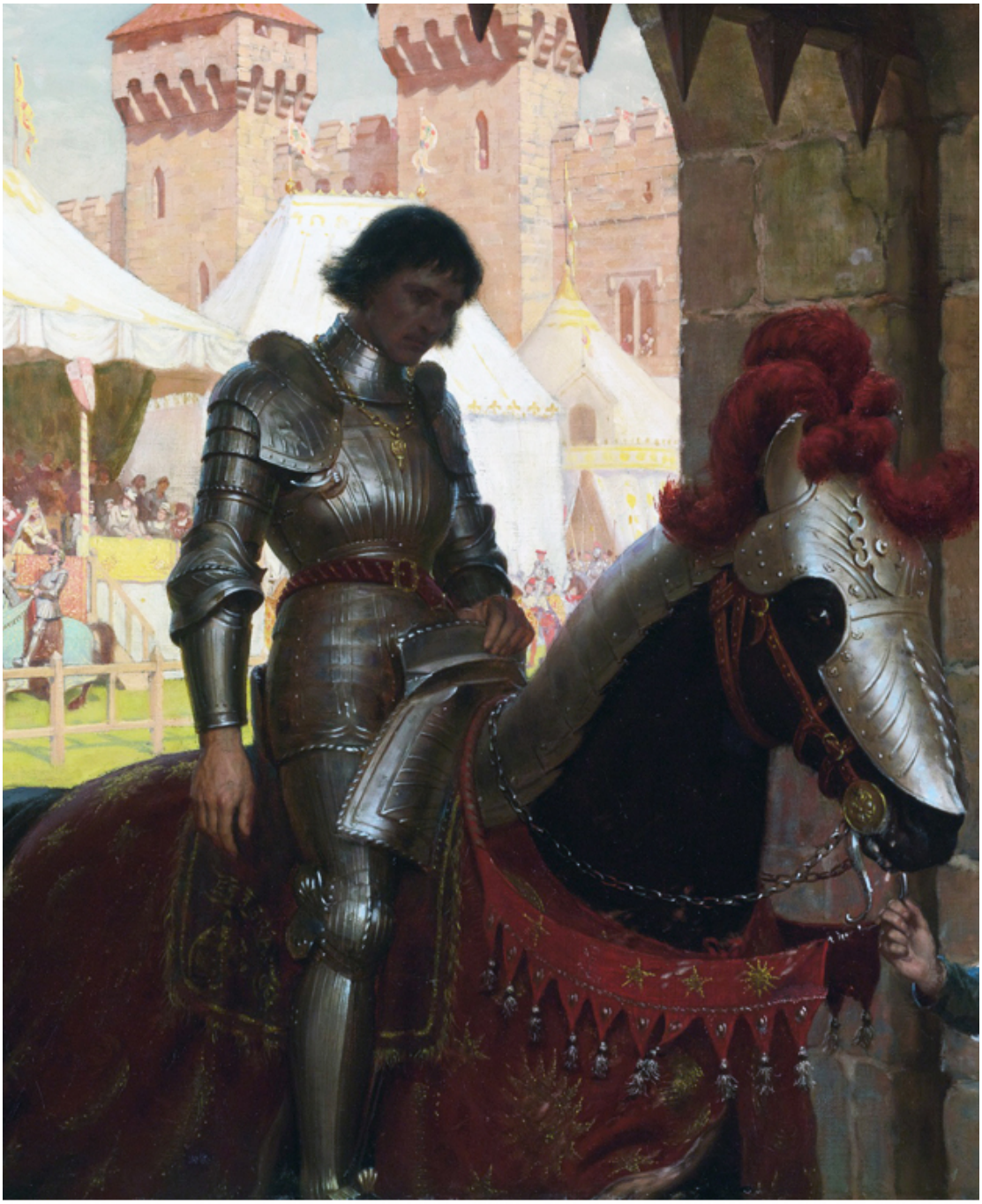

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Christine de Pizan

Collected Works

DELPHI CLASSICS

The Collected Works of

CHRISTINE DE PIZAN

(1364-c. 1430)

Contents

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Version 1

Medieval Library

CHRISTINE DE PIZAN

By Delphi Classics, 2025

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Collected Works of Christine de Pizan

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The Translations

Monterenzio, a town in the City of Bologna, which incorporates the village of Pizzano — Christine de Pizan was born in 1364 in the Republic of Venice, Italy. She was the daughter of Tommaso di Benvenuto da Pizzano.

Epistle of Othéa to Hector (1400)

OR, THE BOKE OF KNYGHTHODE

Original French title: 'L'Épistre de Othéa a Hector'

Translated by Stephen Scrope, c. 1460

Christine de Pizan was born in 1364 in the Republic of Venice and was the daughter of Tommaso di Benvenuto da Pizzano (a village southeast of Bologna). Her father worked as a physician, court astrologer and Councillor of the Republic of Venice. When she was four years old, her father accepted an appointment to the court of Charles V of France as the king's astrologer and the family moved to Paris. There she married the notary and royal secretary Etienne du Castel in 1379. Together they had three children, including a daughter that later became a nun at the Dominican convent of Poissy as a companion to the King's daughter Marie. Christine's husband died of the plague in 1389, a year after her father had died.

After her husband's death, Christine was left in a perilous situation, needing to support and provide for her mother and children. When she tried to collect money from her husband's estate, she faced complicated lawsuits regarding the recovery of salaries still owed to her husband. From these experiences Christine became a court writer and by 1393 she was writing love ballads, which soon caught the attention of wealthy patrons at court. In time, she would become a prolific writer. Her involvement in the production of her books and her skillful use of patronage in turbulent political times has earned her the distinction of being the first professional woman of letters in Europe.

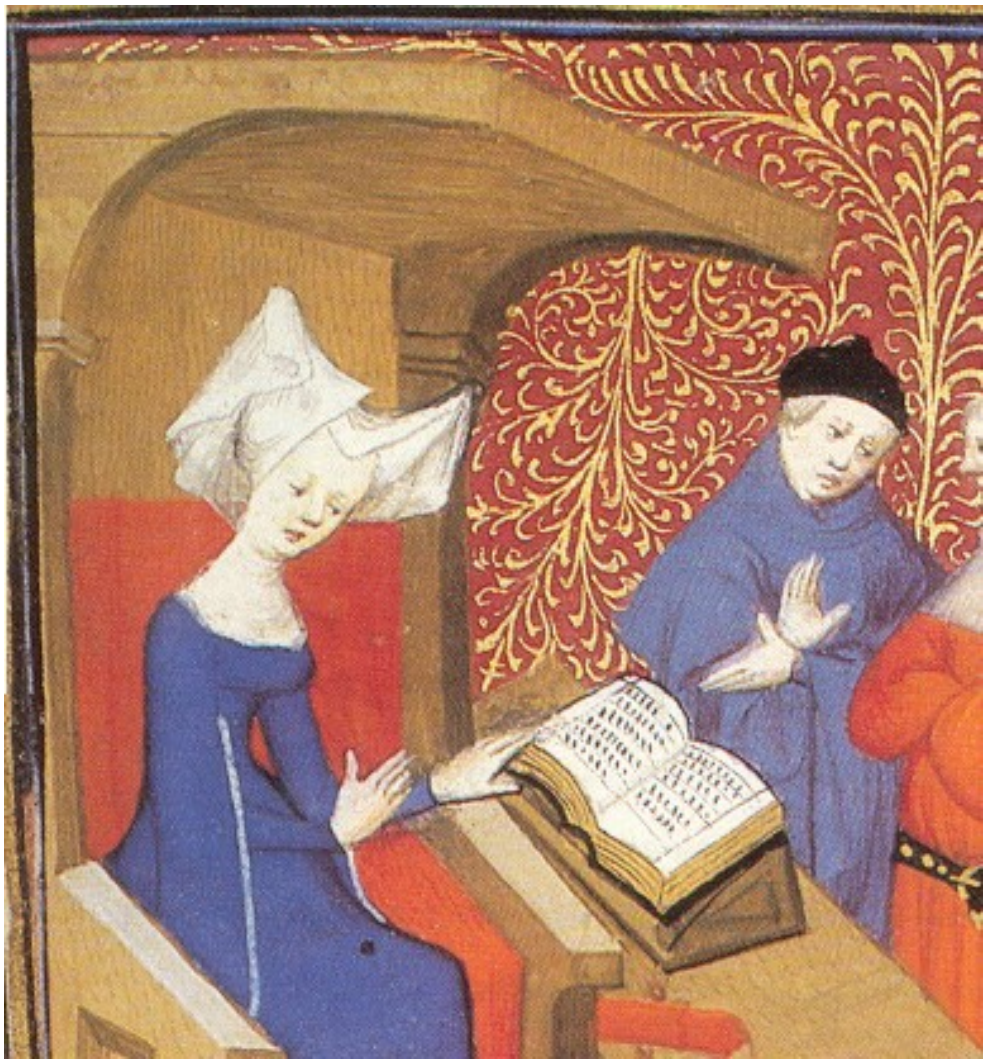
Although a Venetian by birth, Christine expressed a fervent nationalism for France. Financially, she became attached to the French royal family, donating or dedicating her early ballads to its members, including Isabeau of Bavaria, Louis I, Duke of Orléans, and Marie of Berry. The conduct of patronage was now changing in the late Middle Ages. Texts were still produced and circulated as continuous roll manuscripts, but they were increasingly replaced by the bound codex. Members of the royal family became patrons of writers by commissioning books. As materials became cheaper, a book trade was developing, so writers and bookmakers produced books for the French nobility, who could afford to build their own libraries. Therefore, Christine had no single patron that consistently supported her financially, but instead she was associated with the royal court and the different factions of the royal family – the Burgundy, Orleans and Berry – each having their own respective courts. Throughout her career she undertook concurrent paid projects for individual patrons and subsequently published these works for dissemination among the nobility.

