

A medieval-style illustration depicting the Virgin Mary holding a lily, with a man kneeling before her in a church setting. The Virgin Mary is shown in a long, flowing white robe with a blue mantle, holding a white lily. She has a halo and is looking down at the man. The man is kneeling, wearing a dark tunic with a red and black diamond pattern, and looking up at her. In the background, several men in white robes are watching. The scene is set in a church with stone walls and a large window.

JAN M. ZIOLKOWSKI

READING THE JUGGLER OF NOTRE DAME

Medieval Miracles and Modern Remakings



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6. The Jongleurs and the Holy Candle of Arras

The municipality of Arras lies at the heart of Artois, a region in the northeast of modern-day France. Before 1250 this major city generated what count among the [earliest surviving examples](#) in prose and verse of many genres, writings both documentary and literary, ranging from charters and customary laws to plays. These texts are marked by some linguistic features associated with the neighboring territory of Picardy, but their language is often described simply as being Old French. The last-mentioned umbrella term encompasses most of the Romance dialects that were spoken and written in the Middle Ages in the center and north of France and in what are today the French-speaking communities of Belgium.

The wondrous tale of “The Jongleurs and the Holy Candle” that is purported to have unfolded in the principal church of Arras exposes the listener or reader to one transformation after another: a monastery sanctuary turns into a miraculous cathedral, moral enmity into brotherly love, lowly jongleurs into a lofty confraternity, and deadly illness into good health. The Virgin materializes on earth from her usual heavenly haunts, and solid wax melts as a taper burns, so that its drippings can be mixed with water to concoct a healing elixir. But we should approach the story methodically.

In the twelfth century or earlier, an [affliction ran rampant](#) in the environs of Arras. The disease has been commonly identified with [ergotism](#), a type of poisoning caused by consuming rye or other grains contaminated by the parasitic *Claviceps purpurea*—the ergot fungus. The most common mode of transmission was through bread. Back then, the malady was designated *le mal des ardents*, a French phrase that might be translated as “the illness of the burning ones.” It was identical or at least similar to what was also called [hellfire](#) and [sacred fire](#). The designation that eventually prevailed was Saint Anthony’s fire. All these terms refer to two symptoms. Outwardly the disease may resemble erysipelas since sufferers take on a burning-red or livid appearance on the exterior. Inwardly, owing to the hellishly hot pain caused by the inflammation on the interior, its manifestation is even more severe. Individuals who suffer the direst cases experience gangrene-like symptoms in the limbs.

Back to the tale. In the absence of modern medicine, no solace can be found for the ailment in Arras until Mary materializes and furnishes a [miraculous candle](#), along with instructions on its proper application. The faithful enduring the plague are

healed by imbibing water into which molten wax has been poured or dripped from the lighted taper, while their inflammations are soothed when the same liquid is applied externally.

The Virgin does not execute the miracle entirely on her own, but instead enlists a couple of accomplices as her agents. These two helpers are jongleurs who prior to this episode have become mortal and sworn enemies. The one known as [Peter](#) Norman, who is at [Saint-Pol-sur-Ternoise](#) when events begin, experiences an initial vision on the night leading from Wednesday into Thursday and another subsequent one from Thursday into Friday. The town where he found himself is in northern France, within a county that bore the same name. Until 1180 both town and county were a vassalage subject to the count of Flanders.

To put nomenclature behind us, Norman sets out from this locality in the morning on Friday and arrives in the evening. The other entertainer, called [Itier](#), departs that same morning from the region of [Brabant](#), even the nearest parts of which lay much farther than Saint-Pol from Arras. Consequently, despite making the greatest haste, Itier arrives only very early on Saturday morning in the same town. Before the pair of performers can collaborate in accomplishing the wonderful cure, they must first be reconciled through the intervention of the wise bishop, [Lambert](#).

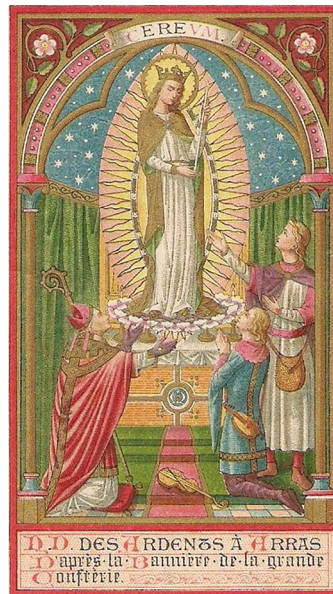


Fig. 9: Holy card depicting the miracle at Arras (Bruges, Belgium, ca. 1890).

After the mix of wax and water has healed nearly a full gross—twelve dozen—of the diseased locals, the two traveling entertainers commemorate the miracle by establishing a special association for members of their profession as well as for others within the Arras community. A kind of guild that enacted services for the dead, the *Confrérie des jongleurs et des bourgeois* or “Confraternity of Jongleurs and Townspeople” provided

mutual aid for funerals, and, perhaps the most important bonus, promised protection from the plague. Healthcare *avant la lettre*! The history of this group, apparently established initially as the *Carité de Notre Dame des Ardents d'Arras* or "Charity of Our Lady of the Burning Ones of Arras," becomes a fascinating story in its own right that reveals much about the complex and changing social position of jongleurs in medieval society.

The Latin communiqué of the miracle about the two jongleurs and the Holy Candle of Arras was apparently written between 1175 and 1200, but the official record of it was transcribed onto parchment as a charter in 1241. This document was certified by five seals. One piece of stamped green wax acknowledged the "mayors" of the confraternity, while each of the other four bore witness to the presence and approval of a [different ecclesiastic organization](#). The sealed original was incorporated in a cartulary that was preserved in the archives of the confraternity from then into the eighteenth century, but the medieval manuscript of it no longer exists. It remained intact, seals and all, at least until a *vidimus* or eyewitness copy was made on paper in 1482 by [two apostolic notaries at the request of a magistrate](#) of Arras. In the meantime, this fifteenth-century likeness has itself also disappeared. As a result, the earliest physical evidence of the text that is extant today comes through [a seventeenth-century transcription](#).

The Latin prose stands out from typical hagiography in its length as well as in the pains that were taken in its composition. Its anonymous author cultivated an elegant rhythmic style. As a writer, he demonstrated a lively command of narrative and dramatic technique by bringing characters on stage and by engaging them in dialogue with each other. The three principals, to wit, the bishop and the two jongleurs, draw back the curtains to reveal vivid and distinctive personalities. It may be going too far, but the theatricality of the writing has encouraged speculation that this version of the story owes some of its nature and flavor to the stage traditions and theatrical literature of Arras.

