye or wagis to fore.
 my fader ranne alle ouer the londe and bare the
 lettres. he wist lytil that he was robbed of his
 tresour. ye though he myght haue wonnen al the
 world. he had not conne fynde a peny thereof.

Whan my fader hadde ben oueral in the lande
 bytwene the elue and the somme. And
 hadde gotten many a souldyour that shold
 the next somer haue comen to helpe bruyne. tho

cam he agayn to the bere and his felowis. and tolde them in how grete a venture he had be to fore the borughes in the londe of saxone / and how the hunters dayly ryden and hunted with houndes after hym in suche wise that he vnnethis escaped with his lyf / whan he had tolde this to thise foure false traytours / thenne shewde he them lettres that plesyd moche to bruyn there in were wreton xij. C. of ysegryms lignage by name withoute the beres / the foxes / the cattes and the dassen / alle thise had sworn that wyth the first messenger that shold come for them they shold be redy and come for to helpe the bere / yf they had their wages a moneth ta fore / This aspyed I / I thanke god / after thise wordes my fader wente to the hole where his tresour had leyn and wold loke vpon it / tho began he a grete sorowe / that he soughte he fonde nothyng / he fonde his hole broken and his tresour born away / there dede he that I may wel sorowe and bewaylle / for grete anger and sorowe he wente and hynge hym self / thus abode the treson of bruyn by my subtylte after / Now see myn Infortune / thise traytours ysegrym and bruyn / ben now most preuy of counseyl aboute the kyng / and sytte by hym on the hie bouche / And I poure reynart haue no thanke ne reward / I haue buried myn owen fader by cause the kyng sholde haue his lyf / my lorde saide the foxe / where ben they that so wolde doo / that is to destroye them self for to kepe yow /

Hhe kyng and the queene hoped to wynne
the tresour and wyth oute counceyl toke to
them reynart and prayed hym that he wold
do so wel as to telle them were this tresour was /

reynart saide how shold I telle the kyng and
them that wold hange me / for loue of the tray-
tours and murderars whiche by her flaterye wolde
fayne bryng me to deth / shold I telle to them
where my good is / thenne were I out of my
wytte /

The queene tho spak nay reynart the kyng shal
lete you haue your lyf / and shal al to gydre for-
gyue you / and ye shal be froliens forth wyse and
true to my lorde.

the foxe answerd to the queene. dere lady yf the
kyng wil beleue me and that he wil pardone and
forgyue me alle my olde trespaces ther was neuer
kyng so riche as I shal make hym for the tresour
that I shal doo hym haue / is right costely and
may not be nombred /

The kyng saide ach dame. wille ye beleue the
the foxe. sauf your reuerence he is borne to robbe
/ stele and to lye / this cleuid to his bones and
can not be had out of the flessch /

the queene saide / nay my lorde ye may now well
byleue hym / though he were to fore felle / he is
now chaunged otherwise than he was ye haue wel
herde that he hath appechid his fader and the dass
his neuw / whiche he might wel haue leyde on

other bestes / yf he wold haue ben false / felle /
and a liar /

The kynge saide dame wille ye thenne haue it
soo / and thynke ye it best to be don / though I
supposed it sholde hurte me / I wille take alle
thise trespaces of reynart vpon me / and bileue his
wordes / But I swere by my crowne / yf he euer
here after mysdoo and trespace / that shal he dere
abye and alle his lignage vnto the. ix. degree.

The foxe loked on the kyng stoundmele and
was glad in his herte / and saide my lorde / I were
not wyse / yf I sholde say thyng that were not
trewe

The kynge toke vp a straw fro the ground / And
pardoned and forgaf the foxe alle the mysdedes and
trespaces of his fader and of hym also /

yf the foxe was tho mery and glad it was no
wonder / ffor he was quyte of his deth and was
alle free and franke of alle his enemyes /

HHe foxe saide my lord the kynge and noble
lady the quene god rewarde yow / thys
grete worship that ye do to me / I shal
thynke and also thanke you for hit / in suche wise
that ye shal be the richest kynge of the world /
ffor ther is none lyuyng vnther the sonne / that I
vouchesauf better my tresour on / than on yow
bothe /

Thenne toke the foxe vp a straw and profred it
to the kyng / and saide my moste dere lord plese it

yow to receyue hiere the ryche tresour whiche kynge
ermeryk hadde / for I gyue it vnto you wyth a fre
wylle / and knowleche it openly /

The kynge receyuid the straw and threwe it
meryly fro hym with a Ioyous visage / And thanked
moche the foxe /

The foxe laughed in hym self.

The kynge thenne herkened after the counseyl
of the foxe. And alle that ther were / were at hys
wylle /

My lorde sade he / herkene and marke wel
my wordes / in the west side of flaundes
ther standeth a woode and is named hul-
sterlo / And a water that is called kreckenpyt lyeth
therby / This is so grete a wyldernesse / that ofte
in an hole yere man ner wyf cometh therin / sauf
they that wil / and they that wille not eschewe it /
There lyeth this tresour hydde / vnderstande wel
that the place is called kreckenpit / for I adyuse you
for the leste hurte / that ye and my lady goo bothe
thyder / ffor I knowe none so trewe that I durste
on your behalve truste wherfore goo your self /
And whan ye come to kreckenpyt ye shal fynde
there two birchen trees standyng alther next the
pytte / my lorde to tho byrchen trees shal ye goo /
there lyeth the tresour vnther doluen / There
muste ye scrape and dygge a way a lytyl the mosse
on the one side / Ther shalle ye fynde many a Iewel
of golde and syluer. and there shal ye fynde the

crowne which kynge Ermeryk ware in his dayes
 that sholde bruyn the bere haue worn yf his wyl
 had gon forth ye shal see many a costly Iewel
 with riche stones sette in golde werk whiche coste
 many a thousand marke / My lorde the kynge
 whan ye now haue alle this good / how ofte shal
 ye saye in your herte and thynke / O how true art
 thou reynart the foxe. that with thy subtyl wytte
 daluyst and hyddest here this grete tresour / god
 gyue the good happe and welfare where euer
 thou bee /

He kynge sayde / sir reynart ye muste come
 and helpe vs to dygge vp this tresour / I
 knowe / not the way / I sholde neuer conne
 fynde it / I haue herde ofte named / parys / london
 akon and coleyn / As me thynketh this tresour
 lyeth / right as ye mocked and Iaped / for ye
 name kryekenpyt / that is afayned name /

these wordes were not good to the foxe / and he
 sayd wyth an angry mode / and dissymyled and
 saide / ye my lord the kynge / ye be also nyghe
 that as fro rome to maye / wene ye that I wille
 lede yow to flomme iordyn / Nay I shal brynge
 you out of wenyng and shewe it you by good
 wytnes /

he called lowde kywart the hare / come here to
 fore the kynge The bestes sawe alle thyder ward
 and wondred what the kynge wold / the foxe sayde
 to the hare / kywart ar ye a colde / how tremble

ye and quake so / be not a ferd / and telle my lorde
the kynge here the trouthe / And that I charge
you by the fayth and trouthe that ye owe hym and
to my lady the quene of suche thyng. as I shal
demaunde of you /

Kywaert saide I shal saye the trouthe though I
shold lose my necke therfore / I shal not lye ye
haue charged me so sore / yf I knowe it /

Thenne saye / knowe ye not where krieken pyt
standeth / is that in your mynde /

The hare saide / I knew that wel. xij. yer a
goon / wher that stondest / why aske ye that. It
stondest in awoode named hulsterlo vpon a
warande in the wyldernesse / I haue suffred there
moche sorowe for hunger and for colde / ye
more than I can telle / Pater symonet the friese
was woned to make there false money / wherwyth
he bare hym self out and al his felawship / but that
was to fore er I had felawship wyth ryn the hounde
whyche made me escape many a daunger / as he
coude wel telle yf he were here / and that I neuer
In my dayes trespaced ayenst the kynge other wyse
than I oughte to doo with right /

reynart sayd to hym go agayn to yonder felaw-
ship here ye kyward / my lorde the kynge
desyreth nomore to knowe of yow /

the hare retorned and wente agayn to the place
he cam fro.

The foxe sayde my lord the kynge is it trewe
that I saide / ye reynart said the kynge / ffor gyue

it me / I dyde euyl that I beleuid you not / Now
 reynart frende fynde the waye that ye goo wyth
 vs to the place and pytte / where the tresour
 lyeth /

the foxe saide it is a wonder thyng wene ye that
 I wolde not fayne goo with yow / yf it were so
 wyth me that I myght goo wyth yow / in suche
 wise that it no shame were vnto your lordshyp / I
 wold goo but nay it may not bee / herkene what
 I shal saye and muste nedes though it be to me
 vylonye and shame / whan Isegrym the wulf in
 the deuels name wente in to religion and become
 a monke shorn in the ordre / though the prouende
 of sixe monkes was not suffycient to hym / and
 had not ynough to ete he thenne playned and
 waylled so sore / that I had pyte on hym / for he
 becam slowe and seke / and by cause he was of
 my kynne I gaf hym counceyl to renne away and
 so he dyde / wherfore I stonde a cursed and am in
 the popes banne and sentence I wil to morow
 bytymes as the sonne riseth take my waye to rome
 for to be assoyled and take pardon and fro rome
 I wil ouer the see in to the holy lande and wil
 neuer retorne agayn till I haue doon so moche
 good that I may with worship goo wyth yow / hyt
 were grete repref to you my lord the kyng / in
 what londe that I accompanied you that men
 shold saye ye reysed and accompanied your self
 with a cursyd and persone agrauate /

The kynge sayde sith that ye stande a cursyd

F

in the censures of the churche yf I wente wyth
yow / men sholde arette vilonye vnto my crowne /
I shal thenne take kywaert or somme other to go
with me to kryekenpytte / and I counseylle you
reynart that ye put you your self out of this
curse /

my lord quod the foxe / therfore wylle I goo to
rome as hastely as I may / I shall not reste by
nyght ner day til I bee assoylled /

reynart said the kyng / me thynketh ye ben
torned in to a good waye / god gyue you grace
taccomplyssh wel your desyre /

Assone as this spekyng was don / noble the
kyng wente and stode vpon an hygh stage
of stone / And commanded sylence to alle
the bestes / and that they shulde sytte down in a
rynge rounde vpon the grasse eueriche in his
place after his estate and byrthe / reynart the foxe
stode by the quene / whom he ought wel to loue /

Thenne said the kyng / here ye alle that be
poure and riche yong and olde that stondest here /
reynart one of the heed offycers of my hows had
don so euyl whiche this daye shold haue been
hanged / hath now in this courte don so moche /
that I and my wyf the quene haue promysed to
hym our grace and frendshyp / The quene hath
prayde moche / for hym / in so moche that I haue
made pees wyth hym / And I gyue to hym his
lyf and membre / freely agayn / and I comande

you vpon your lyf / that he doo worship to /
 reynart his wyf and to his chyldren / where som-
 euer ye mete hem by day or night / and I wil
 also here nomoo complayntes of reynard / yf he
 hath hier to fore mysdon and trespaced / he wil
 nomore mysdo ne trespace / but now bettre him /
 he wylle to morowe / erly goo to the pope for
 pardone and foryeuenes of alle hys synnes and
 forth ouer the see to the holy lande / and he wil
 not come agayn til he brynge pardon of alle his
 synnes /

This tale herde tyselyn the rauen / and leep to
 ysegrym / to bruyn / and to tybert there as they
 were / and saide ye caytyfs / how goth it now /
 ye vnhappy folke what do ye here / reynard the
 foxe is now asquyer and a courtyer and right grete
 and myghty in the court / The kyng hath skylled
 hym quyte of alle his brokes and forgyuen hym
 all his trespaces and mysdedes / And ye be alle
 betrayed and apechyd /

ysegrym saide how may this be / I trowe tyselyn
 that ye lye

I do not certaynly saide the rauen /

Tho wente the wulf and the bere to the kyng
 Tybert the catte was in grete sorowe he was so
 sore a ferde / that for to haue the foxes frendship /
 he wold wel forgyue reynard the losse of his one
 eye that he loste in the prestes hows / he was so
 woo / he wist not what to doo / he wolde wel that
 he neuer had seen the foxe /

**How the woulf and the bere were
arestyd by the labour of reynart the
foxe capitulo .xviiij^o.**



Segrym cam proudly ouer the felde to fore the kyng / and he thanked the quene / and spack wyth afelle moed ylle wordes on the fuxe / in suche wise that the kyng herde it / and was wroth and made the woulf and the bere anon to be arestyd / ye sawe neuer wood dogges do / more harme / than was don to them they were bothe fast bounden so sore that alle that nyght / they myght not ster hande ne foot / They myght scarsely rore ne meue ony Ioynte / Now here how the fuxe forth dyde / he hated hem / he laboured so to the quene that he gate leue for to haue as moche of the beres skyn vpon his ridge as a foote longe and a foot brode for to make hym therof a scryppe / thenne was the fuxe redy yf he had foure stronge shoon / now here how he dyde for to gete these shoon /

he said to the quene / madame I am youre pylgrym / here is myn eme sir Isegrym that hath .iiij. stronge shoon whiche were good for me / yf he wolde late me haue two of them I wolde on the waye besyly thynke on your sowle / ffor it is ryght that a pylgrym shold alway thynke and praye for them that doo him good / Thus maye ye doo your sowle good yf ye will. And also yf ye myght gete of

wyth an heuy chere / And she loste ther her
hynder shoes.

Tho was the foxe glad and said to his aunte in
scorne / My dere aunte how moche sorow haue ye
suffred for my sake / whiche me sore repenteth /
sauf this / herof I am glad ffor ye be the lyeuest of
alle my kyn / Therefore I wyl gladly were your
shoen / ye shal be partener, of my pylgremage /
and dele of the pardon that I shal with your shoen
fecche ouer the see /

dame erswyne was so woo that she vnnethe
myghte speke / Neuertheles this she saide / A
reynart that ye now al thus haue your wyl / I pray
god to wreke it /

ysegrym and his felaw the bere helden their pees
and wheren al styll / they were euyl at ease / ffor
they were / bounden and sore wounded had tybert
the catte haue ben there / he shold also somewhat
haue suffred / in suche wyse / as he shokde not
escaped thens wythout hurte and shame



He next day whan the sonne aroos reynard
thenne dyde grece his shoes whiche he had
of ysegrym and erswyn his wyf / and dyd
hem on and bonde hem to his feet / and wente to
the kynge and to the quene and said to hem with
a glad chere / Noble lord and lady god gyue you
good morow and I desire of your grace that I may
haue male and staff blessyd as belongeth to a
pilgrym

Thenne the kynge anone / sent for bellyn the
ramme / and whan he cam he saide / sir bellyn ye
shal do masse to fore reynart / for he shal goo on
pylgrymage / and gyue to hym male and staf /

the ram answerd agayn and said / my lord I dare
not do that / flor he hath said that he is in the
popes curse /

The kynge said / what therof / mayster gelys
hath said to vs / yf a man had doo as many synnes
as al the world / and he wold tho synnes forsake /
shryue hem and resseyue penance / and do by the
prestes counseyl / god wil forgyue them and be
mercyful vnto hym now wil reynard goo ouer the
see in to the holy lande and make hym clere
of al his synnes /

Thenne ansuerd bellyn to the kynge I wil not
doo litil ne moche herin / but yf ye saue me harm-
les in the spirituel court byfore the bysshop pren-
delor and to fore his archedecken loosuynde / and to
for sir rapiamus his offycyal /

The kynge began to wexe wroth and saide / I
shal not bydde you so moche in half a yere / I had
leuer hange yow than I shold so moche praye you
for it /

whan the rame sawe that the kynge was angry /
he was so sore aferd that he quoke for fere / and
wente to the awter and sange in his bookes and
radde suche as hym thought good ouer reynart /
whiche lytyl sette ther by / sauf that he wold haue
the worship therof

Whan bellyn the ramme had alle sayd his
 seruyse deuoutly / thenne he hynged on the
 foxes necke / a male couerd with the skynne
 of bruyn the bere / and a lytil palster therby. tho
 was reynart redy toward his Iourney. tho loked
 he toward the kyng as he had ben sorowful to
 departe and fayned as he had wepte. right as he
 hadde yamerde in his herte. but yf he had ony
 sorow it was bycause al the other that were there
 were not in the same plyght as the wulf an bere
 were brought in by hym. neuertheles he stood
 and prayd them alle to praye for hym. lyke as he
 wold praye for them the foxe thought that he
 taryed longe and wold fayn haue departed for he
 knewe hym self gylty /

the kyng saide reynart I am sory ye be so
 hasty / and wil no lenger tarye /

nay my lord / it is tyme / for me ought not
 spare to doo wel / I pray you to gyue me leue to
 departe I muste doo my pylgremage /

the kyng sayd / god be wyth yow / and com-
 manded alle them of the court to go and conueyne
 reynart on his way sauf the wulf and the bere /
 whyche fast laye bounden / ther was none that
 durst be sory therfore / and yf ye had seen
 reynart how personably he wente wyth hys male
 and palster on his sholder and the shoes on his
 feet / ye shold haue laughed / he wente and shewde
 hym outward wysely / But he laughed in his
 herte that alle they brought hym forth / whiche

had a lytyl to fore been with. hym so wrooth / And
 also the kynge whiche so moche hated hym / he
 had made hym suche a fool that he brought hym
 to his owne entente he was a pylgrym of deux
 aas.

MY lord the kyng sayd the foxe I pray you to
 retorne agayn I wil not that ye goo ony
 ferther with me. ye myght haue harme
 therby. ye haue there two morderars arestyd / yf
 they escape you. ye myght be hurt by them y pray
 god kepe you fro mysaventure wyth these wordes
 he stode vp. on his afterfeet. And prayde alle the
 beestys grete and smal that wolde be partners of
 his pardon that they shold praye for hym /

They sayde that they alle wolde remembre
 hym /

Thenne departed he fro the kyng so heuily
 that many of them ermed /

Thenne said he to kyward the hare / and to
 bellyn th ramme meryly / dere frendes shal we
 now departe / Ye wil and god will accompanye me
 ferther / ye two made me neuer angry / ye be good
 for to walke wyth / courtoys / frendly and not
 complayned on of ony beeste ye be of good con-
 ditions / and goostly of your lyuyng / ye lyue
 bothe as I dyde / whan I was a recluse / yf ye haue
 leeuus and gras ye be plesyd / ye retche not of
 brede / of flesshe / ne suche maner mete

with suche flateryng wordes hath reynard thise

two flatred / That they wente wyth hym tyl they
camen to fore his hows / maleperduys /

**How kywart the hare was slayn
by the fore / cap^o .xx**



Han the foxe was come to fore the yate
of his hows he sayde to bellyn the
ramme / cosyn ye shal abide here
withouthe / I and kywart wille goo in /
ffor I wille praye kywart to helpe me to take my
leue of ermelyn my wyf / and to comforte her and
my chyldren /

bellyn sayde I praye hym to comforte them wel /
wyth suche flater yng wordes brought he the hare
in to his hole in an euyl hour / There fonde they
dame ermelyn lyeng on the grounde with her
yonglyngis / whiche had sorowed moche ffor drede
of reynarts deth / but whan she sawe hym come
she was glad / but whan she sawe his male and
palster / and espyed his shoes / she meruailled and
sayd dere reynerd how haue ye spedd /

he sayd I was arestid in the court / But the
kynge let me gon / I muste goo a pilgremage /
Bruyn the bere and ysegrym thew ulf they be
plegge for me. I thanke the kyng / he hath
gyuen to vs kywart hier / ffor to doo with hym
what we wyl / The kyng saide hym self that
kywart was the first that on vs complayned / And

by the fayth that I owe yow I am right wroth on
kywart /

whan kywart herde these wordes he was sore
aferde / He wold haue fledde / but he myght not /
ffor the foxe stode bytwene hym and the yate / And
he caught hym by the necke / Tho cryed the hare
helpe bellyn helpe / Where be ye This pilgryme
sleeth me / but that crye was sone doon / for the
foxe had anon byten his throte a two /

Tho sayd he late vs go ete this good fatte hare /
the yonge whelpes cam also / Thus helde they a
great feste / ffor kywart had a good fatte body /
ermelyn ete the flessch and dranke the blood / she
thanked ofte the kyng that he had made them so
mery / The foxe saide ete as moche as ye maye /
he wil paye for it / yf we will feche it.

SHe sayd reynart I trowe ye mocke / telle
me the trouthe how ye be departed thens /
dame I haue so flaterid the kyng and
the quene / that I suppose the frendship bytwene
vs shal be right thynne whan he shal knowe of
this / he shal be angry / and hastely seke me for
to hange me by myne necke / Therfore late vs
departe and stele secretly a way in somme other
foreste / Where we may lyue wythoute fere and
drede / and there that we may lyue vij yere and
more and fynde vs not / there is plente of
good mete of partrychs / wododekkis and moche
other wilde fowle / dame and yf ye wil come with

me thyder / ther ben swete welles and fayr and clere
rennyng brokes / lord god how swete eyer is there /
There may we be in pees and ease and lyue in
grete welthe / ffor the kyng hath lete me gon by
cause I tolde hym that ther was grete tresour in
krekenpyt / but there shal he fynde nothyng
though he sought euer / This shal sore angre hym
whan he knoweth that he is thus deceyuid what
trowe ye how many a grete lesynge muste I lye /
er I coude escape from hym / It was harde that I
escaped out of pryson / I was neuer in gretter
paryl ne nerrer my deth / but how it euer goo / I
shal by my wille neuer more come in the kynges
daunger / I haue now gotten my thombe out of his
mouth / that thanke I my subtylyte.