Christine believed that France had been founded by the descendants of the Trojans and that its governance by the royal family adhered to the Aristotelian ideal. In 1400 she published *L'Épistre de Othéa a Hector*, which was dedicated to Louis of Orléans, the brother of Charles VI, who at court was seen as the potential regent of France. In the text Hector of Troy is tutored in statecraft and the political virtues by the goddess of wisdom Othéa. It is a didactic text that combines the elements of moral teachings, mythology and allegory, presented through the character of Othéa, who imparts wisdom to the legendary warrior Hector. The central theme revolves around the

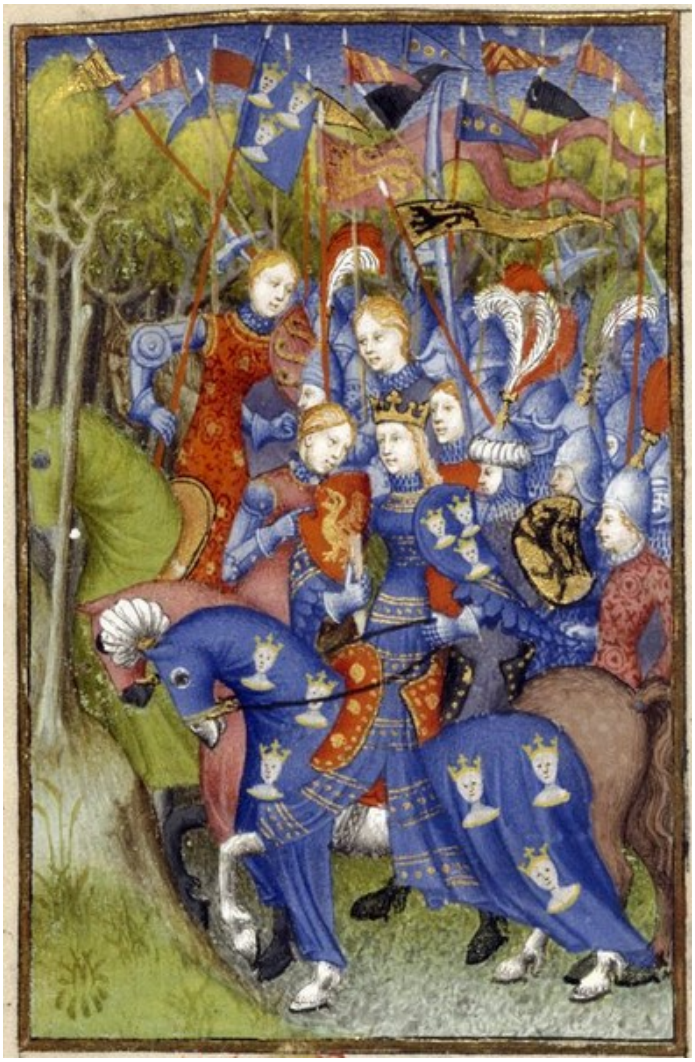
virtues and moral principles necessary for true knighthood, demonstrating the significance of character over mere martial prowess.

At the start of the text, the author introduces Othea, the goddess of wisdom, who addresses Hector, highlighting his noble lineage and experiences in battle. As she praises his past accomplishments, Othea emphasises the need for Hector to continue his journey of moral and spiritual development, particularly as he faces the challenges of aging. She speaks of the importance of transforming his physical valor into a pursuit of virtuous deeds, guiding him through various precepts drawn from mythology and philosophy. Through a series of hundred verses, accompanied by prose commentaries, Othéa teaches Hector about the cardinal virtues and the essence of becoming a true knight, setting the stage for a broader discussion on the nature of chivalry and moral integrity.

Between 1408 and 1415 Christine produced further editions of the book, including several richly illustrated luxury editions. Throughout her career she produced rededicated editions of the book with customised prologues for patrons, including an edition for Philip the Bold in 1403, and editions for Jean of Berry and Henry IV of England in 1404.



A fifteenth century depiction of Christine



A miniature of Queen Penthesilea with her army of Amazons coming to the aid of the Trojan army, illustrating this text, The Queen's Manuscript or British Library Harley 4431.

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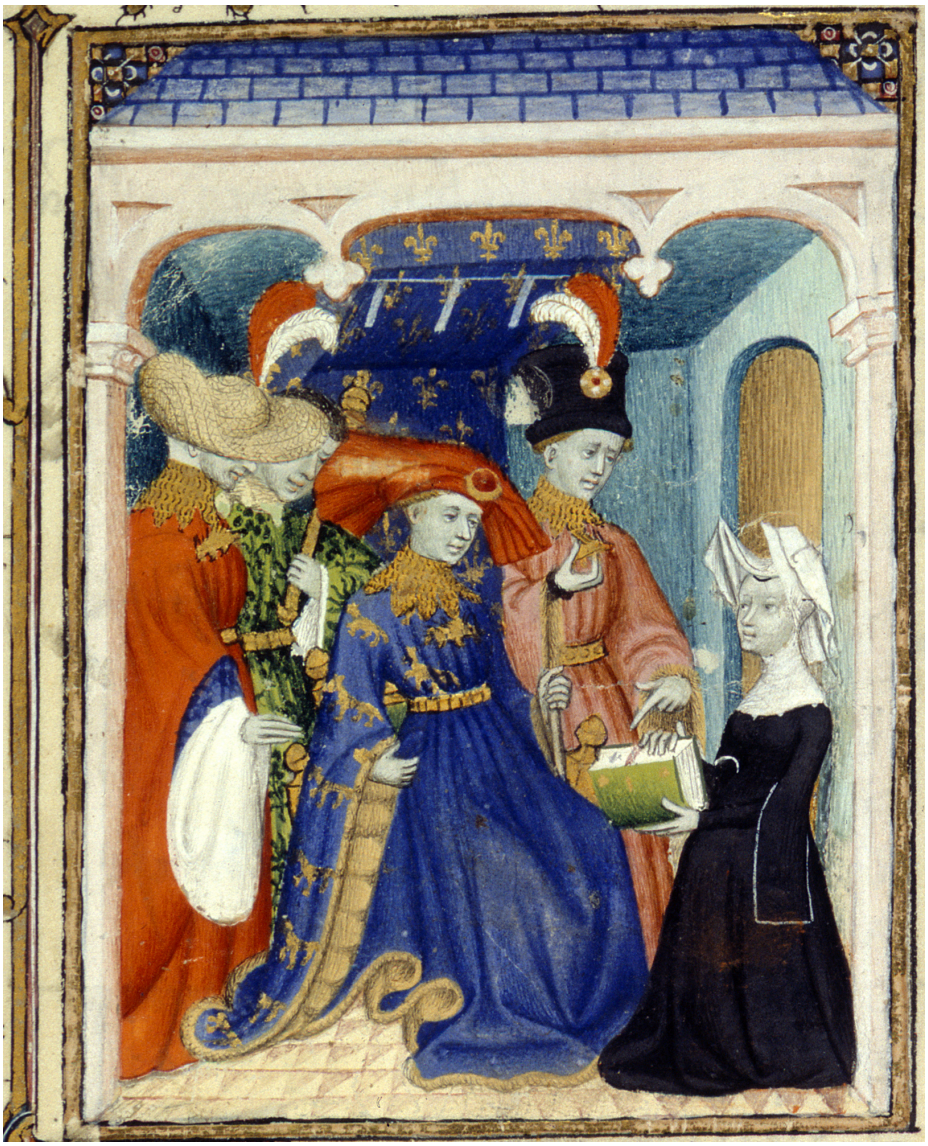
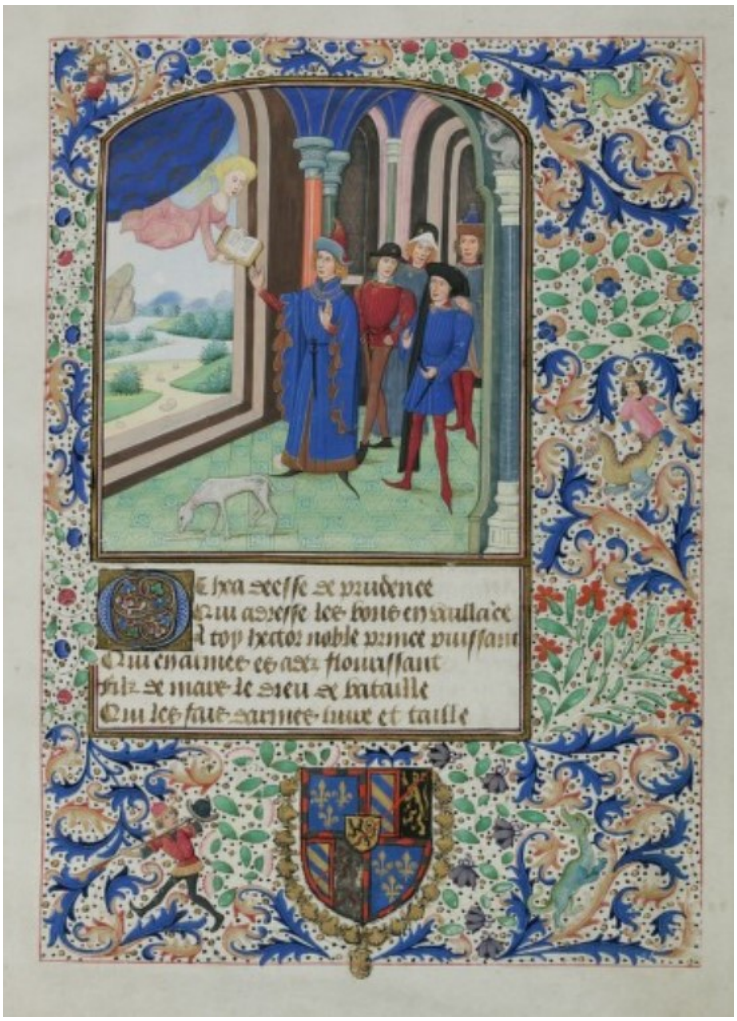


Louis of Orléans, the dedicatee, meeting Christine de Pizan, British Library, c. 1414



A 1460 manuscript of 'L'Épistre de Othéa a Hector', Cologny, Fondation Bodmer

TO

THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS

OF

The Roxburghe Club

THIS VOLUME

Is Dedicated and Presented

BY THEIR OBEDIENT SERVANT

BATH

Longleat, March, 1904

The Roxburghe Club.

MCMIV.

LORD ALDENHAM.