Unlike "Our Lady's Tumbler," "The Jongleur of Rocamadour" provided the specific of a name for its protagonist. "The Jongleurs and the Holy Candle of Arras" takes such granularity much further. In fact, it emanates a nearly legalistic and contractual urgency about establishing what happened when and where to whom. In the Latin and French texts we can glimpse interactions among different strata in medieval society. In the first document the players are the bishop and the two jongleurs. In the second a coda supplements these principals with the knights. A sense comes through that the longstanding division of society among ecclesiastics, knights, and peasants was not holding now as formerly, and that jongleurs were a cause of anxiety, as other classes sought to control them or appropriate their perquisites, while they endeavored to defend themselves and their interests. The miracle here elevates the Church, as the bishop reconciles two mortal enemies and as the Virgin delivers to a large populace in Arras a remedy for a dreaded illness that can be furnished henceforth as required under his oversight. The jongleurs elicit special attention from Mary and are protected

from those who would usurp their gains. Despite the particularity of the personal names and details, "The Jongleurs and the Holy Candle of Arras" in its initial two iterations displays at least as much concern about group identities and dynamics as it does about any alleged individuals.

A. "The Foundation of the Jongleur Confraternity in Arras" (in Latin)

Whatever is done *under the sun* is easily effaced from the memory of human beings unless it has been committed to writing. But the deeds of kings and of others who hold dominion on earth seem worth being recounted and remembered, especially of that king who alone rules *the system of the universe*, who sits *upon the cherubim and beholds the depths*, who *confines the thrones of the heavens and encloses the earth in his fist*, who *has measured the height of heaven and the depth of the abyss*, and who *holds dominion from sea to sea*. Assuredly, we are bound to extol the glories of this healer, which *cannot be numbered*. Yet I will *work through one of them in a brief discourse*.

In the time then when the priest Lambert occupied the *episcopal see of Arras*, as the people's sins and neglect increased, a most virulent trouble arose, such that the inhabitants of the city of Arras and in the countryside, villages, and towns of the whole neighboring province were afflicted, some by fear and others by grief. One suffered *burning* in the mouth, another in the nose, and a third in the ear, one in the hand, another in the foot, one in the hip, another in the shin, one in the male sexual organs, another in the backside, all with that dreadful illness that is called *hellfire*. In contrast, those who survived in good health were beset by fear that similar torment would befall them.

Accordingly, the entirety of those inhabiting the province were stricken by this fear. One group appeared before priests for confession, being reborn through the baptism of penance; another, in contrast, weakened by that illness, took flight together, some by foot and others by vehicle, to the *holy Zion*, which is to say, the *church of blessed Mary*, in the city of Arras. There, lying on beds, pallets, straw, and sacks, all of both sexes shouted to the Lord: "*How long, O Lord, will you forget me to the end?*" The one was saying: "*How long do you turn your face away from me?*," the other was praying: "*O Lord, rebuke me not in your indignation.*" And so there were in number *144* people who all were awaiting the Lord's favorably inclined redemption and providence.

In that time there were two jongleurs dwelling in different areas, for one was in Brabant and the other in the town of Saint-Pol-sur-Ternoise, but they had between them a mortal hatred, to the point where if one encountered the other, one would cut off the other's head with unsheathed sword. For one had slain the other's brother, with the devil proposing the idea and supplying weapons.

As all things maintained deepest silence and night completed the middle of its course, while that jongleur, the Brabanter, was sleeping in his bedroom, on the fourth night of the

week [Wednesday] in which it *began to dawn on the fifth day of the week* [Thursday], a vision was revealed in his sleep, namely, a woman *clothed in white, an exceedingly comely virgin* from the seed of King David, *surrounded with a variety of virtues, in gilded clothing*, with an ardent and unadorned appearance.

"Are you sleeping?" she says, "Are you sleeping? Hear what I say to you. Rising, proceed to the holy Zion of Arras, which is to say, that holiest place in which so many sick suffer to death, in number namely 144. Coming there, I will provide you a suitable place and time in which an opportunity may be afforded you for speaking with the priest Lambert who has charge of the church of Arras, by relating in order the vision you see. Add also that in the *third hour*, on the night of the Saturday, from which the first hour of the Sunday began to dawn, he will walk about through the church of the Blessed Virgin, going around the sick. When now the song of the first cockcrow sounds, a woman will come down from the choir, clothed in the same clothes with which I am too, carrying a candle in her hand and handing it over to you. When indeed you have received and lit the candle, drip the wax that overflows into vessels with water and in a circuit offer it to the sickly to drink, and pour it over the sickness of each and every one, and let there be no doubt to you that however many have faith, they will be restored to their former good health, but he who does not have faith will be condemned to death from his sicknesses. You will indeed unite with you (as the third) that one toward whom you bear a mortal hatred, who on the day of the coming Saturday will station himself in your presence. When mutual reconciliation has been achieved, you will enlist him for yourself as a third companion."

When this vision ended, on the same night the vision, with the Blessed Virgin in the same form and clothing, and relying on the same words, befell the other jongleur dwelling in the Ternoise area. When he had awakened from sleep, he said, "*Oh such and so great* a vision of the ever so venerable Mother of God, Mary! Oh that with her as guide and helper we should be tied together by the bond of reconciliation and love! Oh that with God taking pity and with the Blessed Mary, ever a virgin, protecting and announcing me, so many sick people may be restored to their former good health! But I fear for myself on account of the greatly fantastic illusions. Therefore I will wait all the way until the recurrence of the third hour of the night and, staying awake, I will keep vigil, if the vision should come and be repeated. Oh that it should come!"

Therefore he rises in the morning and proceeding to the church to hear the rite of the divine service, with knees bent in view of the cross, with hands joined and raised up high, he prays devoutly that the Lord may finish in a short time according to his will what he had seen in his vision.

Now on the following night, the same vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary happened to the same individuals, with this added: if they did not hasten, they would be punished by sickness of the same torment. But Norman is aroused from sleep, as if put into a daze and a trance. Made ready and girded with a sword, he undertakes a journey in haste toward Arras and on Friday, worn out by his journey he spent the night in Arras. Itier also did likewise, but I believe that, because he was coming from afar, he hastened far more to Arras, but even so he did not come all the way to the city.

In the earliest twilight of Saturday, as day begins to shine, Norman arises from bed and goes to the church of the Holy Mother to handle the business for which he had come. He greets [the sign of the Lord's death](#) and arms the whole front portion of his body with [the sign of the cross](#). Upon surveying the pains and afflictions of the sickly, he recalls what he heard the Blessed Virgin say in the vision: "If you do not hasten, you will be tormented by the same affliction." Having poured forth tears then to the Lord, he repeats while beating his breast: "[God, have mercy on me, sinner that I am.](#)" Setting out on his journey toward the house of the lord bishop, he says in the silence the entire psalm "[May God have mercy on us,](#)" for he was to a slight extent lettered.

