

[EPISTLES AND *BALLADES*]

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[fo. 32v.] Epistle [I, to King Richard] written by the said  
Creton

As faithful love demands, I Creton – your devoted servant – send this letter to you Richard of England, most noble Christian Prince. And you should know that, as I write, the anger in my heart makes tears flow down my face when I think of your unhappy life. And yet my spirits are greatly comforted and I have high hopes for your well-being, because it is said over here that you are free and in good health; I pray to Our Lord that this may be so.

Alas! Most mighty Sire, how has your solitary self been able to bear such grievous sadness and live? Certainly everyone who talks about this or hears it talked about is greatly astonished, and most men cannot believe it. But through this it can be shown that Our Lord God, who is a righteous judge, has held you in His holy safe-keeping while you were in your enemies' hands, and visited you with capricious and bitter misfortunes, in order perhaps to test the strength and firmness of your strong Christian faith; and – recognizing God's power and wishing to attain everlasting glory – you have borne them with true patience, giving Him thanks and praise for everything that it pleases Him to have done. Thus it appears that you are God's friend, or otherwise your life would have been over a long time since; perhaps these things were predestined before your birth.

[EPISTLES AND *BALLADES*]

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[fo. 32v.] *Epistre faite par ledit Creton\**

Ainsy come\* vraye amour requiert, a tresnoble Prince et vray catholique, Richart d'Engleterre, je<sup>1994</sup> Creton – ton lige serviteur – te envoie ceste epistre. Et saches que en l'escrissant, l'yre de mon cuer espandoit mes larmes par mes joes, pensant a ta douloureuse vie. Et toutesfoiz mon esperit est moult reconforté, et ay vertueuse esperance pour ta santé,<sup>1995</sup> et pour ce que on dit par deça que tu es sains et alegiés, desquelles choses je pry Nostreseigneur que ainsi soit.

Helas! Tresredoubté Sire, et coment a peu ton seul corps soustenir ne porter tant de douloureuse tristesse sans mort? Certes toutes les creatures, qui en parlent ou oent parler, s'en esbaÿssent moult, et la plus grant partie<sup>1996</sup> des homes ne le peut croire. Maiz par ce leur peut apparoir que Nostresire Dieux, qui est vray juge, toy estant es mains<sup>1997</sup> de tes ennemis, t'a tenu en sa saincte garde, en toy demonstrant perverses et ameres fortunes, et par aventure pour esprouver la constance et l'estableté de ta ferme foy<sup>1998</sup> catholique; et toy – congnoissant la puissance divine [et]<sup>1999</sup> desirant parvenir a la gloire qui est sans fin – les as portees en vraye pacience, en ly rendant graces et loenges de tout ce qu'i\* ly plaist estre fait. Et par ainsi appert que tu es amy de Dieu, ou autrement ta vie fust pieça finée; et peut-estre que ces choses te sont predestinees devant ta nativité.

<sup>1994</sup> je  
<sup>1995</sup> par ta sanite  
<sup>1996</sup> parties

<sup>1997</sup> es mains [*in left*  
*margin*]  
<sup>1998</sup> loy

<sup>1999</sup> no et

Now hold fast to hope in Our Lord more than ever before, for well do I know that if you are alive – despite perfidious Lancaster and all his men – you will be restored to great honour and authority in your kingdom. Your body is more suited to Mars than to Jupiter or Venus, and God has formed you for this; your actions are fierce enough for war and men bear witness to this.

Ah! Most mighty and powerful Prince, when I remember that, while you were conquering lands in Ireland devoid of Christians and full of wild places, the perfidious scoundrel – Lancaster – landed in your kingdom and turned the hearts of your subjects against you with his falsehoods, my whole mind is moved to madness. Cursed be the hour when he crossed the sea to England, that Neptune<sup>225</sup> – the god of the winds – did not play havoc with his sails on the high seas, in order that his ship might have been destroyed and that the days of his wicked and shameful life ended at that time: that his flesh might have been eaten by birds or fish, his furious spirit driven through the heavens, and his bones driven down into the sand of the seashore by the pounding of the waves; certainly they merited such a grave and none other.

Ah! most mighty Prince [fo. 33r.], the warm love which you showed towards the most false earl of Rutland<sup>226</sup> has cost you dear, for by him alone and his dishonest deception was your return from Ireland to England delayed by sixteen to eighteen days, after you had heard news of your enemies. Alas! And why did you believe him more than the members of your Council, who ardently desired your swift return? Certainly I am much amazed that the sea gods favoured you so, sending you winds to reach the port of Milford Haven;<sup>227</sup> it would have been better for you to have landed elsewhere, but none can resist what Our Creator has preordained.

<sup>225</sup> Page 303, line 13. *Neptunus – le dieu des vents*. Neptune was god of the sea. Professor Strohm has misunderstood Creton here: ‘rewriting history via a remarkable imaginative flight’, Strohm, ‘The Trouble with Richard’, p. 88. Creton did not suppose Henry shipwrecked, he wished that he had been. The verbs are subjunctives, telling what should have happened, not what did.

<sup>226</sup> Page 303, lines 22–25. *conte de Rotelant ... son faux enginement*. For Rutland’s role in delaying the return from Ireland, *supra*, ll. 527–557.

<sup>227</sup> Page 303, line 28. *Milleforde*. *Supra*, ll. 805–809.

Or ayes doncques ferme esperance en Nostreseigneur plus que oncques maiz, car je sçay bien que, se tu es vif – maugré le traïstre de Lencastre et toutes ses batailles – tu seras restabli a grant honneur et a grant puissance en ton royaulme, car ton corps et ta personne est plus convenable a Mars que a Jupiter ne a Venus, et Dieu t’a formé ad ce; et sont tes faiz dignes de batailles, et de ce te portent les homes tesmoignage.

Ha! Tresredoubté et puissant<sup>2000</sup> Prince, quant il me souvient que, toy conquerant terres deshabitees de crestiens et plaines de desers en Hybernie, et come le lierre [et]<sup>2001</sup> traïstre de Lencastre entra en ton royaulme et soubvertist les cuers de tes soubgez par son faulx art contre toy, tout mon sens s’esmeut a forsenerie. Et maudite soit l’eure quant il passa en Albion, que Neptunus – le dieu des vens – ne fist ses batailles enmi ses voiles ou hault pelage<sup>2002</sup> de la mer, affin que\* sa nef fust rompue, et que a celle heure les jours de sa malvaise et honteuse vie fussent finés: et que sa chair fust devouree, viande a oyseaux ou aux poissons, et son esperit folié<sup>2003</sup> par diverses regions de l’air, et ses os sustraiz en la rive de la mer dedens le sablon par le deboutement des eaues; certes de telle sepulture\* estoient ilz dignes et non d’autre.

Ha! Tresredoubté Prince, [fö. 33r.] l’ardant affection d’amour que tu avoies au tresfaulx conte de Rotelant t’a esté moult chier vendue, car par luy seul fut ton passage retardé de .xvi. a .xviii. jours d’Ybernie en Angleterre, toy avoir oy\* nouvelles de tes ennemis, par son faulx enginement. Helas! Et pour quoy le crus tu plus que ceulx de ton conseil, qui desiroient moult ta briefve retournee? Et certes je me esmerveille moult come les dieux de la mer te furent ay favorables, qui te mandoient vent pour arriver au port de Milleforde; mielx eust esté pour toy d’estre arrivé a port<sup>2004</sup> d’autre region, maiz ce qui est predestiné du Createur<sup>2005</sup> ne peut nul contrestre.

<sup>2000</sup> et puissant puissant  
prince  
<sup>2001</sup> *no et*

<sup>2002</sup> ses batailles ou ses  
voiles non mie ~~en~~ ou hault  
pelage

<sup>2003</sup> foliable  
<sup>2004</sup> a u port  
<sup>2005</sup> du ~~r~~ createur

Furthermore, most mighty Prince, when I remember the earl of Northumberland<sup>228</sup> I curse him, for he came to you at Conway and swore on the Host that your enemy – Henry Lancaster – only wanted his own estates and that he felt remorse for setting foot in your kingdom. Thus I am greatly astonished that the land of his fathers can permit him [Northumberland] to live, for all his promises were empty and steeped in treason; by reason of them he took you to Flint accompanied by a great number of his men-at-arms whom he had left treacherously hidden behind boulders between Conway and Rhuddlan. In this castle of Flint, dear Sire, you spent a most sorrowful night and understandably so, for you could see that you were surrounded on all sides by your enemies, who craved your death more than any other thing. And at that time I myself firmly believed that the end of my days had come, and my heart was filled with great sorrow, as much for you as for me.

The next day the scoundrel – Lancaster<sup>229</sup> – led you in humiliation to London and handed you over to the citizens, who wickedly condemned you to imprisonment for life, from which Our Lord God has delivered you. Now you should thank Him steadfastly and foster a righteous hope that you can have revenge on your enemies; and that the slaughter is so great that their blood flows in rivers throughout your kingdom, so that the ends of their cruel lives may be an example to all other traitors for all time to come.