PRESIDENT.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE ENGLISH VERSION here printed for the first time of Christine de Pisan's "Épître d'Othéa la deesse à Hector" is taken from a MS. which is believed to be unique, and which, if not actually the original, can be very little removed from it. The volume of which it forms a part is numbered MS. 253 in the valuable library of the Marquis of Bath at Longleat, but how or when it found its way thither it is impossible to say. There is little doubt, however, that it was acquired at least as early as the time of Thomas Thynne, first Viscount Weymouth, who died in 1714, and it is not unlikely that it has been at Longleat ever since the house was built by Sir John Thynne in the latter part of the 16th century. It is a small vellum folio, 9¾ inches by 7, in modern binding, and in its present state it consists of ninety-five leaves, the first seventy-five of which are occupied by the work in question and the remainder by an English poem or series of poems, probably also translated from the French, in which love is compared with the growth of a tree. The hand appears to be the same throughout and of a date about the middle of the 15th century. As may be seen from the page here reproduced (*cf.* p. 33), it is fairly neat and regular, but it is hardly the hand of a professional book-scribe, the type being that more commonly found in correspondence and business documents of the period. As to ornament, there is none whatever; for, although blank spaces were left for rubrics and initials, and in a few instances apparently for miniatures as well, for some reason they were never filled in. But the deficiencies of the MS. in this respect are of less practical importance than the mutilation inflicted later upon the text. In the main article, and consequently in this edition of it, there are two lacunæ, one of a single leaf (p. 13) and the other of a whole quire of eight (p. 53), while the supplementary matter has been shorn both of its first leaf and of an unknown number at the end. Nor is the mischief confined to the loss of these portions of the text. Probably, as in the case of another work by the same translator,[1] there was a colophon which would have given interesting particulars of the origin of the whole MS., and unfortunately this also has perished. As the translator has been identified and as specimens of his handwriting are available for comparison,[2] the question whether the copy is in his autograph is easily decided in the negative, but beyond this little can be ascertained of its history. For reasons which will appear further on it is a tempting supposition that it is the "Boke de Othea, text and glose ... in quayers" (*sc.* quires), which is included in an "Inventory off Englysshe boks" belonging to John Paston the younger (?) in the time of Edward IV. (after 1474).[3] If, however, the latter MS. in its turn was identical with the "Othea pistill" which one William Ebesham wrote for Sir John Paston at a cost of 7sh. 2d. about 1469,[4] it contained no more than forty-three leaves. In the margin of f. 75b is an entry, made about 1500, of a certificate of the banns of marriage, real or imaginary, of William Stretford and Joyce Helle, the certifying minister being William Houson, curate; and from scribblings on f. 50 and elsewhere it may be inferred that at a later date in the 16th century the MS. was in the hands of a certain William Porter, who, to judge from the nature of his entries, was perhaps a scrivener's clerk. There is more decisive evidence of ownership in the signature "Jo. Malbee" on the first page, written towards the end of the 16th century under the moral distich:

"Viue diu, sed viue Deo; nam viuere mundo
Mors est. Hæc vera est viuere vita Deo."

The same page also contains the initials J. M., probably meaning John Malbee, together with the old library mark, ix D. 72.

Before commenting upon the English translation something must be said of the original "Épître d'Othéa" and the remarkable woman who was its author.[5] In no sense was Christine de Pisan French by birth. Her father Thomas de Pisan, or de Boulogne, was, as she tells us,[6] a native of Bologna, and he may reasonably be identified with Tommaso di Benvenuto di Pizzano, who was Professor of Astrology there between 1345 and 1356.[7] Later he obtained the salaried office of State Councillor at Venice, where also he married, and where Christine, probably the eldest of his three children and the only girl, was born in 1364.[8] It was shortly after her birth that he was prevailed upon by the French king Charles V. to remove to Paris, and the fact that Louis the Great of Hungary was equally anxious to attract him to Buda shows how widely the fame of his learning and science had spread.[9] For fifteen years he had no cause to regret his change of country, for Charles not only made him his physician and astrologer with handsome emoluments, but treated him altogether with marked distinction. Christine, who with her mother joined him at the end of 1368, was thus brought up at the most brilliant and intellectual court of the time, and when, at the early age of fifteen, she was married to Étienne du Castel in 1379, her ties with it were further strengthened by her husband's appointment as secretary to the king. This prosperity was rudely interrupted by the premature death of Charles V. on 16th September, 1380. In her own words, "Or fu la porte ouverte de noz infortunes, adonc faillirent à mon dit père ses grans pensions."[10] Thomas de Pisan in fact was growing old and out of fashion; with the loss of his place at court and its prestige he soon fell into neglect, and when in a few years he died, his wife and two sons were left dependent upon his daughter and son-in-law. Happily the latter still retained his post under the new king, and if he had lived all might have gone well, though possibly in that case Christine's latent powers would never have been called into activity. As a climax, however, to her misfortunes Étienne du Castel was carried off by an epidemic at Beauvais in 1389, and she thus found herself a widow at twenty-five with three children besides others[11] to support out of what little she could rescue from the claimants to her husband's estate.

Curious details of the protracted lawsuits and other troubles by which she was harassed during the next few years are given in several of her works; but it is enough to say that her tenacity and force of character carried her safely through until she made for herself a literary position which for one of her sex was probably without precedent. Excepting a few short pieces anterior perhaps to her husband's death, she appears to have begun writing poetry as a solace in her widowhood. Such pathetic effusions as "Seulete suy et seulete vueil estre" and "Je suis vesve, seulete et noir vestue,"[12] with others in a similar strain, could hardly fail to excite sympathy, and she was thus encouraged to utilize her pen for procuring more material support. At the end of the 14th century all that an author struggling with poverty had to depend upon was the patronage and munificence of the great, and it may therefore have been mainly to suit the taste of those to whom she looked for favour and assistance that she composed the lighter and more amatory of the "Ballades," "Lais" and "Virelais," "Rondeaux" and "Jeux à vendre," which were the earliest, and not the least charming, of her poems. Besides Charles VI. and his queen, the Dukes of Berry, Burgundy, and

Orleans, and other princes, nobles, and great ladies of the French court, it is interesting to find among her warmest patrons the English Earl of Salisbury,[13] who came on an embassy to Paris in December, 1398. The theory that it was for him that she made the collection of her "Cent Ballades" rests on little, if any, foundation, but his friendly regard for her is shown by his having taken her elder son Jean du Castel, then thirteen, to England, in order to educate him with a boy of his own of similar age. By her own account, as it appears,[14] this was at the time of the marriage of Isabella, daughter of Charles VI., to Richard II., which took place at Calais on 4th November, 1396, so that she may have become acquainted with the earl during a previous visit to Paris, or while he was in France with Richard, who crossed over for the marriage as early as 27th September. If he had not met a tragic fate on 7th January, 1400, in an abortive attempt in favour of his deposed sovereign, Christine herself might have followed her son. At the same time Salisbury was not the only nor most influential admirer of her talent on this side of the Channel. After his death the usurper Henry IV. himself took charge of the boy and tried to induce her to settle in England, and it is to her credit that loyalty to the earl's memory among other reasons made her obdurate. In order, however, to get back her son she feigned compliance until he was sent to fetch her, when she kept him with her and remained in France.[15]

Before this she had entered on the second stage of her literary career, to which the "Épître d'Othéa" most probably belongs. In 1399 she resolved to attempt longer and more serious poems, animated by a more or less definite moral purpose, and she began by preparing herself for this task by a strenuous course of study, as nearly encyclopædic in character as was then possible, though there is no reason to suppose that she was acquainted with Greek authors except through Latin translations. But her earliest poems of any length, issued between 1399 and 1402, were still of the nature of "Dits d'Amour." Such, for example, were the "Épître au dieu d'amour" and the "Dit de la Rose," the "Débat de deux amants," the "Dit de Poissy," with its lively account of her visit in 1400 to Poissy Abbey, where her daughter was a nun, and the idyllic "Dit de la pastoure."[16] The first two of these poems were written in defence of women against the aspersions of Jean de Meun in the "Roman de la Rose" and his school, and they involved her in a protracted controversy, in which with the valuable support of Jean Gerson she fully held her own. The moralizing element is much more strongly developed in the "Chemin de long estude,"[17] and the "Mutation de Fortune,"[18] which were composed in 1402 and 1403. In the earlier of these somewhat prolix, but withal extremely interesting, works Christine is conducted by the Sibyl Amalthea through the known world,[19] and then ascends with her as far as the fifth heaven. After recounting these experiences she proceeds to inculcate doctrines of right and justice by means of an elaborate allegory, in which Raison, Sagesse, Noblesse, Chevalerie, and Richesse play the leading parts, room being also found for a glowing eulogy of Charles V. In the "Mutation de Fortune" she again indulges her taste for allegory, but in place of geography and astronomy other sciences have their turn. The introduction, which is rich in personal interest, deals with her father's life and her own and then leads up to her dream or vision of the great "Chastel de Fortune." This castle is in fact the world, and those who lodge in it are the various classes of mankind, who from pope and king downwards are vividly characterized; while the subjects painted on the walls of the hall give occasion for summaries of philosophy and of universal history to the birth of Christ, followed by allusions to more recent events and by another tribute to the virtues of Thomas de Pisan's royal patron. On 1st January, 1403–4, Christine presented this poem as a new-year's gift to Philip, Duke of Burgundy, brother of Charles V. The immediate result was a

commission to write the late king's life, and although the duke himself died on 27th April following, she completed this task within the year, sending a copy to his elder brother John, Duke of Berry, on 1st January, 1404–5.

The "Livre des fais et bonnes meurs du sage roy Charles V." is the best known and in many respects the most valuable of all her writings,[20] and it also marks the beginning of the period when she practically abandoned verse in favour of prose. Though full of interesting details, the work is not so much a regular biography as an appreciation of the king's character from the point of view of an enthusiastic partisan. To some extent Charles V. realized Christine's ideal of chivalry, and in her discursive way she seized her chance to enforce by his example the paramount necessity to a ruler of a sound education and virtuous principles, with covert reflections no doubt upon the political rivalries and dissolute morals which under the unhappy circumstances of his successor's mental disease were bringing ruin upon France. Of her remaining works "La Vision,"[21] which appeared later in 1405, is of peculiar interest for its self-revelation. It was apparently meant as a reply to those who, on the ground of her sex and foreign origin, questioned her right to pose as an authority on French history and morals; but with a frank recital of her chequered fortunes and a defence of her position she mixes up a curious allegory on the mighty power of "Dame Opinion" and a discussion on the comfort to be derived from philosophy. To quote a simile which she more than once applies to herself,[22] "petite clochete grant voix sonne"; and this may certainly be said of two ambitious treatises written seemingly about 1407. One of them is the well-known "Livre des faits d'armes et de chevalerie,"[23] which is nothing less than an attempt to teach the whole art of war, grounded largely upon Vegetius and other authorities, but not without shrewd and pertinent observations of her own; while in the other, entitled "Le Corps de Policie," she takes up the subject of civil government, more particularly with regard to the education of princes and the duties and mutual relations of the several orders in the state. The "Cité des Dames"[24] and its complement the "Livre des Trois Vertus"[25] deal on the contrary with subjects which fell less disputably within her natural sphere. As we have seen, she had already championed her sex in verse. In coming forward again in its defence, but this time in prose, she went further, taking upon herself to lay down rules of guidance for women of all ranks, which she effectively did by allegory as well as by precepts and by historical examples.

