

could get on books and learning, and he would pray for those who helped him. He was not proud of his learning, but always ready to learn from others or to teach them what he knew. He talked very little, and all that he did say was full of wisdom and goodness.

We have room for only one more description, and that is of the "good man of religion," the poor Parson. He was poor in money, but rich in holy thoughts and in learning. He taught the gospel truly to his people. He was kind, diligent and patient in time of trouble and poverty. Though his parish was very large and the houses far apart, he never failed to visit anyone who was sick or in trouble, whether they were rich or poor. He had to go on foot, too, for he had no horse. Though he was so good himself, he was not hard upon sinners, but tried to draw them on to heaven by gentle words and a good example. Yet if a man persisted in doing wrong, the parson would rebuke him sharply, whoever he might be. He was very different from some of the other clergy whom Chaucer describes, who thought only of their own ambition or pleasure. He was a true shepherd, and cared first of all for his sheep.

The lore of Christ and His apostles twelve,  
He taught, but first he followed it himself.

Besides these who have been described there were a Yeoman, who attended the Squire; a Prioress, who had with her another Nun, and three Priests; a Monk; a Friar; a Merchant; a Lawyer; a Frank-lain (or country gentleman); a Haberdasher; a Carpenter; a Weaver; a Dyer; and a Tapicer (or upholsterer); a Cook; a Shipman, who came from Dartmouth; a Doctor of Physic; a Ploughman, the brother of the poor Parson; a Reeve (or steward); a Miller; a Summoner, who was an officer employed to bring people who had done wrong before the church courts; a Pardoner, who sold indulgences from the Pope; a Manciple, whose business it was to buy provisions for a college; and Chaucer himself. That was all.

The Host of the Inn was a large stout man, fine looking, and very sensible and merry. He served the Pilgrims well, gave them a good supper and good wine to drink, and kept them laughing with his jokes. After supper he made a little speech to the company and said:

My masters, you are very welcome at my house; to tell the truth, I have not seen so large or so merry a company inside my inn this year. I would like to make it

pleasant for you if I could, and now I have just thought of a plan that will make you very merry on your journey. Whoever wants to hear it, hold up your hands.

Every man held up his hand and begged the Host to go on. So he told them his plan.

"Well, my masters," he said, "I propose that each one of you shall tell four stories, two on the way to Canterbury, and two on the way back. For you know there is not much fun in riding along as dumb as a stone. And whichever one of you tells the best story shall have a supper at this inn when you come back, and the others shall pay for it. I will ride to Canterbury with you, and I will be the judge of the stories. And if anyone contradicts me, he shall have to pay all our expenses. Now tell me if you all agree to this, and then I will get ready to start in the morning."

They all agreed gladly to the Host's plan. So the next morning, at daybreak, they set off; and when they had got to the place only a mile or two from Southwark, called the Watering of St. Thomas, they stopped and drew lots to see who should tell the first tale. Every one was very glad when the lot fell to the Knight; and so they rode on, and the Knight began with a merry countenance to tell his tale.

This is the end of the Prologue. We should all like to know who told the best story. But nobody knows, for Chaucer only left us twenty-four stories, and does not tell us about the return of the pilgrims at all.

for the Review.]

### Charity.

Judge not thy neighbour for his words or deeds,  
An idle tongue to many troubles leads.  
The critic casts full many stones away  
That may be flung upon himself some day.  
Broadcast sow not the gossip that you hear;  
Nor add unto a tale a covet sneer.  
Do not accuse, till sure you learn aright  
The causes of a sin; nor bring to light  
Forgotten faults when anger stirs the heart.  
Some time thou, too, may learn to know the smart  
Of idle tongues that often troubles make.  
Some time thy good name, too, may stand at stake,  
And burning round it fires of foul mischance,  
And ranged against thee force of circumstance.  
Then other tongues, as sharp clad as thine own,  
Send random shots, and leave thee not alone.  
So let thy mind grow broad with charity.  
If good thou cannot speak, then silent be.  
Be not afraid to speak a word of praise,  
But let kind thoughts beam forth like cheerful rays,  
That lighten up the weary path of life,  
And turn aside the cruel thrusts of strife.

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