

<County: Herefordshire>

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<Text: Piers Plowman C>

<fol. 12r><line 18>Now ys mede þe mayde+no mo of hem alle
 þorow bedelys & baylyues brou3t byfor þe kyng~
 þe+kyng~ Calledede a klerke ; y knowe nou3t hys name
 to take mede þ^t mayde ; & make hir~ att+ese
 y schal a-say hire my-selfe ; & sotellyche apose
 what man in þys world ; þ^t hyre ys leuyst haue
 & yf he worche wysly ; by wyse men consayle
 y wyl for-gyfe hir~ alle gultes ; so me god helpe
 Curtesly þe klerk þan ; as þe kyng~ hym hete
 toke mede by þe myddel ; & myldelyche hir~ brou3t
 Into boure wiþ blysse ; & by hyre gan sitte
 þere was mirþe & mynstrelcy ; mede forto plese
 þo þ^t wendeþ to westmyster ; worshyppeþ hir~ many
 gentellyche w^t ioy3e ; þe iustyse many on
 <fol. 12v>busked hem to þe bour ; þer þys mayde dwelled
 Comfortyng~ hire as hy coupe . by þe clerkes leue
 & sayde morne þu nou3t mede ; make þ^u no sorwe
 For we wolles wysse þe kyng~ ; & þy wey schappe
 Forto wende at wille ; were þ^u lef lykeþ
 For alle concyens cast ; & crafte as y trowe
 Myldely mede þo ; þankedede hem alle <mrg>hem alle</mrg>
 Of her~ grete goudnesse; & gaf hem echone
 Coupes of clene gold ; & coppes of seluer
 Rynges w^t rubees ; & oþer ryche gyftes
 þe lest of here meyne ; a moten of golde
 whan hy had take ; here leue of þ^t lady mede
 þan comen klerkes ; to confort þe same
 & bede hyre be blyde for we beþe þyn owen
 Forto werche þy wille ; þe whyle þ^t we may dur~
 & mede hendelyche ; by hete ham þe same

to loue hem truelyche ; & lordes hem maken
 & purchesse 3ow prouendres ; whyles 3oure pans lesten
 & bigge 3ow benefis ; pluralyte to haue
 & in þe contrey at curt ; do calle 3our~ names
 Schal no lewdnesse ; lette þe clerke þ^t y loue
 þ^t he ne worþ forst a-vanssed ; for y am by-knowe
 þare connyng~ clerkes ; schul cleke by-hynde
 þan come þer a confessour ; coped as a frer~
 To mede þe mayd ; myldelyche he sayde
 þaw lewed men & lered ; hadde lyen by þe boþe
 & falshede yfounnde þe ; alle þys fourty winter~
 y schal a-soyly þe my-self ; for a seme whete
 & 3ut be þy bedman ; & bryng~ adoun concience
 Among~ kynges & kny3tes ; & clerkes yf þe lykes
 þan mede for hyre mysdedys ; to þys man kneled
 <fol. 13r>& schrofe hyr of hyr myssededes schameles y leue
 he tolde hym a tale ; & touke hym a noble
 For to be hire bedman ; & bere wel hire erande
 Among~ kny3tes & clerkes ; concyens te tourne
 & he a-soyled hyre sone ; & seþe sayde we haue
 A wyndow to worchyng~ ; wille stande vs wel hey3e
 wolde 3e glase þe gable ; & graue þer 3our~ name
 In masses & in matyns for mede we schal synge
 Solemylyche & softelyche ; as for a suster of oure ord~
 louelyche þ^t lady law3yng~ ; sayde
 y schal be 3our~ frende frere & fayle 3ow neuer
 whyle 3e loueþ þes lordes þ^t lechery haunteþ
 & lacheþ now þes ladyes ; þ^t loueþ þe same
 yt ys bote fraylte of her flesche ; 3e findeþ wel bi bokes
 & by course of kynde ; whar-of we comen alle
 we my3t scape þe sclaunder ; scape my3t sone be amendid
 hit ys a sunne of seuene ; non soner relese
 haue mercy quod mede on men ; þ^t hit haunteþ
 & j schal couer~ 3oure chyrche ; & 3oure cloystr~ make
 boþe wyndows & woves ; y wile a-mende & glase
 & do pente & portren ; & paye for þe makyng~
 þ^t euery sege may saye ; y am a suster of 3oure ord~
 Bote god to alle goud folke ; suche grauyng~ defend
 to writen in wyndows ; of eny wel dedes

