CHAUCER'S TALE OF SIR THOPAS.

THE PROLOGUE.<1>

WHEN said was this miracle, every man As sober* was, that wonder was to see, *serious Till that our Host to japen* he began, *talk lightly And then *at erst* he looked upon me, *for the first time* And saide thus; "What man art thou?" quoth he; "Thou lookest as thou wouldest find an hare, For ever on the ground I see thee stare.

"Approache near, and look up merrily. Now ware you, Sirs, and let this man have place. He in the waist is shapen as well as I; <2> This were a puppet in an arm t'embrace For any woman small and fair of face. He seemeth elvish* by his countenance, *surly, morose For unto no wight doth he dalliance.

"Say now somewhat, since other folk have said; Tell us a tale of mirth, and that anon." "Hoste," quoth I, "be not evil apaid,* *dissatisfied For other tale certes can* I none, *know Eut ofa rhyme I learned yore* agone." *long "Yea, that is good," quoth he; "now shall we hear Some dainty thing, me thinketh by thy cheer."* *expression, mien