And you should know that I have documented – in pictures and words<sup>230</sup> – throughout the kingdom of France all the evil and hateful acts of treason that they have committed against you, in order that their lives might be filled with shame and condemnation. And certainly, most mighty Seigneur, I know not how it is that your person appears so often to my inner eye, for day and night all my thoughts and suppositions concern you alone. And had it been the Creator's will that I – sorrowful and sad – should have seen you again before I died, my heart would be eased. But although I cannot see you with the eyes in my head, yet you are always presented to my inner eye, and it sometimes appears to me that I see and speak to you. Thus do illusory joys delight me when I cannot experience real gratification, and for this reason my mindful heart offers up vows and prayers every day to Our Creator, that I may soon see you with all the joy that I desire.

<sup>228</sup> Page 305, lines 1–9. *conte de Northomberlant ... entre Cornüiz et Rothelant*. *Supra*, ll. 1765–1792, 1839–1925.

<sup>229</sup> Page 305, lines 15–16. *le lierre de Lencastre ... te livra au turbe*. Creton is omitting their return to Chester and the three days spent there. *Supra*, p. 203, l. 3–p. 205, l. 11. *Turbe* = 'citizens'; these were the liverymen of London.

<sup>230</sup> Page 305, line 24. *j'ay manifestees par figures [et] par diz*. Creton has written an illustrated account of the usurpation.

Encore, tresredoubté Prince, quant il me souvient du conte de Northomberlant, je maudiz sa vie, car<sup>2006</sup> il te vint jurer a Cornüay sur le corps Nostreseigneur que ton ennemy – Henry de Lencastre – ne vouloit que sa terre, et qu’il se repentoit de tant qu’il estoit entré en ton royaume, dont<sup>2007</sup> je suy moult esbahy come la terre paternelle [le]<sup>2008</sup> peut soustenir en vie, car toutes ses convenances estoient faulces et plaines de traÿsons; et par ycelles t’enmena a Flint avec grant quantité de ses gens d’armes, qu’il avoit laissiés traïteusement tapis de roches<sup>2009</sup> entre Cornüay et Rothelant. Ouquel chastel de Flint, chier Sires, la nuyt te fu moult douleureuse et a bon droit, car tu te<sup>2010</sup> vëoies environné de tes ennemis de toutes pars, lesquies desiroient ta mort plus que nulle autre chose. Et moy mesme cuiday a celle heure fermement que la fin de mes jours fust venue, et avoie grant douleur au cuer, tant pour toy come pour moy.

Et le lendemain le lierre de Lencastre te enmena honteusement a Londres et te livra au turbe, lesquies par<sup>2011</sup> leur faulx conseil te condampnerent en chartre perpetuelle, dont Nostreseigneur Dieu t’a delivré. Or penses donc de luy rendre graces de ferme entencion, et ayes vertueuse esperance de prendre vengeance de tes ennemis; et que ce soit par sy grant occision, que de leur sang courent fleuves par ton royaume, sy que la fin de leur dolereux jours soit exemple a tous autres traïstres a tous temps a venir.

Et saiches que tous les maulx et horribles traÿsons, qu’ilz t’ont faictes, j’ay manifestees par figures [et]<sup>2012</sup> par diz\* ou royaume de France, affin que leur vie soit honteuse et plaine de reprouche. Et certes, tresredoubté Seigneur, je ne sçay come la representacion de ton ymage me vient sy souvent devant les yeux de mon cuer, car de jour et de nuyt toutes mes pensees et ymaginacions\* ne sont autres sy non penser a toy. Et se la volenté du Createur estoit telle, que moy – dolereux et triste – eusse veu ta figure devant ma mort, tout mon esperit en seroit reconforté. Maiz combien que je ne la puisse veoir des yeulx de mon chief, sy est elle tousdiz presentee devant les yeulx de ma pensee, et m’est aucunesfoiz advis que je te voy et que je parle a toy. Ainsi me delictent les faulces joyes, quant les vraies je ne puis avoir, et pour ce je faiz sacrifice de voeux,<sup>2013\*</sup> d’oroisons et de prieres tous les jours de cuer ententif a nostre Createur, que bien brief je te puisse veoir, a telle joye come je le desire.

2006 cas  
2007 donc  
2008 no le

2009 tapis tapis de robes  
2010 [te *superscript*]  
2011 pour

2012 no et  
2013 feu

Most noble and true Christian Prince, remember your noble and loyal wife, who spends day and night weeping as she waits for you, wishing to hear reliable news of your well-being. Send your instructions over here, so that we can clearly see that you are free and in good health, for all men, great and small, rejoice that you are alive. And do not feel sorrow or shame that revenge for you has not been taken a long time ago, for you well know the adversities and tribulations of this kingdom and especially of your father-in-law Charles, King of France; you can be sure that nothing else has delayed it. And if it is your pleasure to come over here, you will find the greater part of the chivalry of France ready to live and die with you.

And also you will find your noble wife, whom your mother-in-law has been keeping most carefully for you, since she was handed back<sup>231</sup> by your enemy, the scoundrel, Lancaster; he dragged out the negotiations for twenty-two months without wanting to give her back, so that she would have been twelve years old, and anything he would have had her do or say would have been unalterable. For his wicked intention was to betroth her to his eldest son, whom you knighted with great honour and joy in Ireland.<sup>232</sup> But it can be shown that she was entreated and petitioned for diligently by the Council of France, so that she was handed back before she attained her majority. And you should know that today she is as chaste and undefiled<sup>233</sup> as she was when you parted from her at Windsor to go on your Irish expedition; she herself bears witness to this. Thus, most mighty Prince, you must greatly wish to see her, for it is a very precious thing to cull the first flower from the tender body of such a noble virgin as your wife.

Now come over here, dear Sire, set sail and Hippotes,<sup>234</sup> the gentle wind, will waft you to safe port. And I am sure that all the gods of the winds and the sea will aid your passage and Stella Maris – the star of the sea – [fo. 33v.] will point you to safe harbour, for your cause appears just to Our Lord, considering that He has delivered you from such grave danger as you have been in for a very long time.

<sup>231</sup> Page 307, lines 14–15. *depuis la restitution faite de ton ennemy. Supra*, ll. 3318–3601.

<sup>232</sup> Page 307, lines 19–20. *son filz aîné, lequel tu feis chevalier ... en Yrlande. Supra*, ll. 138–144.

<sup>233</sup> Page 307, lines 22–25. *Et sachies ... tesmoignage. Supra*, ll. 3550–3564.

<sup>234</sup> Page 307, line 30. *Iphothades* = Hippotes, father of Aeolus, ruler of the winds.

O, tresnoble Prince et vray catholique, ayes remembrance de ta noble et loyal compaigne, qui espant ses larmes jour et nuyt en toy attendant, desirant oÿr vraies nouvelles de ta santé. Fay tes mandemens par deça, affin qu'il appere clerement que tu es sains et alegiés, car tous homes nobles et nonnobles se resjoissent de ta vie. Et n'ayes douleur ne vergoigne au cuer, se ta vengeance n'a esté faicte des pieça, car tu peus congnoistre et savoir clerement les adversités, douleurs et tribulacions de cest royaulme et en especial de ton beau pere, Charles, roy de France; et soies ferme et certain que nulle autre chose ne l'a retardee. Et s'il te plaist venir par deça, tu<sup>2014</sup> trouveras la plus grant partie de la chevalerie preste pour vivre et mourir<sup>2015</sup> avec toy.

Et sy trouveras ta noble compaigne, que ta belle mere t'a moult precieusement gardee depuis la restitution faicte de ton ennemy – le lierre de Lencastre – lequel delaia la<sup>2016</sup> prosecution par l'espace de .xxii. moiz sans la vouloir rendre, affin telle que elle eust .xii. ans accomplis, et que ce qu'il [ly]\* eust<sup>2017</sup> fait faire ou dire eust esté ferme et estable. Car sa faulce entencion estoit telle de la donner a son filz aisé, lequel tu feis chevalier a grant honneur et a grant joye en Yrlande. Maiz par ce peut apparoir que diligeaument a esté requise et sommee par le conseil de France, et tant que elle a esté rendue, ainz que le jour de son aage fust accomplis. Et sachiez que aussi chaste et aussi entiere que elle estoit, quant tu<sup>2018</sup> partis d'elle a Windesore pour aler en ton voyage d'Yrlande, elle est au jour d'uy, et de ce porte elle mesmez tesmoignage. Et pour ce, tresredoubté Prince, tu doiz avoir tresgrant desir de la veoir, car moult precieuse chose est de cuillir la premiere<sup>2019</sup> fleur du tendre corps de sy noble pucelle come de ta compaigne.

