

sufficient elements of comparison traceable between them, to render it most probable that the mode of treatment and even some of the details were suggested by the contemporary pictured "Moralties," familiar alike to the poet and his readers. "Hate," "Felony," "Villany," "Covetice," "Avarice," "Envy" and "Sorrow" are all successively described, after which comes "Elde," the same that is introduced in Pier's Plowman as the Standard-bearer of Death. After the description of Elde's portraiture, the following beautiful passage on the fleeting nature of time occurs :

"The time that passeth night and day,
And restlesse travayleth aye,
And stealeth from us so privily,
That to us seemeth sikerly
That it in one point dwelleth ever,
And certes it ne resteth never,
But goeth so fast and passeth aye,
That there n'is man that thinké may
What time that now present is,
Asketh at these clerkis this,
For men think it readily
Three times been passed by
The time that may not sojourn
But goeth and may never return,
As water that down runneth aye
But never drop returné may.
There may nothing as time endure,
Metal, nor earthly creature,
For all thing it fret and shall,
The time eke that changeth all;
And all doth wax, and fostered be,
And all things destroyeth he.

The time that eldeth our ancestors
And eldeth Kings and Emperors,
And that us all shall overcommen
Ere that death us shall have nomen;
The time that hath all in welde
To elden folk, had made her elde
So inly, that to my witing
She might help herself nothing,
But turned ayen unto childhede;
Ne wit, ne pithe in her hold
More than a child of two year old."