

**HARVARD STUDIES IN  
ENGLISH, VOLUME  
1: COURTLY LOVE IN  
CHAUCER AND GOWER**

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**WILLIAM GEORGE DODD**

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HARVARD STUDIES IN ENGLISH

VOLUME I

COURTLY LOVE  
IN CHAUCER AND GOWER

BY

WILLIAM GEORGE DODD

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

PHYSICS 551  
LECTURE NOTES  
BY  
JOHN H. COOPER

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COURTLY LOVE  
IN CHAUCER AND GOWER

BY

WILLIAM GEORGE DODD

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## PREFACE

This work is a revision of a study originally made by the writer while a student in the Graduate School of Harvard University. The limitation of the consideration to the so-called "love paramours" made necessary the omission of much of Chaucer's best and most interesting work. But even so, in what is left, there is abundant opportunity for observing the poet's genius. The romantic love in Chaucer, although it differs in no essential respect from that treated by his predecessors and contemporaries in France, becomes in his hands the material for an artistic product of an entirely new sort. The very artistic excellence of the work has sometimes led critics, the writer believes, to wrong impressions of the love itself, and hence to wrong assumptions not only as to the poet's purpose but also as to his achievement. This fact may perhaps be considered sufficient reason for the present study.

Readers nowadays, as a matter of course and, it would seem, often conventionally, complain of the dullness of Gower. His treatment of love does not make it possible for us to deny the justice of such a complaint. At any rate, to the reader of early erotic literature, he serves the useful purpose of showing by contrast how brilliant may be a real poet's treatment of romantic love. Some such purpose, it is hoped, the chapter on Gower will serve in this study.

It is a pleasure to express my appreciation of the interest shown in the progress of my work by my friends and teachers of the Graduate School of Harvard University. In an especial way, I am under obligation to Professor Kittredge. I began the

study at his suggestion, and while working at it I had the opportunity of consulting him freely, and of receiving his criticisms and suggestions. Students who have done work under Professor Kittredge's direction, and perhaps only they, will realize all that this means. In helping to revise the work and to arrange it for the press, both he and Professor Robinson have been most kind. They have made many valuable suggestions which I have gladly adopted, and which I here gratefully acknowledge.

W. G. D.

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA, July 1, 1913

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