Or viens donques par deça, chiers Sires, et met tes voiles en mer, et Ypothades, le<sup>2020</sup> doulx vent, te fera arriver a bon port. Et suy certain que tous les dieux des vens et de la mer te feront ton passage, et te fera l'estoile [fo. 33v.] d'eauemonstresse de vray port, car ta cause appert juste a Nostreseigneur, veu qu'il t'a delivré de sy grant peril, ouquel tu as esté moult longuement.

2014 deca te tu  
2015 mouru  
2016 delaia sa

2017 no ly  
2018 quant p̄ tu  
2019 premiere

2020 ile



Ah! Most mighty Prince, how many noble ladies and knights will flock to meet you, weeping as much for joy at your well-being as for the bitter misfortunes that you have suffered. Certainly you will see all men praise Our Creator and enthusiastically lay hands on their weapons to go with you to fight your enemies. And if you cannot come here, because someone impedes your passage, at least, Sire, be pleased to tell us your heart's intent, and you will find that most of the nobles of the royal blood of France are your true friends and will not fail you, even unto death. And certainly if you do not arrive here soon, I shall go to you, wherever you are, and shall bring to you – in writing and pictures – a great portion of your bitter misfortunes and calamities as I saw them happen, I being with you in Ireland and in England.

Now at the end of my epistle I beg you, most mighty and true Christian Seigneur, that you do not despise it and that my shortcomings do not cause you displeasure. Read it with care and perhaps you will find in it something to please you in some way. And I promise you – in the name of God who is omnipotent over all beings – that the intense love that I bear you makes me write it, wishing with all my heart for the fulfilment of all your good pleasures and desires. Certainly if the sea gods favour me, I will swiftly follow, and soon set off after it.

### ***Ballade* [I] by the said Creton**

Lords of the royal blood of France, lay hands on your weapons with all speed if you have reliable news about the King who has undergone so much suffering at the hands of the perfidious English; they have robbed him of his authority and then condemned him to death. But God, who is our righteous judge in Heaven above, has saved his life. Everyone – young and old – says so everywhere; it is noble King Richard of England.

Ha! Tresredoubté Prince, quantes nobles dames et chevaliers yront a l'encontre de toy, espandant leurs larmes, tant pour la joye de ta santé come pour les ameres fortunes et douleurs que tu as souffertes. Certes tu verras tous les homes loer nostre Createur et mettre les mains aux armes ententivement pour aler avecques toy contre tes ennemis. Et se tu ne peus venir par deça, et que aucun empesche ton passage, au moins, Sire, qu'il te plaise mander l'entencion de ton courage, et tu trouveras la plus grant partie des nobles du sang de France tes vrais amis, et qui ne te fauldront jusques a la mort. Et certes se tu ne viens bien brief par deça, je yray<sup>2021\*</sup> a toy en quelque lieu que tu soyes, et te porteray – par escript et par figures – une grant partie des ameres fortunes et doleurs, come je les vy avenir,<sup>2022</sup> moy estant avecques toy en Ybernie et en Angleterre.

Or te prie je, mon tresredoubté Seigneur et vray catholique, en la fin de mon epistre, que tu ne la vueilles prendre en desdaing, et que la faulte de mon povre<sup>2023</sup> corps ne te desplaise point. Et la parlis ententivement, et par aventure que tu y trouveras chose qui te pourra aucunement plaire. Et sy te promet – par Dieu qui est puissant sur toutes creatures – que l'ardant desir d'amour que j'ay a toy le me fait faire, desirant de tout<sup>2024</sup> mon cuer l'acomplissement de tes bons plaisirs et desirs.<sup>2025</sup> Et certes se les dieux de la mer me sont favourables, je la suyvy tost et yray briefment aprez.

### **Balade [I] par ledit Creton**

O vous Seigneurs du sang royal de France,  
 Mettés la main aux armes vistement,  
 Se vous avez certaine congnoissance  
 Du roy, qui tant a souffert de tourment  
 Par faulx Anglois, qui traiteusement  
 Luy ont tollu la dominacion  
 Et puis de mort fait condampnacion.  
 Maiz Dieu, qui est le vray juge es sains cieulx,  
 Luy a sauvé la vie. Main et tart  
 Chascun le dit partout, jennes et vieulx;  
 C'est d'Albion le noble roy Richart.

<sup>2021</sup> yroy  
<sup>2022</sup> vy ~~ae~~ avenir

<sup>2023</sup> poivre  
<sup>2024</sup> tou

<sup>2025</sup> desiirs

And if it is so, for greater increase of honour you should swiftly have your men armed, for all his hope was in you; I know this to be true. Often in Wales did I hear him weep bitterly and praise<sup>235</sup> King Charles of France, and all of you, while the perfidious English hounded him most cruelly. Alas and alack! Help him to improve his lot; it is noble King Richard of England.

He is of your blood and allied to you; everyone knows it plainly. Thus you have no excuse to refuse him aid. Do not await a call to arms, as for lesser cause was the palace of Ilium set ablaze and Priam<sup>236</sup> and four of his sons killed. Make haste then to send help over there and you will be praised in all quarters; it is noble King Richard of England.

Princes, do not take it amiss that he does not tell you of his affairs; you should not be surprised. Cross the sea and help the stricken leopard<sup>237</sup> to rise again; it is noble King Richard of England.

### [Epistle II, to Philip the Bold, duke of Burgundy]

**[The passages in italic type represent borrowings from Valerius Maximus, as translated by Simon de Hesdin.]**

[fo. 34r.] *The fragility and mutability*<sup>238</sup> of public affairs rightly demand a leader who is wise, prudent and endowed with good governance.

<sup>235</sup> Page 311, line 6. *renon*. The usual meaning is 'fame', *infra*, p. 311, l. 21. However, Froissart, *Chroniques de France et d'Angleterre, livre quatrième*, p. 123, l. 5, and p. 436, l. 7, has *renommer* = *célébrer* = 'to praise'. 'Praise' fits *renon* here.

<sup>236</sup> Page 311, lines 18–19. *Fu mis en feu le palais d'Ylion / Et Priant mort et quatre de ses fieulx*. This is perhaps taken from Valerius Maximus, [*Les*] *Grejois ... mirent siege devant Troyes ... ouquel ... furent tués les effans Priamus, c'est assavoir Hector, Troylus, Deyphebus, Paris ... Et finalement sa cité prise et mise en feu et lui meismes fu mis à mort: 'La Traduction de Valère Maxime par Nicolas de Gonesse'*, ed. Charras, Book 7, p. 378, ll. 16–21. *Priant* is what Creton wrote. The scribe of **B** mistook *priant* for a verb – present participle < *prier* which makes no sense; he changed it to *privent* – 6th person past historic < *prendre* – which equally makes no sense. *Priant* is a proper name = 'Priam', king of Troy. This is the form used by Deschamps. *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. de Queux and Raynaud, VIII, no. 1457, pp. 149–150, l. 3.

*Filz* does not rhyme with *lieux*; the Northern form *fielx* is found in Christine de Pizan, *Oeuvres poétiques*, ed. M. Roy, 3 vols (Paris, 1886–1896), I, s.v. *Autres Balades*, no. 37, pp. 250–251, l. 30. See also Pope, *From Latin to Modern French*, §391 (4), p. 155.

<sup>237</sup> Page 311, line 26. *le liepart*. For the leopard as the King of England, *supra*, ll. 133–134, note.

<sup>238</sup> Page 311, line 32. *La fragilité avecques l'inconstance*. Probably from Valerius Maximus, *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, ed. Enriello and others, I, p. 1. See also, *infra*, p. 313, ll. 7–8.

Et s'il est vray, pour avoir accroissance  
 De grant honneur faictes hastivement  
 Voz gens armer, car toute s'esperance\*  
 Estoit en vous; je le sçay vraiment.  
 Par maintesfoiz plourant piteusement  
 Luy oÿ faire en Gales maint renon  
 Du roy françois, qui Charles a a non,  
 Et de vous tous, quant faulx Anglois crueulx  
 Le chassoient plains de [tres]crueulx.<sup>2026\*</sup> art.  
 C'est grant pitié! Aidiés luy\* pour le mieulx;<sup>2027</sup>  
 C'est d'Albion le noble roy Richart.

C'est vostre sang de ligne et d'aliance;  
 Chascun le scet et congnoist clerement.  
 Vous ne povés donc trouver excusance,  
 Que ne soiés tenus tresgrandement  
 De luy aidier. N'atendés mandement  
 Nul quelconque, car pour moins d'achoisson  
 Fu mis en feu le palais d'Ylion,  
 Et Priant<sup>2028</sup> mort et quatre de ses fieulx.<sup>2029\*</sup>  
 Hastés vous donc d'envoier celle part,  
 Sy en aurés bon renon en tous lieux;  
 C'est d'Albion le noble roy Richart.

Princes, n'ayés en indignacion,  
 S'il ne vous fait de son fait mencion;  
 Vous n'en devez pas estre merueilleux.  
 Passez la mer et aydiés le liepart  
 A relever, qui est moult<sup>2030</sup> doulereux;  
 C'est d'Albion le noble roy Richart.<sup>2031</sup>

### [Epistle II, to Philip the Bold, duke of Burgundy]

[The passages in italic type represent borrowings from Valerius Maximus, as translated by Simon de Hesdin.]