DAme ermelyne saide reynart I counseyle that
we goo not in to another foreste / where
we sholde be strange and elenge we haue
here al that we desyre / And ye be here lorde of
our neyghbours / wherfore shalle we leue this
place / And aenture vs in a worse / we may abyde
her sure ynough / yf the kyng wold doo vs ony
harme or besiege vs / here ben so many by or
side holes / in suche wyse as we shal escape from
hym / in abydyng here / we may not doo amys / we
knowe alle bypathes ouer alle / and er he take vs
with myght / he muste haue moche helpe therto but
that ye haue sworn that ye shal goo ouersee and
abide there / that is the thyng that toucheth me moste.

nay dame care not therefore / how more for
 sworn / how more forlorn / I wente ones with a
 good man / that said to me / that a bydwongen
 oth' or oth sworn for force. was none oth. Though
 I wente on his pilgremage it shold not auaylle me
 a cattes tayl. I wil abyde here and folowe your
 counseyl / yf the kyng hunte after me. I shal
 kepe me as wel as I maye. yf he be me to
 myghty. yet I hope wyth subtylte to begyle hym.
 I shall vnbynde my sack. yf he wil seche harm he
 shal fynde harme.



Ow was bellyn the ramme angry that
 kyward his felawe was so longe in the
 hole / and called lowde. come out kyward
 in the deuels name. how longe shal reynard kepe
 you there / haste you and come late vs goo /

when reynard herde this' he wente out and saide
 softly to bellyn the ramme. lief bellyn wherfore be
 ye angry kyward speketh wyth his dere aunte. me
 thynketh ye ought not to be dysplesid therfore. he
 bad me saye to yow ye myght wel go to fore'
 And he shal come after' he is lighter of fote than
 ye. he muste tarye a whyle wyth his aunte and
 her chyl dren. they wepe and crye by cause I shal
 goo fro them /

bellyn sayde' what dyde kyward. me thoughte
 cryed after helpe /

the foxe answerd / what saye ye bellyne wene
 ye that he shold haue ony harme / now herke

what he thenne dyde / whan we were comen in to
myn hows / and ermelyn my wyf vnderstode that I
shold goo ouer see she fyl down in a swoun and
whan kywart sawe that / he cryed loude bellyn
come helpe myn aunte to brynge her out of her
swoun

thenne sayde the ramme In fayth I vnderstode
that kywart had ben in grete daunger /

the foxe sayde / nay truly / or kyward shold
haue ony harme in my hows / I had leuer that my
wyf and chyl dren shold suffre moche hurte /

**How the foxe sente the heed of
kywart the hare to the kyng by bel-
lyn the ramme. capitulo xxj^o.**

HHe foxe saide / bellyn remembre ye not
that yesterday the kyng and his coun-
seyl commanded me that er I shold
departe out of this lande / I shold
sende to hym two lettres. dere cosyn I pray you to
bere them. they be redy wreton.

the ramme sayde I wote neuer yf I wiste that
your endyttyng and wrytyng were good / ye myght
pareuenture so moche praye me that I wold bere
them / yf I had ony thyng to bere them in /

reynarde saide ye shal not fayle to haue som
what to bere them in / rather than they shold be
vnborn I shal rather gyue yow my male that I

bere. and put the kynges lettres therin. and hange them aboute your necke ye shal haue of the kyngre grete thanke therfore and beryghtwelcomen to hym.

hier vpon bellyn promysed hym to bere these lettres

tho returned reynart in to his hows and toke the male and put therin kywarts heed and brought it to bellyn for to brynge hym in daunger / And henge it on his necke / and chargyd hym not for to loke in the male / yf he wolde haue the kyngis frendship and yf ye wil that the kyngre take you in to his grace and loue you / saye that ye your self haue made the lettre and endited it / and haue gyuen the counseyl that it is so wel made and wretton / ye shal haue grete thank therfore /

bellyn the ramme was glad herof and thought he shold haue grete thank and saide reynarde I wote wel that ye now doo for me / I shal be in the court gretly preysed when it is knowen that I can so wel endyte and make alettre / though I can not make it / ofte tymes it happeth that god suf-freth somme to haue worship and thanke of the labouris and connyng of other men / and so it shal bifalle me now / Now what counseyle ye reyner / shal kywart he hare come wyth me to the court /

nay sayd the foxe / he shal anone folowe yow / he may not yet come / for he muste speke wyth his aunte /

Now goo ye forth to fore / I shal shewe to
kywart secrete things whiche ben not yet
knownen /

bellyn sayde fare wel reynart / and wente hym
forth to the court / and he ran and hasted so faste
that he cam to fore mydday to the court / and
fonde the kyng in his palays wyth his barons /
the kyng meruaylled when he saw hym brynge
the male agayn whiche was made of the beres
skyn / the kyng saide saye on bellyn fro whens
come ye / where is the foxe / how is it that he hath
not the male with hym /

bellyn sayd my lord I shal saye yow al that I
knowe / I accompayned reynard vnto his hows /
And when he was redy he asked me yf I that
wold ffor your saacke bere two. lettres to yow / I
saide for to do you playsir and worship / I wold
gladly bere to yow vij. tho brought he to me
this male where in the lettres be / whiche ben
endytet by my connyng and I gaf counseyl of the
makynge of them / I trowe ye sawe neuer lettres
better ne craftelyer made ne endytet /

The kyng commanded anon bokart his secre-
tarye to rede the lettres / ffor he vnderstode al
maner langages / tybert the catte and he toke
the male of bellyns necke / and bellyn hath so
ferre sayd and confessyd / that he therfore was
dampned.

He clerke bokwart vndyde the male / and
drew out kywarts heed and said alas what
lettres ben these / certaynly my lord this
is kywarts heed /

alas sayde the kyng that euer I beleuid so the
foxe / There myghte men see grete heuynesse of
the kyng and of the quene / the kyng was so
angry that he helde longe down his heed And atte
laste after many thoughtes / he made a grete crye /
that alle the bestys were aferde of the noyse /

Tho spack sir firaheel / the lupaerd whiche was
sybbe somewhat to the kyng / and saide / sire kyng
how make ye suche a noyse ye make sorow ynough
though the quene were deed / late this sorowe goo/
and make good chere / it is grete shame / be ye
not a lorde and kyng of this londe / Is it not alle
vnder yow / that here is /

the kyng sayde sir firaheel how sholde I suffre
this / one false shrewe and deceyuaur hath be-
trayed me and brought me so ferre / that I haue
forwrought and angred my frendes / that I the
stoute bruyn the bere / and ysegrym the wulf /
whiche sore me repenteth / and this goth ayenst
my worship that I haue done amys ayenst my
beste barons and that I trusted and beleuid so
moche the fals horeson the foxe / and my wyf is
cause therof / she prayde me so moche that I herde
her prayer and that me repenteth / though it be
to late /

what thawh sir kyng said the lupaerd / yf ther

G

be ony thing mysdon / it shal be amended we
shal gyue to bruyne the bere to ysegrym the wulf /
and to erswyn hys wyf for the pece of his skynne
and for their shoes for to haue good pees bellyn
the ramme / for he hath confessyd hymself that he
gaf counseyl and consentyd to kywardes deth / it
is reson that he aby it / And we alle shal goo
fecche reynard and we shal areste hym and hange
hym by the necke withoute lawe or Iugement / and
ther with alle shul be contente/

**How bellyn the ramme and alle
his lignage were gyuen in the handes
of ysegrym and bruyne and how he
was slayn / capitulo .xxij^o.**



He kyng saide I wil do it gladly /
sirapel the lupaerd wente tho to the
pryson / and vnbonde them firste / and
thenne he sayde ye sires I brynge to
you a faste pardon and my lordes loue and frend-
ship it repenteth hym and is sory that he euer hath
don spoken or trespaced ayenst you / and therefore
ye shal haue a good appoyntement / And also
amendes he shal / gyue to you bellyn the ramme
and alle his lignage fro now forthon to domes laye /
in suche wyse that where someuer ye fynde them in
felde or in wode that ye may frely byte and ete
them wythoute ony forfayte / And also the kyng

graunteth to yow / that ye maye hunte and do the
werst ye can to reynard and alle his lynage wyth-
oute mysdoing This fayr grete pryuelage wylle the
kyng graunte to you euer to holde of hym / And
the kyng wille that ye swere to hym neuer to
mysdoo / but doo hym homage and feawte I coun-
seil yow to doo this / ffor ye may doo it honorably /

Thus was the pees made by fyrapel the lupaerd
frendly and wel / And that coste bellyn the ramme
his tabart and also his lyf / and the wulfis lignage
holde these preuilegis of the kyng / and in to thys
daye they deuoure and ete bellynys lignage where
that they may fynde them this debate was begonne
in an euyl tyme / ffor the pees coude neuer syth
be made betwene them /

The kyng dyde forth wyth his courte and
feste lengthe xij. dayes lenger for loue of the
bere and the wulf / So glad was he of the making
of this pees /

END OF VOL. I.

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EDMUND GOLDSMID, F.R.H.S.

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VOL. II.
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THE
HISTORY
OF
KEYNARD THE FOX.

BY
WILLIAM CAZTON.

EDWARD GOLDSMID, F.R.S.

VOL. II.

LONDON: PRINTED BY EDWARDS.



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**This Edition is limited to seventy-five Large
Paper copies, and two hundred and seventy-five
Small Paper copies, issued only to Subscribers.**

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THE HISTORY OF REYNARD THE FOX.

[THE SECOND PART.]

**How the kynge helde his feeste /
and how lapreel the cony complayned
vnto the kynge vpon reynard the
foxe capitulo xxiiij^o.**



O this grete feste cam al maner of
beestis / ffor the kynge dyde do crye
this feste ouer alle in that londe / Ther
was the moste Ioye and myrthe that
euer was seen emonge beestis / Ther was daunsed
manerly the houedaunce with shalmouse trompettis
and alle maner of menestralsye / the kynge dyde
do ordeyne so moche mete / that euerych fonde
ynough / And ther was no beest in al his lande so
grete ne so lytyl but he was there / and ther were
many fowles and byrdes also / and alle they that
desired the kynges frendship were there / sauynge
reynard the fowe / the rede false pilgrym whiche
laye in a wayte to doo harme / and thoughte it
was not good for hym to be there / Mete and
drynke flowde there / Ther weere playes and
esbatemens / The feest was ful of melodye / One
myghte haue luste to see suche a feeste /

and right as the feeste had dured viij dayes / a
boute mylday cam in the cony lapreel to fore the
kynge where he satte on the table with the quene /
and sayde al heuylly that all they herde hym that
were there / My lorde haue pyte on my complaynt
whiche is of grete force and murdre that reynard
the foxe wold haue don to me / yester morow as I
cam rennyng by his borugh at maleperdhuis he
stode byfore his dore without lyke a pylgryme / I
supposed to haue passed by hym peasibly toward
this feste and whan he sawe me come / he came
ayenst me sayeng his bedes I salewed hym / but
he spack not one worde / but he raught out his
right foot and dubbed me in the necke bytwene
myn Eeris / that I had wende I sholde haue loste
my heed / but god be thanked I was so lyght that
I sprange fro hym / wyth moche payne cam I of
his clawes / he grymmed as he had ben angry by
cause he helde me no faster / tho I escaped from
hym I loste myn one ere / and I had foure grete
holes in my heed of his sharpe nayles that the
blood sprange out / and that I was nyhe al a
swoun / but for the grete fere of my lyf I sprange
and ran so faste fro hym that he coude not ouertake
me / See my lord thise grete woundes that he hath
made to me with his sharpe longe nayles / I pray
yow to haue pite of me and that ye wil punyssh
this false traytour and morderar / or ellis shal ther
noman goo and comen ouer the heth in saefte /
whyles he haunteth his false and shrewde rewle /

**How corbant the roke complayned
on the fore for the deth of his wyf
capitulo .xxiij^o.**

Ryght as the cony had made an ende of
his complaynt / cam in corbant the roke
flo wen in the place to fore the kyng
and sayde / dere lorde here me / I
brynge you hier a pietous complaynt / I wente to
day by the morow wyth sharpebek my wyf for to
playe vpon the heth And there laye reynart the
foxe down on the grounde lyke a dede keytyf /
hys eyen stared and his tonge henge longe out of
his mouth / lyke an hounde had been deed / we
tasted and felte his bely / but we fonde theron no
lyf / tho wente my wyf and herkened and leyde
her ere to fore his mouth for to wite yf he drewe
his breeth / whiche mysfyller her euyl / ffor the
false felle foxe awayted wel his tyme and whan he
sawe her so nygh hym / he caught her by the heed
and boote if of / tho was I in grete sorowe and
cryde lowde / Alas alas what is there happed /
thenne stode he hatelsy vp / and raught so couet-
ously after me that for feere of deth / I trembled
and flewh vpon a tree therby and sawe fro ferre
how the false keytyf ete and slonked her in so
hungerly that he leste neyther flessch ne bone /
nomore but a fewe fethers / the smal fethers he
slange them in wyth the flessch / he was so hungry /
he wolde wel haue eten tweyne / Tho wente he

his strete / tho flewe I down wyth grete sorow and
gadred vp the fetheris for to shewe them to you
here / I wolde not be agayn in suche peryl and
fere as I was there for a thousand marke / of the
fynest gold that euer cam out of arabye / My lord
the kynge see hier this pyteous werke / Thise ben
the fethers of sharpbecke my wyf / my lord yf ye
wil haue worship ye muste do herfore Iustyce and
auenge you in suche wise as men may fere and
holde of yow / ffor yf ye suffre thus youre sauf-
conduyt to be broken / ye your self shal not goo
peasily in the hye way / for tho lordes that do
not Iustyce and suffre that the lawe be not
executed vpon the theeuis / morderars and them
that mysdoo / they be parteners to fore god of alle
theyr mysdedes and trespasses / and eueryche
thenne / wyll be a lord hym self / dere lorde see
wel to for to kepe your self.

How the kynge was sore angry of thise complayntes capitulo .xxv^o.

NOble the kynge was sore meuyd and
angry whan he had herde thise com-
playntes of the cony and of the roke /
he was so ferdful to loke on that his
eyen glymmerd as fyre / he brayed as lowde as a
bulle in suche wise that alle the court quoke for
feere / at the laste he sayde cryeng / by my crowne

and by the trouthe that I owe to my wyf, I shal
 so awreke and auenge this trespaces / that it shal
 be longe spoken of after / that my sauconduyt
 and my commandement is thus broken I was ouer
 nyce that I beleuid so lyghtly the false shrewe /
 his false flateryng speche deceyued me / He tolde
 me he wolde go to rome / and for thens ouer see
 to the holy londe / I gaf hym male and palster
 and made of hym a pylgrym and mente al trouth /
 O what false touches can he / how can he stufe
 the sleue wyth flockes / but this caused my wyf /
 it was al by her counseyl / I am not the fyrst that
 haue been deceyued by wymmens counseyl by
 whiche many a grete hurte hath byfallen / I pray
 and comande alle them that holde of me and
 desire my frendship / be they here or where
 someuer they be / that they wyth theyr counseyl
 and deles helpe me tauenge this ouer geete*
 trespaas / that we and owris may abyde in honour
 and worship / and this false thief in shame that
 he nomore trespace ayenst our saufiguarde / I wil
 mysell in my persone helpe therto all that I maye /



Segrym the wulf and bruyne the bere herde
 wel the kynges wordes / and hoped wel to
 be auengid on reynard the foxe but they
 durste not speke one word The kyngc was so sore
 meuyd that none durst wel speke /

Atte laste the quene spak / Sire pour dieu ne

* Great.

croyes mye toutes choses que on vous dye / et ne
 Iures pas legierment / A man of worship shold not
 lyghtly belieue ne swere gretly vnto the tyme he
 knewe the mater clerly. ana also he ought by right
 here that other partye speke. There ben many
 that complayne on other and ben in the defaute
 them self. **Audi alteram partem.** here that
 other partye / I haue truly holden the foxe for
 good / and vpon that / that he mente no falsehede /
 I helped hym that I myghte but how someuer it
 cometh or gooth / is he euyl or good / me thynk-
 eth for your worship that ye shold not procede
 ayenst hym ouer hastely that were not good ne
 honeste / ffor he may not escape fro you. Ye
 maye prysone hym or flee hym / he muste obeye
 your Iugement /

thenne saide fyrapel the lupaerd / My lord me
 thynketh / my lady here hath saide to you trouthe
 and gyuen yow good counseyl do ye wel and
 folowe her and take aduyse of your wyse counseyl /
 And yf he be founden gylty in the trespasses that
 now to yow be shewd / late hym be sore punyshid
 acording to hys trespasses / And yf he come not
 hyther / er this feste be ended and excuse hym /
 as he ought of right to doo / thenne doo as the
 counseyl shal aduyse yow / But and yf he were
 twyes as moche false and ylle as he is / I wolde
 not counseylle that he sholde be done to more
 then right /

Isegrym the wulf said sir fyrapal. all we agree

to the same' as ferre as it plescth my lord the kynge / it can not be better. But though reynart were now here. and he cleryd him of double so many playntes yet shold I brynge forth ayenste hym that he had forfayted his lyf. But I wyl now be styлле and saye not. by cause he is not presente and yet aboue alle this he hath tolde the kynge of certayn tresour lyeng in kreckenpyt in hulsterlo. Ther was neuer lyed a greter lesyng. ther wyth he hath vs all begyled. and hath sore hyndred me and the bere. I dar leye my lyf theron that he sayd not therof a trewe worde. Now robbeth he and steleth vpon the heth / alle that gooth forth by his hows / Neuertheles sir firapel that pleseth the kynge and yow / that muste wel be don / But and yf he wolde haue comen hyther / he myght haue ben here for he had knowleche by the kynges messenger /

The kynge sayde we wyl none otherwyse sende for hym / But I commande alle them that owe me seruyse and wyllle my honour and worshippe that they make them redy to the warre at the ende of vj dayes / all them that ben archers and haue bowes / gones / bombardes / horsemen / and footemen that alle thise be redy to besiege maleperduys / I shal destroye reynart the foxe / yf I be a kynge / ye lordes and sires what saye ye hereto wille ye doo this wyth a good wyl /

And they sayd and cryed alle / ye we lorde/ whan that ye wyllle / we shal alle goo with yow.

**Now grymbert the dasse warned
the fore / that the kyng was wroth
and wold slee hym capitulo .xxvij^o.**



Alle these wordes herde grymbert the
dasse whiche was his brother sone / he
was sory and angry yf it myght haue
prouffyt he ranne thenne the hie way
to maleperduys ward / he spared nether busshe ne
hawe / but he hasted so sore that he swette / he
sorowed in hym self for reynart his rede eme / and
as he wente hesaide to hym self Alas in what daunger
be ye comen in / where shal ye become shal I see
you brought fro lyf to deth / or elles exyled out of
the lande / truly I may be wel sorouful / for ye
be heed or alle our lygnage / ye be wyse of coun-
seyll / ye be redy to helpe your frendes whan they
haue nede / ye can so wel shewe your resons /
that where ye speke / ye wyne all /

with suche maner wayllyng / and pytous wordes
cam grymbert to maleperduys /

And fonde reynart his eme there standyng /
whiche had gotten two pygeons / as they cam first
out of her nest to assaye yf they coude flee and
because the fethers on her wyngis were to
shorte / they fylle doun to the ground / And as
reynart was gon out to seche his mete / he espyed
them and caught hem and was comen home with
hem /

And whan he saw grymbert comyng / he
 taryed and said / welcome my best beloued neuwe
 that I knowe in al my kynrede / ye haue ronne
 faste / ye ben al be swette / haue ye ony newe
 tydynges /

alas said he / lyef eme it standeth euyl wyth
 yow / ye haue loste both lyf and good / the kyng
 hath sworn that he shal gyue you a shameful deth /
 he hath commanded alle his folke withyn vj dayes
 for to be here / Archers / fotemen / horsemen /
 And peple in waynes And he hath gunnes / bom-
 bardes tentes and pauyllyons / And also he hath do
 laaden torches / See to fore yow / For he haue
 nede / Ysegrym and bruyn ben better now wyth
 the kyng than I am wyth yow / Alle that they
 wille / Is doon / Isegrym hath don hym to vnder-
 stande that ye be a theef and a morderar he hath
 grete enuye to vow. Lapreel the cony and Cor-
 bant the roek haue made a grete complaynt also.
 I sorow moche for your lyf. That for drede I am
 alle seke.