Running all about, he found him persevering in prayer before the [chapel of Saint Séverin](#). Gazing upon him, Norman, fearing to interrupt his prayer, drew a little nearer on bended knee behind him. Having finished his prayer, the lord bishop looked back and said, "What do you want, brother?" "Holy father, I have many things to say to you. May it be pleasing to [Your Paternity](#) to hear the private matters that I convey." Beckoning then with his hand, the bishop had him sit at his feet.

Norman began to speak in this way: "As it began to dawn on the [fifth day of the week](#) that in the end became visible to us, I saw in a vision the Blessed Virgin, who is [the mother of all mercies](#). She enjoined upon me to come to your presence, ordering me that on the current night [Saturday], from which Sunday begins to shine, after the first cockcrow, with you as the third, you should walk about those weakened by illness. In accordance with her will, she will in fact deliver to you a lit candle. You will pour out the wax overflowing from it on water that has had the sign of the cross made over it, and you will offer the water both to drink and to sprinkle over the sores of the sick. Those who lack faith concerning their present health will incur [temporal death](#) within seven days. I leave this command to Your Paternity, so that if you leave it undone, it will be neither my wickedness nor my sin."

When he ceased to speak, the bishop addressed him in these words: "What is your name, my son, and from where do you come and what is your profession?" That one replied to him: "My father, the [sponsors for my faith at baptism](#) named me Peter. Thereafter I acquired for myself the [additional name](#) Norman, having been born in Ternoise, from the town of Saint-Pol. I earn my living from the profession of jongleur." "Oh brother," said the bishop, "you feed me with [pleasant circumlocutions.](#)" Then Norman blushed, because the bishop struck him with his words. He sat in the church, feeling compassion for the miseries that he saw.

Let us come to Itier. Itier, who had spent the night two miles from Arras, hastened in the morning to the church of the Blessed Virgin, as the bell was being struck at [terce](#), and made a prayer to the Lord. Having entered the court of the lord bishop with no one objecting, he came into the chapel and there, as the lord bishop celebrated the Mass out of reverence for the Blessed Virgin Mary, he stood as the sole layman among the clerics so long as they were celebrating the divine office.

Itier advanced, as in contrast the clergy retired, and taking a position before the face of the lord bishop, he burst into these words: "May Your Paternity, holy father,

hear what your son has to say to you.” The bishop, looking at him straightforwardly and drawing him back to more secluded places of the chapel, said: “Speak, brother, if you have something to say.”

Then that one replied, “Holy father, in a vision I saw first once and then again a woman possessing beauty and grace above the [daughters of men](#). As commands she gave me that coming to you on this Saturday, I should announce her commands to you. She also added on threats that if I did not hasten, my flesh would be tormented on this [pillory of death](#) on which the sick in our church were being tormented. So she ordered that on the present night out of which Sunday begins to dawn (according to the testimony of two, mine and of a certain other whom you have chosen with you) you walk about the wretched ill through the church of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Around cockcrow she will deliver to you a flaming candle. Dripping the wax overflowing from it on water that has had the sign of the cross made over it, you will offer it to the sickly to drink. Who has faith will be saved; but who does not have faith will be condemned to immediate death.”

When now he had ceased speaking, the bishop bursting out into words said, “You have tried deceitfully to make a fool of me in my straightforwardness. What is your name, from what origin is your birth, and of what rank are you?” That one said, “My name is Itier, taking my origin from the region of Brabant. I earn my living by [miming](#) and singing.” To him the bishop said, “You have spoken to each other, you and the one who earlier conversed with me. I can neither believe you nor agree with you; for, as it has seemed to me, you strive to deceive me in my ignorance.”

“How,” says Itier, “[do you mean ‘spoken to each other’?](#)” To him the bishop said, “A certain man of your rank, with the surname Norman, came to me, and he conversed with me in the same phrases in which you spoke, with which I cannot at all agree.” “Oh, if only I see Norman,” said Itier, “I will run through his bowels with a two-edged sword, because he was the cause of death to my brother!”

Hearing this, the bishop thought inside himself that the vision—which would be the reconciliation of two enemies, the health of so many sick, and the rendering of thanks of many kinds to God—had come from God. Then, thinking first about reconciliation, he burst out into these words: “My sons, if you have held fast to hate in your heart, you will not be able to perform the work of God, according to [that Gospel text](#): ‘If you offer your gift before the altar, and there you remember that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift there, and go to be reconciled to your brother, and then coming you will offer your gift.’

It is proper that you be reconciled with your brother and live quietly in peace. For the lord [Jesus says](#), ‘Love peace and truth.’ [God himself is peace](#), himself is truth, himself is the way. For [he says](#), ‘I am the way and the truth. Love your enemy, because God is charity: and he who abides in charity, abides in God, and God in him.’ Charity is accorded even to an enemy. [It has been written](#), ‘Love a friend in God and an enemy on account of God.’ ‘Charity covers a multitude of sins.’ [No virtue is perfect without charity](#). For [Paul says](#), ‘If I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, if I should

not have charity, it profits me nothing.' And [the Lord says in the Gospel](#), 'If you do not forgive every each one his brother, I will not forgive you.' My son, you have undertaken the work of charity; complete the work of charity. Let all your works be done with charity. It is proper that you be reconciled with your brother. May he confirm you in charity, who made you [in his image and likeness](#)."

After encouragements of this sort, Itier prostrates himself at the feet of the lord bishop and [kisses the feet](#) of that one. He promises that he is going to do whatever he ordained concerning reconciliation. So the bishop, looking around, called his secretary and ordered him to look around through the church, if perhaps he saw anywhere the man who spoke with him before the rite of the Mass; and to find him more readily, he should run about shouting "Norman!" At the bidding of the lord bishop the secretary hurries and, entering the church, he shouts "Norman!" To him Norman says, "I am Norman. What is it to you?" To him the secretary says, "If you are the Norman who spoke before the rite of the Mass with the lord bishop, you should return to him as swiftly as can be." So he comes and [is introduced](#) by the secretary into the chapel. He finds the lord bishop negotiating with Itier about reconciliation.

Since Itier was sitting to the right, in whose mind and soul all hate had been rendered dead, and [charity was blazing](#) not through mere sparks but through flaming fire, Norman sat hesitantly to the left alongside the feet of the lord. To him the bishop says, "Son, no virtue, no good, is brought to perfection, unless charity has made itself available as companion and leader. Charity and hate are thus mutually [opposed as whiteness and blackness](#). Hate is then a certain hostile rage, the [inducement](#) to all evils. Charity is the Lord's first and greatest commandment, and the virtue which is the inducement to all good actions. The [Lord's greatest commandment](#) is 'You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, and with your whole soul, and with your whole strength and your neighbor as yourself.'

