

L'ENVOY OF CHAUCER TO BUKTON. <1>

My Master Bukton, when of Christ our King Was asked, What is truth or
soothfastness? He not a word answer'd to that asking, As who saith, no man
is all true, I guess; And therefore, though I highte* to express
*promised The sorrow and woe that is in marriage, I dare not write of it no
wickedness, Lest I myself fall eft* in such dotage.** *again **folly

I will not say how that it is the chain Of Satanus, on which he gnaweth ever;
But I dare say, were he out of his pain, As by his will he would be bounden
never. But thilke* doated fool that eft had lever *that Y-
chained be, than out of prison creep, God let him never from his woe
dissever, Nor no man him bewaile though he weep!

But yet, lest thou do worse, take a wife; Bet is to wed than burn in worse
wise; <2> But thou shalt have sorrow on thy flesh *thy life,* *all thy life*
And be thy wife's thrall, as say these wise. And if that Holy Writ may not
suffice, Experience shall thee teache, so may hap, That thee were lever to be
taken in Frise, <3> Than eft* to fall of wedding in the trap.
*again

This little writ, proverbes, or figure, I sende you; take keep* of it, I read!
heed "Unwise is he that can no weal endure; If thou be sicker, put thee not
in dread."** *in security **danger The Wife of Bath I pray you that you
read, Of this mattere which that we have on hand. God grante you your life
freely to lead In freedom, for full hard is to be bond.