Puf said the foxe / der neuwe is ther nothyng
 ellis / be ye so sore aferd herof Make good chere
 hardely / though the kyng hym self and alle that
 ben in the court had sworn my deth / yet shal I
 be exalted aboue them alle / They may alle faste
 Iangle clatre and yeue counsyle / but the courte
 may not prospere wythoute me and my wyles and
 subtylte

**How Reynart the foxe cam another
tyme to the courte capitulo .xxvij^o.**



Ere newew late alle these thynges passe
and come here in / and see what I shal
gyue you / a good payre of fatte
pygeons / I loue no mete better / They
ben good to dygeste / they may almoste be
swolowen in al hool / the bones ben half blode /
I ete them wyth that other. I fele my self other
whyle encombred in my stomak therefore ete I
gladly lyght mete. My wyf ermelyn shal receyue
vs frendly / but telle her nothyng of this thyng /
ffor she sholde take it ouer heuily / she is tendre
of herte, she myghte for fere falle in somme sekene /
a lytyl thyng gooth sore to her herte. And to
morow erly I wil goo with yow to the courte /
And yf I may come to speche and may be herde /
I shal so ansuere / that I shal touche somme nygh
ynowh / newew wyl not ye stande by me / as a
frende oughte to doo to another /

yes truly dere eme said grymbert and alle my
good is at your commandement /

god thanke you newew saide the foxe / That is
wel said. yf I may lyue I shal quyte it yow /

Eme said grymbert ye may wel come tofore alle
the lordes and excuse yow ther shall none areste
yow ne holde as longe as ye be in your wordes /
The quene and the lupaerd haue goten that /

then said the foxe / therfor I am glad / thenne
I carre not for the beste of them an heer / I shal
wel saue my self /

they spake nomore herof / but wente forth in
to the burgh / And fonde ermelyn there sittynge by
her yonglyngs whiche aroose vp anon and receyuid
them frendly / Grymbert salewed his aunte and the
chyl dren with friendly wordes / th: ij pygeons
were made rede for theyr soper / Whiche rey-
nard had taken / eche of them toke his part as
ferre as it wolde stratche / yf eche of hem had
had one more / ther sholde but lytyl haue lefte
ouer / the foxe saide / lief nouewe / how lyke / ye
my chyl dren rosel and reynerdyn they shal do wor-
ship to alle our lygnage / They begynne al redy to
do wel / that one catcheth wel a chyken and that
other a pullet / They conne wel also duke in the
water after lapwynches and dokys / I wolde ofte
sende them for prouande / but I wil fyrste teche
them how they shal kepe them fro the grynnes /
fro the hunters and fro the houndes / yf they were
so ferre comen that they were wyse / I durste
wel truste to them that they shold wel vityallye vs
in many good diuerses metes / That we now lacke /
And they lyke and folowe me wel / ffor they playe
alle grymmyng and where they hate they loke
frendly and meryly· ffor ther by they brynge them
vnder ther feet / And byte the throte asondre /
This is the nature of the foxe / They be swyfte
in their takyng whiche pleseth me wel.



Me said grymbert ye may be glad that ye
haue suche wyse chyldren / And I am
glad of them also by cause they be of my
kynne /

Grymbert said the foxe ye haue swette and be
wery it were hye tyde that ye were at your
reste /

Eme yf it plesse you it thynketh me good. Tho
laye they down on a lytier made of strawe / the
foxe hys wyf and his chyldren went alle to slepe /
But the foxe was all heuy / and laye' sighed and
sorrowed how he myghte best excuse hym self /

On the morow erly he ruymed his castel and
wente with grymbart / but he toke leue first of
dame ermelyn his wyf and of his chyldren / and
sayde thynke not longe I muste goo to the court
wyth grymbert my cosyn / yf I tarye somewhat be
not aferde / and yf ye here ony ylle tydyngis / take
it alway for the beste. And see wel to your self
and kepe our castel wel I shal doo yonder the
beste I can after that I see how it gooth

Alas reyner said she how haue ye now thus taken
vpon yow for to go to the court agayn / the last
tyme that ye were there ye were in grete ieopardye
of your lyf. And ye sayde ye wold neuer come
there more.

dame said the foxe. thauenture of the world
is wonderly it goth otherwhyle by wenyng / Many
one weneth to haue a thing whiche he muste for-
goo. I muste nedes now go thyder / be content

it is al wythoute drede / I hope to come at alther
lengest with in fyue dayes agayn /

Here wyth he departed and wente with grymbert
to the court ward / And whan they were vpon the
heeth thenne sayde reyner / Neuw syth I was
last shryuen I haue don many shrewde tornes / I
wolde ye wold here me now of alle that I haue
trespaced in / I made the bere to haue a grete
wounde for the male whiche was cuted out of his
skynne / And also I made the wulf aud his wyf to
lese her shoon / I peased the kynge with grete
lesyngis and bare hym on honde that the wulf and
the bere wold haue betrayed hym and wolde haue
slayn him / so I made the kynge right wroth with
them' where they deseruyd it not / also I tolde to
the kynge that there was grete tresour in hulsterlo
of whiche he was neuer the better ne richer / for
I lyed al that I sayde / I ledde bellyn the ramme
and kywart the hare with me / and slewe kywart
and sente to the kynge by bellyn kywarts heed in
skorn / And I dowed the cony bytwene his eeris
that almost I benamme his lyf from hym ffor he
escaped ayenst my wyl / he was to me ouerswyft /
The roeke may wel complayne / for I swolowed
in dame sharpbeck his wyf / and also I haue for
goten on thyng the laste tyme that I was shreuen
to you / Which I haue syth bethought me / And
it was of grete deceyte that I dyde whiche I now
wyll telle yow /

I cam wyth the wulf walkynge bytwene

houthulst and eluerdyng / There sawe we goo a
rede mare / And she had a black colte or a fool of
iiij monethis olde / whiche was good and fatte
Isegrym was almost storuen for hunger / And
prayd me goo to the mare / and wyte of her yf she
wold selle her fool /

I ran faste to the mare / And axed that of her /
she sayd she wold selle it for money /

I demaunded of her how she wold selle it /

she sayde it is wretou in my hyndre foot / Yf
ye conne rede and be a clerk ye may come see and
rede it.

Tho wyste I wel where she wold be. and I
saide nay for sothe I can not rede / And also I
desyre not to bye your chylde. Isegrym hath sente
me hether. and wold fayn knowe the prys therof /
the mare saide late him comme thenne hym
self / And I shall late hym haue knowleche /

I sayde / I shal / and hastely weete to ysegrym
and saide / eme will ye ete your bely ful of this
colte / so goo faste to the mare for she taryeth
after yow / She hath do wryte the pris of her
colte vnder her fote she wolde that I shold haue
redde it / but I can not one lettre / which me sore
repenteth / ffor I wente neuer to scole / eme wylle
ye bye that colte / conne ye rede so maye ye bye
it /

oy newew that can I wel what shold me lette / I
can wel frenshe latyn englissh and duche. I haue
goon to scole at oxenford I haue also wyth olde

and auncyent doctours ben in the audyence and
herde plees / and also haue gyuen sentence / I am
lycensyd in bothe lawes / what maner wrytyng
that ony man can deuise / I can rede it as
perfyghtly as my name. I wyl goo to her and shal
anon vnderstonde the prys / and he bade me to
tarye for hym /

and he ranne to the mare / and axed her how
she wold selle her fool or kepe it /

she sayde the somme of the money standeth
wreton on my fote

he said lete me rede it

she said doo and lyste vp her foot whiche was
newe shood wyth yron and vj stronge nayles / and
she smote hym wythout myssyng on his heed that
he fyl doun as he had ben deed / a man shold wel
haue ryden a myle er he aroos / The mare
trotted a way wyth her colte / And she left
Isegrym lyeng shrewdly hurt and wounded He
laye and bledde / And howled as an hound / I
wente tho to hym and sayde / Sir ysegrym dere
eme how is it now wyth yow. haue ye eten
ynowh of the colte. is your bely ful. why gyue
ye me no part I dyde your errande. haue ye slepte
your dyner I pray yow telle me what was wreton
vnder the mares fote. what was it. prose or ryme.
metre or verse. I wold fayn knowe it. I trowe it
was cantum. for I herde you synge me thoughte
fro ferre. for ye were so wyse that noman coude
rede it better than ye

Alas reynart alas said the wulf I pray you to
 leue youre mockyng. I am so foule arayed and
 sore hurte / than an herte of stone myght haue
 pyte on me. The hore wyth her longe legge had
 an yron foot I wende the nayles therof had ben
 lettres / and she hytte me at the fyrst stroke vj.
 grete woundes in my heed that almost it is clouen.
 suche maner lettres shal I neuer more desire to
 rede /

Dere eme is that trouthe that ye telle me / I
 haue grete meruaylle / I heelde you for one of the
 wysest clerkes that now lyue / Now I here wel / it
 is true that I long syth haue redde and herde /
 that the best clerkes ben not the wysest men /

The laye peple otherwhyle wexe wyse / the
 cause that these clerkes ben not the wysest / is that
 they studye so moche in the connyng and science /
 that they therin doole / Thus brought I Isegrym
 in this grete laste and harme. That he vnneth
 byhelde his lyf /

IYef newew now haue I tolde yow alle my
 synnes that I remembre. What so euer
 falle at the courte. I wo'e neuer how it
 shal stonde with me there. I am not now so sore
 aferd' ffor I am clere from synne I wyl gladly
 come to mercy / and receyue penance by your
 counseyl'

grymbert sayde the trespaces ben grete / neuer-
 theles who that is deed must abyde deed. and

therefore I wyl forgyue it you alto gydre / With the
 fere that ye shal suffre therefore / er ye shal conne
 excuse yow of the deth / and hier vpon I wyl
 assoylle you. but the moste hyndre that ye shal
 haue shal be. that ye sente kywarts heed to the
 court And that ye blynded the kyng wyth sutthe
 lyes / Eme that was right euyl doon /

The foxe sayde. what lyef neuew. Who that
 wyl go thurgh the world this to here. and that to
 see / and that other to telle. truly it may not clerly
 be done. how shold ony man handle hony. but yf
 he lycked his syngres. I am oftymes rored and
 prycked in my conscience as to loue god aboue all
 thynges and myn euen crysten as my self. as is to
 god wel acceptable. and accordyng to his lawe /
 But how wene ye that reson wythin forth fyghteth
 ayenst the outeward wylle than stonde I alle style
 in my self that me thynketh I haue loste alle my
 wittes / And wote not what me eyleth I am thenne
 in suche a thought / I haue now alle lefte my
 synnes / And hate alle thynges that is not good /
 and clymme in high contemplacion abone his com-
 mandements but this specyal grace haue I whan I
 am alone / But in a short whyle after whan the
 world cometh in me thenne fynde I in my waye so
 many stones / and the foot spores that thyse loos
 prelates / and riche preestys goo in / that I am
 anone taken agayn / thenne cometh the world and
 wyl haue this / And the flesshe wyl lyue plesantly /
 whiche leye to fore me so many things that I

thenne lese alle my good thoughtis and purpoos /
 I here there synge pype / lawhe / playe / and alle
 myrthe / And I here that these prelates and riche
 curates preche and saye al other wyse / than they
 thynke and doo / There lerne I to lye / the
 lesynges ben moste vsed in the lordes courtes /
 certaynly lordes / ladyes / prestis and clerkes
 maken moste lesyngis / Men dar not telle to the
 lordes now the trouthe / Ther is defaute / I muste
 flatre and lye also / or ellis I shold be shette
 wythoute the dore / I haue ofte herde men saye
 trouthe and rightfully / And haue theyr reson made
 with a lesynge lyke to theyr purpose and brought
 it in and wente thurgh by cause their mater shold
 seme the fayrer / The lesyng oftymes cometh
 vnaused / And falleth in the mater vnwetyngly.
 And so whan she is wel cladde / it goth forth
 thurgh with that other /

DEre neuwe thus muste men now lye here /
 and there saye soth flatre / and menace /
 praye and curse / And seke euery man
 vpon his feblest and wekest / who otherwyse wylle
 now haunte and vse the world / than deuise ale-
 syng in the fayrest wyse / and that bywymple with
 kerchieuis aboute in suche wise that men take it
 for a trouthe / he is not ronne away fro his maister /
 Can he that subtylte in suche wise that he stamer
 not in his wordes / and may thenne be herde /
 neuwe / this man may doo wonder he may were

skarlet and gryse / he wynneth in the spyrituel
lawe and temporal also and where sommeuer he
hath to doo / Now ben ther many false shrewis
that haue grete enuye that they haue so grete for-
dele / And wene that they conne also wel lye / And
take on them to lye and to telle it forth / he wolde
fayn ete of the fatte morsellis. but he is not so
bileued ne herd / And many ben ther that be so
plombe and folisshe that whan they wene beste to
prononce and shewe their matere and conclude.
They falle besyde and out therof. And can not
thenne helpe hem self / and leue theyr mater
wythout tayl or heed and he is a compted for a
fool / And many mocke them ther with / but who
can gyue to his lesynge a conclusion / and pro-
nonce it without tatelyng lyke as it were wretton to
fore hym / and that he can so blynde the peple /
That his lesynge shal better be bileuid than the
trouthe / That is the man. What connyng is it to
saye the trouthe that is good to doo. How lawhe
thise false subtyl shrewis that gyue counseyl to
make thise lesynges. and sette them forth / And
maken vnright goo aboue right / and make billes /
and sette in thynges that neuer were thought ne
sayd / and teche men see thurgh their fyngres And
alle for to wyne money / and late their tonges to
hyre for to mayntene and strengthe their lesyngis
alas neuewe this is an euyl connyng / of whiche
lyf. scathe and hurte may come ther of /

N Saye not but that otherwhyle men muste
Iape / bourde and lye in smale thyngis /
for who so sayth alway trouthe. he may not
now goo nowher thurgh the world. ther ben many
that playe placebo. who so alleway sayth trouth.
shal fynde many lettynge in his way. Men may
wel lye whan it is nede / and after amende it by
counseyl / ffor all trespasses / ther is mercy. Ther
is no man so wyse / but he dooleth other
whyle /

Grymbert sayde wel dere eme what thyng shal
you lette. ye knowe al thyng at the narewest / ye
shulde brynge me hastely in dotyng your resons
passen my vnderstandyng / what nede haue ye to
shryue you / ye shulde your self by right be the
preest / And lete me and other sheep come to you
for to be shruyen / ye knowe the state of the
world in such wyse as noman may halte tofore
you /

Wyth suche maner talkynge they cam walkyng
in to the court / The foxe sorowed somewhat in his
herte / Neuertheles he bare it out and stryked
forth thurgh alle the folke til he cam in to the place
where the kyng hym self was /

And grymbert was alway by the foxe and sayd
eme be not a ferde. and make good chere / who
that is hardy / thauenture helpeth hym / Oftymes
one day is better than somtyme an hole yere /

the foxe saide / Neuw ye saye trouthe / god
thanke you ye comfort me wel

And forth he wente and lokyd grymly here and there as who saith / what wylle ye here come I / he sawe there many of his kynne standyng which yonned hym but lytyl good / as the otter beuer and other to the nombre of .x. whome I shal. name afterward / And somme were there that loued hym.

The floxe cam in and fyl down on his knees to fore the kyng and began his wordes and sayde.

**How reynart the foxe excused
hym bifoze the kyng capitulo
.xxviiij^o.**



God fro whom nothyng may be hyd / and aboute alle thyng is myghty saue my lord the kyng and my lady the quene and gyue hym grace to knowe who hath right and who hath wronge / For ther lyue many in the world that seme otherwise outward than they be withinne / I wolde that god shewde openly euery mans mysdedes / and alle theyr trespaces stoden wreton in theyr forehedes / and it coste me more than I now saye / And that ye my lord the kyng knewe as moche as / I doo / how I dispose me bothe erly and late in your seruyse / And therefore am I complayned on of the euyl shrewys and wyth lesynges am put out of your grace and consayte / and wold charge me with grete offensis

wythoute deseruyng ayenst al right / Wherefore I crye out harowe on them that so falsely haue belyed me / and brought me in suche trowthes / how be it I hope and knowe you bothe my lorde and my lady for so wyse and discrete / that ye be not ledde nor bileuee suche lesyngis ne false talis out of the right waye for ye haue not be woned so to doo / Therefore dere lorde I biseche you to conside by your wysedom alle thynges by right and lawe / is it in deede or in speche / do euery man right / I desire no better he that is gylty and founde fawty late hym be punysshed / men shal wel knowe er I departe out of this courte / who that I am / I can not flatre I wil allewey shewe openly my heed.

How the kynge answered upon reynarts excuse.



Alle they that were in the palays weren alle styll and wondred that the foxe spack so stoutly / the kynge sayde / ha reynart how wel can ye your falacye and salutacion doon but your fayr wordes may not helpe you I thynke wel that ye shal this daye for your werkis be hanged by your necke / I wil not moche chide wyth you But I shal shorte your payne / that ye loue vs wel / that haue ye wel shewde on the cony and on corbant the roeck / your falsnes and your false

Inuencions shal without longe taryeng make you to deye / A pot may goo so longe to water / that at the laste it cometh to broken hoom / I thynke your potte that so ofte hath deceyued vs / shal now hastily be broken /

reynart was in grete fere of these wordes: he wold wel. he had ben at coleyn / when he cam thedyr / Thenne thought he I muste her thurgh / how that I doo

my lorde the kynge seyde he / it were wel reson that ye herde my wordes alle out / though I were dampned to the deth / yet ought ye to here my wordes out. I haue yet here to fore tyme gyuen to you many a good counseyl and prouffitable / And in nede alwey haue byden by yow where other beestis haue wyked and goon theyr way / yf now the euyl beestis with false maters haue to fore you wyth wronge belyed me / and I myght not come to myn excuse / ought I not thenne to playne / I haue to fore this seen that I shold be herde by fore another / yet myght these thyngis wel chaunge and come in theyr olde state / Olde good dedes ought to be remembrid / I see here many of my lygnage and frendes standyng that seme they sette no lytyl by me / Whiche neuertheles sholde sore dere in theyr hertes. that ye my lord the kynge sholde destroye me wrongfully yf ye so dyde he sholde destroye the trewest seruant that ye haue in alle your landes / what wene ye syr kynge / hadde I knowen my self gyilty in only

feat or broke. that I wold haue comen hether to the lawe emonge alle myne enemyes / Nay sire nay / not for alle the world of rede gold / ffor I was fre and at large / What nede had I to do that / but god be thanked I knowe my self clere of alle mysdedes that I dar wel come openly in the lyghte and to answeere to alle the complayntes that ony man can saye on me / but whan grymbert brought me first this tydyngis / tho was I not wel plesed but half fro my self that I lepe here and there as an vnwyse man / And had I not ben in the censures of the chyrche / I had wythoute taryeng haue comen / but I wente dolyng on the heeth / and wist not what to doo for sorowe /

ANd thenne it happed that mertyne myneme the ape mette wyth me. Whiche is wyser in clergie than somme preest. he hath ben aduocate for the bysshop of cameryk ix yere duryng. he sawe me in this grete sorow and heuynes. and saide to me / dere cosyn me thynketh ye ar not wel wyth your self / what eyleth yow. who hath dyspleseyth you. Thyng that thoucheth charge ought to be gyuen in knowleche to frendis. A triew frende is a grete helpe. he fyndeth ofte better counseyl than he that the charge resteth on. ffor who someuer is charged wyth maters is so heuy and acombred with them that ofte he can not begynne to fynde the remedye ffor suche be so woo lyke as they had loste theyr Inwytte.

I Saide dere eme ye saye trouthe. For in lyke wyse is fallen to me. I am brought in to a grete heuynes vnderuid and not gyilty / by one to whom I haue alway ben an herty and grete frende / that is the cony whiche cam to me yesterday in the morenyng where as I satte to fore my hows and sayd matyns /

He tolde me he wolde goo to the court and salewed me frendly and I hym agayne /

Tho sayd he to me / good reynard I am an hongred and am very / haue ye ony mete.

I saide ye ynowh come nere.

Tho gaf I hym a copel of maynchettis with swete butter / It was vpon a wednesday on which day I am not wonte to ete ony flesh / And also I fasted by cause of this feste of whitsontyd whiche approuched / For who that wylle taste of the ouerest wysehede / and lyue goostly in keypyng the commandements of our lord / he muste faste and make hym redy ayenst the hye festes / *Et vos estote parati* / dere eme I gaf hym fayr whyte breed with swete butter / wherwyth a man myght wel be easid that were moche hongry. .

And whan he had eten his bely fulle / tho cam russel my yongest sone / and wold haue taken away that was lefte / For yonge chyldren wold always fayne eten / And with that he tasted for to haue taken somewhat / the cony smote russel to fore his mouthe that his teeth bledde / and fyl doun half a swoun / whan reynardyn myn eldest

C

some sawe that. he sprange to the cony and caught hym by the heed. and shold haue slayn hym. had I not reskowed hym I helpe hym that he wente fro hym / and bete my chyde sore therefore.

lapreel the cony ran to my lord the kyng and saide I wold haue murdred hym See eme thus come I in the wordes / and I am leyde in the blame. And yet he complayneth and I playne not /

After this cam corbant the roek fleying wyth a sorouful noyse / I asked what hym eyed.

and he said alas my wyf is deed / yonder lyeth a dede hare full of mathes and wormes / and there she ete so moche therof. that the wormes haue byten a two her throte /

I axed hym how cometh that by / he wold not speke a worde more but flewe his waye / And lete me stande

Now saith he that I haue byten and slayn her / how shold I come so nygh her / for shee fleeth / and I goo a fote. beholde dere eme thus am I born an honde. I may saye wel that I am vnhappy / But paraenture it is for myn olde synnes / hit were good for me yf I coude paciently suffre it.

The ape saide to me / Neuw ye shal goo to the courte to fore the lordes and excuse yow /

ALas eme that may not be. ffor the arche-
deken hath put me in the popes curse /
by cause I counseyllid ysegrym the wulf for
to leue his religyon at elmare and forsake his

habyte / he complayned to me that he lyuyd so straytly as in longe fastyng and many thyngis redyng and syngyng that he coude not endure it. Yf he shold longe abyde there he shold deye. I had pyte of his complaynyng / And I helpe hym as a trewe frende that he cam oute. Whiche now me sore repenteth. for he laboureth al that he can ayenst me to the kynge for to do me behanged. thus doth he euyl forgood. See eme thus am I at the ende of al my wyttes and of counseyl. For I muste goo to rome for an absolucion. And thenne shal my wyf and chylde suffre moche harme and blame. For these euyl bestis that hate me / shulle do to hem alle the hurte they maye and fordryue them wher they can / And I wold wel defende hem yf I were fre of the curse / for thenne wold I goo to the court and excuse me / where now I dar not / I shold do grete synne yf I cam emonge the good peple / I am aferde god sholde plaghe me.