[fo. 34r.] *La fragilité avecques l'inconstance*<sup>2032</sup> de la chose publique doit ou doivent\* desirer par droit cours de Nature chief sapient, prudent et plain de bon gouvernement.

<sup>2026</sup> no tres  
<sup>2027</sup> mielx  
<sup>2028</sup> prirent  
<sup>2029</sup> filz

<sup>2030</sup> relever qui est qui est  
 moult  
<sup>2031</sup> le ~~roy~~ noble roy  
 richart

<sup>2032</sup> fragilite avecques  
 avecques linconstance

And because the head of this kingdom<sup>239</sup> has suffered or is suffering still from a strange and possibly unidentifiable injury – perhaps by the will of Our Creator, who was or still is angry at the multitude of sins committed by him or by others in his kingdom, punishment for which is sent him by His Celestial Majesty – or because of the sins of our fathers, of which *the Holy Scriptures say*: ‘Our fathers have sinned, but we will carry the blame’<sup>240</sup> – or perhaps because of various wicked and hateful actions carried out by Fate:

Yet for the common good, most mighty Christian Prince, Philip – son of a King of France<sup>241</sup> and duke of Burgundy – you should consider the kingdom’s poor and miserable people, responsibility for whom you received at one time through the consent and command of your brother Charles, formerly King of France, which responsibility, most mighty Seigneur, you have exercised most wisely and beneficially to this day.

And in carrying out the work which you have begun – which needs help more than ever – I can compare you very well to the beginning, not the end, of the rule of the Roman emperor, Tiberius Caesar. In accomplishing the good works which you have begun, you are his only successor on earth, for Suetonius<sup>242</sup> says in his book *The Twelve Caesars* that he was so overflowing in humility, chastity, good sense, wisdom and all other virtues, that he surpassed all other men; and at the same time he had such a great and special knowledge of the ceremonies due to the gods that it was most marvellous.

And from the beginning of his reign until almost the end, he would not tolerate being called emperor or father of the country, and could scarcely suffer anyone to kneel before him, and sharply reprimanded anyone who did. And especially did he mortally hate those who flattered him, which is very like how some great lords behave today, which is a matter of regret; and perhaps some lose their self-awareness. He never had harm done to anyone for what was said of him – be it good or bad – but said that in a free city all tongues should be free. He spoke so well to everyone and so honoured all those who spoke to him, that in doing so he almost overstepped the bounds of humanity.

<sup>239</sup> Page 313, line 1. *en ce royaume le chief principal*. Charles VI of France, who suffered from recurring bouts of insanity.

<sup>240</sup> Page 313, lines 7–8. *l’Escripture Sainte dit*: ‘Nos peres ont pechié, maiz nous emporterons le mal’. This is the first indisputably identified borrowing from Simon de Hesdin’s translation of Valerius Maximus: *si comme dist la Sainte Escripture ... «Nos peres pecherent et ne sont plus, et nous portons leurs iniquités»*, Valère Maxime, *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, ed. Enriello and others, I, p. 70. Also, A. Vitale-Brovarone, ‘Notes sur la traduction de Valère Maxime par Simon de Hesdin’, in M.C. Timelli and C. Galderisi, *Pour acquérir honneur et pris: Mélanges de Moyen Français offerts à Giuseppe Di Stefano* (Montreal, 2004), pp. 183–191; and *supra*, Introduction, pp. 34–35.

<sup>241</sup> Page 313, line 11. *Philippe – filz de roy de France*. Philip was the fourth son of King John the Good, and brother of Charles V, *infra*, p. 313, 14.

<sup>242</sup> Page 313, lines 22–37. *car Suetonius dit ou livre Des .xii. Cesarres ... a pou que ... il ne passoit les mettes de humanité*. This passage comes from Valerius Maximus: *Suetonius ou livre des .XII. Cesaires dist ... que a pou que ... ne passoit les mettes de humanité*, Valère Maxime, *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, ed. Enriello and others, I, p. 9.

Et pour ce que en ce royaume le chief principal se peut estre dolo  
ou deult encore de bleceure merueilleuse et par aventure incongneue  
– et peut-estre par la volenté du Createur, lequel peut avoir esté ou  
est indigné aucunement par la moultiplicité d'aucuns pechiés com-  
mis par luy ou par autres de son royaume, dont pugnicion luy est  
transmise de la majesté celestie – ou par le pechié de noz peres, des-  
quieux *l'Escripture Sainte dit: Noz peres ont pechié, maiz nous emporterons le  
mal'* – ou par aventure [par] aucunes malvaises oeuvres et detest-  
ables<sup>2033</sup> faictes par [le]<sup>2034</sup> sort ou autrement:

Toutesvoiz loist il pour le bien publique, tresredoubté Prince et  
vray catholique, Philippe – filz<sup>2035</sup> de roy de France, duc de  
Bourgoigne – que tu ayes regard a son povre et miserable peuple,  
duquel tu as une foyz receu la charge et garde par le consentement  
et commandement de ton beau frere Charles, jadix roy de France,  
auquel gouvernement, mon tresredoubté Seigneur, tu as esté moult  
prudent et favorable jusques au jour d'uy.

Et en poursuyvant l'euvre que tu as commencee – laquelle a grei-  
gneur mestier d'aide que oncques mayz<sup>2036</sup> – je te puis assez com-  
parer au commencement de la seigneurie de Tybere Cesar –  
empereur des Rommains – non pas a la fin de son empire. Maiz  
en acomplissant les oeuvres<sup>2037</sup> vertueuses que tu as commencees,  
tu peus estre son seul successeur en terre, *car Suetonius dit ou livre Des  
.xii. Cesarres<sup>2038</sup> qu'il fut sy habondant en humilité, en chasteté, en sens, en pru-  
dence et en toutes autres operacions vertueuses, qu'il en passa tous les autres; et  
avecques ce il fu de sy grant congnoissance et especial cultivement des<sup>2039</sup> cerimonies  
aux dieux, que ce fu grant merueille.*

*Et tant que du commencement<sup>2040\*</sup> de son empire et prez jusques a la fin, il ne  
voulit souffrir non d'empereur ne surmon de pere du pais,<sup>2041</sup> ne a paine vouloit il  
souffrir que on se agenouillast devant luy, et reprovoit aigrement ceulx qui<sup>2042</sup> le fai-  
soient. Et especialment ceulx qui le blandissoient ou flatoient heoit il mortelment,  
laquelle chose est au jour d'uy moult prouchaine, collateral et familliant d'aucuns  
grans seigneurs, dont est pitié et damage; et par aventure peut-estre que aucuns en  
perdent la congnoissance d'eulx mesmes. Il ne faisoit fere mal a nul pour chose que  
on dist de luy – feust bien ou mal – maiz [disoit]<sup>2043</sup> que en franche cité toutes  
langues devoient estre franches. Il parloit sy bel a chascun et honouroit aussi tous  
ceulx qui parloient a luy, que a pou que en ce faisant il ne passoit les mectes de  
humanité.*

2033 par aventure s [no  
par] aucunes malvaise  
oeuvres et destables  
2034 no le  
2035 philippe ~~to~~ filz

2036 oncques ~~ma~~ mayz  
2037 oeuvres  
2038 cesarres  
2039 de  
2040 commandement

2041 de paix  
2042 ceulx [one letter scored  
out] qui  
2043 no disoit

And then when the Romans saw the very special way he governed and that he had such keen regard for public affairs, *there were some men burning with avarice who advised* <sup>243</sup> *him to increase the country's dues and taxes. He replied to them most severely that they showed no love for the common good, and that a good shepherd did not swallow or devour his sheep but sheared it closely; and he did so many good things that he demonstrated in his own person how everyone ought to behave and live.*

Considering the great virtues in Tiberius Caesar from the beginning of his rule almost to the end, I have been able to compare you to him, since you have been recently following in his excellent footsteps, in as much as you have become shepherd to the poor sheep – as he was – and have not been willing for them to be devoured, but have most energetically laid hands on your victorious weapons to protect them. For this, most mighty Christian Seigneur, your wisdom will be exalted and spread amongst all Christians today and for all time to come.

And you should know that by working in this way you gain a second life, which is called everlasting glory: for glory – that is to say good repute – gives all good men a second life after their deaths, and the repute which lives on following their good works makes it seem as if they were still alive. Also glory stops those who are praiseworthy from dying. Therefore, most mighty Seigneur, be pleased to continue the good work which you have begun, for your feats of arms are not violent or oppressive, but are gentle and shining like Jupiter's star to serve the common good. And you can see this clearly, for out of all other Christian princes you are courted by several places and nations, especially by the Bretons,<sup>244</sup> who want to hand over to you alone all their government and safe-keeping; this is most honourable, considering their nobility and strength and that of their country.

