

Notes to the Doctor's Tale

1. Livy, Book iii. cap. 44, et seqq.
2. Faconde: utterance, speech; from Latin, "facundia," eloquence.
3. Slothe: other readings are "thought" and "youth."
4. Meschance: wickedness; French, "mechancete."
5. This line seems to be a kind of aside thrown in by Chaucer himself.
6. The various readings of this word are "churl," or "cherl," in the best manuscripts; "client" in the common editions, and "clerk" supported by two important manuscripts. "Client" would perhaps be the best reading, if it were not awkward for the metre; but between "churl" and "clerk" there can be little doubt that Mr Wright chose wisely when he preferred the second.
7. Judges xi. 37, 38. "And she said unto her father, Let . . . me alone two months, that I may go up and down upon the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my fellows. And he said, go."
8. Beguiled: "cast into gaol," according to Urry's explanation; though we should probably understand that, if Claudius had not been sent out of the country, his death would have been secretly contrived through private detestation.