Ay cosyne be not aferd. er I shold suffre you in this sorow I knowe the way to rome wel. I vnderstande me on this werke. I am called ther mertyne the bisshops clerke. and am wel byknowen there. I shal do syte the arche-deken and take a plee ayenst hym. and shal brynge with me for you an absolucion ayenst his wil / for I knowe there alle that is for to be doon or lefte there dwelleth symon myn eme whiche is grete and myghty ther. who that may gyue ought /

he helpeth hym anon / ther is prentout* wayte
 scathe / and other / of my frendis and alyes Also I
 shal take somme money with me / yf I nede ony.
 the preyer is wyth yeftes hardy. wyth money ane-
 way the right goth forth. A trewe frende shal for
 his frende auentre both lyf and good / and so shal
 I for you in your right

Cosyn make good chere I shal not reste after to
 morow til I come to rome / and I shal solycyte
 your maters / And goo ye to the court as sone as ye
 may / all your mysdedes / and tho synnes that haue
 brought you in the grete sentence and curse / I
 make you quyte of them and take them in my self /
 whan ye come to the court ye shal fynde there
 rukenawe my wyf / her two susters and my thre
 chyldren and many mo of our lignage / dere cosyn
 speke to them hardely / my wyf his sondrely wyse /
 and wil gladly do somme what for her frendis / who
 that hath nede of helpe shal fynde on her grete
 frendship / one shal alway seke on his frendis /
 though he haue angred them / for blood must krep /
 where it can not goo / And yf so be that ye be so
 ouer chargyd that ye may haue no right / thenne
 sende to me by nyght and day to the courte of
 rome / and late me haue knowleche therof / and
 alle tho that ben in the lande is it kynge or quene /
 wyf or man I shall brynge then alle in the
 popes curse / and sende there an Interdicte
 that noman shal rede ne syngen ne crystene
 chyldren / ne burye the deede ne receyue sacra-

mente / tyl that ye shal haue good ryght / Cosyn
 this shal I wel gete / for the pope is so sore old
 that he is but lytil sette by / And the cardynal of
 pure gold hath alle the myght of the court / he is
 yonge and grete of frendis he hath a concubyne /
 whom he moche loueth / And what she desyreth
 that geteth she anone / see cosyn / she is myn
 nece / and I am grete and may doo moche with
 her in suche wyse / what I desyre / I faylle not of
 it / but am alway furtherd therin / wherfore cosyn
 byd my lord the kyng that he doo you right / I
 wote wel he wil not warne you / for the right is
 heuy ynough to euery man /

MY lord the kyng whan I herde this I
 lawhed / and wyth grete gladnes cam
 hether and haue told you alle trouthe /
 yf ther be ony in this court that can leye on me
 ony other mater wyth good witsnesse and preue it
 as ought to be to a noble man / late me thenne
 make amendes acordyng to the lawe / and yf he
 wil not leue of herbi / thenne sette me day and
 feld and I shal make good on hym also ferre as
 he be of as good birthe as i am and to me lyke /
 and who that can wyth fyghtyng getethe worship
 of the felde / late hym haue it / this right hath
 standen yet hetherto. And I wil not it sholde be
 broken by me. the lawe and the right doth noman
 wrong /

Alle the beestis both poure and riche were
 alle styll when the foxe spak so stoutly /
 the cony laprel and the roek were so sore
 aferde that they durste not speke but pyked and
 stryked them out of the court bothe two. and
 whan they were a room fer in the playne they
 saide. god graunte that this felle murderare may
 fare euyl. he can bywrappe and couere his fals-
 hede. that his wordes seme as trewe as the gospel
 herof knoweth noman than we. how shold we
 brynge wytnesse. it is better that we wyke and
 departe than we sholde holde a felde and fyghte
 with hym he is so shrewde. ye thaugh ther of
 vs were fyue we coude not defende vs. but that he
 shold sle vs alle.

Isegrym the wulf and bruyn the here / were woo
 in hem self whan they sawe thise tweyne rume the
 court /

He kinge sayde / yf ony man wil complayne
 late hym come forth / and we shal here
 hym yesterday camen here so many
 where ben they now Reynart is here /

He foxe saide. my lord ther ben many that
 complayne / that and yf they sawe their
 aduersarye they wold be styll and make
 no playnte / witnes now of laprel the cony and
 Corbant the roke / whiche haue complayned on me
 to yow in my absence / but now that I am comen

in your presence they flee away / And dar not
 abyde by theyr wordes / yf men shold byleue false
 shrewes / it shold do moche harme and hurte to
 the good men / as for me it skylleth not Neuer-
 theless my lord yf they had by your commande-
 ment axed of me forgyfnes / how be it they haue
 gretly trespaced / yet I had for your sake par-
 doned and forgyue them / for I wil not be out of
 charyte / ne hate ne compleyne on myne enemyes /
 but I sette alle thyng in goddes hand he shall
 werke and auenge it as it plesyth hym.

He kynge saide reynart / me thynketh ye
 be greuyd as ye saye / ar ye withinforth as
 ye seme outward / Nay it is not so cleer
 ne so open nowher nyghe / as ye here haue
 shewed / I muste saye what my gryef is / whiche
 towcheth your worship and lyf / that is to wete /
 that ye haue don a foule and shameful trespaas /
 whan I had pardoned you alle your offencis and
 trespacis / and ye promysed to goo ouer the see
 on pylgremage / And gaf to you male and staf /
 And after this ye sente me by bellyn the ramme
 the male agayn and theryn kywarts heed / how
 myght ye do amore reprouable trespaas / how
 were ye so hardy to dore to me doosuche a shame /
 is it not euyl don to sende to a lorde / his ser-
 uaunts heed / ye can not saye nay here agaynst
 bellyn the ram whiche was our chapelayn tolde vs
 al the mater how it happed / suche reward as he

had whan he brought vs the message / the same
shall ye haue or right shall faylle /

tho was reynart so sore aferd that he wist not
what to saye / he was at his wittes ende / and
loked aboute hym pytously and sawe many of his
kyn and alyes that herde alle this but nought they
saide / he was al pale in his visage but noman
proferd hym hand ne fote to helpe hym /

the kinge said thou subtyl felaw and fals shrewe
why spekest thou not [art thou] now dombe.

The foxe stode in grete drede and syghed sore
that alle herde hym / But the wulf and the bere
were glad herof.

How dame rukenawe answerd for the foxe to the kyng. capitulo

xxix^o.

DAme rukenawe the she ape reynarts
aunte was not well pleysd / She was
grete wyth the quene and wel belouyd /
hit happed wel for the foxe that she was
there. ffor she vnderstood alle wysedom / And she
durste wel speke / where as it to doo was / where
euer she cam euerich was glad of her /

She sayde my lord the kyng ye ought not to be
angry whan ye sytte in Iugement / ffor that be-
cometh not your noblesse. A man that sytteth in
Iugement ought to put fro hym alle wrath and

angre / A lorde ought to haue dyscrecion that
shold sytte in Iustyse / I knowe better the poyntes
of the lawe / than somme that were furryd gownes /
ffor I haue lerned many of them / and was made
connyng in the lawe / I had in the popes palays of
woerden a good bedde of heye / where other
beestes laye on the harde grounde and also when I
had there to doo / I was suffred to speke / and was
herd to fore another / by cause I knewe so wel the
lawe / Seneca wryteth that a lorde shal oueral doo
right and lawe / he shal charge none to whom he
hath gyuen his saufgarde to aboue the right and
lawe / the lawe ought not to halte for noman /
And euery man that stondest here wolde wel
bethynke hym what he hath doon and bydryuen
in his dayes he shold the better haue pacience and
pyte on Reynarte / late euery man knowe hym
self / that is my counseyl / ther is none that
stondest so surely / but otherwhyle he falleth or
slydeth / who that neuer mysdede ne synned / is
holy and good and hath no nede to amende hym /
whan a man doth amys / and thenne by counseyl
amendeth it / that is humaynly / and so ought he
to doo / fut away to mysdo and trespase / and not
to amende hym / that ys euyl and a deuely lyf /
Merke thenne what is wretton in the gospel *Estote
misericordes* / be ye mercyful yet standeth ther
more / *Nolite iudicare* / et non iudica bimini /
deme ye noman / and ye shal not be demed / Ther
standeth also how the pharisees brought awoman

taken in aduoultre and wold haue stoned her to deth / they axed our lord what he said therto / he said who of yow alle is withoute synne / late hym caste the fyrste stone / tho abode noman but lefte her there stondyng.

AL E thynketh it is so hyere / ther be many that see a strawe in an others ye* / that can not see a balke in his owne / there be many that deme other / and hym self is worst of alle / thaugh one falle ofte / and at laste aryseth vp and cometh to mercy / he is not therof dampned God receyueth alle them that desyre hys mercy late noman condampne another / though they wyste that he had don amys / yet late them see theyr owne defawtes / and thenne may they them self correcte fyrst / and thenne reynert my cosyn shold not fare the werse for his fadre and his graunfadre / haue alway ben in more loue and reputaconn in this court than Isegrym the wulf or bruyn the bere with al theyr frendis and lignage / hit hath ben here to fore an vnlyke comparison / the wysedom of Reynart my cosyn / and the honour and worship of hym that he hath doon and the counseyl of them / ffor they knowe not how the world gooth / me thynketh this court is al torned vp so doon / These false shrewes flaterers and deceyuours arise and wexe grete by the lordes and ben enhaunsed vp / And the good triewe and

* Eye.

wyse ben put down / For they haue ben woned to
counseyle truly and for thonour of the kyng I
can not see how this may stonde longe /

Thenne said the kyng / dame yf he had don
to yow suche trespaas as he hath don to other it
shold repent yow* Is it wonder that I hate hym /
he breketh alway my saufgarde / haue ye not herde
the complayntes that there haue ben shewde of
hym of murdre / of theefte / And of treson / haue
ye suche trust in hym / Thynke ye that he is thus
good and cleer / thenne sette hym vp on the awter
and worshipe and praye to hym as to asaynte /
But ther is none in alle the world that can say any
good of hym / ye maye saye moche for hym / but in
thende ye shal fynde hym al nought / he hath
nether kyn ne wyn ne frende that wylle enterprise
to helpe hym he hath so deseruyd / I haue grete
meruaylle of yow / I herde neuer of none that hath
felawsshippid with hym that euer thanked hym or
saide ony good of hym / sauf you now / but alway
he hath stryked hem with his tayl /

the she ape ansuerd and said / my lord I loue
hym and haue hym in grete chierte. And also I
knowe a good dede that he ones in your presence
dyde / wherof ye coude hym grete thanke / though
now it be thus torned / yet shal the heuyest / weye
moste / a man shal loue his frende by mesure / and
not his enemye hate ouermoche / stedfastnes and
constaunce is fyttyng and behoueth to the lordes.
how someuer the world torneth. Me ought not

preyse to moche the daye. tyl euen be come.
good counseyl is good for hym that wil doo ther
after.

**A parable of a man that delyuered
a serpent fro peryl of deth. capitulo
xxx^o.**

Now two yere passid cam a man and a
serpent here in to this court for to haue
Iugement. which was to yow and
yours right doubtfeul. The serpent
stode in an hedche where as he supposed to haue
gon thorough / but he was caught in a snare by the
necke. that he myght not escape without helpe
but shuld haue lost his lyf there. the man cam
forth by. and the serpente called to hym and cryde.
and prayd the man that he wolde helpe hym out
of the snare. or ellis he muste there dye :

The man had pyte of hym and saide / yf thou
promyse to me that thou wilt not enuename me ne
do me none harme ne hurte I shal helpe the out of
this peryl /

The serpente was redy and swore a grete othe
that he now ne neuer sholde doo hym harme ne
hurte

Thenne he vnlosed hym and delyuerd hym out
of the snare / And wente forth to gydre a good
whyle / that the serpente had grete hongre for he

had not eten a grete while to fore. and sterte to the
man and wold haue slayn hym. the man sterte
awaye and was a ferde and said / wylte thou now
sle me / hast thou forgotten the oth that thou madest
to me that thou sholdest not mysdoo ne hurte me

The serpent answerd I maye do it good / to fore
al the world that I doo / the nede of hongre may
cause a man to breke his oth /

The man saide yf it may be not better / gyue me
so longe respyte tyl we mete and fynde that may
Iuge the mater by right /

The serpente graunted therto / thus they wente to
gydre so longe that they fonde tyselyn the raucn /
And slyndpere his sonne / there rehersed they theyr
resons.

Tiselyn the raucn Iuged anon that he shold
ete the man / he wolde fayn haue eten his parte and
his sone also /

The serpente said to the man / how is it now / what
thynke ye haue I not wonne /

The man saide / how sholde a robber Iuge this
he shold haue auayle therby / and also he is allone /
ther muste be two or thre atte leste to gydre and
that they vnderstande the right and lawe and that
don / late the sentence gon / I am neuertheles yl on
ynough /

They a greed and wente forth bothe to gydre so
longe that they fonde the beer and the wulf to
whom they tolde theyr mater /

And they anon Iuged that the serpent shold sle

the man / For the nede of hongre breketh oth
alway / the man thenne was in grete doubte and
fere / and the serpent cam and cast his venym at
hym / but the man lepe a way from hym with grete
payne.

And said ye doo grete wronge that ye thus lye
in a wayte to slee me / ye haue no right therto /

The serpent sayde / Is it not ynough yet / hit hath
been twyes luded /

ye sayd the man that is of them that ben
wonte to murdre and robbe. Alle that euer
they swere and promyse they holde not / but I
appele this mater in to the court to fore our lord
the kyng / And that thou mayst not forsake And
what Iugement that shal be gyuen there / I shal
obeye and suffre / and neuer doo the contrarye.

HHe here and the wulf sayden that it shold
be so / And that the serpent desired no
better / They supposed yf it shold come to
fore yow / It shold goo there as they wolde. I
trowe ye be wel remembrid herof. Tho cam
they alle to the court to fore yow / And the wulues
two chyldren cam with theyr fader. Whiche were
callyd empty bely and neuer full / by cause they
wold ete of the man. ffor they howlyd for grete
hongre wherfore ye commaunded them to auoyde
your court /

The man stode in grete drede / And called vpon
your good grace and tolde how the serpente wolde

haue taken his lyf from hym to whom he had sau'd
his lyf and that aboue his oth and promyse he wold
haue deuoured hym /

The serpente answerd I haue not trespased / And
that I reporte me hoolly vn* the kyng / For I
dyde it to saue my lyf / ffor nede of lyf / one may
breke his oth and promyse /

My lord that tyme were ye and alle your
counseyl here wyth acombryd For your noble grace
sawe the grete sorow of the man / And ye wold not
that a man shold for his gentilnes and kyndenes
be Iuged to deth / And on that other sith hongre
and nede to saue the lyf seketh narrowly to be
holpen / hier was none in al the court that coude
ne knewe the right hierof / There were somme
that wolde fayn the man had be holpen / I see them
hier stondyng / I wote wel they sayde that they
coude not ende this mater.

Thenne commanded ye that reynard my neuwe
shold come and saye his aduys in this mater / that
tyme was he aboue alle other byleuyd and herd in
the court / And ye bad hymgyue sentence acordyng
to the best right / and we alle shal folowe hym / For
he knewe the grounde of the lawe /

reynard said my lord / it is not possyble to yeue
a trewe sentence after theyr wordes / for in here
sayeng ben ofte lesynges / But and yf I myght see
the serpent in the same paryl and nede that he
was in whan the man loosed hym and vnbonde/

* Unto (?).

Thenne wyste I wel what I shold saye / And who
that wolde doo otherwise he shold mysdoo agayn*
right /

Thenne sayd ye my lord reynard that is wel said
we alle acorde herto / ffor noman can saye
better /

Thenne wente the man and the serpente into
the place wher as he fonde the serpente / Reynart
bad that the serpent shold be sette in the snare in
lyke wyse as he was / And it was don /

Thenne sayd ye my lord / reynart how thynketh
yow now / what Iugement shal we gyue.

Thenne sayd reynart the foxe. My lord now
ben they bothe lyke as they were to fore. they haue
neyther wonne ne loste. See my lord how I Iuge
for a right also ferre as it shal plese your noble
grace. yf the man wil now lose and vnbynde the
serpent vpon the promyse and oth. that he to fore
made to hym. he may wel doo it. But yf he thynke
that he for ony thyng shold be emcombryd or
hyndred by the serpent. or for nede of hongre wold
breke his othe and promyse. Thenne Iuge I that
the man may goo frely where he wyl. and late the
serpente abyde styll bounden. like as he myght
haue don at the begynnyng. ffor he wold haue
broken his oth and promyse / where as he helpe
hym out of suche fereful peryl / Thus thynketh me
a ryghtful Iugement that the man shal haue his fre
choys / like as he to fore hadde.

* Agaynst.

LO my lord this Iugement thought yow good /
 and alle your counseyl whiche at that tyme
 were by you/ and folewed the same / And
 preysed reynardis wysedom that he had made the
 man quyte and free Thus the foxe wysely kepte
 your noble honour and worship / as a tricwe
 seruaunt is bounde to doo to his lord / wher hath
 the beer or the wulf don euer to yow so moche
 worship They conne wel huynen and blasen stele
 and robbe / and ete fatte morsellis and fylle theyr
 belyes / And thenne Iuge they for right and lawe
 that smale theuis that stele hennys and chekyns
 shold be hanged / But they hem self that stelen
 kyen oxen and horses / they shal goo quyte and be
 lordes / And seme as though they were wyser than
 salamon / Auycene or aristotiles / And eche wil
 be holden hye proud / and preised of grete dedes
 and hardy But and they come where as it is to doo /
 they ben the firste that flee / Thenne muste the
 symple goo forth to fore / And they kepe the
 rereward behynde / Och my lorde these and other
 lyke to them be not wyse / but they destroye
 towne. castel. lande and peple. They retche not
 whos hows brenneth. so that they may warme
 them by the coles They seke alle theyr owne auayll
 and synguler proffyte / But Reynart the foxe and
 alle his friendis and lignage sorowen and thynke to
 preferre the honour worship. fordeel and proffyte
 of theyr lord. and for wise counseyl whiche ofte
 more prouffyteth here than pryde and boost / This

D

doth reynard / though he haue no thanke / Atte
longe it shal be wel knowen / who is beste and
doth moste prouffyt / My lord ye saye / that his
kynne and lignage drawe al afterward from hym /
and stonde not by hym / for his falskede and
deceyuable and subtyl touchis / I wolde an other
had sayde that / ther sholde thenne suche wrake
be taken thereof / that hym myght growle that
euer he sawe hym / But my lorde we wyl forbere
you / ye maye saye your playsir / and also I saye
it not by yow / Were ther ony that wolde bedryue
ony thyng ayenst yow with wordes or with werkes /
hym wold we soo doo to / that men shold saye we
had ben there / Ther as fyghtyng is / we ben not
woned to be aferd . My lorde by your leue I may
wel gyue you knoweleche of reynardis frendis and
kynne. ther ben many of them that for his sake and
loue wille auenture lyf and good. I know my self
for one. I am a wyf. I shold yf he had nede
sette my lyf and good for hym also I haue thre ful
waxen children which ben hardy and stronge /
whom I wold alle to gydre auentre for his loue.
rather than I shold see hym destroyed / yet had I
leuer dye than I sawe them myscharye to fore myn
eyen. so wel loue I hym.



Whiche ben frendes and kynne
 unto Reynard the fore. capitulo
 xxxi^o.

He fyrste chylde is named byteluys.
 whiche is moche cherysshyd and can
 make moche sporte and game / wher-
 fore is gyuen to hym the fatte trenchours
 and moche other good mete whiche cometh wel to
 prouffyt of fulrompe hys brother / and also my
 thyrde chylde is a doughter and is named haten-
 ette / she can wel pyke out lyce and netis out of
 mens heedis / thise three ben to eche other tryewe
 / wherfor I loue them wel /

dame rukenawe called hem forth and sayde /
 welcome my dere chylde to me forth and stande
 by reynard your dere neuw /

Thenne sayde she / Come forth alle ye that ben
 of my kynne and reynarts / and late us praye the
 kynge that he wille doo to reynart ryght of the
 lande /

Tho cam forth many a beest anon / as the
 squyrel / the musehout / the fychews / the martron
 / the beuer wyth his wyf ordecale / the genete /
 the ostrole / the boussyng / and the fyret / thise
 tweyne ete as fayne palayl as doth reynart / The
 oter and pantecroet his wyf whom I had almoste
 forgoten / yet were they to fore wyth the beuer
 enemyes to the foxe / but they durst not gaynsaye

dame rukenawe / for they were aferd of her She
 was also the wysest of alhis kynne of counseyl and
 was moste doubted / Ther cam also mo than xx
 other by cause of her to stande by Rynard /
 Ther cam also dame atrote with her ij sustres / the
 wesel / and hermell the asse / the backe / The
 wateratte and many moo to the nombre of xl /
 whiche alle camen and stoden by reynard the foxe /

MY lord the kyng saide rukenawe come and
 see hier yf reynart haue ony frendis / here
 may ye see / we ben your trewe subgettis
 whiche flor yow wold auenture both lyf and good
 yf ye had nede / Though ye be hardy myghty and
 stronge / Oure welwyllyd frendship can not hurte
 you / late reynard the foxe wel bethynke hym
 vpon these maters that ye haue leyd ayenst hym /
 And yf he can not excuse them / thenne doo hym
 right we desire no better / And this by right ought
 to noman be warned /

The quene] thenne spack. this saide I to hym
 yesterday / But he was so fyers and angry that he
 wold not here it.

the lupaerd saide also. Syre ye may Iuge no
 ferther than your men gyue theyr verdyte. ffor yf ye
 wold goo forth by wyl and myghte that were not
 worshipful ffor your estate here allewaye bothe
 partyes and thenne by the beste and wysest counseyl
 gyue you Iugement discretly acording to the beste
 right.

the kynge saide. this is al trewe· but I was so sore meuyd whan I was enformed of kywarts deth and sawe his heed. that I was hoot and hasty. I shal here the foxe. can he answere and excuse hym of that is leyd ayenst hym. I shal gladly late hym goo quyte. And also atte requeste of his good frendis and kynne.