þ^t prute be pente þer ; pompe of þe worlde
 For god knoweþ þy concience ; & þy kynde wille
 þy coste & þy couetyse & who þe catel Au3te
 For þy leue lordes loue ; lefe suche wrytyng
 God in þe gospelle suche *grauynge* nou3t aloweþe
 <lat></lat>
 let nou3t þy lyfte honde ; our~ lorde techeþ
 <fol. 13v>Wyte what þ^u dost ; w^t þy ry3t syde
 3it mede myldely ; þe mayr hyr~ by-sou3t
 boþ scherefys & seriauntes ; & hem þ^t kepeþ lawes
 Some punysscheþ op on pileryes ; & on pynyng stoles
 as bakers & brewers ; bouchers & koukes
 For þes men doþ most harm ; to þe comen peple
 Rycheþ þorow regratrye ; & rentes hem bygges
 w^t þ^t þe powr~ peple ; scholde put in here wombe
 For hy touke so vntruly ; hy tymbred nouþ so hye3e
 Some bou3te burgages ; be 3e ful certayne
 þo haueþ no pyte of þe peple ; þ^t *parcel* mele mote biggen
 þan hy takeþ hem vn-tydy þyng ; hy hold it no tr~son
 & þaw hy fylle nou3t ful ; þ^t for þe lawe ys seled
 he grypeþ þerfore as grete ; as for þe ri3t truþe
 Many manere sorwys ; in Cites falleþ ofte
 boþe þorw fyre & floude ; & alle þorow fals peple
 þ^t by-gyleþ goud men ; & greueþ þem wrongly
 þe whyche cryeþ on her knees ; þ^t cryst hem a-venge
 her on þys erþe ; oþer elles in helle
 þ^t so by-gyleþ men of her goud ; þ^t god on hem sendes
 Feuers oþer foule yuels ; or fire on her houses
 Moreyne or oþer myschaunses ; & many tymes falleþ
 þ^t in nocens it herd ; in heuene among~ sentes
 þ^t for hem louteþ to oure lord ; & to our~ lady boþe
 to *graunte* gylours on erþe ; grace for+to amende
 & haue here penaunse her on erþe ; & no3t þe pyne of hel
 þan falleþ here fire ; on fals men houses
 & gode mennes for her gyltes ; glowes *in* fire after
 Al þys haue we seyn ; þ^t som-tyme þorow a+brewer~
 Many burgages ybrend ; bodyes þer-ynne
 & þorow a candel clemynge~ ; in a cursed place
 <fol. 14r>Fel adoun & forbrente forþ al þe rewe

