

were then rivals. Since the conquest, the French had been the language of the courtier, the lawyer and the theologian—the Saxon of the peasant and the churl. But Chaucer chose the Anglo Saxon in which to robe his thoughts, and found it full of life and poetry—possessing capacity for the expression of the sweetest and tenderest, the loftiest and sublimest sentiments. It is now developed and polished, and rendered classic, by the most wonderful productions of human genius. But Chaucer redeemed it from chaos and saved it from decay.

This ancient bard died at a good old age, after having with other mortals shared the ills and joys of life. Fortune had smiled and adversity had frowned upon him. But, notwithstanding the vicissitudes of his life, when age and death came they found the noble spirit as strong and genial as ever. Posterity has not fully recognized his worth. Only the few appreciate his songs. But if there is one in her whole list of worthies to whom England should raise a monument, it is to the name and genius of Geoffrey Chaucer, the first poet of his age, and the admiration of his country.

IRA SMITH.

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### Vespers.

I SAW sweet Evening kneel  
Beneath the glowing amber of the skies,  
A tender trouble on her lovely face,  
Great pity in her eyes.

For O the flowers! the flowers  
Lay languishing, and like to die too soon,  
Smitten with burning kisses from the lips  
Of Summer's passionate noon.

But now had Evening come  
Among the flowers, and lowly knelt she there,  
And from the fulness of her pitying heart  
Went up a silent prayer.