Reynart was glad of these wordis. and thoughte god thanke myn aunte· She hath the rys doo blosme aagayn· She hath wel holpen me forth now. I haue now a good foot to daunse on. I shal now loke out of myne eyen. And brynge forth the fayrest lesyngis that euer man herde. and brynge my self out of this daunger.

Now the foxe wyth subtylte excused hym for the deth of kywart the hare and of alle other maters that were leyde ayenst hym and how wyth flaterynge gate agayn his pees of the kynge. capitulo xxxij^o.



Henne spak reynart the foxe and saide /
 Alas what saye ye is kywart deed / and
 where is bellyn the ramme what brought
 he to yow / whan he cam agayn / ffor I
 delyuerd to hym thre iewellis / I wold sayn
 knowe where they ben be comen / That one of hem

shold he haue gyuen to yow my lord the kyng /
And the other ij to my lady the quene /

The kyng saide / bellyn brought vs nought ellis
but kywarts heed / lyke as I saide you to fore /
wherof I toke on hym wrake / I made hym to lose
his lyf / ffor the foule kaytyf said to me / that he
hym self was of the counseyl of the lettres makyng
that were in the male /

Alas my lord is this very trouthe / woo to me
kaytyf that euer I was born sith that thise good
Iewellis be thus lost myn herte wil breke for
sorowe / I am sory that I now lyue / what shal my
wyf saie whan she hereth herof / she shal goo out
of her wytte for sorow / I shal neuer also longe as
I lyue haue her frendship she shal make moche
sorowe whan she hereth therof /

The she ape saide Reynard dere neuw / what
prouffyteth that ye make al this sorowe late it
passe / And telle vs what thise Iewellis were /
paraenture we shalle fynde counseyl to haue them
agayn yf they be aboue erthe Mayster akeryn shal
laboure for them in his bookis / and also we shal
curse for them in alle chirchys vnto the tyme that
we haue knowleche wher they been / They maye
not be loste /

Nay aunte thynke not that / ffor they that haue
them wyl not lightly departe fro them. ther was
neuer kyng that euer gaf so riche Iewellis as
thise be / Neuertheles ye haue somewhat wyth
your wordes easyd myn herte and made it lighter

than it was / Alas loo here ye may see how he or
 they to whomme a man trusteth moost is ofte by
 hym or them deceyuyd / though I shold goo al
 the world thorough and my lyf in auenture sette
 therfore / I shal wyte wher these Iewellis ben
 becomen.

Wyth a dissymlyd and sorouful speche saide
 the foxe heken ye alle my kynne and
 frendys / I shal name to yow / these
 Iewellis what they were / And thenne may ye
 saye that I haue a grete losse / that one of them
 was a ryng of fyn gold / and within the ryng
 next the fynge were wretton lettres enameld with
 sable and asure and ther were thre hebrews names
 therin / I coude not my self rede ne spelle them /
 for I vnderstonde not that langage / but maister
 a brion of tryer he is a wyse man / he vnderstandeth
 wel al maner of langages and the vertue of al
 maner herbes / and ther is no beest so fiers ne
 stronge but he can dompte hym / for yf he see hym
 ones he shal do as he wyl / And yet he bileueth
 not on god / He is a Iewe / The wysest in con-
 nyng and specially he knoweth the vertue of
 stones. I shewde hym ones this ryng / he saide
 that they were tho thre names that seth brought
 out of paradys whan he brought to his sadre Adam
 the oyle of mercy / And who someuer bereth on
 hym these thre names / he shal neuer be hurte by
 thondre ne lyghtnyng ne no witchcraft shal haue

power ouer hym ne be tempted to doo synne /
And also he shal neuer take harm by colde though
he laye thre wynters longe nyghtis in the feelde /
though it snowed stormed or frore neuer so sore /
so grete myght haue these wordes / wytnes of
maister abrion / withoute forth on the ryng stode
a stone of thre maner colours / the one part was lyke
rede cristalle / and shoon lyke as fyre had ben
therin / in suche wyse that yf one wold goo by
nyght / hym behoued non other lighte for the
shynnyng of the stone made and gaf as grete a
lyghte as it had ben mydday / That other parte
of the stone was whyte and clere as it had ben
burnysshid / Who so had in his eyen ony smarte
or sorenes / or in his body ony swellyng or heed
ache / or ony sykenes withoutforth yf he stryked
this stone on the place wher the gryef is / he shal
anon be hole / or yf ony man be seke in his body
of venym / or ylle mete in his stomack / of colyk /
stranguyllyon / stone / fystel or kanker or ony
other sekenes / sauf only the very deth late hym
leye this stone in a litle watre / And late hym
drynke it / and he shal forthwyth be hole and al
quyte of his seknessis / Alas said the foxe we haue
good cause to be sory to lese suche a Iewel / ffor
thermore the thirde colour was grene lyke glas /
But ther were somme sprynklis therin lyke pur-
pure / the maister told for trouthe / that who that
bare this stone vpon hym shold neuer be hurte of
his encmye / and that noman were he neuer so

stronge and hardy that myght mysdoo hym / and where euer that he fought he shold haue vycторыe were it by nyght or by daye also ferre as he behelde it fastyng / and also therto where someuer he wente and in what felawship / he shold be bylouyd / though they halde hated hym to fore / yf he had the ring vpon hym / they shold forgete theyr angre as sone as they sawe hym / Also though he were al naked in a felde agayn an hundred armed men / he shold be wel herted and escape fro them with worship / but he muste be a noble gentle man / and haue no chorles condicions / ffor thenne the stone had no myght / and by cause this stone was so precious and good / I thought in myself that I was not able ne worthy to bere it / and there fore i sent it to my dere lord the kyng / far i knowe hym for the moste noble that now lyueth / and also alle our welfare and worship lyeth on hym / and for he shold be kepte fro alle drede nede and vngheluck.



Fonde this rynge in my fadres tresour / and in the same place I toke a glasse or a mirroure and a combe whiche my wyf wold algates haue / a man myght wondre that sawe this Iewellis / I sent thyse to my lady the queene / for I haue founden her good and gracious to me / this Combe myght not be to moche preysed / Hit was made of the bone of a clene noble beest named Panthera / whiche fedeth hym

bytwene the grete Inde and erthly paradyse / he
 is so lusty fayr and of colour / that ther is no
 colour vnder the heuen / but somme lyknes is in
 hym / therto he smelleth so swete / that the
 sauour of hym boteth alle syknessis and for his
 beaute and swete smellyng all other beestis folowe
 hym / for by his swete sauour they ben heled of
 alle syknessis / this panthera hath a fair boon
 brode and thynne / whan so is that this beeste is
 slayn al the swete odour restid in the bone which
 can not be broken ne shal neuer rote ne be
 destroyed by fyre / by water / ne by smytyng /
 hit is so hardy tyht and faste / and yet it is
 lyght of weyght / The swete odour of it hath grete
 myght / that who that smelleth it sette nought by
 none other luste in the world and is easyd and
 and quyte of alle maner diseases and Infirmytes /
 And also he is ioconde and glad in his herte / this
 combe is polysshid as it were fyne syluer / and
 the teeth of it be small and strait / And bytween
 the gretter teeth and the smaller is a large felde
 and space where is coruen many an ymage
 subttly made and enameld aboute with fyn
 gold / the felde is checked with sable and siluer /
 enameld with cybore and asure / And ther in is
 thistoyre how venus Juno and pallas strof for
 thapple of gold / whiche eche of them wold
 haue had / whiche contrauersye was sette vpon
 parys / that he shold gyue it to the fayrest of them
 thre.

Parys was that tyme an herde man and kepte
his faders beestis and sheep withoute troye /
whan he had resceyuid thapple / Iuno
promysed to hym yf he wolde Iuge that she
myght haue thapple / he shold haue the moste
richesse of the world / pallas said yf she myght
haue thapple she wold gyue hym wysedom and
strengthe and make hym so grete a lorde that he
shold ouercome alle his enemyes / and whom he
wold / venus saide what nedest thou richesse or
strengthe / art not thou pryamus sone / and hector
is thy brother whiche haue al asye vnder their
power / art not thou one of the possessours of
grete troye / yf thou wylt gyue to me thapple
i shal gyue the the richest tresour of the world
and that shal be the fayrest woman that euer had
lyf on erthe / ne neuer shal none be born fairer
than she / thenne shal thou be richer than riche /
And shal clymme aboue al other / ffor that is the
tresour that noman can preyse ynough / for honest /
fair and good women can put a way many a sorow
fro the herte / they be shamefast and wyse / and
brynge a man in very Ioye and blysse / Parys
herde this venus whiche presented hym this grete
Ioye and fair lady and prayd her to name this
fayr lady / that was so fair and where she was /
venus saide / it is helene kynge menelaus wyf
of grece / ther lyueth not anobler. richer. gen-
tiller. ne wyser wyf in al the world / Thenne parys
gaf to her thapple and said that she was

fayrest / how that he gate afterward helene by the
 helpe of venus and how he brought her in to
 troye and wedded her / the grete loue and ioly
 lyf that they had to gydre / was al coruen in the
 felde euery thyng by hym self / and the storye
 wreton.



Ow ye shal here of the mirroure / the glas
 that sto de theron was of suche vertu
 that men myght see therin / all that was
 don within a myle / of men of beestis and of al
 thyng that me wold desire to wyte and knowe /
 and what man loked in the glasse had he ony
 disscase / of prickyng or motes / smarte or perles
 in his eyen he shold be anon heled of it / Suche
 grete vertu had the glas / is it thenne wondre yf
 I be meuyd and angry for to lose suche maner
 Iewellis. The tree in whiche this glas stode was
 lyght and faste and was named cetyne / hit sholde
 endure euer er it wold rote or wormes shold hurte
 it / and therfore kynge salamon seelyd his temple
 wyth the same wode withynforth / Men preysed
 it derrer than fyn gold / hit is like to tre of
 hebenus / of whiche wode kynge Crompart made
 his hors of tree for loue of kynge morcadigas
 daughter that was so fayr / whom he had
 wende for to haue wonne / That hors was so
 made within / that wo someuer rode on hit
 yf he wolde / he shold be within lesse than on
 hour / an hondred myle thens / And that was wel

preuyd ffor cleomedes the kynges sone wolde not
byleue that / That hors of tree had suche myght
vertue / He was yonge lusty and hardy / And
desyred to doo grete dedes of prys for to be
renomed in this world / And leep on this hors of
tree / Crompart torned a pynne that stode on his
brest / And anon the hors lyfte hym vp and wente
out of the halle by the wyndowe and er one myght
saye his pater noster / He was goon more ten myle
waye cleomedes was sore aferd and supposed
neuer to haue torned agayn / as thistorye therof
tellethe more playnly / but how grete drede
he had / and how ferre that he rood vpon that
horse made of the tree of hebenus er he coude
knowe the arte and crafte how he shold torne
hym / and how Ioyeful he was whan he knewe it /
and how men sorowed for hym / and how he
knewe alle this and the ioye therof when he cam
agayn al this I passe ouer for losyng of tyme / but
the moste parte of alle cam to by the vertue of the
wode /

of whiche wode the tree that the glas stode in
was made / and that was without forth of the glas
half a foot brood / wherin stode somme strange
hystories whiche were of gold / of sable / of siluer /
of yelow / asure and cynope / thyse sixe colowrs
were therin wrought in suche wise as it behoued /
and vnder euery hystorie the wordes were grauen
and enameld that euery man myght vnderstande
what eche hystorie was / After my Iugement ther

was neuer myrour so costly so lustly ne so play-
saunt / in the begynnyng stode there an horse
made fatte stronge and sore enuyous vpon an herte
whiche ran in the feeld so ferre and swyftly that
the hors was angry that he ran so ferre to fore hym
and coude not ouertake hym he thought he shold
cacche hym and subdue hym. though he shold suffre
moche payne therfore. the horse spack tho to a
herdeman in this wyse. yf thou cowdest taken an
herte that I wel can shewe the / thou sholdest
haue grete prouffyt therof. thou sholdest selle dere
his hornes his skyn and his flesshe. the herdeman
sayd how may I come by hym. the hors saide
sytte vpon me. and I shal bere the and we shal
hunte hym til he be take. The herdeman sprange
and satte vpon the hors and sawe the herte and he
rode after but the herte was lyght of foot and
swyft. and out ran the hors ferre they honted so
ferre after hym that the horse was wery and said
to the herdeman that satte on hym. now sytte
of I wil reste me / I am al wery. and gyue me
leue to goo fro the. The herdeman saide I haue
arested the thow mayst not escape fro me. I
haue a brydle on thy hede and sporis on my heles
thou shalt neuer haue thanke herof / I shal
bydwyng and subdue the haddest thou sworn the
contrarye.

see how the horse brought hym self in thraldom
and was taken in his owne nette. how may one
better be taken than by his owne propre enuye

suffre hym self to betaken and riden· ther ben
 many that laboure to hurte other· and they them
 seluen ben hurt and rewarded with the same

Her was also made an asse and an hound /
 whiche dwelled bothe with a riche man /
 The man louyd his hound wel / ffor he
 pleyde ofte with hym as folke doo with houndis /
 the hound leep vp and pleyd with his tayl / And
 lyckyd his maister aboute the mouth / this saw
 howdwyn the asse / and had grete spyte therof in
 his herte / and said to hym self / how may this be
 and what may my lorde see on his fowle hound /
 whom I neuer see doth good ne proffyt / sauf
 spryngeth on hym and kysseth hym / But me
 whom men putten to laboure / to bere and drawe /
 and doo more in a weke than he with his xv shold
 doo in a hole yere and yet sytteth he neuertheles
 by hym at the table / and there eteth bones flessch
 and fatte trenchours / And I haue nothing but
 thystles and nettles / And lye on nyghtes on the
 harde erthe and suffre many ascorn / I wyl no
 lengre suffre this / I wylle thynke how I may gete
 my lordes loue and frendship lyke as the hounde
 doth / Therwyth cam the lorde / And the asse lyft
 vp his tayl and sprang with his fore feet on the
 lordes sholdres / And blered grennyd and songe
 and with his feet made two grete bules about his
 eres / And put forth his mouth and wolde haue
 kyssed the lordes mouth as he had seen the hound

doon / Tho cryde the lorde sore aferde help / help /
 this asse wil slee me / Thenne cam his seruauntis
 with goox stauis and smyten and bete the asse so
 sore that he had wende he shold haue loste his lyf /
 Tho returned he to his stable and ete thistles and
 nettles and was an asse as he to fore was.

In lyke wyse who so haue enuye and spyte of an
 others welfare / and were seruyd in lyke wyse / it
 shold be wel behoefful. Therfor it is concluded
 that the asse shal ete thistelis and netteles and
 bere the sacke / though men wold doo hym worship
 he can not vnderstonde it / but muste vse olde
 lewde maners / Where as asses geten lordshippis /
 there men see selde good rewle / For they take
 hede of nothyng but on theyr synguler prouffyt /
 yet ben they take up and rysen grete / the more
 pyte is /



Erken fether how my fadre and tybert the
 catte wente to gydre / and had sworn by
 theyr trouthe that for loue ne hate they
 shold not departe. And what they gate / they
 shold departe to eche the half / Thenne on atyme
 they sawe hunters comyng ouer the felde with
 many houndes / They leep and ronne faste fro
 them ward al that they myghte as they that were
 aferd of theyr lyf /

Tybert said the foxe whyther shal we now beste
 flee / the hunters haue espyed vs / knowe ye ony
 help / my fadre trusted on the promyse that eche

made to other / And that he wolde for no nede
 departe fro hym / Tybert said he / I haue a sack
 ful of wyles yf we haue nede / as ferre as we abyde
 to gydre we nede not to doubte hunters ne
 houndes /

Tybert bigan to syghe and was sore aferd / And
 saide / Reynart what auallyen many wordes / I
 knowe but one wyle. and theder must I too.

And tho clamme he vpon on hye tree in to the
 toppe vnder the leuys / Where as hunter ne hounde
 myghte doo hym non harme And leste my fadre
 alone in leoparde of his lyf. ffor the hunters sette
 on hym the houndes alle that they coude / Men
 blewe the hornes and cryed and halowed the foxe /
 Slee and take. Whan tybert the catte sawe that. he
 mocked and scorned my fadre and said what
 reynart cosyn vnbynde now your sakke wher al
 the wylis ben in / it is now tyme ye be so wyse
 called / helpe your self / ffor ye haue nede /

this moche muste my fadre here of hym to
 whom he had most his trust on / And was almoste
 taken and nygh his deth and he ranne and fledde
 wyth grete fere of his lyf and lete his male slyde
 of by cause he wold be the lighter / yet al that
 coude : not helpe hym for the houndes were to
 swyft and shold haue byten him / But he had one
 auenture that ther by he fond an old hole /
 wherin he crepte / and escaped thus the honters
 and houndes /

Thus helde this false deceyuer tibaert his

E

sykernes that he had promysed / Alas how many
 ben there now a dayes that kepe not theyr pro-
 myse / and sette not therby though they breke it /
 And though I hate tybaert herfore / is it wonder
 but I doo not sikerly / I loue my sowle to wel
 therto / Neuertheles yf I sawe hym in auenture
 and mysfalle in his body or in his goodes / I trowe
 hit shold not moche goo to my herte so that
 another dyde it / Neuertheles I shal neyther hate
 hym ne haue enuye at hym / I shal ffor goddes
 loue forgyue hym yet is it not so clere out of myn
 herte / but a lytyl ylle wyll to hymward abideth
 therin as this cometh to my remembraunce / And
 the cause is that the sensualyte of my flesh fyghteth
 ayenst reson.

Hier stode also in that myrrour of the wulf /
 how he fonde ones vpon an heth a dede
 horse flayn' but al the flesh was eten
 thenne wente he and bote grete morsellis of the
 bones that for hungre he toke thre or iiij attones
 and swolowed them in / ffor he was so gredy that
 one of the bones stack thwart in his mouth /
 Wherof he had grete payne. And was in grete
 fere of his lyf / He soughte al aboute for wyse
 maisters and surgyens and promysed grete yeftis
 for to be heled of his disease / Atte laste whan he
 coude nowher fynde remedye he cam to the crane
 wyth his longe necke and bille / and prayde hym
 to helpe hym and he wolde loue and rewarde hym

so wel that he sholde euer be the better / The crane herked after this grete rewarde and put his heed in to his throte and brought out the boon wyth his bylle /

The wulf sterte a syde wyth the pluckyng / and cryde out alas thou doost me harme / but I forgyue it the / doo no more soo / I wolde not suffre it of an other /

The crane saide / Sir Isegrym goo and be mery for ye be al hool now gyue to me that ye promysed

The wulf saide / wyl ye here what he sayth / I am he that hath suffred and haue cause to playne / and he wille haue good of me / he thanketh not me of the kyndnes that I dyde to hym he put his heed in my mouth / and I suffred hym to drawe it out hole without hurtyng / And he dyde to me also harme / And yf ony hier shold haue a rewarde it shold be I by ryght /

Thus the vnkynde men now adayes rewarde them that doo them good / whan the false and subtyl aryse and become grete / thenne goth worship and prouffyt al to nought / Ther ben many of right that ought reward and doo good to suche as haue holpen hem in her nede / that now fynde causes and saye they be hurte and wolde haue amendis / where they ought to rewarde and make amendes them self / Therefore it is said and trowthe it is / whoo that wyl chyde or chastyse / see that he be clere hym self.