And because your strength and power, after those of the head of this kingdom are greater than other men's – as I can see – may it please you to apply yourself to two things which will make your good name live for ever: that you consider the most merciless and unhappy strife within our Holy Mother Church,<sup>245</sup> in order that she may be united and

<sup>243</sup> Page 315, lines 2–6. *il y ot d'aucuns ... qui a luy conseillement ... de la tondre justement.* This comes from Valère Maxime, *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, ed. Enriello and others, I, p. 9. *ce n'estoit pas fait de bon pastre ... de vouloir transgloutir ... sa beste, mais de la tondre justement.* Hesdin has made a mistake in translation here, and Creton follows him. He contrasts the good shepherd who shears (*tondre*, p. 315, l. 6) his sheep with the bad who devours (*transgloutir*, p. 315, l. 6) it. Hesdin has translated *deglutire* 'to devour' instead of *deglubere* 'to flay'. Creton uses *escorchier* 'to flay', *supra*, l. 2001.

<sup>244</sup> Page 315, lines 29–31. *tu es desiré ... mesmement des Bretons.* In October 1402, Philip the Bold became regent of Brittany and guardian of the young duke John V. This prevented Brittany from falling under English influence, as Joan of Navarre, widow of duke John IV had married Henry IV. See Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, pp. 52–53.

<sup>245</sup> Page 315, lines 37–38. *la trescruieuse ... discorde de nostre mere Sainte Eglise.* The papal Schism: *ibid.* pp. 45–47.

Et lors, quant les Rommains virent son trespecial gouvernement et qu'il avoit sy aspre<sup>2044</sup> regart a la chose publique, *il y ot d'aucuns ardans en convoitise, qui a luy conseillerent qu'il creust les threuz et redevances du pais, de quoy il respondi a eulx*<sup>2045</sup> *moult crueusement qu'ilz n'amoient pas le bien publique, et que ce n'estoit pas fait de bon pastre ou pastour de vouloir transloutir ou mengier sa beste, maiz de la tondre justement; et tant fist de biens, qu'il monstra en luy par exemples come chascun se devoit gouverner et vivre.*

Et pour l'influence des grans biens habondans en ycellui Tybere Cesarre du commencement<sup>2046</sup> de son empire et pres jusques a la fin, je te puis bien avoir comparé a luy, car encores depuis nagueres tu as moult habondaument ensuy les vertus de sa succession, de tant que tu as voulu devenir pastour des povres bestes – come il fut – et n'as pas voulu souffrir leur transloutissement, maiz as tresviguerusement mis la main aux armes vainqueresses pour les garder. Pour laquelle chose, mon tresredoubté Seigneur et vray catholique, la prudence de toy sera essaucee et divulguee entre tous les crestiens de cest monde et entre les aages a venir.

Et sachiez que en faisant telles oeuvres tu peus acquerir une vie seconde, qui est appelee gloire perdurable: car la gloire – qui vault autant a dire come bone renommee – donne a tous pseudommes une vie seconde après la mort, et la renommee, qui remaint de leurs bones oeuvres, fait sembler qu'ilz soient encores vifs. Encore defent la gloire que ceulx ne soient mors qui sont dignes de loenges. Et pour ce, mon tresredoubté Seigneur, vueillies soustenir vertueusement la<sup>2047</sup> oeuvre\* que [tu]<sup>2048</sup> as commenee, car tes armes ne sont pas armez forcenees ne persecutoires, maiz sont douces et reluisans come l'estoille de Jupiter pour le bien publique. Et tu le peus appercevoir clerement, car entre tous les autres princes des crestiens tu es desiré en plusieurs lieux et plusieurs nacions mesmement des Bretons, lesquieux singulierement<sup>2049</sup> et seulement a toy veulent baillier toute leur seignourie et garde et gouvernement; laquelle chose est moult honnorable, veu la noblesse et force d'iceulx et de leur pais.

Et pour ce que ta force et puissance, aprez<sup>2050</sup> celle du chief de ce royaume surmonte les autres – come je puis appercevoir – qu'il te plaise mettre ententive a deux choses, lesquelles feront vivre ta renommee perdurablement: c'est que tu ayes regard a la trescrueuse et miserable discorde de nostre mere Sainte Eglise, affin que par toy elle puisse estre unie et mise en paix et en repos. Car [fo. 34v.] certes

2044 sy ~~apre~~ aspre

2045 ceulx

2046 comman ~~dement~~

[cement *superscript*]

2047 le

2048 *no* tu

2049 singlierement

2050 ta force et puissance  
est force aprez



pacified by you. For [fo. 34v.] certainly I truly believe that all the trials and tribulations which are happening in this country or have been happening for a long time past, only come about through our sins and through our disregard for or disobedience towards Our Creator.

Valerius Maximus shows many fine examples of this when he deals with the Romans, saying: *'It is no surprise<sup>246</sup> that the benevolence or goodwill of the gods have been constant in protecting and enlarging the Roman empire, which has had the petty misdeeds against their honour or service examined with such scrupulous care, for no one should think that our city was ever backward with regard to the most conscientious observance of the ceremonies due to the gods.'* And he proves this with a multitude of examples, one of which I want to relate to you and which we ought to remember.

'In Rome two consuls were appointed, one of whom was named Scipio Nasica and the other Gaius Figulus. They were sent to wage war, one in Corsica and the other in Gaul; they subjected these lands to Roman rule. But notwithstanding their excellent feats of arms, they were recalled to Rome and stripped of their estates and situations simply because Tiberius Graccus<sup>247</sup> had written to tell the College of Augurs in Rome that they had held meetings in the temple or tabernacle of the gods, to hear matters<sup>248</sup> of little and trivial significance, the noise from which might perhaps have disturbed the sacrifices to the gods.'

*We ought to mark well this example<sup>249</sup> and treat our holy places and churches with great reverence, for as St Isidore says in the fifteenth book of his Etymologies: 'If pagans could bestow such great honour on the temples or tabernacles not of their gods but of their idols, Christians ought to be most ashamed to show so little reverence to God Himself who is Our Creator.'* Livy and Valerius Maximus relate many other marvellous things concerning this subject; through them they seemed to mean that the great benevolence<sup>250</sup> and goodwill of the gods favoured and helped the Romans.

<sup>246</sup> Page 317, lines 6–10. *Ce n'est pas merveille ... des ceremonies aux dieux.* This comes from *nutz ne se doit merveillier ... des ceremonies aus diex*, Valère Maxime, *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, ed. Enriello and others, I, p. 31.

<sup>247</sup> Page 317, lines 18–20. *Tyberius Graccus avoit escript ... tabernacle aux dieux.* Comes from *Tyberius Graccus ... envoya lectres ... le tabernacle des diex*, *ibid.* I, p. 26.

<sup>248</sup> Page 317, lines 20–22. *pour oïr questions de petites choses et inutiles, desquelles la noïse par aventure pouoit avoir empesché le sacrifice des dieux.* Comes from *il avoit oïes ou temple questions de petites choses et inutiles, desquelles la noïse par aventure avoit empesché le service des diex*, *ibid.* I, pp. 28–29.

<sup>249</sup> Page 317, lines 23–31. *Ceste exemple devoit on bien noter ... qui est nostre Createur.* This comes from *En cest exemple puet on noter ... au vray Dieu du ciel*, *ibid.* I, p. 26. *Ysidore*, p. 317, l. 24. St Isidore of Seville (560–636), author of the *Etymologiae*. See Bossuat and others (eds), *Dictionnaire des lettres françaises: Le Moyen Age*, s.v. 'Isidore de Séville'.

<sup>250</sup> Page 317, lines 30–31. *la grant indulgence et bone volenté des diex les Rommains ont esté favorables et aydans.* Comes from *l'indulgence ou bone volenté des diex a esté ferme et constans de garder et augmenter le empire*, Valère Maxime, *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, ed. Enriello and others, I, p. 31. **B's** reading has *dieux* and *Rommains* transposed, *supra*, p. 317, l. 30.

je croy veritablement que toutes les tribulacions et maulx, qui avienent ou sont venus en ce royaume depuis longtems a, ne viennent sy non des pechiés commis par nous et par la desconnoissance ou desobeissance que nous avons de nostre Createur.

Moult de beaux exemples en monstre Valerius, ou il traicte des faiz des Rommains, en disant ainsi: *‘Ce n’est pas merveille, se indulgence ou bone volenté des<sup>2051</sup> dieux a esté ferme et constant de garder et acroistre l’empire de Romme, lequel a voulu par sy scrupuleuse cure estre examinez les petis mesfaiz encontre leur honneur ou service, car on ne doit pas cuidier que nostre cité eust oncques les yeulx arriere du tresespecial cultivement des cerimonies aux dieux.’* Et il le monstre<sup>2052</sup> bien par moult d’exemples, entre lesquies je t’en vueil raconter<sup>2053</sup> un, duquel nous devrions bien avoir la souvenance.

