

CANTERBURY

The courses of his youth promised it not.
 The breath no sooner left his father's body
 But that his wildness, mortified in him,
 Seemed to die too. Yea, at that very moment
 Consideration like an angel came
 And whipped th' offending Adam out of him,
 Leaving his body as a paradise
 T' envelop and contain celestial spirits.
 Never was such a sudden scholar made ;
 Never came reformation in a flood
 With such a heady currance scouring faults ;
 Nor never Hydra-headed willfulness
 So soon did lose his seat – and all at once –
 As in this king.

(I, i : 24-37)

CANTERBURY

Gracious lord,

Stand for your own, unwind your bloody flag,
 Look back into your mighty ancestors ;
 Go, my dread lord, to your great-grandsire's tomb,
 From whom you claim ; invoke his warlike spirit,
 And your great-uncle's, Edward the Black Prince,
 Who on the French ground played a tragedy,
 Making defeat on the full power of France,
 Whiles his most mighty father on a hill
 Stood smiling to behold his lion's whelp
 Forage in blood of French nobility.
 O noble English, that could entertain
 With half their forces the full pride of France
 And let another half stand laughing by,
 All out of work and cold for action !

ELY

Awake remembrance of these valiant dead,
 And with your puissant arm renew their feats.
 You are their heir ; you sit upon their throne ;
 The blood and courage that renownèd them
 Runs in your veins ; and my thrice-puissant liege
 Is in the very May-morn of his youth,
 Ripe for exploits and mighty enterprises.

(I, i : 100-121)

CANTERBURY

Hear him but reason in divinity,
 And, all-admiring, with an inward wish
 You would desire the king were made a prelate ;
 Hear him debate of commonwealth affairs,
 You would say it hath been all in all his study ;
 List his discourse of war, and you shall hear
 A fearful battle rend' red you in music ;
 Turn him to any cause of policy,
 The Gordian knot of it he will unloose,
 Familiar as his garter ; that when he speaks,
 The air, a chartered libertine, is still,
 And the mute wonder lurketh in men's ears
 To steal his sweet and honeyed sentences ;
 So that the art and practic part of life
 Must be the mistress to this theoric ;
 Which is a wonder how his grace should glean it,
 Since his addiction was to courses vain,
 His companies unlettered, rude, and shallow,
 His hours filled up with riots, banquets, sports ;
 And never noted in him any study,
 Any retirement, any sequestration
 From open haunts and popularity.

ELY

The strawberry grows underneath the nettle,
 And wholesome berries thrive and ripen best
 Neighbored by fruit of baser quality ;
 And so the prince obscured his contemplation
 Under the veil of wildness, which, no doubt,
 Grew like the summer grass, fastest by night,
 Unseen, yet crecive in his faculty.

(I, i : 38-66)