In all these works her aims were moral rather than political. But although, considering her relations with the leaders of the contending factions, it is not surprising that she abstained from decisively taking a side, there is no doubt that she was profoundly moved by the growing miseries of her adopted country. As early as 1405 she addressed to the queen, Isabella of Bavaria, a letter[26] strongly advocating peace, and five years later she returned to the subject in a passionate appeal[27] to the princes generally and the Duke of Berry in particular. The "Livre de la Paix," the different parts of which were composed respectively in 1412 and 1413 in connexion with the transient pacifications of Auxerre and of Pontoise, is of less restricted scope.[28] It was dedicated by Christine to the youthful Dauphin, Louis, Duke of Guienne, and after an earnest exhortation to harmony it is expanded into a formal treatise on the virtues that go to form the perfect prince, Charles V. providing her as usual with an ever ready example. This appears to have been the latest, as it is one of the most important, of her prose works; for although possibly some of her religious verses were composed in the interval, so far as is known she maintained an unbroken silence until 1429, when the triumphs of the Maid of Orleans drew from her a poem ringing with patriotic fervour,[29] her joy at the approaching deliverance of France

being no doubt all the greater because its promised saviour was a woman. What her feelings were when these hopes were again deferred can only be imagined, for nothing more is heard of her. In the opening lines of her poem she states that she had then been eleven years in a convent,[30] but she omits to give its name, and the date and the place of her death thus alike remain unidentified.

Of all her works the one with which we are here specially concerned presents perhaps most difficulty with regard to date. In the best copies, as in Harley MS. 4,431,[31] it is headed "Ci commence lepistre Othea la deesse, que elle envoya a Hector de Troie *quant il estoit en laage de quinze ans*," for which reason, coupled with its dedication to Louis, Duke of Orleans, it has been too hastily assigned to 1386,[32] when Louis himself was of that age. Against this date it is almost enough to urge that Christine was then only twenty-two years old, and from all that we know of her she was not in the least likely to have begun authorship so early with a long didactic treatise mostly in prose; but, apart from this, Louis was not made Duke of Orleans until 4th June, 1391, so that the work could not have been addressed to him, as it is, under that title five years before. Another theory, that, although dedicated to Louis, it was designed for the edification of his son and heir Charles[33] is not open to the same objections; for, as the future poet-duke was born in 1391, the date would then be 1406, at which time Christine was in full career as a moralist and prose-writer, with strong views, as may be seen in her "Fais et bonnes meurs du sage roy Charles V.", on the subject of chivalrous qualities. On the other hand, if the facts were as supposed, in addressing the work to the father she would hardly have failed to make some explanatory reference to the son. Her omission to do so therefore makes this theory hardly less untenable than the other. It is more likely that the date lies between these two extremes. The significance of the dedication may easily be overrated. It was Christine's habit to send her works with a separate dedicatory preface to her several patrons as new-year's gifts for no other reason probably than the hope of a tangible acknowledgment, and we know in fact that other copies of the "Épître d'Othéa" were sent both to Charles VI. and the Duke of Berry.[34] If it is necessary to look for some particular youth of fifteen to whom she wished to play the part of a moral instructress, he may perhaps be found in her own son, for whom on another occasion she wrote the "Enseignemens Moraux."[35] Jean du Castel was probably of the required age about 1400, so that in this case the work represents, as it well may, the first-fruits of the studies in which she immersed herself shortly before, and its date moreover exactly accords with its position in her own collections of her works, where it comes after the "Dit de Poissy" (1400) and before the "Chemin de long estude" (1402).[36]

Although without any claim to be reckoned among the best of her works, it is at least admirable in motive. Ostensibly it is addressed by the Goddess of Prudence or Wisdom to her *protégé* Hector with the object of inciting him to the attainment of true knighthood by the practice of virtue, the name of the goddess being clearly no more than the Greek vocative ὦ θεά, commonly used in Homer in speeches addressed to Athena.[37] The plan of the work is somewhat peculiar. The epistle proper, which purports to be Othea's own, is in verse, and is divided into a hundred "textes," each of which after the first five consists of a single quatrain. These hundred "textes" serve as a medium for instilling into the mind of the pupil as many moral precepts or rules of behaviour, wrapped up in an allusion to some story from mythology, from the history of Troy or, very rarely, from other sources, without the least regard for chronological propriety. Othea indeed anticipates the charge of anachronism by claiming at the outset (p. 6) the divine prerogative of prophecy, by which means she obviates the incongruity of drawing lessons for Hector from the circumstances of his own death (p.

105), from the story of Cyrus and Queen Tomyris (p. 63), and even from the vision of Christ shown by the Sibyl to the Roman emperor Augustus (p. 113). Perhaps the most glaring anachronism is the reference to the fate of "Thune" (p. 110). It has been suggested in a note on the passage that this is a corruption in the MSS. for "Thyre" or Tyre; but the rhyme both in the French and English versions requires "Thune," and possibly the allusion is to the much vaunted expedition of Louis, Duke of Bourbon, against Tunis in 1391. If so, this is a single instance of a reference to an event in more recent times. The "textes," however, are not left to stand alone, being invariably followed by a "glose" and an "allégorie," both of which are in prose and often of some length. The bulk of the work therefore is really a commentary by Christine herself upon Othea's supposed teaching. Thus, in the "glose" she amplifies and explains the allusion in the "texte," and as a rule points its application by a maxim from an ancient philosopher; and, having done this to her own satisfaction, she next dilates in the "allégorie" on its more spiritual meaning, which she illustrates by a passage from one of the Fathers or some later theologian, and finally by a more or less appropriate verse from Scripture. These last citations are from the Latin Vulgate, and from the fact that the translator omits them it may be inferred that he was either ignorant of Latin or intended to supply them from the Wycliffite English version. In this way Christine works through the Virtues and Vices, the Articles of the Creed, the Ten Commandments, the properties and influences of the seven planets, and so forth; and the whole forms a curious and ill-assorted medley, which is not without interest as a reflection of the taste of the time, but which contains, it must be confessed, little either to attract or to edify the modern reader.

No critical edition of the original work has yet appeared, and the preface to a translation is hardly the place in which to enter minutely into its composition. Apart, however, from the Latin Vulgate and the theological writers whose names may be found in the index, there are three sources from which the matter appears to be mainly derived. Christine's classical mythology, it is clear, comes almost entirely from the Metamorphoses of Ovid, but whether she had recourse to the original or to a moralized mediæval adaptation is a question not so easily determined. There is a work of the latter kind in French verse and of prodigious length, fourteen MSS. of which are known, including one in the British Museum (Add. MS. 10,324). By some misunderstanding it was formerly attributed to Philippe de Vitry, Bishop of Meaux (1351–1362). Modern criticism, however, has proved that it was really written by Chrétien Legouais, a Friar Minor, for the queen of Philip IV., Jeanne de Champagne, who died in 1305.[38] There was a copy in the library of Christine's patron, the Duke of Berry,[39] but it was apparently acquired in 1403, after the "Épître d'Othéa" was written. Although it is quite possible that she had a direct knowledge of this poem, she is more likely to have used a moralized prose paraphrase of the Metamorphoses by the Benedictine Pierre Bersuire, who in his second edition, written at Paris in 1342, laid Legouais under contribution. Bersuire wrote in Latin, which language Christine certainly understood, and how soon his work appeared in French it is difficult to say. In the Berry Library there were three MSS. of the Metamorphoses apparently in vernacular prose,[40] any one, if not all, of which may have been Bersuire in a French version. There is also a French prose version in Brit. Mus. Royal MS. 17 E. iv. in company with the "Épître d'Othéa" itself, but the MS. is not earlier than the latter part of the 15th century. This version is closely connected with that printed at Bruges in 1484 by Colard Mansion, who supposed the original author to have been, not Bersuire, but Thomas Waleys or de Galles. The two are, however, not quite identical, and the former possibly represents an older version, which Mansion revised for

printing. But whatever the particular form of Ovid's Metamorphoses which Christine utilized, her naive interpretations of his mythological tales are no doubt largely her own. In this respect she was certainly not in advance of her age. In the usual euhemeristic fashion she regarded the classical deities and demigods as men and women who by the "prerogative of some grace" had raised themselves above their fellows and were for this reason accorded divine honours; or, on the other hand, they were mere inventions of the poets, who, for instance, by inverting the process by which the planets were named from the gods, made gods of the planets. A fair sample of her method may be seen in the story of Perseus (p. 15). This hero, whose name, by the way, our English translator changed into that of the better known Arthurian Sir Perceval, was a "moult vaillant chevalier," his steed Pegasus was "bonne renommée" or fame, which carried his name into all lands, and his deliverance of Andromeda teaches the aspirant to knighthood the duty of relieving all women in distress. So much may be learnt from the "glose"; but in the "allégorie" Pegasus becomes the spiritual knight's good angel, "qui fera bon rapport de lui au jour de jugement," while Andromeda is his soul, which he frees from the power of the fiend.

With regard to the many personages and incidents from Trojan history introduced into the work, Christine's authority was evidently a French prose romance which in a 15th century copy in the British Museum (Add. MS. 9,785) is entitled "La vraye ystoire de Troye." Its origin has been traced in an instructive article by M. Paul Meyer entitled "Les premières compilations françaises d'histoire ancienne."[41] It appears to be founded upon the well-known romance of Troy in French verse by Benoît de Ste. More and to have been composed before 1287, and it was employed, instead of Dares Phrygius as was previously the case, in the second edition of the compilation known as the "Histoire ancienne jusqu'à César." There is, however, no reason to doubt that what Christine worked from was the "Vraye histoire" itself.