Alle this and moche more than I now can wel remembre was made and wrought in this glasse / The maister that ordeyned it / was aconnyng man and a profounde clerk in many sciencis / And by cause these Iewells were ouer good and precious for me to kepe and haue / Therefore I sente them to my dere lord the kynge and to the quene in presente / Where ben they now that gyue to theyr lordes suche presentes / The sorowe that my ij chyldeyn made when I sente away the glasse was grete for they were woned to loke therin and see them self how theyr clothyng and araye bycam them on their bodyes / O alas I knewe not that kywart the hare was so nyghe his deth when I delyueryd hym the male with this iewellis / I wiste not to whom I myght better haue taken them. though It shold have coste me my lyf. than hym and bellart the ramme / They were two of my best frendis / Oute alas I crye vpon the murderar / I shal knowe who it was. though I shold renne thurgh al the world to seke hym. ffor murdre abydeyth not hyd. it shal come out perauenture he is in this companye that knoweth where kywart is bicommen. though he telleth it not. ffor many false shrewys walke wyth good men. fro whom noman can kepe hym. they knowen theyr craft so wel and can wel couere their falsenes. but the most wondre that I haue is that my lord the kyng hier saith so felly. that my fadre nor I dyde hym neuer good / that thynketh me / meruayl of a

kyng / but ther come so many thyngis to fore hym
that he forgeteth that one wyth that other / and so
faryth by me / Dere lorde remembre not ye whan
my lord your fadre lyuyd / and ye an yonglyng
of two yere were that my fadre cam fro skole fro
Monpellier / where as he had fyue yere studied in
receptes of medycynes / he knewe al the tokenes of
the vryne as wel as his honde / And also alle the
herbes and nature of them whiche were viscose or
laxatyf / he was a synguler maister in that science /
he myght wel were cloth of sylke and a gylt gyrdle /
whan he cam to court he fonde the kyng in a
grete sekene / wherof he was sory in his hert /
For he louyd hym aboue alle other lordes / The
kyng wold not forgoo him / ffor whan he cam
alle other had leue to walke where they wold he
trusted none so moche as hym /

he said reynard I am seke and fele me the
lenger the werse /

My fadre said / my dere lord here is an vrynal /
make youre water therin and assone as I may see
it I shal telle what sekene it is and also how ye
shal be holpen

the kyng dyde as he conseilled hym for he
trusted noman better that lyuyd / Though so were
that my fader dyde not as he shold haue don to
you / But that was by counseyl of euyl and foule
beestis I had wonder therof / but it was a rasyng
ayenst his deth / he sayd my lord yf ye wyl be
hole / Ye muste ete the lyuer of a wulf of vij yere

old / that may ye not leue / or ellis ye shal deye /
for your vryne sheweth it playnly /

the wulf stode ther by and said nought /

But the kynge said to hym sir ysegrym now ye
here wel that I muste haue your lyuer / yf I wil
be hool /

Tho answerd the wulf and saide / Nay my lord
not soo / I wote wel I am not yet fyue yere olde /
I haue herde my moder saie soo /

My fadre sayd / what skylleth this wordes / late
hym be opened and I shal knowe by the lyuer yf
it be good for yow or not /

And therwyth the wulf was had to kychen / and
his lyuer taken out / whiche the kynge ete and was
anon al hole of alle his sekene / thenne thanketh
he my fadre moche / and commanded alle his
houshold upon their lyuys that after that tyme
they shold calle hym mayster reynard



HE abode styll by the kynge and was
byleuid of alle thyngis / and muste allewey
go by his syde / And the kynge gaf to
hym a garlond of rooses. whiche he muste alway
were on his heed. but now this is al torned. Alle
the old good things that he dyde. ben forgotten.
And thise couetouse and rauenous shrewys ben
taken vp and sette on the hye benche and ben
herde and made grete. And the wyse folke ben
put a back. by whiche thise lordes ofte lacke.
And cause them to be in moche trouble and

sorowe ffor whan a couetous man of lowe byrthe is made a lorde and is moche greet and aboue his neyghbours hath power and myght / Thenne he knoweth not hym self / ne whens he is comen And hath no pyte on nomans hurte. ne hereth nomans requeste. but yf he may haue grete yestis. al his entent and desyre is to gadre good and to be gretter. O how many couetous men ben now in lordes courtes. they flatre and smeke / and plesse the prynce for theyr synguler auayl / But and the prynce had nede of them or their good they sholde rather suffre hym to deye or fare right hard er they wold gyue or lene hym / They be lyke the wulf / that had leuer the kinge had deyed than he wolde gyue hym his lyuer / Yet had I leuer er that the kynge or quene shold fare amys / that xx suche wulues shold lose theyr lyues / hit were also the leest losse / My lorde al this bifelle in your yougthe that my fader dyde thus / I trowe ye haue forgotten it /

And also I haue my self don yow reuerence worship and courtosye / Vnroused be it / though ye now thanke me but lytyl / but parauenture ye remembred not that I shal now saye / not to ony forwytyng of yow / for ye be worthy alle worship and reuerence that ony man can doo / that haue ye of almyghty god by enheritaunce of your noble progenytours / wherfor I your humble subgette and seruaunt am bounden to doo to yow alle the seruyse that I can or maye / I cam on a tyme

walkyng with the wulfe Isegrym / And we hadde
 gotten vnder vs bothe a swyne / And for his lowde
 cryyng we bote hym to deth / and syre ye cam fro
 ferre out of a groue ayenst vs. ye salewed vs
 frendly and saide we were welcome. and that ye
 and my lady the quene whiche cam after yow
 hadde grete hongre. and had nothyng for to ete / and
 prayd vs for to gyue yow parte of our wynnyng /
 Isegrym spack so softe that a man vnnethe myght
 here hym. but I spack out and saide. ye my
 lord and with a good will. though it were more
 we wil wel that ye haue parte And thenne the
 wulf departed as he was wont to doo / departed
 and toke that on half for hym self / And he gaf
 yow a quarter. ffor yow and ffor the quene / That
 other quarter he ete and bote as hastely as he
 myghte / bicause he wolde ete it allone / And he
 gaf to me but half the longes that I pray god that
 euyl mote he fare.

Hus shewde he his condicions and nature /
 er men shold haue songen a Credo ye my
 lord had eten your part / And yet wold ye
 fayn haue had more / ffor ye were not ful / And
 bicause he gaf yow no more ne profred yow / Ye
 lyft vp your right fote and smote hym bytwene the
 eris that ye tare his skynne ouer his eyen / and
 tho he myght no lengre abyde but he bledde /
 howled and ran away and lefte his part there lye /
 Tho said ye to hym haste yow agayn hether and

brynge to vs more /-And here after see better to
 how ye dele and parte / Thenne saide I my lord
 yf it please yow I wyll goo wyth hym / I wote
 wel what ye saide / I wente wyth hym / he
 bledde / and groned as sore as he was al softly / he
 durst not crye lowde / we wente so ferre. that we
 brought a calf / And whan ye saw vs come ther-
 wyth / ye lawhyd for ye were wel plesyd / ye said
 to me that I was swyft in hontyng' I see wel
 that ye can fynde wel whan ye take it vpon yow /
 ye be good to sende forth in a nede / The calf is
 good and fatte. herof shal ye be the delar I
 saide my lord wyth a good wyl / The one half my
 lord shal be for yow. And that other half for my
 lady the quene. the moghettis. Lyuer longes and
 the Inward shal be for your chyldren / the hed
 shal Isegrym the wulf haue / and I wil haue the
 feet' Tho said ye Reynart who hath taught you to
 departe so courtoisly / my lord said I. that hath
 don this preest that sytteth her with the bloody
 crowne / he lost his skynne wyth the vncourtoys
 departyng of the swyn. And for his couetyse
 and rauyne he hath hurte and shame

Alas ther ben many wulues now a dayes that
 without right and reson destroye and ete them that
 they may haue the ouerhand of / they spare neyther
 flesh ne blood / frende ne enemye / what they can
 gete' that take they / O woo be to that lande and
 to townes' where as the wulues haue the
 ouerhand /

My lord this and many other good thing haue
 I don for you / that I cowde wel telle yf it were
 not to long / of whiche now ye remembre litil
 by the wordes that I her of yow. yf ye wold al
 thyng ouersee wel / ye wold not saye as ye doo.
 I haue seen the day / that ther shold no grete
 mater be concluded in this court without myn
 aduise / al be yt that this auenture is now fallen /
 It myght happen yet that my wordes shal be herd
 and also bileuyd as wel as an others as ferre as
 right wyl for I desyre none other / ffor yf ther be
 ony can saye and make good by suffycient wit-
 nensis that I haue trespaced I wyl abyd al the right
 and lawe that may come therof and yf ony saie
 on me ony thyng of whiche he can brynge no wyt-
 nesses. Let me thenne be rewlyd after the lawe
 and custome of thys court

the kynge saide Reynart ye saye resonably I
 knowe not of kywarts deth more than that bellyn
 the Ramme brought his heed hether In the male /
 therof I lete yow goo quyte ffor I haue no wytnes
 therof /

My dere lord said [Reynart] god thanke yow /
 sykerly ye doo wel for his deth maketh me so
 sorowful / that me thynketh my herte wyl breke in
 two / o whan they departed fro me myn herte was
 so heuy / that me thought I shold haue swowned /
 I wote wel it was a token of the losse that tho was
 so nyghe comyng to me /

Alle the moost parte of them that were there and herde the foxes wordes of the Iewellis and how he made his contenance and stratchid hym / had veryly supposed that it had not be fayned but that it had be tryewe. they were sory of his losse and mysaventure. and also of his sorowe. The kynge and the quene had bothe pyte of hym. And bad hym to make not to moche sorowe / But that he sholde endeuore hym to seche hem. For he had so moche preysed hem. that they had grete wyl and desyre to haue them / And by cause he had made them to vnderstonde that he had sente these Iewellis to them. though they neuer had them. yet they thankyd hym. And prayd hym to helpe that they myght haue them.

He foxe vnderstode theyr menyng wel. he thought toward them but lytyl good for al that. he said god thanke you my lord and my lady that ye so frendly comforte me in my sorow. I shal not reste nyght ne day ne alle they that wyl doo ony thyng for me but Renne and praye / Thretene and aske alle the four corners of the world / Though I shold euer seche tyl I knowe where they ben bicomen / and I pray you my lord the kynge / That yf they were in suche place as I cowde not gete them by prayer / by myght ne by request that ye wold assiste me and abide by me / ffor it towcheth your self / and the good is youris / And also it

is your part to do Iustyse on theste and murdre
whiche bothe ben in this caas /

Reynart said the kyng that shall I not leue
whan ye knowe wher they ben / Myn helpe
shalbe alway redy for you /

O dere lorde this is to moche presented to
me / yf I had power and myght I sholde deserue
ayenst yow /

Now hath the foxe his mater fast and fayr / ffor he
hath the kyng in his hand as he wold / hym thought
that he was in better caas than it was lyke to haue
be / he hath made so many lesynges / that he may
goo frely wher he wyl without ccomplaynyng of ony
of them alle /

Sauf of Isegrym which was to hymward angry
and dysplesyd and saide / O noble kyng ar ye so
moche chyldyssh that ye byleue this false and
subtyl shrewe / and suffre your self wyth false lyes
thus to be deceyuyd / Of fayth it shold be longe
or I sholde byleue hym / he is in murdre and treson
al be wrapped / And he mocketh you to fore your
visage / I shal telle hym a nother tale I am glad
that I see now hym here / al his lesynges shal not
a vaylle hym er he departe fro me.



How psegryn the wulf com-
playned agayn on the fore. capitulo
xxxiiij^o

MY lord I pray you to take hede / this false
theef betraied my wyf ones fowle and
dishonestly / hit was so that in a
wynters day that they wente to gyder
thurgh a grete water / and he bare / my wyf an
honde that he wold teche her take fysshe wyth her
tayl / and that she shold late it hange in the water
a good while and ther shold so moche fysshe cleue
on it that foure of them shold not conne ete it.
The fool my wyf supposed he had said trouthe /
And she wente in the myre to the bely to er
she cam in to the water / And whan she was in the
depest of the water. he bad her holde her tayl /
til that the fysshe were comen. she helde her tayl
so longe that it was from harde in the yse and
coude not plucke it out / And whan he sawe that.
he sprange vp after on her body. Alas there
rauysshyd he and forcyd my wyf so knauisshly
that I am ashamed to telle it. she coude not
defende her self the sely beest she stode so depe
in the myre. herof he can not saye naye. ffor I
fonde hym with the dede. for as I went aboue
vpon the banke I sawe hym bynethe vpon my wyf
shouyng and stekyng as men doo whan they doo

suche werke and playe. Alas what payne suffred
I tho at my herte I had almost for sorow lost my
fyue wyttes and cryde as lowde as I myght reynart
what do ye there / and whan he sawe me so nyghe
tho leep he of. and wente his waye. I wente
to her in a grete heuinesse. And wente depe in
that myre and that water er I coude breke the yse
and moche payne suffred she er she coude haue
out her taylle / and yet lefte a gobet of her tayle
behynd her / And we were lyke bothe therby to
haue lost our lyues / for she galped and cryde so
lowde for the smarte that she had er she cam out /
that the men of the village cam out with stauys
and byllis / with flaylis and pykforkes / And the
wyuis wyth theyr distauis / and cryed dyspytously
sle sle / and smyte down right / I was neuer in my
lyf so aferde / ffor vnnethe we escape / we ran so
fast that we swette ther was a vylayne that stake
on vs wyth a pyke / whiche hurted vs sore he was
stronge and swyfte a fote / hadde it not be nyght /
Certaynly we had ben slayn / The fowle olde
quenes wold fayne haue beten vs / they saide
that we had byten theyr sheep / They cursed vs
with many a curse / Tho cam we in a felde ful of
brome and brembles there hydde we vs fro the
vylaynes / And they durst not folowe vs ferther
by nyght / but returned home agayn See my lorde
thys fowle mater / this is murdre / rape / and
treson / whiche ye ought to doo Iustyce thereon
sharply.

Reynard answerd and said / yf this were trewe / it shold go to nyghe myn honour and worship / god forbede that it shold be founde trewe / hit is wel trewe that I taught her how she holde* in a place catche fyssh / and shewde her a good way for to goo ouer in to the water without goyng in to the myre / But she ranne so desyrously whan she herde me name the fyssh / That she nether way ne path helde / But wente in to the yse wherein she was forfrom / And that was by cause she abode to longe she had fish ynough yf she coude haue be pleyd wyth mesure it falleth ofte / who that wold haue all / leseth alle / Ouer couetous was neuer good / For the beest can not be satisfied / And whan I sawe her in the yse so faste / I wente to haue holpen her / and heef and shoef and stack here and there to haue brought her out / But it was al payne loste / ffor she was to heuy for me / Tho cam ysegrym and sawe how I shoef and stack and dyde al my beste and he as a fowle chorle· fowle and rybadously sklaundryth me wyth her. as thyse fowle vnthriftes ben wonte to doo· But my dere lorde it was none otherwyse. he belyeth me falsely paraenture his eyen daselyd as he loked from aboue doun. he cryde and cursed me and swore many an oth I shold dere abyet† it / whan I herde hym so curse and thretene / I wente my waye / and lete hym curse and menace

* Sholde, *i.e.*, should.

† Abyde.

til he was wery / And tho wente he and heef and
shoef and halpe his wyf out / and thenne he leep
and ran and she also for to gete them an hete and
to warme them / or ellis they shold haue deyed
for colde / And what someuer I haue saide a fore
or after / that is clerely al trouthe / I wolde not
for a thousand marke of fyn gold lye to yow one
lesyng it were not fyttyng for me / what someuer
falle of me I shal saye the trouthe / lyke as myn
elders haue alway don / syth the tyme that we
fyrst vnderstode reson / and yf ye be in doubte of
ony thyng that I haue said otherwise than
trouth / gyue me respyte of viij dayes that I may
haue counseyl / and I shal brynge suche Infor-
macion wyth good tryew and suffycient recorde /
that ye shal alle your lyf duryng truste and byleue
me / and so shal all your counseyl also / what haue
I to doo wyth the wulf / hit is to fore clerly ynowh
shewde that he is a foule vylaynous kaytyf / and
an vnclene beest / Whan he deled and departed
the swyn / So is it now knowen to you alle by hys
owen wordes that is a deffamer of wymmen as
moche as in hym is ye may wel marke euerychone /
Who shold luste to do that game to one so stedfast
a wyf beyng in so grete peryll of deth now aske ye
hys wyf / yf it be so as he sayth / yf she wyl saye
the trouthe I wote wel / she shal saye as I doo /

Tho spack erswynde the wulfis wyf / Ache felle
reynart / noman can kepe hym self fro the /
thou canst so wel vttre thy wordes and thy falsenes

and reson sette forth / but it shall be euyl rewarded
 in the ende / How broughtest thou me ones in to
 the welle where the two bokettys henge by one
 corde rennyng thurgh one polley whiche wente
 one vp and another doun / thou sattest in that one
 boket bynethe in the pytte in grete drede / I cam
 theder and herde the syghe and make sorowe /
 And axed the how thou camest there / thou
 saidest that thou haddest there so many good
 fysshes eten out of the water that thy bely wolde
 breste / I said telle me how I shal come to the /
 Thenne saidest thou aunte sprynge in to that
 boket that hangeth there / and ye shal come anon
 to me / I dyde so / and I wente downward / and
 ye cam vpward tho was I alle angry / thou saidest
 thus fareth the world that one goth vp / and
 another goth doun / tho sprang ye forth and wente
 your waye and I abode there allone syttyng an
 hole day sore an hongryd and a colde / And therto
 had I many a stroke er I coude get thens /

Aunte sayd the foxe / though the strokes dyde
 you harme I had leuer ye had them than I / ffor ye
 may better bere them / for one of vs must nedes
 haue had them / I taught yow good / wyl ye
 vnderstande it and thynke on it / that ye another
 tyme take better hede and bileue noman ouer
 hastely / is he frende or cosyn / for euery man
 seketh his owne prouffyt / They be now fooles
 that do not soo / And specyally whan they be in
 Leopardye of theyr lyues.

F

A fayr parable of the foxe and
the wulf. Ca^o xxxiii^o



Y lord said dame Erswyn I pray yow
here how he can blowe with alle
wyndes / And how fayr bryngeth he his
inaters forth /

Thus hath he brought me many tyme in scathe
and hurte said the wulf / he hath ones bytrayed
me to the she ape myn aunte / where I was in
grete drede and fere / for I lefte there almost myn
one ere / yf the foxe wil telle it how it byfel / I
wyl gyue hym the fordele therof / for I can not
telle it so wel / but he shal beryspe me /

wel said the foxe I shal telle it wythout stameryng
I shal saye the trouthe / I praye yow herken me / he
cam in to the wode and complayned to me / that
he had grete hongre ffor I sawe hym neuer so ful /
but he wold alway haue had fayn more / I haue
wonder where the mete becometh that he de-
stroyeth / I see now on his contenance that he
begynneth to grymme for hongre / Whan I herde
hym so complayne I had pyte of hym / And I
saide I was also hongry / thenne wente we half a
day to gydre and fond nothyng / tho whyned he
and cryed / and said he myght goo no ferther
Thenne espyed I a grete hool standyng in the
myddys vnder an hawe whiche was thyck of
brembles / and I herde a russhyng therin I wist

not what it was / thenne said I goo therin and loke
 yf ther be ony thing ther for vs / I wote wel ther is
 somewhat / tho saide he cosyne I wolde not crepe
 in to that hole for twenty pound but I wist fyrst
 what is therin / me thynketh that ther is some
 perylous thyng but I shal abyde here vnder this
 tree / yf ye wil goo therin to fore / but come anon
 agayn / And late me wete thyng is therin / Ye can
 many a sub:ylte and can wel helpe your self and
 moche better than L. See my lord the kynge /
 Thus he made me poure wight to goo to fore in to
 the daunger / and he whiche is grete longe and
 stronge abode withoute and rested hym in pees /
 awayte yf I dlyde not for hym there.



Wold not suffre the drede and fere that I
 there suffred for al the good in erthe / but
 yf I wyste how to escape / I wente hardyly
 in / I fonde the way derke / longe and brood / Er
 I right in the hool cam soo espyed I a grete light
 whiche cam in fro that one syde ther laye in a
 grete ape with tweyne grete wyde eyen / and they
 glymmed as a fyre / And she had a grete mouth
 with longe teeth and sharp naylles on hir feet and
 on hir handes / I wende hit had be a mermoyse /
 a baubyn or a mercatte / for I sawe neuer fowler
 beest / and by her laye thre of her children whiche
 were right fowle ffor they were ryght lyke the
 moder / whan they sawe me come / they gapeden
 wyde on me and were al styll / I was aferd / And

wold wel I had ben thens / but I thoughte I am
 therin / I muste ther thurgh and come out as wel
 as I maye / as I sawe her me thought she semed
 more than ysegrym the wulf / And her chyldren
 were more than I / I sawe neuer a fowler meyne /
 they lay on fowle heye whiche was al be pyssed /
 They were byslabbed and byclagged to their eres
 to in her owen donge / hit stanke that I was
 almost smoldred therof I durst not saye but good /
 and thenne I saide / Aunte god gyue yow good
 daye and alle my cosyns your fayr chyldren / they
 be of theyr age the fayrest that euer I sawe O lord
 god how wel plesce they me / how louely / how
 fayr ben they eche of them for their beaute myght
 be a great kyngis sone / Of right we ought to
 thanke yow / that ye thus encrece oure lygnage /
 Dere aunte whan I herde saye that ye were dely-
 uered and leyd doun I coude no lenger abyde but
 muste come and frendly vysite yow / I am sory
 that I had not erst knowen it /

Reynard cosyn said she ye be welcome / ffor
 that ye haue found me and thus come see me I
 thanke yow. Dere cosyn ye be right trewe and
 named right wyse in alle londes / and also that ye
 gladly furthre and brynge your lignage in grete
 worship / Ye muste teche my chyldren with the
 youris some wysedom that they may knowe what
 they shal doo and leue / I haue thought on yow /
 for gladly ye goo and felawship with the good /

O how wel was I plesyd whan I herde thise

wordes / this deseruyd I at the begynnyng whan
I callyd her aunte / how be it that she was nothing
sybbe to me / ffor my right aunte is dame ruken-
awe that yonder standeth / Whiche is woned to
brynge forth wyse chyltren /

I saide aunte my lyf and my good is at your
commandement / and what I may doo for yow by
nyght and by daye / I wylle gladly teche them alle
that I can.

I wolde fayn haue be thens for the stenche of
them. and also I had pyte of the grete hongre
that Isegrym had.