‘Il fu ordonné a Romme deux consules, dont l’un fu appellé Scipio Nasica et l’autre Gayus Figulus,<sup>2054</sup> lesquies furent envoiés pour fere guerre, l’un en Corsique et l’autre en Gale, lesquelles terres ilz soubz-mistrent a la seignourie de Romme. Maiz nonobstant leurs armes vertueuses furent ilz remandez a Romme et furent privez de leurs estas ou offices, pour ce seulement que *Tyberius Graccus avoit escript au college des augures a Romme qu’ilz avoient<sup>2055</sup> fait assemblees de gens dedens le temple ou tabernacle aux dieux pour oÿr questions de petites choses et inutilles, desquelles la noyse par aventure povoit avoir empeschié le sacrifice des dieux.*’

Ceste<sup>2056</sup> exemple devoit on bien noter, et avoir les sains lieux et eglises en grant reverence, car sycome dit Ysidore ou .xv.<sup>e</sup> livre d’Ethimologies: *‘Se les paiens faisoient aussi grant honneur aux tabernacles ou temples non pas de leurs dieux maiz de leurs ydoles, bien devoient les crestiens grant vergoigne avoir de fere si pou de reverence au vray Dieu, qui est nostre<sup>2057</sup> Createur.’* Moult d’autres grans misteres en raconte Titus Livius et Valerius Maximus touchans ceste matiere, par lesquies<sup>2058</sup> il semble qu’ilz veulent dire que *la grant indulgence et bone volenté des dieux les Rommains<sup>2059</sup> ont esté favourables et aydans.*

2051 de  
2052 ilz le monstrent  
2053 vueil monstrent  
raconter

2054 siculus  
2055 quil avoit  
2056 e ceste  
2057 nostre *superscript*

2058 lesquies  
2059 bone volenté des  
rommains les dieux

Next, most mighty Seigneur, you should see that revenge is taken or punishment meted out for the spilling – so sinfully and so treacherously – of the royal blood of that good Christian, King Richard; certainly it is most pitiful and distressing to hear of the end of his days which have been cut short before his lifespan was reached, on account of the true and loyal love which he had for this country. Alas! If you knew what sad laments and piteous regrets he voiced to all the royal princes of France – and especially to you and to the Count of St Pol<sup>251</sup> – when he was a fugitive in Wales, in fear of those traitors, his enemies, who pursued him on all sides in order to put him to death, certainly you would gather large companies of men and cross to their island, for the long duration of peace makes good men become gross and lazy.

And therefore, Sire, do not agree to any further truce, but let revenge be taken, proportionate to the crime. And truly I think that there would be no more honourable conquest made or talked about than this, since the time that the Gauls destroyed the sovereign empire of Rome *after they had crossed<sup>252</sup> the frozen, wild and impassable Alps, which no man had crossed before except Hercules*. And fear not their furious strength, for Our Lord God who is a righteous judge, knowing their wickedness, would not allow them to be victorious in battle – as we can clearly see – for since their rebellion<sup>253</sup> they have known only failure and defeat. Therefore, Sire, should it please you to set sail when you can, and unfurl in the wind those banners sent to your lineage by divine omnipotence, you will see the greater part of the nobility laying hands on their weapons to go along with you, seeking revenge for the royal blood shed in England.

Now I beg you, most mighty Christian Seigneur, at the end of my epistle, if I have misspoken in any way, please excuse me and bear with my ignorance, for I am only a lay person with little learning, and my knowledge is scant. But the faithful love I bear you made me write it, wishing with all my heart to serve you. May the God who broadcasts His riches and bestows His abundance on wise men grant you victory.

Amen.

<sup>251</sup> Page 319, line 9. *Monseigneur de Saint Pol*. For Waleran of Luxembourg, *supra*, I, 3505, note. In the *Prinse et mort* we read only that Richard invoked Charles VI and Isabella.

<sup>252</sup> Page 319, lines 17–19. *qu'ilz orent passees les Alpes tresfroides, rudes et incertables, que oncques home par avant n'avoit passees que Hercules seulement*. Comes from *qui premierement passerent les Alpes tres froides, rudes et intraitables, c'est a dire les mons qui n'avoient esté passé par devant, fors de Hercules, Valère Maxime, Facta et dicta memorabilia*, ed. Enriello and others, I, pp. 34–35. Creton's *incertables* should be Hesdin's *intraitables*.

<sup>253</sup> Page 319, lines 23–25. *depuis ... leur rebellion ilz n'ont eu ... que fortunes et desconfitures*. The deposition of King Richard in 1399 was followed in 1401 by the uprising of Owen Glendower in Wales, and trouble on the border with Scotland. See Given-Wilson, *Henry IV*, pp. 190–215.

Après, mon tresredoubté Seigneur, vueillies que vengeance ou<sup>2060</sup> pugnacion soit faicte du noble sang du bon catholique le roy Richart, lequel a esté espandu tant villainement, tant traicteusement, que certes c'est moult misericordieuse et piteuse chose a oyr la fin<sup>2061</sup> de ces\* jours lesquies, par la vraye et loyale<sup>2062</sup> amour qu'il avoit par deça, ont esté finiz, ainz que son aage deust estre acompli. Helas! Se tu savoies bien les tristes complaints et les piteux regrés qu'il faisoit a tous les seigneurs du sang de France – et especialment a toy et a Monseigneur de Saint Pol – quant il estoit fuitif en Gales pour la crainte des traictres ses ennemis, qui le chassoient de toutes pars pour le mettre a mort, certes tu feroies assembler tumultes de batailles pour passer en leur yslé, car la longue demeure de paix fait les bons homes a rudir\* et devenir paresceux.

Et pour ce, Sires, ne soies consentans de leur plus donner treves, maiz que vengeance en soit prise, telle come il appertient au mesfait. Et vrayement je cuide que – depuis le temps que les Gaulx destruisirent<sup>2063</sup> le souverain empire de Romme et *qu'ilz orent passees*<sup>2064</sup> *les Alpes tresfroides, rudes et incertables,\* que oncques home par avant n'avoit passees que Hercules seulement* – ne fu plus honnorable conquete faicte come ceste, ne dont il fut plus parlé. Et ne doute point leur force forcenee, car Nostreseigneur Dieux, qui est vray juge, congnoissant leurs maulx, ne les pourroit souffrir ne soustenir en armes victorieuses – come on le peut clerement appercevoir – car depuis le temps de leur rebellion ilz n'ont eu gaires que fortunes et<sup>2065</sup> desconfitures. Et pour ce, Sires, s'il te plaist metre tes voiles en mer maiz que temps convenant soit venu, et tes enseingnes au vent – lesquelles furent envoiees a ton sang par la puissance divine – tu verras la plus grant partie des nobles homes mettre la main aux armes ententivement pour aler avecques toy, desirans la vengeance du noble sang espandu en Albion.

Or te prie je, mon tresredoubté Seigneur et vray catholique, a la fin<sup>2066</sup> de mon epistre que, se j'ay aucunement mespris en parler, qu'il te plaise le moy pardonner et supporter l'ignorance de moy, qui ne suys que home lay et pou sachant; et est mon entendement de pou de congnoissance. Maiz la vraie amour que j'ay a toy le m'a fait faire, desirant de tout mon cuer ton service. Ycellui Dieu, qui ses richesses eslargist et donne habondamment a la vie des saiges, te vueille octroier vie victorieuse.

Amen.

2060 vengeance soit faicte  
ou  
2061 la ✢ fin

2062 loyal  
2063 destruisierent  
2064 passes

2065 de  
2066 affin

**Ballade [II] by Creton**

Come, come from the Empire and from France, come and see an excellent company, come and see an alliance renewed. Come and see noble knights, come and see how they both act as one, come and see Caution coupled with Youth.<sup>254</sup> Come and see the scourge of sloth who labours diligently night and day for the common good. Come and see triumphant love, come to him bearing branches of laurel.

Do this to strengthen the old custom,<sup>255</sup> established long ago by the Romans; [fo. 35r.] it is the true symbol of victory, awarded for loyalty – as formerly the Romans used to award it for wisdom or valour – for it was the supreme earthly prize, given for worthy deeds and honour. If you follow the Romans, everyone will hold you dear, and if a prince's work leads to victory, come to him bearing branches of laurel.

The man who brings safety where there was danger saves the lives of many valiant men. And perhaps France<sup>256</sup> would shortly have been enslaved by the jealous English,<sup>257</sup> since previously they showed that they had the ability to do so. Thus it seems to me that the man who extinguishes such a misfortune should have many triumphs.<sup>258</sup> Come and see him to thank him, everyone in turn should come and see him, come to him bearing branches of laurel.