This love is also extended, just as a [commandment kept most](#), even to an enemy. For he commanded to love an enemy in God, just as, a pitiful pitier, [he took pity on Mary Magdalene and took pity on the robber on the cross](#). My son, Christ suffered, [leaving to you an example that you should follow his footsteps. He prayed for those persecuting him that they not perish. Pray then one for another, that you may be saved. My little sons, you have been called by God that you may inherit a blessing](#). The Blessed Virgin called you to one work of mercy, namely, to visiting the sick. Do not, with the devil's suggestion obstructing, let the Lord take away from you the Holy Spirit; for [the Holy Spirit does not rest upon](#) an ill-willed soul."

After charitable encouragements of this kind, Norman, with knees bent and hands joined, with heart and tears pouring forth most abundantly, humbly implores the paternity of the lord bishop to redirect the enmities of Itier into love, and he promises to do dutifully whatever he commanded concerning a peace accord.

Accordingly, the lord bishop said, arising, "Give in turn the [kiss of peace](#), and at once acting upon the business that has been enjoined upon you, keep vigil through

the night in prayer, so that he who is [one in Godhead and threefold in persons](#) may restore through the threefold ministry of those serving him health to those lying ill in the church.”

Rising up then, those two jongleurs, with the contagion of all hate set aside, were allied, through the encouragement of the lord bishop, by a kiss of mutual reconciliation. With a fast on bread and water imposed on them until the hour for partaking of food, they feasted together around the [hour of none](#) at the table of the lord bishop. Thereafter, entering the church, persisting in prayer, they waited for the setting of the sun and evening. But, as the evening of the world presses, when the sinking sun had drawn darkness altogether over the whole face of the earth, while the three of them with contrite heart and humbled spirit gave their time to the specified prayer, at the first cockcrow the Virgin Mother of the Lord, [mother of mercies](#), mother of all consolation, she who calls back to the way those who have strayed, [star of the sea](#), port of salvation, hope of forgiveness, carrying from the choir in her hand a candle lit by divine fire, she said, “You who perform as jongleurs by miming, be present. I deliver to you, to be kept in perpetuity, this one memento. Whoever has been infected by the contagion of that illness which is called hellfire, may he drip the wax that overflows from the candle on the water, and when the lesion is sprinkled with water, may the fire be quickly extinguished. Who has faith will be saved; but who does not have faith, will be condemned to present death.”

After saying this, [she vanishes into thin air](#). Then, they delivered to the lord bishop the candle that they had received dutifully and respectfully out of veneration for the Blessed Virgin, so that they could act by his counsel concerning what they had heard and seen. To them the bishop said, “Because it has been granted to you from God, oh that you would deign to associate me with you! And that you summon me as a comrade to you, I do not cease to ascribe not to my own merits but to the grace of God and yourselves.”

Therefore, the jongleurs and bishop, after kissing themselves in mutual brotherly exchange, receiving the water in three vessels, and pouring from the God-granted candle into the water, proceeded in three files and offered it as a drink to the sick, pouring the blessed water over the lesions and ulcers. Under God’s protection they sweated over this work with earnest attention, to the same degree during the night on which they were as on the following day up to the hour of terce.

When they held out the drink of health to the last one as to the others, the sick man said, “Is this water or wine?” They said, “It is water.” The man replied, “Health is preferable in wine rather than in water, seeing that [wine is accustomed to cheer my soul](#).” “Accept,” said the bishop, “son, the communal drink of brotherhood; may you have communal health with them, seeing that you have been reborn in the same faith with them in baptism, and you have come to the same refuge of health.” He drank indeed, not to the increase of bodily health but instead to the hastening of momentary death, because expiring in a moment he [goes the way of all flesh](#).

After this duty of the health-bringing drink had been fulfilled along with what the Blessed Virgin had enjoined as a command upon the jongleurs, this very threesome, the lord bishop and the two jongleurs, returned among the sick, so that they could see the wondrous works of God, by which the Blessed Virgin Mary was glorified in the holy Zion of Arras. *Some sang with David*: "Sing to the Lord a new canticle, because he has done wonderful things." Others: "*The Lord has made known his salvation.*" Others: "*Shout with joy to God, all the earth, sing you a psalm to his name.*" Others sang with *Zachary*: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, because he has visited and wrought the redemption of his people." Why should I tell you all the individual details? As many as were the tongues of those recovering, so many were the glorifications made to God throughout the church.

It was now almost the *third hour of the day*, and the clergy and people of the city came together in the church, that they might hear in keeping with custom the ceremonies of the Mass for Sunday. The lord archbishop, after leaving the candle in the hands of the jongleurs, exulting and praising God at the entrance to the choir, began in a loud voice "*We praise you, God,*" and the clergy of the choir, following the praises begun, *sang the Introit*.

On that day there were healed, with the Blessed Virgin being favorably disposed and God working together with her, sick people to the number 143. There were 144, but one did not have faith and did not regain health. Out of reverence for the Blessed Virgin and the miraculous action of God, that candle given by the hand of the Blessed Virgin Mary has been preserved, through generations of jongleurs in succession, in the city of Arras, down to the present day, and through it the mercy of God is often effected on the ill.

For the remembrance of this miracle, the jongleurs established the confraternity which for some time was maintained by few fellow members. But now, in these times of ours, the prayers, benefices, and support of the poor have been enlarged, as respectable men and women of the city and other nobles, which is to say, clerics and knights, have been *united with them*.

These are the customs of the confraternity and of the charity. To no person, so long as healthy, is it allowed to enter the charity, except on Friday or Saturday after *the Pentecost octave*, not even for the greatest amount of money. Who indeed on the aforesaid term-day, either man or woman, enters the charity, will ratify by the pledging of faith that he will conform to the best of ability to the customs and rules of the charity. Seeing that the charity will consist of twelve fellow members, male or female, let him make himself the thirteenth, to the best extent he can. If indeed a man without a wife or a woman without a husband enters the charity, the man will pair off with a woman or the woman with a man and will make the other a confrere or a consoeur, with the rule of the charity intact, whenever he or she wishes, in the presence of the mayor and aldermen.

The issuing of this transcript was done in A.D. 1241, in the month of May.

B. “The Foundation of the Jongleur Confraternity in Arras” (in French)

The account of [the miracle in vernacular prose](#) must have been composed after 1241, since it derives from the one in Latin to which it corresponds. In addition, the text contains a reference to the county of Artois, which did not exist before 1237. The prestige attached to the miraculous event during these years takes tangible form in [a silver reliquary](#), preserved in the episcopal palace in Arras, which was crafted for the confraternity in the period 1220–1250. This container for relics portrays Lambert and a jongleur beneath an image of the Virgin with the candle.