For þy mayres þ^t makeþ fremen ; me þynkeþ þ^t hi au3t
 Forto spirr~ & a-spye ; for eny speche of seluour
 what maner~ of marchaundyse he vsede
 Ar he were vnderfong~ fre ; oþer pult in her rolles
 hit ys vn-semely for-souþ ; in cite or in borwtoun
 þ^t vsoures & regratoures ; for any skyynnes 3eftes
 be fraunchysed for freman ; & haue a fals name
 Bote mede þe mayde ; þe mayre he by-sou3te
 Of alle suche syllers ; seluer to take
 or presentes wiþ-oute pans ; & oþer priue 3yftes
 & haue reuþe on regratoures ; þ^t haueþ ryche hondes
 <lat></lat>
 loue hem for my loue ; quap þys lady mede
 & suffre hem som tyme ; to selle a-3en þe lawe
 Salamon þe sage ; a sermon he made
 In a-mendement of mayrs ; & oþer stywardes
 & witnesseþ what worþ of hem ; þ^t wol+take mede
 <lat></lat>
 A-mong þes lettred lordes ; þys latyn is to mene
 þ^t fire schal falle & forbrenne ; alto plake asks
 þe houses & þe homes of hem ; þ^t takeþ 3yftes
 þe kyng~ fro consayl com ; & callede after mede
 & sente to se hyr~ bote sey nou3t him þ^t hyr ladde
 Fol curtesly þe kyng~ þo ; as ys kynde wolde
 lakkede hyre a lytel whyle ; for þ^t he loued gyle
 & wilnede to be wedded ; by þouten hys lyue
 þo truþe had tolde hyr a tokne ; fro hym-selue
 & sayd vnwittelyche womman ; wrou3t hast þ^u oft
 y haue for-3yue þe my gilt ; & my grace grauntede
 boþe to þe & to þyn ; in hope schalt a-mende
 <fol. 14v>& ay þe lenger y lete þe go þe lasse truþe ys wyþþe
 For wors wrou3test neuere ; þan wan þ^u fals toke
 3yt y for-3yfe þe þys gilt ; gode Forbede eny more
 þ^u tene me on truþe ; & þu may be take
 In þe castel of corf ; y schal do þe close
 þer as an Ancre ; oþer in a wel worse wone
 & marye þe w^t myschyf ; by seynt mari my lady
 þ^t alle wikkede wymmen ; schal be war by þe one
 & bitterlyche banne þe ; & alle þ^t bereþ þy name

& teche þe loue truþe ; & take consaile of reson
 y haue a kny3t hat concience ; com late fro by-3onde
 if he wile haue þe to+wyf ; wyl þ^u hym haue
 3e lord *quod* þ^t lady ; lord i^t me forbede
 bote y be holy at þyn hest ; let hong~ me elles
 þan was concyence called ; to come & apere
 by-fore þe kyng~ & hys consayl ; as clerkes & oþer
 knelyng~ to þe kynge ; concyence loutede
 to wite what hys wil were ; & what he do scholde
 wylt þ^u wedde þys mayde ; yf y+wyl a-sente
 For he ys fayne of þy felawschyp ; & for to be þi make
Quod concience to þe kyng~ ; crist i^t me forbede
 Ar y weddy suche a wyfe ; wo me bytyde
 For he ys brokel of hyre fay ; & fykel of hir speche
 & makeþ men mysdo ; many score tymes
 In tryst of her tresour ; he tenes ful many
 wyues & wydewys ; wikkenesse he techēþ
 & lereþ hem to lechery ; þ^t loueþ hyr 3yftes
 3our~ fadere he felde ; fals & he to-gedres
 he haþ apoysned popes ; he appayreþ holy cherche
 ys nower a betr~ baude ; by hym þ^t me made
 by-twyne erþe & helle ; alle erþe 3yf men sou3t
 <fol. 15r>For he ys tykel of hyre tale ; tale wyse of tong~
 as *commenn* as þe cartway ; to knaues & to oþer
 to monkes to alle men ; to meseles in hegges
 lyggeþ by hyr~ whan hem lyst ; þe lered & lewede
 Sysours & somners ; suche men hyr~ *preseþ*
 Schereffes of shyres ; were schent 3yf he nere
 For he doþ men lese her londe & here lyues boþe
 he lateþ passe *prisons* ; & payeþ for hem oft
 & gyueþ þe gaylour gold ; & grotys to-gedres
 to vn-feter þe fals ; fle where hym lykeþ
 & take+þe+truwe by þe top ; & tyeþ hem fast
 & hongēþ hem for hatered ; þ^t harmed neuere
 to be cursed in constarye ; he counteþ nou3t a rysche
 he copeþ þe *commessarye* ; & coteþ hys clerkes
 he ys a-soyled þys sone ; as hyrselfe lykeþ
 he may as moche do ; in a mounthe one
 as 3oure secre seal ; in sex score dayes