<sup>254</sup> Page 321, line 7. *Prudence avec Jennesse*. 'Caution' is certainly Philip the Bold. 'Youth' has been suggested as the young duke of Brittany (*supra*, p. 315, ll. 29–31); see Creton, 'Trois ballades politiques inédites', ed. Roccati, pp. 1102–1103; but Louis d'Orléans (1372–1407), younger brother of Charles VI, may be a securer identification. Creton is celebrating the outbreak of peace at the beginning of 1402. *Supra*, Introduction, p. 22.

<sup>255</sup> Page 321, lines 13–14. *l'ancienñe ordonnance / ... des Rommains*. Creton is referring to the Roman custom of awarding a crown of laurel to a victorious commander. See *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, s.v. 'Crowns and Wreaths, Roman'.

<sup>256</sup> Page 321, line 26. *la province – France* – does not refer to Brittany, a province of France, but to France herself. See *infra*, p. 327, l. 28, *leur province* = England. Creton also uses *region* = *pays* to refer to France. *Supra*, l. 3638, *D'Engleterre en sa region* = 'out of England into her own country'.

<sup>257</sup> Page 321, line 28. *Albions* = Englishmen. This form is also found in Deschamps, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. de Queux and Raynaud, I, no. 153, p. 281, l. 22; III, no. 362, p. 100, l. 21.

<sup>258</sup> Page 321, line 30. *triumphes*. A triumph, a celebratory procession, was awarded by the Romans to a successful general. See *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, s.v. 'Triumph'.

**Balade [II] par Creton**

Venez, venez de l'Empire et de France,  
 Venez vëoir tresbelle compaignie,  
 Venez vëoir renouvel d'aliance.  
 Venez vëoir gente chevalerie,  
 Venez vëoir comë elle est unie,  
 Venez vëoir Prudence avec Jenesse.  
 Venez vëoir l'ennemy de paresce,  
 Qui pour le bien publique nuyt et jour  
 Diligeamment ne fait que travaillier.  
 Venez vëoir victorieuse amour,  
 Venez vers luy portant raim de lorier.

Pour augmenter l'ancienne ordonnance,  
 Qui des Rommains fu pieça estable;  
 [fo. 35r.] Et pour monstrer vraie signifiante  
 De victoire par<sup>2067</sup> loyaulté gaingnie<sup>2068</sup> –  
 Come jadiz la rommaine lignie  
 Souloit faire par senz ou par prouesce –  
 Faictes ainsi, car ce fu la maïstresse  
 Des biens mondains, de vaillance et de honneur.<sup>2069\*</sup>  
 D'ensuyvre les chascun vous aura chier,  
 Et se prince conquete par labour  
 Venez vers luy portant raim de lorier.

Car qui fait seur ce qui est en balance,  
 De maint vaillant home gaigne la vie.  
 Et peut-estre que la province – France –  
 En eust esté en brief temps asservie  
 Par Albions, qui sont tous plains d'envie,  
 Veü que pieça en ont monsté l'adresse.  
 Sy doit avoir triumphes a largesse,  
 Ce m'est advis, qui estaint tel dolour.<sup>2070</sup>  
 Venez le veoir pour le remercier,  
 Venez le veoir un chascun a son tour,  
 Venez vers luy portant raim de lorier.<sup>2071\*</sup>

<sup>2067</sup> pour  
<sup>2068</sup> gaingnee

<sup>2069</sup> honneur  
<sup>2070</sup> dolour

<sup>2071</sup> venez le veoir  
 portant rains de lorier

### Another *ballade* [III] by the said Creton

All<sup>259</sup> the lands of Asia and Europe, Africa also and India were formerly conquered by the ancient Romans' mighty feats of arms, so strong were their noble levies, until Sulla and Marius<sup>260</sup> were elected to rule as consuls. Then began the cruel jealousy from which many Romans died. The strength of Rome was almost destroyed by their quarreling and hostility; reflect on this, noble blood of France.

Sulla, who was full of self-will, planned to go and conquer the lands of noble King Mithridates.<sup>261</sup> But before he had led his army from the Campania,<sup>262</sup> Marius said that he would lead the armies himself and that he was consul; he had been consul for six years or more. Then Sulla appeared, full of rage, and put all those of Marius' party to death. Marius took revenge when he returned from his flight to Ostia,<sup>263</sup> reflect on this, noble blood of France.

A long time afterwards Caesar<sup>264</sup> – the first emperor – won many noble victories, and you can be sure that in under three years he subjugated fourteen kings with his fierce fighting. Pompey feared his receiving a triumph from those he had defeated, and ordered him not to enter Rome. Julius Caesar said to his men, who knew how to fight to the death: 'Those who have enslaved Rome will die'; reflect on this, noble blood of France.

<sup>259</sup> Page 323, line 1. *Autre balade*. With five stanzas and an *envoi*, this is a *chant royal*. See L.A. Finlay [formerly Stewart], 'The *Chant Royal*: A study of the evolution of a genre', *Romania*, 96 (1975), pp. 481–496; also L.E. Kastner, *History of French Versification* (Oxford, 1903), pp. 268–271.

<sup>260</sup> Page 323, line 7. *Scilla, Marius*. Creton had read Valerius Maximus' account of the enmity between Sulla and Marius: *Silla et Marius si orent grant guerre ensemble, par laquelle la vertu et poissance de Rome fu aussi comme toute perie et perdue*, Valère Maxime, *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, ed. Enriello and others, I, p. 114.

<sup>261</sup> Page 323, line 16. [*le*] *roy Mitridates*. See *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, s.v. 'Mithridates II, king of Parthia, 125/121–91 BCE', also s.v. 'Parthia, Parthian empire'.

<sup>262</sup> Page 323, line 17. *Campagne* is the correct reading. See *Quant Silla sot ceste chose ... il recoint de Champagne vers Rome*, Valère Maxime, *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, ed. Enriello and others, I, p. 114. **B**'s *compaignie* also makes the line hypermetric. The Campania = the region of west central Italy. See *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, s.v. 'Campania'.

<sup>263</sup> Page 323, line 24. *Ostie*. Ostia was a harbour-town at the mouth of the Tiber. See *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, s.v. 'Ostia'. Ostia's importance to Rome is well illustrated by the fighting between Marius and Sulla. When Marius returned from Africa, he captured Ostia before advancing on Rome; he knew that by controlling Ostia and the Tiber he could starve Rome.

<sup>264</sup> Page 323, lines 26–27. *Cesar – le primerains / Emperiere*. Caesar's great-nephew Augustus was the first emperor. The rivalry between Caesar and Pompey is treated in Valère Maxime, *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, ed. Enriello and others, I, pp. 124–127, and 265–268.

**Autre balade [III] par ledit Creton**

Par les grans faiz des anciens Rommains  
 Furent jadiz les terres soubjugees  
 De toute Aise et d'Orreup<sup>2072</sup> pour [le]<sup>2073</sup> mains,  
 D'Auffrique aussi avecques les Indees;  
 Tant furent fors leurs nobles assemblees,  
 Jusques au temps que Scilla, Marius  
 Pour gouverner furent consule esleus.  
 Lors commença la doleureuse envie,  
 Dont mains<sup>2074</sup> Rommains depuis perdirent vie.  
 Par le discord<sup>2075\*</sup> d'eulx et malveillance  
 Fut la force rommaine prez perie;  
 Advisés y, le noble sang de France.

Scilla, qui fu de sa volenté plains,  
 Tenoit aler conquerre les contrees  
 Du noble roy Mitridates. Mes ainz  
 Que de Campaigne<sup>2076</sup> eust ses gens amenees  
 Dit Marius qu'il feroit les armees  
 Luy mesme, et que consule il fust tenus;<sup>2077</sup>  
 Sy avoit il esté six ans ou plus.  
 Lors vint Scilla plain de forcenerie  
 Et mist a mort tous ceulx de la partie  
 De Marius, qui puis en prist vengeance,  
 Quant il revinst de sa fuyte d'Ostie;  
 Advisés y, le noble sang<sup>2078\*</sup> de France.

Grans temps aprez Cesar – le primerains  
 Emperiere – maintes nobles journees  
 Ot<sup>2079\*</sup> de victoire, et sy soiés certains  
 Qu'a luy soubzmist en moins de troiz annees  
 .xiiii. roys par ses fieres meslees.  
 Pompee ot paour qu'il ne fust lors reçus  
 A triumphe, par ceulx qu'il ot vaincus,  
 Sy luy manda que a Romme n'entrast mie.  
 Jules Cesar dist a sa compaignie,  
 Qui furent duys d'armes faire a oultrance:  
 'Ceulx seront mors, qui ont<sup>2080</sup> Romme asservie;'  
 Advisez y, le noble sang de France.

2072 dorreut  
 2073 *no* le  
 2074 maint

2075 discord  
 2076 compaignie  
 2077 tenu

2078 roy  
 2079 et  
 2080 qui ~~me~~ ont



Then was Caesar feared so much by Pompey that he fled, having called up his men. Then were father and cousin fighting against one another with bloodied weapons. Caesar's men were slaughtered, but then Pompey was defeated and his people killed; not one of them survived. He fled to Ptolemy<sup>265</sup> by sea, [fo. 35v.] and did not survive there long; Ptolemy had him executed without warning. After this Rome lost her ascendancy; reflect on this, noble blood of France.