The version in the spoken language abstains from much of the formal rhetoric and many of the learned allusions that typify the Latin. This restraint is evident already in the omission of the preface. The vernacular work alternates between translation and paraphrase. It was likely designed for an audience with less appetite for the moral exhortations that belong to the intrinsic nature of the earlier version, which was pitched at a clerical or at least literate audience. The text is in the dialect often known as Old French, but behind it likely lies a predecessor in Picard.

On the Candle of Arras

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, all say amen.

In the time of Lambert, who was the first bishop of Arras after this bishopric was split from the bishopric of Cambrai, a great pestilence befell bodies of men and women living in towns, cities, and castles, owing to the sins of the people in Arras and in the countryside that depends on it in the county of Artois. For some were stricken and had maladies in the mouth, others in the eye, these ones in the nose, those others in the ear, these ones in the foot, those others in the thigh or in the leg, and some in the private parts, these ones in front, those ones behind, by this frightful ill, from which may God protect us, that they call hellfire. And if someone remained healthy and unharmed by it, he was racked by great fear that such an ill might befall him, either because of sin or on some other account.

For fear of this dread, one segment within the community of people of the country disclosed their confidences to their priests through confession and received penance; another that was stricken by this ill took flight to the mother church of Notre Dame, the Virgin Mary, at Arras in the city, some by foot, others by horse, cart, or other vehicle; some lay on litters, sacks, and straw, and everyone, men and women alike, cried in loud voices: “Lord, true God, mercy! Good Lord God, help!” Some said, “[O Lord, rebuke me not in your indignation,](#)” the beginning of [the seven psalms](#). There were in the sanctuary of Notre Dame, the Virgin Mary, in total 144 with these maladies, all of whom awaited mercy and the aid of the Lord God and of his very sweet and dear mother.

In that time there were two jongleurs who lived in different regions. For one lived in Brabant and the other in Saint-Pol-sur-Ternoise, and they had, the one for the other, mortal hatred, such that if one encountered the other, the one would gladly kill the other. For the one had killed the other’s brother, at the devil’s incitement.

Now it happened that the most beautiful woman who has ever been seen, a virgin girl, clad entirely in plain white, appeared in a vision to the jongleur of Brabant as he lay and slept in his bed, one Wednesday in the night from which the Thursday was dawning.

"Are you sleeping?" she says, "Are you sleeping? Hear what I will tell you. Get up and go off to this holiest place that people call the church of Notre Dame, the Virgin Mary, in Arras, there where so many sick—144—suffer to death. When you come there, I will provide and propose a place and time to allow you to speak to the bishop, who is named Lambert, and to recall to him the vision that you are seeing, and all in order. Then add that, around about the third hour of the night when Sunday will dawn which is the first day of the week, it will behoove him to go about the church to visit and assist the sick. And it will come to pass around midnight that a woman, clad in clothes just as I am, will come down into [the choir that people call the chancel](#) and she will carry a candle in her hand, indeed will hand it over to you. You will receive the candle all lit from the heavenly fire, and you will drip the melted wax, which will overflow from the candle, into vessels full of water, and. you will pour that upon the injuries of everyone with the malady. Have no doubt at all that the men and women who have faith will return to good health, and he or she who does not have faith will immediately die sick. And so you—both you and the third, the one whom you hate with mortal enmity—will accompany the bishop, and this same one will be made ready at Arras with you on the coming Saturday. And when the bishop has brought the two of you into harmony by the grace of the Holy Spirit and by the [fair speech of God](#), so you will have between the two of you each other as companion."

And when this vision to the jongleur in Brabant was finished, in the same night Our Lady, the Virgin Mary, appeared to the other minstrel who lived in Saint-Pol-sur-Ternoise, all in such clothing and in like form and in such appearance as she had shown herself to the first. And all that she had said to the Brabanter, she says word for word to the other. And when he had come to his senses and had been awakened, he spoke a speech as follows: "Oh how very beautiful, how saintly, and how honorable is the vision of the manifestation of the Mother of God! If I had my wish, with her help we would be brought into accord and would have peace made between me and my mortal enemy, and if I had my wish, so many a grievously ill person would be restored to good health through the virtue of God and his sweet mother and by the effect of my service! But I suspect greatly that what I have seen is not a dream or illusion; now I will wait until the [third hour of the night](#) and I will keep watch if this vision has come to me from God. And may God grant that it comes to me from him."

He arises in the morning, and he goes off to the sanctuary to hear the Mass and the service of the Lord God, and he [kneels](#) before the crucifix and joins his hands and raises them on high, and he prays to God with great devotion that what he had seen in a vision, God fulfill by his will soon in deed.

The first night after, this same vision was manifested to these two same minstrels, and it was said as well additionally that if they did not make haste, they would be stricken with the same illness. The jongleur living in Saint-Pol, who was named Norman, awakens and leaps up all troubled; so he readies himself and girds his sword, and holds to the route to Arras by Friday and arrives at his hostel in Arras all tired. The other minstrel, who lived in Brabant and had the name Itier, makes haste likewise and even much more, for he was coming from afar, and it does not seem he can come to Arras on Friday in the evening.

The following day, on Saturday, Norman arises at daybreak and goes off to Notre Dame in the city to accomplish the matter for which he had come. And when he had hailed on his knees the symbol of the death of Jesus Christ and the crucifix, and he had made over himself the sign of the true cross, he saw throughout the church the suffering sick, crying and moaning. Then he recalls the threat that in the last vision had been revealed to him by the blessed Virgin, when she said to him: "If you do not make haste, you will be tormented by the same anguish." He began to shed tears from wretchedness and fear, beat his chest and recognize his sin and say, "Lord God, have mercy on this sinner!" Then he turns toward the bishop's palace, all the while saying the psalm "[May God have mercy on us](#)" softly, for he was a little lettered.