I saide aunte I shal commytte yow and your
fayr chyltren to god and take my leue / My wyf
shal thynke longe after me /

Dere cosyn saide she ye shal not departe til ye
haue eten / for yf ye dyde I wold saie ye were not
kynde /

Tho stode she vp and brought me in an other
hool where as was moche mete of hertes and
hyndes / roes / fesaunts / partrychs and moche
other venyson that I wondred for whens al this
mete myghte come / And whan I had eten my
bely ful she gaf me a grete pece of an hynde fro to
ete wyth my wyf and wyth my household / whan
I come home / I was a shamed to take it / But I
myght none other wyse doo / I thankyd her and
toke my leue / she bad me I shold come sone
again / I sayd I wolde

And so departed thens meryly / that I so wel

had speelde / I hasted me out / and whan I cam
and sawe ysegrym whiche lay gronyng. And I
axed hym how he ferde / he said neuwe al euyl-
ffor it is wonder that I lyue / brynge ye ony mete
to ete I deye for hongre. tho had I compassion of
hym and gaf hym that I had. And saued hym
there his lyf wherof thenne thanked me gretly.
how be it that he now oweth me euyl wyl.

HE had eten this vp anon tho said he Rey-
nard dere cosyn what fonde ye in that
hoel. I am more hongry now than I was
to fore / my teeth ben now sharped to ete.

I said thenne / Eme haste yow thenne lyghtly
into that hool. Ye shal fynde there ynough. there
lieth myn aunte wyth her chyldren yf ye wyl
spare the trowth and lye grete lesynges / ye shal
haue there al your desire / But and ye saye trowth /
ye shal take harme /

My lord was not this ynough sayd and warned /
who so wold vnderstonde it / that al that he
fonde he shold saye the contrarye But rude and
plompe beestis can not vnderstonde wysedom /
therfore hate they alle subtyl Inuencions / ffor they
can not conceyue them. Yet neuertheles / he
saide he wolde goo Inne / and lye so many lesyn-
gis er he sholde myshappe that all man sholde
haue wondre of it. and so wente forth in to that
fowle stynkyng hool and fonde the marmosette.
She was lyke the deuyls doughter. and on

her chyldren hyngc moche fylth cloterd in gobettis.

Tho cryde he alas me growleth of thyse fowle nyckers / Come they out of helle. men may make deuylls a ferd of hem. goo and drowne them that euyl mote they fare. I sawe neuer fowler wormes. they make al myn heer to stande right vp /

sir ysegrym said she. what may I doo therto. they ben my chyldren. And I muste be their moder. what lyeth that in your weye. whether they be fowl or fayr. They haue yow nothyng coste. here hath ben one to day byfore yow whiche was to them nyhe* of kyn. And was your better and wyser and he sayde that they ware fayr. who hath sente yow hyther wyth thyse tydynges.

dame wyl ye wytte I wylle ete of your mete. hit is better bestowed on me than on thyse fowle wyghtes.

She sayde hier is no mete /
he saide here is ynough.

And ther wyth he sterte with his hede toward the mete. and wolde haue goon in to the hool wher the mete was. But myn aunte sterte up wyth her chyldren. and ronned to hym wyth their sharp longe nayles so sore that the biode ran ouer his eyen / I herde hym crye sore and howle / but I knowe of no defence that he made / but that he ran faste out of the hool / And he was there cratched and byten / and many an hool had they

* Near.

made in his cote and skyn / his visage was alle on
a blood / and almost he had loste his one ere / he
groned and complayned to me sore /

thenne asked I hym yf he had wel lyed

he sayd I saide lyke as I sawe and fonde / and
that was a fowle bytche wyth many fowle
wyghtis /

Nay eme said I / ye shold haue said / Fayr nece
how fare ye and your fair chyliden which ben my
welbelouid cosyns /

the wulf sayd / I had leuer that they were
hanged er I that saide /

ye eme therfore muste ye resseyue suche maner
payment / hit is better otherwhile to lye than to
saye trouthe / They that ben better / wyser and
strenger than we be haue doon so to fore vs /

See my lord the kyng thus gate he his rede coyf /
Now stondest he al so symply as he knewe no
harme / I pray yow aske ye hym yf it was not
thus / he was not fer of yf I wote it wel

**How ysegrim proferd his gloue
to the fore for to fyght wyth hym
capitulo xxxv.**



He wulf sayd I may wel forbere your
mockes and your scornes and also your
felle venymous wordes strong theeft that
ye ar / ye saide that I was almost dede
for hungre / when ye helpe me in my nede / that

is falsely lyed. for it was but aboon that ye gaf to me / ye had eten away alle the flessch that was theron / And ye mocke me and saye that I am hongry here where I stande / that toucheth my worship to nygh / what many a spyty worde haue ye brought forth wyth false lesyngis / And that I haue conspyred the kynges deth fro the tresour that ye haue seid to hym / is in hulsterlo / And ye haue also my wyf shamed and sklandred / that she shal neuer recoure it / and I shold euer be disworshipped therby yf I auengyd it not / I haue forborn yow longe / but now ye shal not escape me / I can not make her of greet preef / But I saye here to fore my lord and to fore alle them that ben here that thow art a false traytour and a morderar / And that shal I proue and make good on thy body wythin lystes in the felde. and that body ayenst body And thenne shal our stryf haue an ende / And therto I caste to the my gloue / and take thou it vp / I shal haue right of the or deye therfore /

Reynard the foxe thought how come I on this Campyng / we ben not bothe lyke / I shal not wel conne stonde ayenst this stronge theef / all my proof is now come to an ende.



**How the foxe took bp the gloue.
And how the kynge sette to them
daye and felde for to come and doo
theyr bataylle capitulo xxxvj^o**



Et thought the foxe I haue good
auauntage. the clawes of his for feet
ben of. and his feet ben yet sore
therof. whan for my sake he was
vnshoed. he shal be somewhat the weyker.

Thenne sayde the foxe who that saith that I am
a traytour or a morderar. I saie he lieth falsely
and that art thou specyally ysegrym / thou
bryngest me / there as I wolde be / this haue I
ofte desyred / lo here is my plegge / that alle thy
wordes ben falls / And that I shal defende me /
and made good that thou lyst /

The kynge receyuyd the plegges / and amytted
the bateyll And asked borowes of them bothe /
that on the morn they shold cme and performe
theyr batayll / and doo as they ought to doo /
Thenne the here and the catte were borowes for
the wulf / And for the foxe were borowys
grymbert the dassse / and byteluys



How rukenawe the she ape coun-
 seylded the fore how he sholde
 byhaue hym in the felde ayenst the
 wulf Capitulo xxxvij^o



He she ape saide to the foxe / Reyner
 neuwe / See that ye take hede in your
 batayll / be colde and wyse Your eme
 taught me ones a prayer that is of
 moche vertue to hym that shal fyghte / And a
 grete maister and a wyse clerk. and was abbot of
 boudele that taughted hym / he saide who that
 sayde deuoutly this prayer fastyng shal not that
 day be ouercomen in batayll ne in fyghting ther-
 fore dere neuwe be not aferd / I shal rede it ouer
 yow to morrow / thenne may ye be sure ynough
 of the wulf hit is bettre to fyghte / than to haue
 the necke asondre.

I thanke you dere aunte said the foxe / The
 quarel that I haue is rightful therfore I hope I shal
 spede wel / and that shal gretely be myne helpe /
 Alle his lygnage abode by hym al the nyght /
 and helpe hym to dryue a way the tyme /

Dame rukenawe the she ape his aunte thoughte
 alway on his prouffyt and fordele / And she dyde
 alle his heer fro the heed to the tayl be shorn of
 smothe / and she anoynted alle his body wyth oyl
 of olyue / And thenne was his body also glat and

slyper / that the wulfe sholde haue none holde on hym / And he was round and fatte also on his body /

And she said to hym dere cosyn ye muste now drynke moche / that to morowe ye may the better make your vryne / but ye shal holde it in tyl ye come to the felde / And whan nede is and tyme / so shall ye pyse ful your rowhe tayll / and smyte the wulf therwyth in his berde / And yf ye myght hytte him therwyth in his eyen· thenne shal ye byneme hym his syght / that shold moche hyndre hym / but ellis hold alway your tayl faste bytwene your legges that he catche yow not therby / and holde doun your eris lyeng plat after your heed / that he holde you not therby / And see wisely to your self and at begynnynz flee fro his strokes. And late hym sprynge and renne after yow / and renne to fore where as moste dust is / and styre it wyth your feet that it may flee in his eyen and that shal moche hyndre his syght / And whyle he rubbeth his eyen take your auantage and smyte and byte hym there as ye may most hurte hym / And alleway to hytte hym wyth your tayll ful of pyse in his visage and that shal make hym so woo / that he shal not wyte where he is / And late hym renne after yow for to mak hym wery / Yet his feet ben sore / of that ye made hym to lose his shooes / and though he be greet / he hath no herte / Neuw certainly this is my counseyll.

He connyng goth to fore strengthe / therfore see for your self / And sette your self wysely atte defence / that ye and we alle may heue worship therof / I wold be sory yf ye myshapped / I shal tech you the worde that your eme mertyn taught me / that ye may ouercome your enemye / as I hope ye shal doo wythout doubtte /

therwyth she leyde her hand vpon his heed and saide these wordes / Blaerde Shay Alphenio / Kasbue Gorfons alsbuifrio / Neuwew now be ye sure fro alle myschief and drede / and couns-yle yow that ye reste you a lytyl / for it is by the daye / ye shal be the better dysposed / we shal awake you in al in tyme /

aunte said the foxe I am now glad / god thanke you ye haue don to me suche good I can neuer deserue it fully agayn / me thynketh ther may no thyng hurte me syth that ye haue said thyse holy wordes ouer me /

Tho wente he and leyd hym doun vnder a tre in the grasse and slepte tyl the sonne was rysen / tho cam the otter and waked hym and bad hym aryse / and gaf hym a good yong doke / and said / dere cosyn I haue this nyght made many a leep in the water er I coude gete this yonge fatte doke / I haue taken it fro a fowler / take and ete it /

Reynart sayde this is good hansele / yf I refused I were a fool / I thanke yow cosyn that ye remembre me / yf I lyue I shal rewarde yow /

The foxe ete the doke with oute sawce or bredd
it sauourd hym wel and wente wel in / And he
dranke therto iiij grete draughtis of water / Thenne
wente he to the bataylle ward and alle they that
louyd hym wente wyth hym.

**How the ffoxe cam in to the felde
and how they foughten / capitulo
xxxiiij^o.**



When the kyng sawe reynart thus shorn
and oyled he said to hym / Ey foxe
how wel can ye see for your self /
he wondred therof he was fowle to
loke on /

but the foxe said not one worde but kneled
doun lowe to therthe vnto the kyng and to the
quene and stryked hym forth in to the felde /

The wulf was ther redy and spack many a
proud word / the rulers and kepars of the felde
was the lupaert and the losse / they brought forth
the booke / on whiche sware the wulf that the
foxe was a traytour and a morderar / and none
myght be falsar than he was / and that he wolde
preue on his body and make it good / Reynart the
foxe sware that he lyed as a false knaue and a
cursyd theef and that he wold doo good on his
body /

Whan this was don the governours of the felde /
 bad them doo theyr deuoyr / Thenne romed they
 aile the felde sauf dame rukenawe the she ape /
 she abode by the foxe and bad hym remembre wel
 the wordes that she had sayd to hym / she said
 see wel too / whan ye were vij yer olde ye were
 wyse ynnowh to goo by nyght wythout lanterne /
 or mone shyne / Where ye wyste to wyne ony
 goode / ye ben named emong the peple wyse and
 subtyl / payne your self to werke soo that ye
 wyne the prys / thenne may ye haue euer honour.
 and worshiip / and al we that ben your frendys /

he answerd my derest aunte I knowe it wel / I
 shal doo my beste and thynke on your counseyl /
 I hope so to doo that alle my lignage shal haue
 worship therby / and myn enemyes shame and
 confusion /

she sayde god graunte it yow.

How the foxe and the wulf foughten to gydre ca^o xxxix^o



Herwyth she wente out of the felde /
 and lete them tweyne goo to gydre / the
 wulf trade forth to the foxe in grete
 wrath and opened his fore feet / and
 supposed to haue taken the foxe in hem / But the
 foxe sprang from hym lyghtly / For he was lyghter
 to fote than he / The wulf sprange after and

hunted the foxe sore / theyr frende stodes / withoute the lystes and loked vpon hem / The wulf stode wyder than reynard dyde and ofte ouertoke hym / And lyfte vp his foot and wende to haue smyten hym / but the foxe sawe to / and smote hym wyth his rowhe taylor / Whiche he had al bepyssed in his visage / tho wende the wulf to haue ben plat blynde / the pysse sterte in his eyen / thenne muste he reste for to make ciene his eyen / Reyner thoughte on his fordele and stode aboute the wynde skrabbing and casting with his feet the duste that it flewe the wulfis eyen ful / the wulf was sore blynded ther wyth in suche wyse that he muste leue the rennyng after hym / ffor the sonde and pysse cleuyd vnder his eyen that it smerted so sore / that he muste rubbe and washe it a way /

Tho cam reyner in a grete angre and bote hym thre grete woundes on his heed wyth his teeth / and said / what is that syr wulf / hath one there byten yow / how is it wyth yow / I wyl al otherwyse on yow yet / abyde I shal brynge yow somm newe thyng / ye haue stole many a lambe and destroyed many a symple beest / and now falsely haue appeled me and brought me in this trouble / al this shal I now auenge on the / I am chosen to reward the for thyn old synnes ffor god wyl no lenger suffre the in thy grete rauayn and shrewdness / I shal now assoylle the and that shal be good for thy soule take paciently this pennance / for thou shalt lyue no longer / the

helle shal be thy purgatorye / Thy lyf is now in
 my mercy / but and yf thou wilt knele down and
 aske me forgyfnes / and knowleche the to be
 ouercomen / yet though thou be euyl / yet I wyl
 spare the / for my conscience counseylleth me /
 I shold not gladly slee no man /

Isegrym wende wyth thyse mockyng and
 spytous wordes to haue goon out of his wytte /
 And that dered hym so moche that he wyste not
 what to saye buff ne haff / he was so angry in his
 herte / The wounds that reynart had gauen hym
 bledde and smarted sore / And he thought how
 he myghte best auenge it.

Wyth grete angre he lyft vp his foot and
 smote the foxe on the heed so grete a
 stroke / that he fyl to the ground / tho
 sterte the wulf to and wende to haue take
 hym / but the foxe was lyght and wyly and roose
 lyghtly vp and mette wyth hym fiersly and there
 began a felle bataylle whiche dured longe / the
 wulf had grete spyte on the foxe as it wel semed /
 he sprange after hym x tymes eche after other /
 and wold fayn haue had hym faste / but his skyn
 was so slyper and fatte of the oyle that alway he
 escaped fro hym O so subtyl and snelle was the
 foxe / that many tymes whan the wulf wende wel
 to be sure of hym / he sterte thenne bytwene his
 legges and vnder his bely and thenne tornd he
 agayn and gaf the wulf a stroke wyth his tail ful of

G

pysse in his eyen that Isegrym wende he sholde haue loste his syght / and this dyde he often tymes / And alwey whan he had so smyten hym thenne wolde he goo aboute the wynde and reyse the duste / that it made his eyen ful of stufs / Isegrym was woo begon / and thought he was at an afterdele / yet was his strengthe and myght moche more than the foxes / Reynard had many a sore stroke of hym / whan he raught hym / They gaf eche other many a stroke and many a byte whan they saw theyr auantage / And eche of hem dyde his best to destroye that other / I wold I myght see suche abaytaylle / that one was wyly / and that other was stronge / that one faught wyth strengthe / and that other with subtylte.



He wulf was angry that the foxe endured so longe ayenst hym yf his formest feet had ben hole / the foxe had not endured so longe / but the sores were so open that he myght not wel renne / And the foxe myght better of and on than he / And also he swange his tayl wyth pysse ofte vnder his eyen / and made hym that hym thoughte that his eyen shold goo out /

Atte laste he sayd to hym self / I wyl make an ende of this bataylle / How longe shal this caytyf dure thus ayenst me / I am so grete / I shold yf I laye vpon hym presse hym to deth / hit is to me a grete shame that I spare hym so longe / Men shal

mocke and poynte me wyth fynGRES to my shame
and rebuke for I am yet on the werst syde / I am
sore wounded / I blede sore / and he drowneth
me / wyth his pysse / and caste so moche dust and
sande in myne eyen / that hastely I shal not conne
see / yf I suffre hym ony lenger / I wyl sette it in
auenture / and seen what shal come therof /

wyth that he smote wyth his foot reynard on the
heed that he fyll down to the ground And er he
cowde aryse he caught hym in his feet· and laye
vpon hym as he wold haue pressed hym to deth.
Tho began the foxe to be a ferd. and so were alle
his frendis whan they sawe hym lye vnder· And on
that other syde alle ysegryms frendes were ioyeful
and glad. The foxe defended hym faste wyth his
clawes as he laye vpwrd wyth his feet· And gaf
hym many a clope· The wulf durste not wyth his
feet doo hym moche harme but wyth his teeth
snatched at hym as he wold haue byten hym. whan
the foxe sawe that he shold be byten and was in
grete drede. he smote the wulf in the heed with his
formest clawes and tare the skynne of bytwene his
browes and hys eeres. and that one of his eyen
henge out. Whiche dyde hym moche payne· he
howlyd. he wepte· he cryde lowde. and made
a pyteuous noyse for the blode rann down as it had
ben a streme

How the foxe beyng vnder the
wulf wyth flaterynge wordes glosed
hym. that the foxe cam to his aboue
agayn. capitulo xl^o



He wulf wyped his eyen. the foxe was glad
whan he sawe that / he wrestled so
sore / that he sprang on his feet whyles
he rubbed his eyen / the wulf was not
well plesyd therwyth alle / And smote after hym
er he escaped and caught hym in his armes and
helde hym faste / notwythstandyng that he bledde /
Reynard was woo thenne / There wrestled they
longe and sore / The wulf wexe so angry that he
forgat al his smarte and payne and threw the foxe
al plat vnder hym / whiche cam hym euyl to passe /
ffor his one hand by whiche he deffended hym
sterter in the fallyng in to ysegryms throte / and
thenne was he aferd to lese his hand /

The wulf sayd tho to the foxe / Now chese
whether ye wyl yelde yow as ouercome / or ellis I
shal certaynly slee yow / the skaterynge of the dust /
thy pysse / thy mockyng ne thy deffence / ne alle
thy false wyls / may not now helpe the / thou
mayste not escape me / Thou hast here to fore don
me so moche harme and shame / and now I haue
lost myne one eye / and therto sore wounded /

Whan reynard herde that it stode so rowme /

that he shold chese to knowleche hym ouercomen
and yelde hym / Or ellis to take the deth / he
thought the choys was worth ten marke / And that
he muste saye that one or that other / he had anon
concluded wold saie / and began to saye to hym
wyth fayr wordes in this wyse /

Dere eme I wyl gladly become your man wyth
alle my good / And I wyl goo for you to the holy
graue / and shal gete pardon and wynnyng for your
cloistre / of alle the chyrches that ben in the holy
lande / Whiche shal moche prouffyte to your sowle
and your elders sowles also / I trowe ther was
neuer suche a prouffre / prouffred to ony kynge /
And I shal serue you / lyke as I shold serue our holy
fader the pope / I shal holde of you al that I haue
and euer ben your seruaunt and forth I shal make
that al my lignage shal do in lyke wyse / Thenne
shal ye be a lord a boue alle lordes / who shold
thenne dare doo ony thyng ayenst you / And
furthermore what someuer I take of polaylle /
ghees / partrych or plouyer / fysshe or flesshe or
what someuer it be / therof shal ye fyrst haue the
choys / and your wyf and your chyldren / er ony
come in my body / Therto I wyl alway abyde by
you / that where ye be ther shal no hurte ne
scathe com to yow / ye be strong and I am wyly /
late vs abyde to gydre / that one wyth the
counseyl and that other wyth the dede / then may
ther nothyng mysfalle to vs ward / and we ben so
nygh of kynne eche to other / that of right shold

be no angre bytwene vs / I wold not haue foughten
 ayenst yow yf I myght haue escaped / But ye ape-
 peled me fyrst vnto fyghte / Tho muste I doo /
 that I not doo wold gladly / And in this bataylle
 I haue ben curtoys to yow / I haue not yet
 shewde the vtterist of my myght on yow /
 like as I wold haue doon yf ye had ben a
 straunger to me / ffor the neuwe ought to spare the
 eme / it is good reson and it ought so to bee / Dere
 eme so haue I now doo / And that maye ye marke
 wel whan I ran to for yow. myn herte wold not
 consente therto. ffor I myght haue hurte yow
 moche more than I dyde. but I thought it neuer ffor
 I haue not hurte yow ne don yow so moche harm
 that may hyndre yow sauf only that myshappe that
 is fallen on your eye / ach therefore I am sory and
 suffre moche sorow in my herte. I wold wel dere
 Eme that it had not happed yow. But that it had
 fallen on me. so thet ye ther wyth had ben plesyd.
 how be it. that ye shal haue therby a grete auaun-
 tage. For whan ye here after slepe ye nede not
 to shette but one wyndowe. where another muste
 shette two. My wyf and my children. and my
 lignage shal falle downn to your feet / to fore
 the kyng and to fore alle them that ye wyl
 desyre and praye yow humbly / that ye wyl suffre
 reynart your neuwe lyue and also I shal knowleche
 ofte to haue trespaced ayenst yow / and what
 lesynges I haue lyed vpon yow / How myght ony
 lord haue more honour than I proffre yow / I

wold for no good do this to another / therefore I
praye yow to be plesyd here wyth al

I Wote wel yf ye wolde ye myght now slee
me / but and ye so don had / what had ye
wonne / so muste ye euer after this tyme
kepe yow fro my frendes and lignage / Therfore
he is wyse that can in his angre / mesure hym self
and not be ouer hasty / and to see wel what may
falle or happe afterward to hym / what man that
in his angre can wel aduuse hym certaynly he is
wyse / Men fynde many fooles that in hete hasten
hem so moche / that after they repente hem / and
thenne it is to late / but dere Eme I trowe that
ye be to wyse so to doo / hit is better to haue
prys honour / reste / and pees / And many frendes
that be redy to helpe hym / than to haue shame /
hurte / vnreste / and also many enemyes lyeng in
a wayte to doo / hym harme / Also it is lityl wor-
ship to hym that hath ouercomen aman / thenne to
slee hym / it is grete shame / not for my lyf
Though I were deed / that were a lytyll hurte.