The third authority of which she habitually made use was of a different character, supplying her, not with mythological or legendary tales, but with moral maxims, one of which, as we have already remarked, she generally quoted at the end of each "glose." These maxims are derived from a singular work known as "Dicta Philosophorum," and consisting of long strings of apophthegms attached to the names of various ancient sages. They begin with Sedechias, of whom it is said "primus fuit per quem nutu Dei lex precepta fuit," and besides Homer, Solon, Hippocrates, Pythagoras, Diogenes, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Alexander of Macedon, and Ptolemy, they include Hermes Trismegistus and such strange and evidently corrupted names as Tac, Salquinus (or, as it is written in some MSS., Zaqualquin), Rabion (or Sabion), Assaron, Longinon, Magdarges, Texillus (or Thesillus) and others, some of which have a distinctly oriental appearance. The Arabic original in fact exists in a work written by Abu-'l-Wafá Mobasschir ibn-Fátik al Káïd, an emir of Egypt, in 1053.[42] Sedechias appears there as Adam's son Seth, and some other of the above names may be dimly recognized in Sab, ancestor of the Sabæans, Lókman, Maháda Gis, and Basilius. From the heading of the Latin version in the MS. from which it has been published,[43] it seems that the work was first translated from Arabic into Greek, and then again from Greek into Latin, the last version being by John de Procida, famous for the prominent part he took in the revolution which freed Sicily from Charles of Anjou and the French in 1282. Christine de Pisan, however, apparently employed a popular French version made from the Latin for Charles VI. by one of his chamberlains, Guillaume de Tignonville, who was afterwards Provost of Paris (1401–1408) and died in 1414. As a copy of it at Paris was written in 1402,[44] it was certainly completed before then, and the probability is that it preceded the "Épître d'Othéa" by

several years. It possesses a special interest from the fact that an English version of it had the honour of being the first book actually printed in this country. This was the famous *Dictes and Sayengis of the Philosophres*, which Anthony Wydeville, second Earl Rivers, translated from a copy of De Tignonville's work lent to him when he was going on a pilgrimage to Compostella in 1473, and which Caxton issued from his newly established press at Westminster in 1477.[45] Neither of them seems to have been aware that another English version was in existence, which dated from 1450.[46] This is still preserved in two MSS. in the British Museum, but has never been printed. The late 15th century copy in Add. MS. 34,193 (ff. 137–201) has the advantage of being complete, but it bears no evidence of origin, having neither title nor preface and ending merely with the words "Hic est finis libri moralium philosophorum." Harley MS. 2,266, on the contrary, though it is mutilated at the beginning and elsewhere, fortunately has the following colophon:

"This boke byfore wretyn is callid in Frensh lettris Ditz de Philisophius and in Englysh for to sey the doctryne and þe wysedom of the wyse auncyent philysophers, as Arystotle, Plato, Socrates, Tholome and suche oþer, translatid out of laten in to frensh to (*sc.* for) kyng Charles the vite of Fraunse by Wyllyam Tyngnovyle, knyght, late provest of the cyte of Parys, and syth now late translatyd out of frensh tung in to englysh the yere of oure Lord mlccccl. to (*sc.* for) John Fostalf, knyght, for his contemplacion and solas by Stevyn Scrope, squyer, sonne in law to the seide Fostalle. Deo gracias."

The truth of the statement here made may be accepted without hesitation, nor is its interest confined to the translation of the "Dis des Philosophes" to which it is attached, for, as will be seen below, it also materially helps to determine the similar origin of the English version of Christine de Pisan's "Épître d'Othéa," which we now have to consider.

If the rubricator had done his work, no doubt the "Epistle of Othea to Hector" would have had this title prefixed in conformity with the MSS. of the French original. As it is, the text begins abruptly without a word of heading three lines from the bottom of the first page, and the only preliminary indication of its nature is furnished by the inscription "The Booke of Knyghthode," written, apparently by a somewhat later hand, on the old vellum cover, which now serves for a fly-leaf. This alternative title is peculiar to the English version, and is extracted from the translator's dedicatory preface, to which source we are also indebted for a clue to his identity and the knowledge of the circumstances under which the translation was made. The anonymous patron, "noble and worshipfull among the ordre of cheualrie," to whom the preface is addressed was obviously a person of some consequence. He was of knightly rank and had won great renown in France and elsewhere[47] abroad, having spent most part of his life in "dedys of cheualrie and actis of armis." He was now, however, sixty years of age, and was compelled by failing strength to seek retirement, and he is thereupon somewhat pointedly reminded that it behoved him to devote the remainder of his days to conflict with those spiritual enemies that war against the soul. If this were all, it might have applied to more than one veteran of the protracted French war which began in 1415; but, when the writer goes on to speak of himself (p. 2) as "I, yowre most humble son Stevyn," there can hardly be a doubt that, as in the case of the above-mentioned translation of the "Dis des Philosophes," we have to do with that famous old warrior Sir John Fastolf, K.G., and his stepson[48] Stephen Scrope, esquire.

The briefest summary of Fastolf's military career[49] will suffice to show how closely it accords with the writer's description. Son of a Norfolk squire and born in or

about 1378, he appears to have begun active service early in the reign of Henry IV. with that king's second son, Thomas, afterwards Duke of Clarence. In 1401, though a mere lad of fourteen, Thomas of Lancaster, as he was then called, was appointed his father's Lieutenant in Ireland. Fastolf was in his train there in 1402, if not before, and on 14th April, 1406,[50] he had from him a grant of the office of joint Chief Butler of Ireland during the minority of the Earl of Ormonde. He was still in Ireland when he married Millicent, daughter of Robert, Lord Tiptoft, and widow of the Deputy Lieutenant, Sir Stephen Scrope. The marriage took place on 13th January, 1409, only four months after the death (4th September, 1408) of the lady's first husband,[51] whose son and heir Stephen was a minor ten or twelve years old at the time.[52] Besides other advantages, it gave Fastolf the control over lands of his wife and stepson in Yorkshire, at Castle Combe in Wiltshire, and elsewhere, and he seems to have exercised it with little regard to any one's interest except his own. His earliest service in France probably dated from 1412. He figures in the long muster-roll of esquires who joined the expedition under Clarence in August of that year,[53] and before its close he had become Lieutenant of the castle of Bordeaux.[54] With the accession of Henry V. his energy and undoubted talent for war found ample scope. His contract in June, 1415,[55] to serve the king with ten men-at-arms and thirty archers was speedily followed by Henry's invasion of France and the siege of Harfleur. Evidently it was not long before he attracted notice, for when the town surrendered on 22nd September he was at once put in command of it under the king's uncle, Thomas Beaufort, Earl of Dorset.[56] This did not prevent him from displaying his prowess a month later at Agincourt; and he was again active in the sieges of Caen and Rouen and in other operations during Henry's second invasion of Normandy in 1417–1419. Hardly any name in fact of secondary rank more frequently recurs in the chronicles and documents of the war for a quarter of a century. Already knighted before 29th January, 1415–6,[57] he was made a knight banneret in 1423 and a Knight of the Garter in 1426; and, only to mention a few of the posts conferred upon him,[58] in 1420 he was made Governor of the Bastille of St. Antoine at Paris, in 1422 Master of the Household to John, Duke of Bedford, Regent of France, and in 1423 Lieutenant of Normandy and Governor of Anjou and Maine. In the minor battles and sieges which made up so much of the desultory warfare of the time he was everywhere conspicuous. On 2nd March, 1423, with the Earl of Salisbury, he recovered Meulan; on 17th August, 1424, he shared in the victory at Verneuil and took the Duke of Alençon prisoner; on 11th October in the same year he captured Sillé le Guillaume, from which he acquired the title of baron; on 2nd August, 1425, again with Salisbury, he received the surrender of Le Mans[59]; and on 12th February, 1429, when in command of a convoy of much needed supplies for the English camp before Orleans, he signally defeated a far stronger force of French and Scots at Rouvray St. Denis in the famous "Battle of the Herrings." Up to this point, so far as is known, he had met with almost uninterrupted success; but after the advent of Jeanne Darc had caused the raising of the siege of Orleans, when the English were routed and Lord Talbot was taken prisoner at Pataye on 18th June following, he barely succeeded in escaping from the field. Unfortunately for his fame with posterity, the charge of cowardice on this occasion made against him in Monstrelet's Chronicle was repeated by Hall and Holinshed and has been perpetuated in the "First Part of Henry VI."[60] The effect of the charge at the time was, however, transient at most, and there is no need to dwell upon it here, either on its own account or in its bearing upon the question whether he was the original of Shakespeare's Sir John Falstaff. It is contradicted by the chronicler Wavrin, who fought in the battle under him, and it is out of keeping with his whole career; moreover, Talbot, who was

his bitterest accuser, was already on ill terms with him and, having flouted his advice just before the battle, in his chagrin at defeat was perhaps only too ready to make him a scapegoat. The Regent Bedford's action in the matter is significant; for, although Fastolf was at first badly received by him, after a formal inquiry he was again taken into favour and the Garter, of which he is said to have been deprived, was restored to him in spite of Talbot's protests. Nor was less use made of his services afterwards. Thus, between 1430 and 1434 we find him Lieutenant of Caen and of Alençon and Captain of Fresnay, and in 1431 he relieved Vaudemont and captured the Duke of Bar. As late as 1435 he is spoken of as Governor of Anjou and Maine,[61] and until the Duke of Bedford's death on 14th September of that year he continued at the head of his household, being so described both in a list of the Regent's retinue in 1435 and in a highly interesting report on the conduct of the war which he himself drew up about the same time.[62] Bedford's confidence in him to the last is also clear from the fact that he named him one of the executors of his will. Notwithstanding the loss of so powerful a patron and his own advancing years, Fastolf was plainly in no hurry to put off his armour; for, with the exception of occasional visits to England as before, he remained abroad for at least five years longer. His retirement is generally fixed in 1440, but there is evidence of his being in Maine in the following year.[63] On 12th May, 1441, the Duke of York, Bedford's successor as Regent, granted him a yearly pension of £20 for his services,[64] and probably therefore it was not very long before or after that date that he finally turned his back upon the country from whose unhappy distractions he had won fame and fortune.

It is at this stage of his life that we get a glimpse of him in the dedication of the "Epistle of Othea." From its language this was written soon after he finally returned home; in fact it gives his age, no doubt somewhat loosely, as sixty, whereas even in 1440 he was probably sixty-two. During the greater part of the period which elapsed before his death on 5th November, 1459, he seems to have resided chiefly in Southwark, where he was within easy reach of a summons to the King's Council, of which he was a member; and there is something attractive in the picture which Stephen Scrope's words suggest of the war-worn old soldier beguiling his leisure with literary studies. Nor are the "Epistle of Othea" and the "Sayings of the Philosophers" the only two translations made at his "commaundement" and for his "contemplacion and solas." In 1481 Caxton printed an English version, rendered from the French of Laurence de Premierfait, of Cicero's "De Senectute."[65] On the question of its authorship I shall have some remarks to make further on; but meanwhile it deserves notice that its preface states that it "was translated and thystoryes openly declared by the ordenaunce and desyre of the noble auncyent knyght Syr Johan Fastolf of the countee of Norfolk banerette, lyuyng the age of four score yere, excercisyng the warrys in the Royame of Fraunce and other countrees, ffor the diffence and vnyuersal welfare of bothe royames of englond and ffraunce by fourty yeres enduryng, the fayte of armes hauntyng, and in admynystryng justice and polytique gouernaunce vnder thre kynges, that is to wete Henry the fourth, Henry the fyfthe, Henry the syxthe, and was gouernour of the duchye of Angeou and the countee of Mayne, Capytayn of many townys, Castellys and fortressys in the said Royame of ffraunce, hauyng the charge and saufgarde of them dyuerse yeres, ocupyeng and rewlynge thre honderd speres and the bowes acustomed thenne, and yeldyng good acompt of the forsaid townes castellys and fortresses to the seyd kynges and of theyr lyeutenauntes, Prynces of noble recomendacion, as Johan regent of ffraunce Duc of Bedforde, Thomas duc of excestre, Thomas duc of clarence & other lyeutenauntes," etc.