And he goes about to such an extent that he finds the bishop lying in prayers in his chapel before the altar of Saint Séverin. Norman watches him and beseeches that he not grow angry if he enters in upon him or infringes his prayer. He draws nearer, little by little, on his knees toward the bishop. The bishop looks at him gently and asks him, "What do you want, brother?" Norman replies to him, "Good father, if it pleases you and is allowed me, I would tell you very gladly a little confidential matter in private." The bishop beckons and has him sit at his feet, and Norman began to tell him how three days earlier, during the night that led to daybreak on Friday, the blessed Virgin, who is the mother of all mercies, appeared to him, and in such a fashion she enjoined upon him and ordered that he come to Arras and speak to the bishop: "Saturday, during the night from which Sunday will dawn, after nightfall, you who are my lord the bishop of Arras, Lambert, will go, you as the third, to visit the sick who in our church suffer travails from the anguishing hellfire; and the glorious lady, when it pleases her, will hand over to you a lit candle, and making the sign of the cross, you will drip down into some vessels full of water the melting wax that will flow beneath the flame, and you will give it to those sick to drink of the water and you will spread it upon the burns and wounds of those with the malady; and a person sick who has no faith will die within nine days. Lord, you who are bishop of the city of Arras and of whatever depends on it, I leave to you this injunction, and if you do not put it into effect, I who am a layman and a simple Christian pray to God that he asks nothing of me."

When Norman had related his speech, the bishop addressed him in such a speech and in such words: "What are your names, good son, and from where do you come, and what kind of life do you live?" Norman replies, "Lord father, my godfather and godmother, who answered for me in baptism to the clergyman, named me [Perron](#); afterward people called me by the surname Norman, and I was born in Saint-Pol-sur-Ternoise, and as a poor minstrel I support myself from jonglery." "I believe it well," said the bishop, "for you feed me with pleasantries and fabrications, just as jongleurs do." Norman takes his leave from the bishop, ashamed and disconcerted, and enters the sanctuary and sits down, and has great wretchedness and pain, and is very fearful of the great pains that he sees and has.

Now we will speak of the other jongleur from Brabant, who is called Itier. Itier, who that same night had lodged two leagues from Arras, arises early and comes to Arras in the church of Notre Dame just as they were sounding terce, says his prayer, enters the bishop's court, and, without opposition, goes off into the chapel where the bishop himself was celebrating the Mass of Our Lady; and he was the the only layman among the clerics until the Mass had been said.

And when the clergy went out, Itier leapt forward and went before the bishop and said to him, "Good lord father, hear what I, who am your son in the Lord God, will tell

you." The bishop looked at him straightforwardly and drew him confidentially to one side in his chapel and said to him, "Tell me, brother, what you want."

"Lord," he said, "I have seen once and again, in a vision, the most beautiful woman who was ever born of a mother, and she said to come to you on this Saturday that is today and to announce her commands to you, and she threatened me that if I did not make haste, I would languish or die from the same painful affliction as the other sick people who lie within in your church. So she ordered that, on the coming night out of which Sunday will dawn, you should go about the church and visit the sick, you as the third of three, of whom I am one and the other is he who will meet your approval. And around the hour when the cocks will crow, the beautiful lady of whom I have spoken to you will hand over to you a lit candle, you will drip the melted wax into water, and you will make over it the sign of the cross, and from that water you will grant each sick person to drink. Who has faith will be healed, and who does not have faith will die immediately."

"Oh!" said the bishop, "You deceive me or wish to deceive. What is your name, and of what origin were you born, and what life do you lead?" "Lord," he said, "I am called Itier, and I was born in Brabant and am a resident there; I subsist from singing and jonglery." "Aha!" said the bishop, "You spoke together, you and the other who earlier conversed with me. I cannot believe you; indeed, I see that the two of you want to put me to the test and trick me."

"Lord," said Itier, "how long has it been since he spoke to you?" The bishop replies to him, "Another minstrel such as you are came to me recently; they call him by the surname Norman, and he related to me the same tricks as you have, which is why I cannot believe the two of you, neither him nor you." "Oh!" said Itier, "If I see Norman, and if I have place and opportunity, I will surely strike my sword through his stomach, for he killed my brother."

When the bishop heard this, he reflected, and his heart said to him that this vision came from God, by whom there would be peace and concord between these two mortal enemies, and with healing and health of so many sick, and many thanks rendered to God. The bishop pondered that it would be good for him first to talk about concord between the two enemies, and he said to Itier, "Dear sweet son, if you harbor in your heart hate or rancor, you cannot do God's work, for the Lord God, who never lies, says [in the Gospel](#), 'If you make your offering before the altar, and there you remember that your brother has any ill-will toward you, leave your offering in that place before the altar, and so you go off sooner to reconcile with your brother, and then you will return and offer your gift.'

Your brother is each and every Christian: it is proper for you to pardon your brother for vexation, for [God says](#), 'Love peace and truth, for I myself am peace and truth.' Love your enemy, for the [Holy Writ says](#), 'Love your friend in God and your enemy on account of God.' 'God is charity: and he who abides in charity, abides in God, and God in him.' 'God is charity: and he who abides in charity, abides in God, and God in him.' No virtue and no charitable act is perfect without charity. For this reason, [Saint Paul says to us](#), 'If I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, if I should not have charity, it profits me nothing.' And [God says in the Gospel](#), 'If you do not forgive every each one his brother, I will not forgive you.' Dear son, you have undertaken to do the work of charity, and he wishes to confirm you in charity who [made you in his image and likeness](#)."

When Itier heard these saintly words that the bishop made known to him, he was [moved](#) to great compassion and let himself fall at the bishop's feet and began to kiss them and promised him that he would make peace and accord as the bishop recommended.

The bishop was very glad, and he looked around him and called his chamberlain and orders him that he go look throughout the sanctuary, high and low, if by chance he could find the man who before had spoken to him; and so as to find him still more readily, he shouts roughly in a loud voice, "Norman! Norman!" The chamberlain ran promptly and entered the church and calls Norman the jongleur in a loud voice. Norman replies, "You see me here; what is your pleasure?" "If you are the one who has the name Norman as a surname," the chamberlain said, "who spoke to my lord before the Mass, go off fast to him." Norman goes off; the chamberlain leads him into the chapel and finds my lord the bishop speaking of peace to Itier, who sat at the bishop's feet to the right, and all the hate and ill-will in his heart that he had had toward Norman were for certain dead, for he was for certain entirely inflamed by the fire of charity from the good examples that he had heard and understood. Norman sits at the feet of the bishop to the left, very hesitantly, and the bishop began to preach to him the goods of charity, just as well as or better than he did to Itier, and he said to him, "Dear son, no virtue, no good, no charitable act comes to fruition, if charity does not lead it there. Charity and hate are as **different as are white and black**; hate is madness and motivator of all evils, but **charity is the first and sovereign commandment** in the law of Lord God and is the motivator of all good works. The **very great commandment of Lord God** is that all Christians love our Lord God with all their heart and with all their soul and with all their might, and their neighbor as themselves.