Now Lucan,<sup>266</sup> an upright and worthy man, said that these misfortunes were brought about because the one did not want another to rule over him, considering the honours he had won. 'The other, full of pride, would bear no equal, thus the whole empire was lost,' said Valerius. At one time Caesar and Pompey held sway over all the world. Alas! Had there been enduring peace between them,<sup>267</sup> no city would have been hostile to them; reflect on this, noble blood of France.

Princes, be clothed in harmony – that is a garment of great virtue – behave so that it is not torn by you. No one will take sides against you, for you have a huge amount of righteous power. Rome was despoiled by strife; reflect on this, noble blood of France.

<sup>265</sup> Page 325, lines 8–10. *A Tholomee s'en fouy par navye / ... Trenchier luy fist le chief*. See Valerius Maximus, *Photin osta a Pompee la teste et la presenta au roy Ptholomee ... Qui veult savoir plus a plain de ceste matere si voie Lucan ...*, Valère Maxime, *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, ed. Enriello and others, I, p. 266. Photinus (d. AD 376), bishop of Sirmium (in Serbia), denied the incarnation of Christ, and was therefore considered a heretic. See *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, ed. C.G. Herbermann and others, 18 vols [in 19] (New York, 1907–1950); <https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/>, XII, s.v. 'Photinus'.

<sup>266</sup> Page 325, line 13. *Lucan*. Roman poet, whose *Pharsalia* deals with the civil war between Julius Caesar and Pompey. See *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, s.v. 'Annaeus Lucanus, Marcus, the poet Lucan (39–65 CE)'.  
<sup>267</sup> Page 325, lines 21–23. *Se paix unye / Eüst esté entre eulx ... / Nulles cités ne leur fut enemie*.

Comes from Valère Maxime, *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, ed. Enriello and others, I, p. 126.

Lors fu Cesar de Pompee sy crains  
 Qu'il s'en fouy, tant qu'ot ses gens mandees.  
 La fu le pere et le cousin germains,  
 L'un contre l'autre en armes sanglantees.  
 Les gens Cesar y furent decoupees,  
 Maiz depuis [fu]<sup>2081</sup> vaincus Pompeius  
 Et ses gens mors, qu'il n'en demoura nulz.  
 A Tholomee s'en fouy par navye,  
 [fo. 35v.] Ou il ne fu pas longuement en vie;  
 Trenchier luy fist le chief sans deffiance.  
 Depuis perdy Romme sa seignourie;  
 Advisez y, le noble sang de France.

Or dist Lucan, qui fu preudoms et sains,  
 Que ses<sup>2082</sup> douleurs sy furent engendrees  
 Pour ce que l'un ne vult nulz souverains,  
 Veu les honneurs qu'il avoit conquetees.  
 'L'autre, qui fu plain de fieres pensees,  
 'Ne vult avoir pareil, dont tous perdus  
 'Fut tout l'empire,' ce dit Valerius.  
 Sy tindrent eulx un jour la monarchie  
 De tout le monde. Helas! Se paix unye  
 Eüst esté entre eulx sans variance,  
 Nulles cités\* ne leur fut<sup>2083</sup>\* enemie;  
 Advisez y, le noble [sang de France.]<sup>2084</sup>\*

Princes, soyés de concorde vestus –  
 C'est un habit qui est de grant vertus –  
 Faictes que ne soit de vous departie.  
 Nul ne fera encontre vous partie,  
 Car trop avés vertueuse puissance.  
 Romme sy fu par discorde ravie;  
 Advisez y, le noble sang de France.

<sup>2081</sup> *no* fu  
<sup>2082</sup> *se*

<sup>2083</sup> *fut superscript*  
<sup>2084</sup> *no* sang de france

**Another ballade [IV] by the said Creton.**

Lay hands on your weapons with all speed to win honour and renown, to improve your standing amongst noble men, to be like Judas Maccabaeus,<sup>268</sup> to emulate the valiant deeds of Alexander, who was bold and brave. If you have any thought of defeating a king,<sup>269</sup> muster troops against this summer season, then throw down a challenge to Henry who has falsely accused you of treachery, in the letters sent to France.

Do not lead your army into Italy<sup>270</sup> – that is a country full of dangerous people – even if you had conquered them, that would not win you any security. Do not hate the Germans, but be ready, willing and able to attack those most wicked people<sup>271</sup> who have long been hostile to the royal blood from which you sprang and to which you belong today. Do not look elsewhere; you can see the truth of this, in the letters sent to France.

Do not wait until they have crossed the sea, for advantage very often lies with the aggressor. But let their land be pillaged by you, riding hard and setting fire<sup>272</sup> like they did here in many districts, until fire appears in more than a hundred places. Repay them what they did to us in their great perfidy. You will be obeyed and feared for evermore if you exact revenge, you whom they have greatly insulted, in the letters sent to France.

<sup>268</sup> Page 327, lines 4–6. *Judas Machabee / ... Alixandre*. These were two of the Nine Worthies, a group of historic and legendary figures popular in the Middle Ages, embodying the virtues of a perfect knight. There were three pagans (including Alexander the Great), three Jews (including Judas Maccabaeus), and three Christians (including Charlemagne. *Supra*, l. 1492, note). See J. Huizinga, *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*, trans. R.J. Payton and U. Mammitzsch (Chicago, 1996), pp. 76–77.

<sup>269</sup> Page 327, lines 8–9. *Se vous avés pensee ... / De conquerir royale majesté*. This ballade is addressed to Louis d'Orléans, and refers to an exchange of letters between him and Henry IV in 1402–1403. *Supra*, Introduction, p. 28.

<sup>270</sup> Page 327, lines 14–18. *En Ytalie ne conduisiés armée / ... D'Alenaigne ne soiés envieus*. Louis d'Orléans was known to have ambitions in Italy and Germany. See Palmer, *England, France and Christendom*, pp. 222–223.

<sup>271</sup> Page 327, line 20. *la tresmalvaise gent* = the English.

<sup>272</sup> Page 327, line 29. *En chevauchant de force et boutant feux*. During the fourteenth century, English tactics in the war against France generally involved a *chevauchée*: the army rode on a broad front, plundering and burning as they went. See Palmer, *England, France and Christendom*, pp. 5–6. Creton advocates turning these tactics against the English.

**Autre balade [IV] par ledit Creton**

Pour acquerir honneur et renommee,  
 Pour mielx valoir entre les gracieux,  
 Pour ressembler a Judas Machabee,  
 Pour ensuir les faiz chevalereux  
 D'Alexandre, qui fu hardyz et preux,  
 Mettés la main aux armes vistement.  
 Se vous avés pensee aucunement  
 De conquerir royale<sup>2085</sup> majesté,  
 Assemblés gens contre cest temps d'esté,  
 Et puis mandés a Henry deffiance,  
 Qui vous met sus sans cause faulseté  
 Par [les]<sup>2086</sup> lettres envoiees en France.\*

En Ytalie<sup>2087</sup> ne conduisiés armee –  
 C'est un país plain de gens perilleux –  
 Se vous aviez la terre conquestee,  
 Sy n'auriés vous assurance par eulx.  
 D'Alemaigne ne soiés envïeux,  
 Maiz soiés prest, hastif et diligent  
 De courre sus la tresmalvaïse gent,  
 Qui sy longtemps ennemis<sup>2088</sup> ont esté  
 Du sang royal, dont pieça fustes né,  
 Et sont encores. N'ayés autre esperance;  
 Vous en povés savoir la verité  
 Par [les]<sup>2089</sup> lectres envoiees en France.

N'attendés pas qu'ayent la mer passee,  
 Car assaillans sont bien souvent eureux.  
 Maiz par vous soit leur province fustee  
 En chevauchant de force et boutant feux,  
 Come ilz ont fait par deça en mains<sup>2090</sup> lieux,  
 Tant qu'il y pert en places plus de cent.  
 Rendés leur donc leurs biens pareillement  
 Qu'ilz nous ont fait par grant desloyauté.  
 Vous en serez servi, craint et doubté  
 A tousjours maiz, se prise en est vengeance  
 De vous, a qui ilz ont moult offensé  
 Par [les]<sup>2091</sup> lettres envoiees en France.

2085 royal  
 2086 *no les*  
 2087 ytale

2088 ennemie  
 2089 *no les*  
 2090 maint

2091 *no les*

[fo. 36r.] Prince, go to war with Perfidy, who ought to make you want to punish boldly, in faith and in hope, those who show you no love, in the letters sent to France.

[fo. 36r.] Prince, querele avec<sup>2092</sup> Desloyauté,  
Qui vous doit bien donner la voulenté  
De hardement, de foy et d'esperance  
De pugnir ceulx, dont vous n'estes amé,  
Par les lectres envoiees en France.

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<sup>2092</sup> avecques