he ys priue w^t þe pope ; promyssours h^t knoweþ
 For symonye & hyr-selfe ; seleþ here bulles
 he blesseþ þes bysschoppys ; be hy neuere so lewd
 he prouendereþ persons ; & prestes he <ill><1-2 letters></ill>entayneþ
 to hold lemmans & lotebyes ; alle here lyf dayes
 & bryngeþ forþ chyldren ; a3ens <ill><1 word></ill> lawes
 <lat></lat>
 þer he ys welle w^t any kyng~ ; <ill><1 word></ill> wo ys þe reame
 For he ys fauorable to fals ; & þ^t defouleþ treuþe
 by jesus w^t iwelles ; þe justyse he schendes
 he lyeþ a3ens þe lawe ; & lettes hem þe gates
 þ^t fayþe may nou3t haue ys forþ ; h<ill><2-3 letters></ill> florines goþ so þikke
 & ledeþ þe lawe as hyr lyste ; & louedayes makeþ
 þorow suche louedayes ys lost ; þ^t leaute my3t wynne
 <fol. 15v>þe mase for a mene man; 3yf he mote euere
 lawe ys so lordlyche ; & loþe to make ende
 w^touten presantes or pans ; it pleseþ ful+fewe .
 trewe burgeys & bond ; to nou3t he bryngeþ ofte
 & alle þe commune in care ; & in couetyse
 Relygyous he al to reues ; & oute of reule hem brynges
 þer nys cyte vnder sonne ; no so ryche reame
 w^touten werre oþer wo ; oþer wikkede lawes
 & customes of couetyse ; þe commune to destruy3e
 vnsittyng~ suffraunse hyre syster & hyr-seluen
 haueþ maked al moste ; bote marye þe helpe
 þ^t no lond loue þe ; & 3yt lost þyn owen
 For mede haþ kny3t clerkes ; & conciens togedres
 þ^t alle þe wit of þys wordle ; ys waxen in-to gile
 þus þys lady lereþ þy londe ; now lord 3yf hir~ sorw
 For pour~ men der nou3t playne ; noþer playnt shew
 Suche a mayster ys mede ; a-mong~ men of goude
 Pan murnede mede ; menyng hir~ to þe kyng
 to haue space to speke ; spede 3yf he my3t
 þe kyng~ grantede hyr grace ; w^t a goud wille
 Excuse þe 3yf þ^u canst ; y can no more seggen
 For concyence consayleþ me ; to conge þe for euere
 Nay lorde quod þ^t lady ; lyueþ hym þe werse
 whan 3e wyteþ wyterly ; on wham þe wrong~ liggyþ
 þere þ^t myschyf ys grete ; mede may helpe