Charity extends further, for God, who is charity, orders that one **love his enemy**. Lord God **pardoned Mary Magdalene**, who was his enemy, her misdeeds, on account of the very great charity that she had toward him, and **took pity on the robber hanging on the cross**, and **prayed for those who crucified him**. The two of you likewise, my dear sons, **pray one for another, that you may be saved**. The blessed Virgin has chosen you and called you to a work of mercy for visiting these sick people. Now take care that at the advice of the devil Lord God not take back from you the Holy Ghost and the grace that he has furnished you; for you should know well that **the Holy Spirit does not rest upon an ill-willed soul**."

After this lesson on charity, Norman, with hands joined and knees bent, entreats my lord the bishop with a good heart, in tears, humbly, to transform the enmity of Itier into friendship, and he will do entirely whatever he commands for peace and accord.

The bishop arises and says to them, "Now exchange kisses by God in the name of peace and accord; and in the night that is coming, keep vigil with me in prayers and devotions, so as to fulfill well the obligation that has been given to us as a charge and command, so that this lord who is one in Godhead and threefold in persons, Father and Son and Holy Ghost, by the service of us three may render health to the sick lying within in this church."

The two jongleurs arise and the one pardons the other for hatred and they kiss each other according to the command of the bishop, who commanded them to fast this Saturday on bread and water. And around the hour of none, they breakfast with the bishop at his table, and after eating they enter the sanctuary and were in prayer until vespers. And when it became night, as the three of them said their prayers and called upon Our Lady Saint Mary, she, the sweet Mother of God, a little after cockcrow, came down from the choir, and she carried in her hand a candle lit from the heavenly fire. "You, jongleurs," she said, "who lived from song and the viol, come here. I hand over this candle to you to keep forever perpetually. Whoever, being a Christian, whether man or woman, has the condition of this malady that they call hellfire, if they light this candle and they drip in water some of the wax that melts by virtue of the flame, and if they

sprinkle from this water on the place where the sick person is inflamed and injured, it will be extinguished immediately in such fashion that if he has faith, he will be healed, and if he does not have it, he will die at once."

When the glorious [lady of paradise](#) had said these words, she vanished. The jongleurs received the candle with great devotion, in honor and in memory of Our Lady Saint Mary, and they delivered it to the bishop, because whatever they had heard and seen, they wanted to act according to his counsel. And the bishop said to them, "Because this candle has been given to you from God and come from a miracle, if I had my wish, you would make of me your companion in this matter, not by merit but by the grace of God and by your own!"

The jongleurs received willingly and gladly my lord the bishop as a confrere and companion and they kissed him in the name of the confraternity. Now the three go off, carrying three vessels, each one his own, full of water, and they hold the lit candle and each one drips the melted wax into the water of his vessel; and they follow three routes, and they go around to visit the ill, each one by his route, and they gave from this blessed water to them to drink and they sprinkled from it over the wounds of the afflicted. In this important matter the bishop and the two minstrels worked the whole night through and the next day until the hour of terce, with the help of God.

And when it came to the last of the sick and they poured for him to drink as they had done to the others, he said, "Is this wine or water?" They replied, "It is water." He replied, "Better health is [in wine than in water](#), for [wine is accustomed to cheer my body and soul](#)." And the bishop said to him, "Dear son, your soul may have a share of both gladness and health in this drink, so that the power of the son of God be made clear in you. Take the common drink of the confraternity, that you receive common health with the others; for with them is this same faith and in similar belief you receive baptism in the water, and for similar assistance of health you came here as they did." He drank all the same, not at all for health, but encounters his death; he drank out of bad faith, in no way [to recover but to depart](#), for then he departed from this world.

When this giving of drink and all the other things had been completed, as Our Lady had ordered the two jongleurs, they headed off among the sick to see how God had performed his miracles in them, for which the sweet Mother of God was and is honored and exalted in this saintly church of Arras. And should I prolong the tale for you? As many as there were tongues of those who recovered, so many there were thanks and praises rendered to Lord God throughout the church.

It was now nearly terce, and the clergy and the people of the city were gathered to hear Mass and to go to procession, just as on Sunday; and my lord the bishop, when he had returned the candle of Our Lady to the jongleurs in their hands, he begins at the entrance to the choir to sing in a loud voice and with great joy "[We praise you, God](#)," and the clerics of the choir sang through to the end.

In that night and day, 143 sick people were healed who had been inflamed by the grievous hellfire, except for one alone, who was the last and kept the faith badly, as has been said. And this happened in the city of Arras, by the grace of God and of his blessed mother and in honor of her. And in remembrance of so lovely a miracle, this candle is kept at Arras, which was given by the right hand of the Mother of God herself, and should be in the keeping of the jongleurs and minstrels for posterity, and by it God shows mercy very often to those sick from inflammation.

And for remembrance of this miracle, the jongleurs established a confraternity and a charity which was for a long time maintained by a small lot of confreres. But within

a short time it was very large, for knights entered it, who owed it dues to look after the poor people at the annual session, which will have been said and done. It lasted eight or nine years in this way. Norman was lord of it—and Itier—so much so that it seemed a shame and humiliation to the knights of the country that the jongleurs had the right to be lords and masters over them; and when Itier and Norman died, they would not execute the commands of the other jongleurs, but instead [two lords](#), whom I can in fact name, held them in contempt and mocked them: the one was Nicholas aux Grenons, who held [Imercourt](#) and [Bailleul](#) in fief, and the other was called Jean, who was born in [Waencort](#).

Those two were the first who motivated the outrage for which they would afterward have shame, for they summoned the other knights, revealed their mind to them, and slandered: “Lords, this charity is distinguished by great lordship and we do it great shame, seeing that the jongleurs are thus lords and masters of it over us. But we do not want them to be in our confraternity, nor to come with us to make offerings, nor to have authority, but to keep their confraternity and their charity by themselves—and we will keep this one by ourselves. What do you think of this business?” “There is in them very little profit,” say the others, “Insofar as it seems good to you, we approve it indeed on our side, for they are foolish and excessive. Forbid them to come here anymore but let them keep their charity.”

They carried out the counsel of these two and threw out the jongleurs, in such a way that they did not dare to come among them nor to maintain their confraternity, which had been established by them—and for the relief of what was so dreadful and fearsome. The jongleurs experienced great shame and lamented much over these two and called upon the glorious lady who is queen of the entire world. So they were excluded for a long time during which a jongleur did not come there. But now hear what happened to those who motivated this great outrage. They were overpowered by such an illness that deprived them of their members, all of them, and oppressed them so gravely that they were not able even to eat. Who initiates a wrong, must indeed pay for it: for such a gain, such a recompense. To these two it happened in the same way, and they were stricken and tormented at such length that they craved nothing except death: therefore what is done right is wise.