At the same time, there was another side to Fastolf's character, which is revealed in that mine of curious information on the social life and manners of the time, the well-known *Paston Letters*. Through his intimacy with John Paston,[66] who was ultimately his executor and principal heir, many of his private letters and papers are there preserved, and they certainly do not exhibit him in a favourable light.[67] Hot-tempered, arbitrary and rapacious, harsh and mean to his dependents, an exacting creditor and a rancorous litigant, he was the reverse of Chaucer's type of the "verray perfight, gentil knight." Wealthy as he was and childless, he was still bent on making gain, partly no doubt to pay for the building of his great castle at Caister in Norfolk, the ruins of which may still be seen. No one perhaps knew him better or had suffered more from his hard dealing than his stepson. Some years later than the present work Stephen Scrope drew up a formal statement of his wrongs,[68] in which he not only complained that in the disposal of his wardship Fastolf had bought and sold him "as a beast," but even charged him with being the cause of illnesses which had marked him for life[69] and with having at a later period used him so scurvily that he was compelled to sell his manor of Hever in Kent and take service with the Duke of Gloucester. Apparently this sign of independence did not meet Fastolf's views, for he soon managed to get him into his own retinue, and, as the other admits, at this time he showed him "good fatherhood," employing him at Honfleur and elsewhere, probably in a civil capacity,[70] until he returned home in pique at some slight. Fastolf's dealings with regard to Scrope's inheritance are somewhat obscure, but by some arrangement he contrived to secure Castle Combe for life.[71] As Lady Fastolf died in 1446, her son by her first marriage, to whom it should have then come by right, was thus kept out of it for thirteen years longer, only enjoying it from his stepfather's death in 1459 until his own in 1472. But in spite of differences the two were apparently not altogether on bad terms; otherwise neither this translation nor that of the "Dis des Philosophes" would have been made, and still less would Scrope have spoken of Fastolf as he here does. His language indeed is something more than respectful and laudatory. While he fully endorses Wavrin's description of Sir John as "moult sage et vaillant chevallier,"[72] there is a tone of humility which makes it difficult to realize that the writer was upwards of forty years of age and at least Fastolf's equal by birth. The nature of their relations may be gathered from a singular letter to the latter about 1455 from Sir Richard Bingham, Justice of the King's Bench, whose daughter Stephen Scrope had recently married.[73] In imploring help for him the writer says[74]:

"... My saide son is and hath be, and will be to hys lifes ende, your true lad and servaunt, and glad and well willed to do that myght be to your pleaser, wirschip and profit, and als loth to offend yow as any person in erth, gentill and well disposid to every person. Wherfore I besech your gode grace that ye will vouchesafe remember the premissez, my saide sons age, his wirschipfull birth, and grete misere for verrey povert, for he hath had no liflode to life opon sithen my lady his moder deed, safe x. marc of liflode that ye vouched safe to gife hym this last yer, and therffore to be his good maister and fader. And thof he be not worthy to be your son, make hym your almesman, that he may now in his age life of your almesse, and be your bedeman, and pray for the prosperite of your noble person...."

The result of this appeal, and of more to the same effect, is not recorded, but that Fastolf could be gracious enough in words is evident from the only letter from him to Scrope which is included in the *Paston Letters*,[75] written on 30th October, 1457. It is addressed, "Worschepeful and my right wel beloved sone," and, after thanking him for his "good avertismentys and right well avysed lettres," begs him to recommend to his father-in-law, Justice Bingham, a suit in which the writer was interested, and the

tone throughout is unexceptionable. There is, however, another letter in the *History of Castle Combe* (p. 270), written from Calais, and, according to the editor, about 1420, which is not so amiable. After Scrope's second marriage he and his stepfather no doubt lived apart, but at the time when the "Epistle of Othea" was translated they were probably under the same roof, and as late as 1454, when Caister Castle was completed and Fastolf was about to take up his residence there, it is expressly stated that Scrope would live with him.[76]

While there is little doubt that he was incapacitated by weak health from military service and that he was deficient also in force of character, it cannot be said that, so far as we can judge from his two translations from the French, he possessed much literary ability. There is nothing original in either of them except the short preface to the "Epistle of Othea" here printed, and, interesting as this is in other respects, its style is so involved that in places it is hardly intelligible. Nor is the writer more fortunate in his account of the French work which he translated; for by some strange misunderstanding he deprives its authoress of the credit of it and makes out (p. 3) that it was compiled by doctors of the University of Paris merely at the instance and prayer of the "fulle wyse gentylwoman of Frawnce called Dame Cristine." It is curious that a very similar statement is made as to her works generally in a marginal note in the "Boke of Noblesse,"[77] with reference to a passage taken from her "Livre des faits d'armes," which, however, is wrongly spoken of as the "Arbre des batailles." It is there said that Christine was a lady of high birth and character, who dwelt in a house of religious ladies at Passy (Poissy?) near Paris, that she maintained with exhibitions several clerks studying in the University of Paris and caused them to compile divers virtuous books, such as the "Arbre des batailles," and that the doctors in consequence attributed the books to Christine herself. As this note is in the hand of the well-known William Worcester or Botoner, who was servant and secretary to Fastolf, the two statements no doubt had a common origin, coming perhaps from Sir John himself.

From the prominent way in which Scrope mentions the Duke of Berry it is reasonable to conclude that the French MS. which supplied him with the original text contained a dedicatory address by the authoress to that famous royal bibliophil, who, as we know, was one of her special patrons. In the inventory of his library, among the MSS. acquired soon after 1401, there is in fact the entry,[78] "Item le livre de l'espitre que Othéa la deesse envoia à Ethor (*sc.* Hector), compilé par damoiselle Christine de Pizan, escript en françois de lettre de court, très bien historié .... le quel livre la dicte Cristine a donné à mon dit seigneur"; and the probability is that on Fastolf's return to England he brought with him either this identical MS. or a transcript of it, together with a copy of De Tignonville's "Dis des philosophes." Existing copies of the "Épître d'Othéa" are not uncommon. In the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris there are twelve,[79] and Koch (p. 59) mentions six others at Brussels, while the British Museum possesses four. One of these is included in the fine collection of Christine's poems and other works in Harley MS. 4,431. It is the MS. "H," readings from which are given here in the notes, and the collotype frontispiece, which depicts the goddess Othea personally handing her letter to Hector, is reproduced from the second of its numerous miniatures, one of which precedes each of the hundred "textes." The collection, which is of the highest importance, including pieces found nowhere else,[80] was made by Christine herself, apparently about 1410–1415, for the French queen, Isabella of Bavaria, the MS. beginning with an introductory poem of ninety-six lines addressed to her.[81] Probably it came into the possession of John, Duke of Bedford, Regent of France, in 1425[82] among other MSS. from the royal library of the Louvre; for the

signature "Jaquete" of his second wife, Jacquetta of Luxemburg, is written on the fly-leaf, together with that of Anthony Wydeville, Earl Rivers, her son by her second marriage, in 1437, with Sir Richard Wydeville, who was created Earl Rivers in 1466. As we have already seen, Anthony, Earl Rivers, translated the "Dis des philosophes," and he also made an English version, printed by Caxton in 1478, of Christine's "Proverbes moraux," the text of which he no doubt obtained from this MS. After he perished on the scaffold in 1488, the volume passed by some means to Louis de Bruges, Sieur de Gruythuyse, created Earl of Winchester in 1472, whose motto and name, "Plus est en vous. Gruthuse," appear on the same page. In 1676 it belonged to Henry Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle, and no doubt it found its way into the Harley collection by the marriage of his grand-daughter Lady Henrietta Cavendish-Holles in 1713 to Edward Harley, Lord Harley, second Earl of Oxford in 1724. That it was known to Fastolf, when Master of the Household to the Regent Bedford, is likely enough; but the copy of the "Épître d'Othéa" included in it can hardly have been the one used by Scrope, as it is dedicated, not to the Duke of Berry, but to his nephew Louis, Duke of Orleans. After some lines of apostrophe to the "Fleur de lis" and to "Seigneurie," which begin,

"Tres haulte flour, par le monde louee,
A tous plaisant et de dieu auouee,"
it proceeds,
"Et a vous tres noble prince excellant,
Dorliens duc loys, de grant renom,
Filz de Charles Roy quint de cellui nom,
Qui fors le roy ne congnoiscez greigneur,
Mon tres loue et redoubte seigneur,
Dumble vouloir moy, poure creature,
Femme ignorant, de petite estature,
Fille iadis philosophe et docteur,
Qui conseiller et humble seruiteur
Vostre pere fu, que dieu face grace,
Et iadis vint de Boulongne la grace,
Dont il fu ne, par le sien mandement,
Maistre Thomas de pizan, autrement
De Boulonge, fu dit et surnomme,
Qui sollempnel clerc estoit renomme.

This is the dedication which appears, not only in some other MSS. but in the edition printed by Philippe Pigouchet at Paris, probably in 1490, under the title *Les cent histoires de troye*.[83] Of the other three manuscript copies in the British Museum, Royal MS. 14 E. ii. (f. 294) and 17 E. iv. (f. 272) have no dedication at all, while that in Harley MS. 219 (f. 106) appeals to a third patron:

"Prince excellent de haute renommee,
De qui grand vois par le mond est semee,
Tres noble en fais, sage, duit et apris
De touz les biens qui en bon sont compris,
Roy noble et haut chiualer conquerour,
Digne destre par vaillaunce Emperour,
A vous puissant, tres redoute seignour,
Qui dessur vous ne cognoise greignour,
Soit tres humble recommendacioun
Deuant mise de vray entencioun

De par moy que en sagesse non digne
Femme ignorant suy nommee Cristine,
Fille iadis philosophe et docteur,
Qui conseiller fu, humble seruiteur
Au Roy Charles quint, qui dieu face grace."