I Segrym the wulf said / Ay / theef how fayn
woldest thou be losed and dyscharged
fro me / that here I wel by thy wordes /
were thou now fro me on thy free feet / Thou
woldest not sette by me an egge shelle / Though
thou promysedest to me alle the world of fyn rede
gold / I wold not late the escape / I sette lytyl

by the and alle thy frendes and lignage / Alle that thou hast here said is but lesyngis and fayned falsenes / Wenest thou thus to deceyue me / it is longe syth that I knewe the I am no byrde to be locked ne take by chaf / I know wel ynowh good corn / O how woldest thou mocke me / yf I lete the thus escape / thou myghtest wel haue said this to one that knewe the not / but to me thou locest thy flateryng and swete floytyng / ffor I vnderstande to wel thy subtil lyeng talys / Thow haste so ofte deceyued me / that me behoueth now to take good hede of the. Thou false stynkvng knaue thou saist that thou hast spared me in this batayl. loke hetherward to me / is not myn one eye out / and therto hast thou wounded me in xx places in my heed. thou woldest not suffre em so longe to reste. as to take ones my breeth. I were ouer moche a fool yf I shold now spare the. or be mercyful to the so many a confusion and shame as thou hast don to me. and that also that toucheth me moste of alle. that thou hast disworshipped me and sklaundred erswyn my wyf. Whom I loue as wel as my self. and falsely forrest and deceyuedest her. whiche shal neuer out of my herte. ffor as ofte as it cometh to myn mynde / alle myn angre and hate that I haue to the reneweth.

In the mene wylle that ysegrym was thus spekyng. The foxe bithoughte hym how he myght

helpe hym self. And stack his other hond after
 bytwene his legges. And grepe the wulf fast by
 the colyons. And he wronge hem so sore that for
 woo and payne / he muste crye lowde and howle /
 Thenne the foxe drewe his other hond out of his
 mouth / The wulf had so moche payne and
 anguyssh of the sore wryngyng that the foxe dowed
 and wronge his genytours / that he spytte blood /
 And for grete payne he byshote hym self

**How ysegrim the wulf was ouer-
 comen and how the batayl was taken
 vp and fynysshid / And how the fore
 had the worship capitulo xlv^o**



His payne dyde hym more sorow and
 woo / than his eye dyde that so sore
 bledde / and also it made hym to ouer-
 throwe alle in a swowne ffor he had so
 moche bledde / and also the threstyng that he
 suffred in his colyons made hym so faynt that he
 had lost his myght / Thenne reynard the foxe lepe
 vpon hym wyth al his myght / And caught hym by
 the legges and drewe hym forth thurgh the felde /
 that they alle myght see it / and he stack and
 smote hym sore / Thenne were ysegryms frends al
 ful of sorowe / and wente al wepyng vnto their
 lord the kynge / And prayde hym that he wold

doo sece the batayll and take it vp in to his handle

The kynge graunted it / and thenne wente the kepars / of the felde the lupaerd and the lossem and saide to the foxe and to the wulf / Our lord the kynge wil speke wyth yow / and wyl that this batayll be ended / he wil take it in to his hand / he desyareth that ye wyl gyue your stryf vnto hym ffor yf ony of yow here were slayn / it shold be grete shame on bothe sydes / For ye haue as moche worship of this felde as ye may haue /

and they sayde to the foxe / Alle the beestis gyue to yow the prys / that haue seen this bataylle /

The foxe said therof I thanke hem / and what that shal plese my lord to commande that shal not I gaynsaye / I desire no better / but to haue wonne the felde / late my frendes come hether to me / I wil take aduys of them what I shal doo /

They saide / that they thought it good / And also it was reson in weyghty maters a man shold take aduys of his frendes /

thenne cam dame slopecade / and grymbert the dasse her husbond / dame rukenawe wyth her ij susters / Byteluys and fulrompe her ij sones and hatenet her doughter / the flyndermows and the wezel / And ther cam moo than xx / whiche wolde not haue comen yf the foxe had loste the feild. So who that wynneth and cometh to hys aboue. he geteth grete loos and worship / And who that

is ouer throwen. And hath the wise. to hym
 wyl no man gladly come. Ther cam also to the
 foxe / the beuer. the otter and bothe theyr wyues
 panthecrote and ordecale. And the ostrole. the
 Martre the fychews. the fyret. the mowse. and the
 squyrel and many moo than I can name. And alle
 bycause he had wonne the feeld. ye some cam
 that to fore had complayned on hym and were now
 of his next kynne. and they shewde hym right
 frendly chier and contenance. Thus fareth the
 world now. who that is riche and hye on the
 wheel. he hath many kynnesmen and frendes. that
 shal helpe to bere out his welthe. But who that
 is nedy and in payne or in pouerte. fyndeth but
 fewe frendes and kynnesmen. flor euery man
 almost esheweth his companye and waye.

There was thenne grete feste / they blewe vp
 trompētis and pyped wyth shalmoyses /

They sayden alle der newe blesyd be god that
 ye haue sped wel / we were in grete drede and fere
 whan we saw yow lye vnder /

reynart the foxe thanked alle them frendly / and
 resceyued them wyth grete Ioye and gladnes /
 Thenne he asked of them what they counseyllid
 hym / yf he sholde gyue the felde vnto the kyng:
 or noo /

Dame slopecade sayde / ye hardely cosyn /
 Ye may wyth worship wel sette it to his handes /
 And truste hym wel ynough /

Thoo wente they alle wyth the kepars of the

feelde vnto the kynge / And Reynard the foxe
wente to fore them alle / wyth trompes and pypes
and moche other mynstralcye / The foxe kneled
down to fore the kynge

The kynge bad hym stande vp / and said to
hym / reynard ye be now Ioyeful / ye haue kepte
your day worshipfully / I discharge yow. and late
yow goo frely quyte where it plesyth yow / And
the debate bytwene yow I holde it on me / And
shal discusse it by reson and by counseyl of
noble men and wil ordeyne therof that ought be
doon by reson. at suche tyme as ysegrym shal be
hool. And thenne I shal. sende for yow to come
to me. And thenne by goddes grace I shal yeue
out the sentence and Iugement.

An ensample that the foxe told to
the kynge whan he had wonne the
felde. capitulo xlif^o



Y worthy and dere lord the kynge.
saide the foxe I am wel a greed and
payd therwyth. But whan I cam fyrst
in to your court. ther were many that
were felle and enuyous to me. Whiche neuer had
hurte ne cause of scathe by me / but they thought
that they myght beste ouer me / And alle they
cryden wyth myn enemyes ayenst me / and wold
fayn haue destroyed me / by cause they thought

that the wulf was better withholden and gretter
wyth you than I was whiche am your humble
subget / They knewe none other thyng why ne
wherfore / They thoughte not as the wyse be
woned to doo / that is what the ende may
happen /

My lorde thyse ben lyke a grete heep of houndes
whiche I ones saw stonde at a lordes place vpon a
donghil / where as they awayted that men sholde
brynge them mete / Thenne saw they an hound
come out of the kyche / and had taken there a
fayr rybbe of beef er it was gyuen hym / And he
ran fast away wyth all / but the cook had espyed
or he wente away / and toke a grete bolle full of
scaldyng water / and caste it on his hyppes be-
hynde / Wherof he thankyd nothyng the cook /
ffor the heer behynde was skalded of / And his
skyn semed as it had be thurgh soden / Neuer-
theless he escaped away / and kepte that he had
wonne /

And whan his felaws the other houndes saw
hym come wyth this fayr rybbe / They called
hym alle and saide to hym / O howe good a frende
is the cook to the / Whiche hath gyuen to
the so good a boone / Wheron his so moche
flessh /

The hounde saide ye knowe nothyng therof / Ye
preyse me lyke as ye see me to fore wyth the
bone / But ye haue not seen me behynde / take
hede and beholde me afterwarde on myn but-

tokkis. And thenne ye shal knowe how I haue deseruyd it.

And whan they had seen hym behynde on his hyppes how that his skynne and his flesh was al rawe and thurgh soden / tho growled them alle and were aferd of that syedyng water / and wold not of his felawship / but fledde and ran away from hym / and lete hym there allone /

SFe my lord this right haue thyse false beestis / whan they be made lordes and may gete their desire / and whan they be myghty and doubted / thenne ben they extortionners and scatte and pylle the peple / and eten them lyke as they were forhongred houndes / These ben they that bere the bone in her mouth / Norman dar haue to do wyth hem / but preyse alle that they bedryue / Noman dar saye other wyse / but suche as shal plese hem by cause they wold not be shorn / and somme helpe them forth in theyr vnryghtwys dedes by cause they wold haue parte and lykke theyr fyngres / and strengthe them in theyr euyl lyf and werkis / O dere lorde how lytyl seen they that do thus after behynde them what the ende shal be atte laste they fal fro hye to lowe in grete shame and sorowe / and thenne they weerkis come to knowleche and be opene in suche wyse that noman hath pyte ne compasconn on them / in theyr meschief and trouble / and eury man curse them and saye euyl by them to

their shame and vylanye / many of suche haue
 ben blamed and shorn ful nyghe that they had no
 worshipe ne prouffyt / but lose theyr heer as the
 hound dyde. that is theyr frendes. whiche haue
 holpe them to couere their mysdedes and extor-
 conns. lyke as the heer coueryth the skynn / And
 wehan they haue sorow and shame for theyr olde
 trespaces. thenne eche body pluckyth his hand
 fro hym. And flee. lyke as the houndes dyde fro
 hym that was scalded wyth the syedyng water /
 and lete hym thyse extorcions in her sorow and
 nede /

MY dere lorde kynge I besechyou to remem-
 bre this example of me / it shal not be
 ayenst your worship ne wysedom / What
 wene ye how many ben ther suche false extor-
 cionners now in these dayes / ye moche werse
 than an hound / that bereth suche a bone in his
 mouth / in townes / in grete lordes courtes / whiche
 wyth grete facing and bracyng oppresse the poure
 peple wyth grete wronge / and selle theyr fredom
 and pryuelages / and bere them on hond of
 thyngis that they neuer knewe ne thoughte / And
 all for to gete good for theyr synguler proffyte /
 God gyue them all shame and soone destroye
 them who somme euer they be that so doo /

but god be thanked said the foxe / ther may
 noman endwyte me ne my lygnage ne kynne of
 suche werkys / but that we shal acuyte vs / And

comen in the lyghte / I am not a ferd of ony / that
 can saye on me ony thyng that I haue don other-
 wyse than a trewe man ought to doo / Alleway the
 foxe / shall a byde the foxe though alle his enemyes
 hadde sworn the contrarye / My dere lorde the
 kynge I loue you wyth my herte aboue alle lordes /
 And neuer for noman wold I torne fro yow / But
 abyde by yow to the utterist how wel it hath ben
 otherwyse enformed your hyenes / I haue neuer-
 theles alway do the best / and forth so wylle doo
 alle my lyf that I can or may /

**How the kynge forgaf the fore alle
 thynghis / and made hym souerayn
 and grettest ouer al his landes. ca^o
 xliij^o**



He kynge sayde Reynard ye be one of
 them that oweth me homage· whiche I
 wyl that ye allway so doo. And also I
 wylle that erly and late ye be of my
 counseyl. and one of my Iustyses / See wel to
 that ye not mysdoo ne trespace nomore. I sette
 yow agayn in alle your myght and power. lyke as
 ye were to fore and see that ye further alle maters
 to the beste righte· For whan ye sette your wytte
 and counseyl to vertue and goodnesse· thenne may
 not our court be wythout your aduyse and coun-
 seyl. for here is non that is lyke to yow in sharp

and hye counseyll ne subtyller in syndyng a remedye for a meschief. And thynke ye on th example that ye yourself haue tolde. And that ye haunte rightwysnes and be to me trewe. I will frohens forth werke and doo by your aduyse and counseyll. he lyueth not that yf he mysdede yow. But I shold sharply aduenge and wreke it on hym ye shalle oueralle speke and saye my wordes. And in alle my lande shall ye be aboue alle other souerayne and my bayle. That Offyce I gyue yow. ye may wel occupye it wyth worship /

Alle reynardis frendis and lignage thanketh the kynge heily /

The kynge sayde / I wolde doo more ffor your sake / than ye wene / I pray yow alle that ye remembre hym that he be trewe /

Dame rukenawe thenne sayd yes sykerly my lord / that shal he euer be / And thynke ye not the contrary / for yf he were otherwyse / He were not of our kynne ne lignage And I wold eue myssake hym / and wold euer hyndre hym to my power /

Reynart the foxe thanked the kynge with fayr curtoys wordes / And sayd / dere lorde I am not worthy to haue the worship that ye doo to me / I shal thynke theron and be trewe to you also longe as I lyue / and shal gyue you as holsom counseyll as shal be expedient to your good grace /

here wyth he departed wyth his frendes fro the kynge /

H

Now herke how Isegrym the wulf dyde /
 bruyne the bere / thybert the catte / and
 erswynde and her chyldren wyth their
 lignage drewen the wulf out of the felde / and
 leyde hym vpon a lyter of heye / and couerd hym
 warme / and loked to his woundes whiche were wel.
 xxv. and ther came wyse maistres and surgyens.
 Whiche bonde them and weeshe hem he was so
 seke and feble / that he had lost his felynge / But
 they rubbed and wryued hym vnder his temples
 and eyen / that he sprange out of his swound / and
 cryde so lowde that alle they were aferde / they
 had wende that he had been wood

But the maistres gaf hym a drynke that com-
 forted his herte and made hym to slepe They
 comforted his wyf / And tolde to her that ther was
 no deth wounde ne paryl of his lyf Thenne the
 court brake vp / and the beestis departed and
 wente to their places and homes that they came
 froo.



How the foxe wyth his frendis
and lignage departed nobly fro the
kyng / and wente to his castel
malleperduys / capitulo xliij^o

Eynart the foxe toke his leue honestly of
the kyng and of the quene. And they
bad hym he shold not tarye longe. But
shortly retorne to them agayn he
answerd and said dere kyng and quene alway at
your commandement I shal be redy / yf ye nede
ony thyng whiche god forbede I wold alway be
redy wyth my body and my good to helpe yow /
and also al my frendes and lignage in lyke wyse
shall obeye your commandement and desire / ye
haue hyely deseruyd it / god quyte it yow and
yeue yow grace longe to lyue / And I desyre your
licence and leue to goo home to my wyf and chyl-
dren / And yf your good grace wil ony thyng /
late me haue knowleche of it And ye shal fynde
me alway redy /

Thus departed the foxe wyth fayr wordes fro
the kyng.

Now who that coude sette hym in reynardis
crafte / and coude behaue hym in flateryng
and lyeng as he dyde / he shold I trowe be
herde / bothe wyth the lordes spyrytuel and tem-

porcel / The ben many and also the moste parte
 that crepe after his waye and his hole / The name
 that was gyuen to hym abydeyth alway styll wyth
 hym / he hathe lefte many of his crafte in this
 world / Whiche allewaye wexe and become
 myghty / for who that wyl not vse reynardis crafte
 now is nought worth in the world now in ony
 estate that is of myght. But yf he can crepe in
 reynardis nette / and hath ben his scoler / thenne
 may he dwelle with vs / For thenne knoweth he
 wel the way how he may aryse / And is sette
 vp aboue of euery man / Ther is in the world moche
 seed left of the foxe / whiche now oueral groweth
 and cometh sore vp / though they haue no rede
 berdes / Yet ther ben founden mo foxes now than
 euer were here to fore / The ryghtwys peple ben
 al loste / trouthe and rightwysnes ben exyled and
 fordriuen / And for them ben abyden wyth vs
 couetyse / falshede / hate and enuye / Thyse reyne
 now moche in euery contre / For is it in the popes
 court / the emperours / the kynges / dukes or ony
 other lordes where someuer it be eche man
 laboureth to put other out fro his worship / offyce
 and power / for to make hym sylf to clymme hye
 with lyes / with flaterieng / wyth symonye / wyth
 money / or wyth strengthe and force / ther is
 none thyng byloued ne knowen in the court now
 aldays but money / the money is better byloued
 than god / For men doo moche more therfore /
 for who someuer bryngeth money. shal be wel

receuyd and shal haue alle his desyre / is it of lordes or of lādyes or ony other / that money doth moche harme / Money bryngeth many in shame and drede of lyf / and bryngeth false wytnes ayenst true peple for to gete money. Hit causeth vnclennes of lyuyng' lyeng. and lecherye. Now clerkes goon to rome / to parys and to many another place. for to lerne reynardis craste' is he clerke / is he laye man' eueriche of them tredeth in the foxes path. and seketh his hole. The world is of suche condycion now. that euery man seketh hym self in alle maters. I wote not what ende shal come to vs herof Alle wyse men may sorowe wel herfore. I fere that for the grete falsenes thefte robberye and murdre that is now vsed so moche and comonly. and also the vnshamefast lecherye and auoultry bosted blowen a brood with the auauntynge of the same. that wythout grete repentaunce and penaunce therfore / that god will take vengeance and punysshē vs sore therfore / whom I humbly beseche and to whom nothyng is hyd that he wylle gyue vs grace to make amendes to hym therfore / and that we maye rewle vs to his playsyr

And her wyth wil I leue ffor what haue I to wryte of this mysdedis / I haue ynowh to doo with myn owne self / And so it were better that I helde my pees and suffre / And the beste that I can doo for to amende my self now in this tyme. And so I counseyle euery man to doo here in this

present lyf / and that shal be most our prouffyt /
 For after this lyf / cometh no tyme that we may
 occupye to our auantage for to amende vs ffor
 thenne shal euery man answere for hym self and
 bere his own burthen /

Reynardis frendes and lignage to the nom-
 bre of xl haue taken also theyr leue of the
 kynge / And wente alle to gydre wyth the
 foxe / whiche was right glad that he had so
 wel sped / And that he stode so wcl in the
 kynges grace. he thought that he had no shame.
 but that he was so grete with the kyng that he
 myght helpe and further his frendes / and hyndre
 his enemyes / and also to doo what he wolde.
 wythout he shold be blamed yf he wold be wyse /

The foxe and his frendis wente so longe to
 gydre that they camen to his burgh to Male-
 perduys. ther they alle toke leue eche of other
 wyth fayr and courtoys wordes / Reynard dyde to
 them grete reuerence and thanked them alle
 frendly. of theyr good fayth and also worship that
 they had don and shewd to hym. And profred to
 eche of them his seruise yf they had nede wyth
 body and goodes / And herwyth they departed and
 eche of them wente to theyr own howses /

The foxe wente to dame ermelyn his wyf whiche
 welcomed hym frendly he tolde to her and to his
 chyldren / alle the wonder / that to hym was
 befallen in the court. And forgate not a worde /

but tolde to them every dele / how he had escaped /
Thenne were they glad that theyr fader was so
enhaused and grete wyth the kynge / And the
foxe lyued forthon wyth his wyf and his chyldren
in great Ioye and gladnes /

Now who that said to yow of the ffoxes more or
lesse than ye haue herd or red / I holde it for
lesynge / but this that ye haue herd or red / that
may ye byleue wel / and who that byleueth it not /
is not therefore out of the right byleue / how be it
ther be many yf that they had seen it / they shold
haue the lasse doubte of it / for ther ben many
thynges in the world whiche ben byleuyd though
they were neuer seen / Also ther ben many figures /
playes founden / that neuer were done ne happed /
But for an example to the peple / that they may
ther by the better / vse and folowe vertue / and
teschewe synne and vyces / in lyke wyse may it
be by this booke / that who that wyl rede this
mater / though it be of iapes and bourdes / yet he
may fynde therin many a good wysedom and
lernynges / By whiche he may come to vertue and
worship. Ther is no good man blamed herein /
hit is spoken generally / Late every man take his
owne part as it belongeth and behoueth / and he
that fyndeth hym gyilty in ony dele or part therof /
late hym bettre and amende hym And he that is
verly good / I pray god kepe hym therin And yf
ony thyng be said or wreten herin / that may greue

or dysplease any man / blame not me / but the
foxe / for they be his wordes and not myne /

Prayeng alle them that shal see this lytyl treatis /
to correcte and amende / Where they shal fynde
faute / For I haue not added ne mysnusshed but
haue folowed as nyghe as I can my cotype whiche
was in dutche / and by me william Caxton trans-
lated in to this rude and symple englyssh in th
abbey of westmestre. fynysshed the vj daye of Juyn
the yere of our lord .M.CCCC.Lxxxj. and the xxj
yere of the regne of kynge Edward the iiiijth /

**Here endeth the historpe of
Reynard the foxe etc.**



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