& þ^t knoweþ concyens ; y com nou3t to chyde
 Noþer to depræue þy persone ; w^t a prout herte
 wel þ^u wost witerly ; bote 3yf þ^u wylle gabbe
 þ^u hast hangede on myn half ; enleuen tymes
 & also grype of my gold ; gyff where þe lykede
 why þ^u wraþest þe now ; wonder me þynkeþ
 <fol. 16r>3it y may as y my3t ; quethe þe w^t 3yftes
 & mantayne þy manhode ; more þan þ^u knowest
 bote þ^u hast famed me foule ; byfore þe kyng~ here
 For gilte y neuer kyng~ ; no consailed so to done
 Bote y haue y-saued my-self ; syxty þousande lyues
 Boþe here & elles whar ; in alle+kunne londes
 bote þ^u þy-self soþly ; who say hit derst
 haues agast many hardy+man ; þ^t had wille to fy3te
 to brenne & to berst ; to bete adon strengþes
 In contreys þer þe kyng~ com ; concience hym lette
 þ^t he my3t no3t afille hys foes ; þei fortune i^t wold
 & as hys wardes were ordeyned ; by þe wil of *our* lord
 kaytyfly þ^u concyence ; consayled þe kyng~ leten
 In hys enemyes hondes ; hys eritage of *fr*raunce
 vn-connyng ys þ^t concience ; a kyngdom to selle
 þ^t ys conquered þorow a *commune* help ; a kyngdom oþer a duche
 May nou3t be sold souþly ; so many here parte askeþ
 Of folke þ^t fau3te þerfore ; & folwede þe kyngis wille
 þe lest lad þ^t longeþ to hym ; be þe londe ywonne
 lokeþ after lordschype ; or oþer large mede
 wharfore he may as a man; euer more lyfe aftre
 & þ^t ys þe kynde of a kyng~ ; þ^t conqueres hys enemyes
 to helpe heylyche hys men ; or elles to *hem* graunty
 Al þ^t men may wynne ; to do þer-w^t her best
 For þ^t y consayle no kyng~ ; any consayl aske
 at concience 3yf he couetyte ; to conquere a reame
 For schal neuere conciens ; be my costable
 were y a kyng~ y-crouned ; by mary *quod* mede
 Ne be marchal ouer my men ; þer y moste fy3t
 Bote hadde mede ben hys marchal ; ouer þ^e reme of fraunce
 J durste haue y-leyde my lyf ; & no las wedde
 <fol. 16v>he had be lord of þ^t londe ; on lengþe & *in* brede
 & also kyng of þ^t y knowe ; hys kynne to+haue holpe

þe lest brol of hys blode ; a barons pere
 vn connabelyche þ^u concience ; consaylest him þens
 to lette go hys lordschyp ; for a lytel monye
 hit be-comeþ for a kyng ; þ^t schal kepe a reame
 To 3yuen men mede ; to mekely hym seruen
 to alyens to alle men ; to onour~ hem w^t 3yftes
 Mede makeþ hym ; to be louede & for a+man yholden
 Emperours & erles ; & alle manere lordes
 þorow 3yftes haueþ 3emen ; to renne & to ryde
 þe pope & al prelates ; presantes vnder-fongeþ
 & 3yueþ mede to men ; to mentene here lawes
 Seruantes for her seruyse ; med hy wille asken
 & take mede of her maystres ; as hy may acorde
 Beggars & bedmen ; craauen mede for her prayers
 Mynstrales for her mynstrasye ; mede hy do asken
 Maystres þ^t techep cherkes ; crauen for her mede
 prestes þ^t prechep & þe peple techep
 Asken mede & masse pans ; & here mete boþe
 Alle kynde craftes men ; crauen mede for her~ prentyse
 Marchaundyse & mede ; mote nede go to-gedres
 þer nys no lad þ^t lyueþ ; þ^t he ne loueþ mede
 & glad forto gripe her ; grete lorde oþer pour~
 Quod þe kyng~ to concyens ; by cryst at my knowyng~
 Mede ys worpy me þynkeþ ; þe maystrye to haue
 Nay quod concience to þe kyng~ ; clerkes wot þe souþe
 þ^t mede ys mayntenour euer more of gyle
 As þe sauter sheweþ ; by suche þ^t 3yuen mede
 þ^t vnlawfullyche lyuen ; hauen large hondes
 to <ill><1 word></ill> mede more oþer lasse
 <fol. 17r>bote þer ys mede a-merced ; & boþe men demen
 a deseyt for some men priue oþer elles
 Mede many tymes men 3yuen ; byfore þe doying~
 & þ^t ys nou3t reson no ry3t ; noþer no remes lawe
 <ill><1 word></ill> eny man mede touke ; bote he hit my3t deserue
 & forto vndertake ; to trauallye for an-oþer
 <ill><1 word></ill> wot neuere wyterly ; wher~ he lyue so longe
 No haue happe to hys hele ; mede to deserue
 J hold hym euer hardy ; or elles nou3t truwe
 þ^t <lat></lat> ys payd ; or hys pay askes



harlotes & hores ; & al-so fals leches
þey asken her hyre ; or hy it haue deserued
& gyles gyuen byfore ; & gode men ate ende
whan þe dede ys done ; & þe day ended