The king who is thus addressed can be no other than the unfortunate Charles VI., although any hopes that he once excited had by this time been dispelled by his strange intermittent fits of insanity, which dated from 1392. Very similar terms were employed in the dedication to him by name of the "Chemin de long estude" in 1402:

"A vous, bon roy de France redoubtable,
Le VIe Charles du nom notable,
Que Dieux maintienge en joie et en sante,
Mon petit dit soit premier presente,
Tout ne soit il digne qu'en telz mains aille,
Mais bon vouloir comme bon fait me vaille."

In this instance, however, Christine associated with him his uncles Berry and Burgundy and his brother Orleans, who during his incapacity divided the real power between them:

"Et puis a vous, haulz ducs magnifiez,
Dicelle fleur fais et ediffiez,
Dont l'esplendeur s'espant par toute terre,
Par quel honneur fait los a France a querre."

In her presentation copies she was not wont to measure her language, and probably Scrope's extravagant eulogy of the Duke of Berry was based upon what he found in his MS., although, instead of translating the dedication as it stood, he chose to embody it in his preface. On the other hand, Christine of course was in no way responsible for the statement that the duke lived for a hundred years (p. 3). How it originated is a mystery, for there is no doubt whatever that he died on 15th June, 1416, at the age of seventy-six.[84] Jean Bouchet indeed in his *Annales d'Aquitaine*,[85] although he records the date of his death correctly, states that he was ninety or thereabouts, but he gives no authority, and it is enough to say that Berry's father King John II. was born in 1319, and his eldest brother Charles V. in 1337. It will be seen that Scrope represents him as a perfect paragon of chivalrous qualities, unrivalled in his time both in war and in council, as well as for deeds of piety. In more sober history, however, he by no means appears to such advantage. His cultured and sumptuous tastes, his splendid buildings and his library and other rich collections, have shed a certain lustre on his name; but, as he showed especially in his government of Languedoc, he was cruel, rapacious, and unprincipled, and in critical times his life was that of a selfish and prodigal voluptuary. For war he had neither talent nor zest; his real element appears to have been diplomacy, and, apart from his patronage of art and letters and his benefactions to the church, his chief claim to credit rests on his repeated attempts to mediate between the Burgundian and Orleanist factions. Scrope's

estimate of him is in striking contrast with that of modern historians, such as Raynal[86] and Martin, the latter of whom in recording his death writes, "Ce prince laissa une mémoire souillée entre toutes dans cette êpoque de souillures. Il joignait à bien d'autres vices le vice que la France pardonne le moins à ses chefs, le péché irremissible, la lâcheté."[87]

To pass from the preface to the "Epistle of Othea" itself, there is no reason to suppose that the translator had received the training of a scholar; on the contrary, the probability is that, owing to a sickly youth and other drawbacks, his education had been more or less neglected. It is not even certain that he had been regularly taught French. From a curious passage interpolated by Trevisa in his translation of Higden's "Polychronicon," which was finished in 1387, it seems that the fashion was then already dying out among the class to which by birth he belonged,[88] and possibly therefore he learnt all he knew of the language while he was with his stepfather in France. Be that as it may, his rendering of Christine de Pisan's French may claim on the whole to be fairly well done. The verse of his "textes" is too much of the doggrel type and his meaning is sometimes obscure, but as a rule he follows the original closely, while the orthography of the MS., though atrociously bad, is no worse than what we are accustomed to in the *Paston Letters* and elsewhere at the same period. Occasionally, as is only natural, he goes astray, though it is of course possible that the fault lay with the MS. from which he translated. In most cases the source of his errors is obvious. Thus he translates "ton bon cuer" (p. 5) by "all good hertys," having evidently mistaken "ton" for "tou[t]"; and again "en quant fraisle vaissel est sa vie contenue" (p. 28) by "in how frele (*sc.* frail) a vessel his lyff is all naked" (toute nue)! Similarly "conscience pour soy" (p. 16) appears as "conscience for feyth" (foy); "ala querre les autres dieux" (p. 62) as "thanne went he forth [to seek] the tothir iio" (deux); "mais a nostre propos [la fable] veult dire" (*ibid.*) as "Mars to owre purpose seith"; and "gard toy de lagait (l'agait) de tes ennemis" (p. 73) as "kepe the (*sc.* thee) from the peple (la gent) of thyn ennemyes." It is not so easy to understand the process by which the simple sentence "Vanite fist lange devenir deable" (p. 15) was transformed into "Vanite made avoyde degre to becum a fende," whatever that may mean; or why in the story of Acis and Galatea (p. 65) "un iouuencel qui Acis estoit nommez" became "and he was dede" (*sc.* dead), though possibly in this case there was some confusion between "acis" and "occis." But the strangest mistranslation is in the words "Averyse and covetise be iio sausmakers the which sesseth neuer to seye, 'Bryng, Bryng'" (p. 105), where the French text has "sont ii. sancsues," sanguisugæ, or leeches. The reference of course is to Proverbs xxx. 15, "The horseleach hath two daughters, crying, 'Give, give'"; and, as stated in the note, "horseleeches" is in fact the rendering given in another translation of Christine's work. Scrope's "sausmakers" can hardly be anything but "sauce-makers,"[89] but it is not impossible that he coined the mongrel word "sanc-suckers," which the scribe miscopied.

The second English translation of the "Épître d'Othéa" referred to above can be so little known that a brief account of it will not be superfluous. It exists only in the form of a small printed octavo in black-letter with the title *Here foloweth the C. Hystoryes of Troye*, and there is no doubt that it was taken from Pigouchet's French edition of 1490,[90] or one of the reprints; in fact it copies the second title in French, merely omitting the imprint "à Paris." Many of its rough woodcuts, one of which accompanies each "texte," also come from the same source, being generally reversed, but others are independent and their subjects often have no connexion whatever with

the text. In place of the dedication to the Duke of Orleans the translator gives a prologue of his own in ten seven-line stanzas, the first two of which are as follows:

"Boke, of thy rudenesse by consyderacion
Plunged in the walowes of abasshement,
For thy translatoure make excusacion
To all to whom thou shalt thy selfe present,
Besechynge them vpon the sentement
In the composed to set theyr regarde
And not on the speche cancred and frowarde.
"Shewe them that thy translatour hath the wryten,
Not to obtain thankes or remuneracions,
But to the entent to do the to be wryten
As well in Englande as in other nacyons.
And where mysordre in thy translation is,
Vnto the perceyuer with humble obeysaunce
Excuse thy reducer, blamyng his ygnoraunce."

All the information which he gives about himself in this prologue is that, when he made his translation, he was "flowring in youth," but after the "Finis" he has added, "Thus endeth the .C. Hystories of Troye, translated out of Frenche in to Englysshe by me. R.W." This again is followed by the colophon, "Imprynted by me Robert Wyer, dwellyng in S. Martyns parysshe at Charyng Crosse at the sygne of S. John̄ Euangelist besyde the Duke of Suffolkes place"; and it is therefore highly probable that R. W. and Robert Wyer were identical, though the latter is not otherwise known except as a printer. A list of nearly a hundred books issued by him has been made up,[91] ranging in date from 1530 to 1556, and all those which, as in this instance, have the Duke of Suffolk's name in the imprint must have been published after 1536, when the property referred to, which previously belonged to the Bishop of Norwich, passed into his possession. The date of the book therefore is about 1540–1550, though the translation may have been made some years before. For the sake of comparison with the earlier version of Stephen Scrope, one of the texts with its commentary is here given:

The .xxviii. Texte.
Loue and prayse Cadmus so excellente,
And his dyscyples holde thou in chyerte.
He gaygned the fountayne of the Serpente
With ryght great payne afore that it wolde be.
The .xxviii. Glose.

Cadmus was a moche noble man and founded Thebes, whiche cytie was greatly renomed. He set there a study & he hym selfe was moche profoundly lettered and of great science. And therfore sayth the fable that he daunted the serpent at the fountayne, that is to vnderstande the science and sages that alwayes springeth; the Serpent is noted for the payne and trauayle which it behoueth the student to daunte afore that he maye purchase scyence. And the fable sayth that he hym self became a serpent, which is to vnderstande he was a corrector and mayster of other. So wol Othea say that the good knight ought to loue and honour the clerkes lettered, which ben grounded in science. To this purpose sayeth Arystotle to Alexandre, "Honour thou scyence and fortyfie it by good maysters."

The .xxviii. Allegorie.

Cadmus whiche daunted the Serpent at the fountayne, whiche the good knyght ought to loue, we may vnderstande the blyssed humanite of Jesu christ, which dompted the serpent and gaigned the fountayne, that is to say the lyfe of this world, from the which he passed afore with great payne and with great trauayle. Wherof he had perfyte victory whan he rose agayne the thyrd day, as sayth S. Thomas, "Tertia die resurrexit a mortuis."

In conclusion it only remains to say a few words on the possible connexion of Stephen Scrope with two other works already mentioned, which, like his "Epistle of Othea" or "Boke of Knyghthode" and his "Sayings of the Philosophers," were written for Sir John Fastolf or under his influence. One of them, the "Boke of Noblesse," is preserved in a unique copy in the British Museum, Royal MS. 18 B. xxii., and was edited for the Roxburghe Club in 1860 by Mr. J. Gough Nichols. In the form in which it has come down to us, it was addressed to Edward IV. at the time of his invasion of France in 1475, professing to be "write and entitled to courage and comfort noble men in armes to be in perpetuite of remembraunce for here noble dedis, as right conuenient is soo to bee," or, more precisely, for the purpose of inciting the English to recover by force of arms their lost foreign conquests. The contents were admirably summarized in the editor's introduction, and all that need be said of them here is that, in addition to a highly interesting retrospect of English relations with France, they include a large amount of matter derived from a French treatise on the art of war, which is spoken of as the "Arbre de Batailles" and attributed to "Dame Cristyn." Although the editor failed to identify the author, he pointed out that he must have been intimately associated with Fastolf and had access to his papers. Strictly speaking, Fastolf's name is not specially prominent except in the marginal insertions and notes, where the writer refers to him as "myne autor" and gives several curious anecdotes as heard from his lips. The body of the MS. is clearly not autograph; but these additions, together with the title and colophon,[92] are in a different handwriting, and, although the editor seems to have been unaware of the fact, it is beyond question that of William Worcester, or Botoner, who was not only Fastolf's servant and secretary, but is also known as an annalist and a diligent collector of matter on historical, topographical and other subjects.[93] The editor therefore dismissed his claims to the authorship of the work rather too hastily, for, as the final touches were certainly his, the only question is whether he was also responsible for the whole of it from its inception. From the limit of date of the events mentioned there is some reason to believe that it was originally composed within Fastolf's lifetime and was only revised and enlarged in 1475 for a special occasion; and its date may perhaps be fixed still more exactly, since there is an allusion (p. 42) to "another gret armee and voiage fordone for defaut and lak of spedy payment *this yere* of Crist Mlcccli." Apart from the final additions there is evidence to connect Worcester with it in a passage of the prologue to a series of documents relating to the wars in France which were collected by him,[94] mainly no doubt from materials that belonged to Fastolf, and which may be regarded as *pièces justificatives* to the "Boke of Noblesse." This collection also appears to have been designed for Edward IV., but the original prologue was awkwardly recast, as we now have it, after Worcester's death by his son for dedication to Richard III. The passage in it referred to, for which he is responsible, is as follows:

"And I, as moost symple of reasone, youre righte humble legemane, cannot atteyne to understond the reasons and bokes that many wise philosophurs of gret auctorite have writtene upone this vertue of Force, but that my pore fadyr, William Worcestre ... toke upone hym to write in this mater and compiled this boke to the most highe and

gretly redoubted kyng, your most nobille brodyr and predecessoure, shewyng after his symple connyng, after the seyng of the masters of philosophie, as Renatus Vegesius in his Boke of Batayles, also Julius Frontinus in his Boke of Knyghtly Laboures, callid in Greke Stratagematon, a new auctoure callid The Tree of Batayles."

Obviously this cannot apply to the purely historical documents of which the collection itself consists. It is, however, strongly suggestive of the "Boke of Noblesse," to which they are, as it were, an appendix, and coupled with the evidence of the handwriting of the additions, it leaves little room for doubt that William Worcester was its author. At the same time, it is by no means unlikely that Stephen Scrope also had a hand in it. If indeed it was wholly compiled in 1475, this is impossible, since he died in 1472.[95] Assuming, however, for the reason given above, that it dates from 1451, or thereabouts, he was residing at the time with Fastolf and was no doubt on familiar terms with Worcester. As already remarked, a prominent feature of the work is the number of extracts translated from the so-called "Arbre de Batailles" of "Dame Cristyn." This, however, was not, as the editor supposed, Honoré Bonet's treatise of that name[96] assigned to a wrong author, but Christine de Pisan's "Faits d'armes et de chevalerie" under a wrong title.[97] Whether Worcester was capable of making translations from it as early as 1451 is somewhat doubtful; for he seems to have only begun to learn French about August, 1458,[98] little more than a year before Fastolf's death. Scrope on the contrary had before this translated two French works for the latter, one of them being by the same Christine, and it is therefore in this part of the "Boke of Noblesse," if at all, that he may possibly have collaborated.

Unlike the last-named work, the anonymous English version of Cicero's "De Senectute" which Caxton printed in 1481 has already been attributed to William Worcester,[99] the ground of this assumption being an entry made in his "Itinerarium,"[100] that on 10th August, 1473, he presented to Bishop Waynflete at Esher a translation which he had made of this treatise, but got nothing in return. Apart from this statement there is no more reason for attributing Caxton's text to Worcester than to Scrope. The language is better than might have been expected from either of them, but as no MS. copy exists, we cannot tell to what extent it was edited by Caxton. In the preface, as may be seen above (p. xxx.), it is said that the translation was made from the French of Laurence de Premierfait by Sir John Fastolf's "ordenaunce and desyre." As there is no reason to doubt this, its date cannot be later than 1459, so that, if Worcester was the translator, he kept it at least thirteen years before he offered it to Waynflete. This does not seem very likely, and his translation was therefore possibly a different one altogether, completed shortly before the occasion when the bishop so disappointed him by his cold acceptance of it. The earlier version in that case was almost certainly by Scrope; but, where so much is left to conjecture, the most that can be said is that the evidence upon which it has hitherto been assigned to Worcester is not wholly conclusive.

G. F. W.

THE EPISTLE OF OTHEA TO HECTOR; OR THE BOKE OF KNYGHTHODE.

Noble[101] and worshipfull among the ordre of cheualrie, renommeed ffor in as much as ye and suche othir noble knyghtes and men of worchip haue exerciced and occupied by long continuaunce of tyme the grete part of yowre dayes in dedys of cheualrie and actis of armis, to the whic[h]e entent ye resseyved the ordre of cheualrie, that is to sey, principaly to be occupied in kepyng and defendyng the cristyn feythe, þe rigth of the chirch, the lond, the contre and the comin welefare of it — And now, seth it is soo that the naturel course off kynde, by revolucion and successyon of .lx. yeeres growyn vpon yowe at this tyme of age and feblenesse, ys comen, abatyng youre bodly laboures, takyng away yowre naturall streyngtht and power from all such labouris as concernyth the exercysing off dedis of cheuallrie, be it yowre noble courage and affeccion of such noble and worchipfull actis and desirys departyth not from yow, yet rygth necessarie [it] now were to occupie the tyme of yowre agys and feblenes of bodie in gostly cheuallrie off dedes of armes spirituall, as in contemplacion of morall wysdome and exercisyng gostly werkys which that may enforce and cavse yow to be callid to the ordire of knyghthode that schal perpetuelly endure and encrese in ioye and worship endelese.

And therefor I, yowre most humble sone Stevyn, whiche that haue wele poundered and consideryd the many and grete entreprises of labouris and aventuris that ye haue embaundoned and yovyn youre selph to by many yeeris contynued, as wele in Fraunce [and] Normandie as in othir straunge regions, londes and contrees — and God, which is souuerayne cheueten and knyght off all cheualrie, hath euer preseruyd and defendid yow in all yowre seyde laboures off cheualrye into this day, ffor the which ye be most specyaly obliged and bownden to becom hys knyght in yovre auncient age, namely for to make ffyghtyng ayen youre goostly ennemyes, that allwey be redy to werre wyth youre sovle, the which, and ye ouerecom hym, shall cawse yow to be in renomme and worchyp in Paradis euerlastyng — I, consideryng thees premisses wyth othir, have (be the suffraunce off yowre noble and good ffadyrhode and by yowre commaundement) take vpon me at this tyme to translate ovte off Frenche tong, ffor more encrese of vertu, and to reduce into owre modyr tong a Book off Knyghthode, as wele off gostly and spirituell actis off armys for the sowle hele as of wordly[102] dedys and policie gouernaunce, and which is auctorised and grounded fryst vpon the .iiii. Cardinal Vertous, as Justice, Prudence, Fors and Temperaunce, also exempled vpon the grete conceytys and doctrine off fulle wyse pooetys and philosophurs, the whiche teche and covnesell how a man schuld be a knyght for the world prynspally, as in yeftis off grace vsyng, as the Cardinalle Vertuus make mencion, ffryst in iustice kepyng, prvdently hym self gouuernyng, hys streynght bodely and gostly vsyng, and magnanimite conseruyng, and allso gouuernyng hymself as a knyght in the seyde Cardinall Vertuouse kepyng. Which materis, conseytys and resons be auctorised and approued vpon the textys and dictes off the holde[103] poetys and wyse men called Philosophurs. And allso ye schal fynde here in this seyde Boke off Cheuallry how and in whatte maner ye, and all othir off whatte astate, condicion or degre he be off, may welle be called a knyght that ouercomyth and conqveryth hys gostly ennemyes by the safegard repuignand defence off hys sovle, wich among all othir victories [and] dedys off worchip is most expedient and necessarie, where as

dayly in grettest aventures a man puttyth hym inne and most wery he is to be renommed in worchip and callid a knyght that dothe exercise hys armes and dedys off knyghthode in gostly dedys, in conqveryng his gostly ennemees and ouyrcomyng þe peple and aventure off the world.

And this seyde boke, at the instavnce and praer off a fulle wyse gentylwoman of Frawnce called Dame Cristine, was compiled and grounded by the famous doctours of the most excellent in clerge the nobyl Vniuersyte off Paris, made to the ful noble famous prynce and knyght off renovnne in his dayes, beyng called Jon, Duke of Barry, thryd son to Kyng Jon of Frawnce, that he throwe hys knyghtly labourys, as welle in dedys of armes temporell as spirituell exercisyng by the space and tyme of .c. yeerys[104] lyvyng, flowrid and rengnyd in grete worchip and renownne of cheualry. And in thre thyngges generaly he exercisyd his knyghtly labowris. Thereof oon was in victories, dedis of cheualrie and of armys, in defendyng the seyde royalme of Frawnce from his ennemyes. [The second was] in grete police vsyng, as of grete cowneseylles and wysdomys, yevyng and executing the same for the conseruacyon of iustice and transquillite and alsoo pease kepyng for all the comon welleffare of that noble royaulme. The thredde was in spirytuell and gostly dedys yovyn ontoo for the helthe and wellfare of hys sovle. And in euery of these thre thynggys the seyde prynce was holden ful cheualrouse and suremounted in his dayes above all othir. Wych schewyth welle opynly to euery vnder-stander in the seyde booke redyng that it was made acordyng to hys seyde victorious dedis and actis of worchip exercysyng.

And the seyde booke ys diuidyd in thre partys gederid in a summe of an .c. textys, drawen vpon the dictis and conceytys of the seyd most famous poetys off olde tyme beyng, as Vyrgyl, Ouyde, Omer and othir; and also with an .c. commentys therevpon, callid exposicyons or glosis vpon the seyde textys, of exemplys temporell of policie gouernaunce and worldlye wysdoms and dedys, grovndyed and also exempled by experiens and by auctorite of the auncient philosophurs and clerkes, as Hermes,[105] Plato, Salomon, Aristotiles, Socrates, Ptholome and suche othir. And vpon thies exemplis and glosis is made and wretyn also an othyr .c. allegories and moralizacions, applied and moralized to actis and dedys of werkyng spirituell, for to doctrine enforme and to lerne euery man nov lyvyng in this world how he schuld be a knyht exercisyng and doyng the dedys of armys gostly, for euerlastyng victorie and helthe of the sovle. Which allegories and moralizacions ben grovnded and auctorised vpon the .iiii. holy doctoris of the chirche, as Austyn, Jerom, Gregorie, Ambrose, alsoo vpon the Bible, the Holy Ewaungelistes and Epistollys and othyr holy doctorus, as here textis more opynly schalle appere hereafftyr. Fiat. Fiat. Amen.

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