

which Chaucer studied carefully. Indeed, he borrowed some of them for his "Canterbury Tales."

King Edward was certainly satisfied with the way Chaucer did his commissions, for very soon after the latter returned to England, we find that the king's butler was ordered to send him a pitcher of wine daily. A few months after, he was given a very important post, comptroller of the customs of the Port of London. After this, the king and John of Gaunt continued to hold him in high favour. He held other important offices that brought him a good deal of money, and he was again and again sent abroad on the king's errands. He made two other journeys to Italy, one to France and one to Flanders.

In 1377 King Edward III died. His oldest son, the Black Prince, had died before him, and so he was succeeded by his grandson, Richard II, who was only eleven years old. The king's uncles governed for him, and as John of Gaunt was the most powerful of them, Chaucer's good fortune was unchanged, or changed only for the better. In 1386 he was elected to go to the parliament at Westminster as knight of the shire for Kent.

So far all had gone well with him. But now he was to know misfortunes and sorrow. John of Gaunt went to Spain, and while he was gone, his brother, Thomas of Gloucester, put himself at the head of the government, and took away all power from the king. Chaucer was dismissed from his offices and from being a rich man he became very poor. In the next year his wife died.

But in two years' time, King Richard took the power into his own hands. John of Gaunt came back from Spain, and immediately Chaucer was remembered, and was appointed clerk of the king's works at Westminster with a good salary. He deserved this, for he had been faithful and honourable, and had stood up bravely for his friend John of Gaunt when the latter's enemies were too strong for him. But he seems never to have been as prosperous as before, for when Henry IV came to the throne, Chaucer sent him a poem called "A Complaint to his Purse," telling of his poverty. Henry IV was the son of John of Gaunt, who was now dead, and he must have remembered his father's love for Chaucer, for in only four days he ordered that the poet's pension should be doubled, so we hope that Chaucer did not suffer from want of money in his last years.

He died in his house at Westminster, on October 25th, 1400. He was only sixty, but in those times, that was considered very old. We know hardly anything about his family; only that he had a "little son Lewis" for whom he wrote a lesson book, and who probably died young.

We have said little about Chaucer's poetry, but through all these years of busy life, he had been writing. His greatest work is "The Canterbury Tales," and most of these were written at the time when he was in poverty and disgrace. It is pleasant to see that his misfortunes did not make him lose heart and interest in his work. The "Tales" will be the subject of our next lesson, and in the meantime, you will do well to learn by heart Longfellow's Sonnet on Chaucer, from which the lines at the head of this paper have been taken.

The Ideal Teacher.

I have said that the ideal teacher is a lady born and bred; that she is a cultivated lady, and besides, her culture has cost a deal of time and money. But she is much else. She has great skill in the management of children. This means that she loves children and loves them down deep in her heart. She wins them from the first. She understands them, and they look to her for guidance and sympathy, even as they look to their own mothers.

Parents seldom come to the ideal teacher to make complaints or offer suggestions. If they do come, it is because of some misunderstanding. The ideal teacher, who is always a lady, disarms opposition at once, explains what before was misunderstood, and sends her visitor home with a cordial invitation to come again and to come often. It is needless to say that the ideal teacher has common sense in abundance. It is the soil out of which all her other good qualities grow. It governs all her actions, it tempers all her words, and it gives us what we all want.—Robert C. Metcalf.

A million twinkling sky-lamps look down through the frosty night:
A million fairy diamonds flash up from the snow so white,
A sharp g'lint of the frosted steel sounds 'neath the foot below;
And bare brown branches trail their snake-like shadows on the snow.

—Elizabeth Walling.