Now hear what kind of event happened to those who were thus languishing. One night they were lying in their beds. To one appeared the glorious Virgin, Saint Mary, who is queen and lady in the heavens. She was adorned in glory and brightness. She spoke to him like an angry lady. “Have you heard,” she said, “for what reason you are lying here? Do you know why you are sick? Because you have enraged me severely. It is indeed right that it has turned out badly for you from it, for you have undone what I had established. But if you do not soon set it right, it will behoove you to end in a hideous death, as indeed rank will not be of value to you in it.” “Ah, good, sweet lady, mercy,” he said, “for I have never seen you, but I would set it right very willingly, if I knew in what I have done wrong to you. Ah, beautiful lady,” he said, “so give your name. This whole place is resplendent from you. I am entirely stunned by the brightness from you.” “I am,” she said, “the mother of Jesus Christ, who bewail the confraternity that you took from them. They have been thrown out of it by your pride; but if you want ever to recover your health, set this outrage right for them soon and return to them their inheritance that I bestowed on them forever; and once you have done this thing, your pain will be healed.” Then the glorious Virgin vanished.

She went to the other sick man. The whole matter that she told the first man, she revealed to this one who was very preoccupied and desired very much to be healed.

When these two sick men heard the matter, they had themselves carried to Arras to the sanctuary to the glorious lady. Their affair was so marvelous that they met before the sanctuary and related their visions, then stretched their hands toward heaven and rendered thanks to Our Lady. Then, as it seems to me, they had all the jongleurs come who were living in Arras; so they returned to them at once their charter and their rightful claim.

This miracle has existed in Latin a long time; now it has been translated into the Romance language so that the lay people will understand it better. Pray for all those who uphold the charity, and for all those who will hear it said that they pray to the glorious Virgin Saint Mary for her to advise them in body and soul on acquiring with honor their sustenance, true confession at death, and true pardon at judgment.

After the miracles of Our Lady, hear the customary laws and ordinances. No one can nor ought, so long as he is healthy and hearty, enter this charity except on Thursday, Friday, or Saturday after the octave of Pentecost, which people call *cinquiesme*, to have what he knows he cannot give. And who then will enter, be it man or woman, it will be necessary for this person to promise to pursue and maintain to the best of his or her ability the customary laws and rightful claims of the confraternity, and as far as there will be in the charity twelve, what with men and what with women, he or she will be the thirteenth; and upon entering the charity the person will pay six and a half *pennies*. And if it happens that any worthy man enters the confraternity without his wife, or any gentlewoman without her husband, the one and the other will form a pair in this confraternity, when he or she comes before the mayor and aldermen, with the rights of the charity protected.

Here ends the Candle of Arras.

C. "The Arrival of the Holy Candle"

The text that follows was edited nearly a century and a half ago from the *seventeenth-century Registre Thieulaine*. The nineteenth-century editor, offering no support for his view, dated the poetry in the *thirteenth century*. Without identifying the manuscripts at issue or supplying a critical apparatus with alternative readings, he asserted that many other copies exist and that they display types of variation showing "that these verses were recited by heart and were transmitted in families by oral tradition." To my eye, traits of oral traditional composition are lacking in the poetic style. An intriguing feature, retained in the English here, is marginal notation that suggests pitch or volume. These marginalia may indicate which performer, the one with a high voice or the other with a low, is expected to read or chant which parts of the poem.

The Arrival of the Holy Candle, in Oldentime Verses That Are Sung on the Eve of Assumption

In the name of God in the Trinity,
three names in one deity,

High Voice

I wish to retell and retrace for you
word for word, as a just model,
5 the disposition of the worthy candle,
which was brought down here
by the blessed Virgin, comforter of sinners,
to two singers
to comfort the sick,
10 who at that time on account of their sufferings longed
to die, without living any more in any way,
on account of the burning from which God delivers us.
The charter wishes to bear witness to us
from the time of the first bishop
15 of the noble city of Arras,
in truth Lambert by name,
who had no concern for pomp
nor also for acquiring great riches.
For in his days, it is altogether true,
20 Arras was within the diocese
and bishopric of Cambrai,
but he had it split in half
and then kept for his portion
very much the lesser part.
25 He was named bishop of Arras.
He was famed for all good qualities;
he was much beloved for his foresight,
for he was full of morality.
In the time when Lambert held office,
30 a plague invaded
the Artois region, it is a sure thing,
falling upon many human beings,
upon the bodies of men, women, and children,
who were in grievous pain
35 from the fire that is called hellfire.
It is red and black as iron
that is at one side inflamed
and at the other is not at all burnt.
Many were withered
40 grievously by this plague.
It spread with such great force
in towns, cities, castles,
villages, and hamlets
that they found no relief from it
45 from potions, doctors,
magicians, and soothsayers.
Some had fires in their arms
and others in the lower limbs,
in the legs, feet, and hands.

50 Many, enduring much torment from it,
 are unable to find any relief
 except to cry and weep
 for the fire that can take hold of them,
 from which may God wish to protect us all.
 55 Even those who were healthy
 and who felt this illness not at all
 were tormented by fear
 that they might have it in turn as well.
 As a result of the sin that then prevailed,
 60 regarding which some, knowledgeable in law,
 set themselves to rights
 through good and sure faith
 and took confession,
 making amends
 65 through penance for their misdeeds,
 and confessed all their deeds
 devoutly to their priests,
 and some who in this torment
 were touched by the hellfire already mentioned
 70 in great sin
 arrived at the mother church
 of Arras, as well-informed people,
 by cart, on foot, and on horseback,
 entreating that the Virgin
 75 might wish to heal and cure them
 of this illness, she who can obtain
 in such fashion
 by her kindly will that they would be protected
 and provided with good health,
 80 so much so that the great illness
 and frightful burning spark of this fire
 came to an end because of the Virgin and young maid
 who extended her great grace there,
 just as you have heard.
 85 Good people in that period,
 as memory recalls,
 the singers who then existed,
 would recite the fine and lofty deeds
 of noble worldly princes
 90 who as valiant Christians
 expended blood and sweat
 to multiply every day
 our law of Christianity
 by worthy and good will.
 95 And those singers, mentioned before,
 recounted many of their fine deeds,

Low Voice

High Voice

singing along with the viol,
 which often renews joy.
 And in this time people called them
 100 jongleurs, and insofar as (they say)
 one rejoices because of jongleurs,
 one should call them bringers of joy.
 But nowadays
 they call themselves minstrels,
 105 and those who lead about apes and bears
 have themselves called jongleurs.
 But it was not at all for such people
 that the worthy Virgin with her noble heart
 sent this great grace
 110 when she sent the worthy candle
 to display her virtue visibly,
 which ought not to be at all unbelievable,
 for by hot, everlasting fire
 she causes infernal fire to be extinguished
 115 in those who have solid and sure
 belief, without inconstancy.
 Those to whom this grace
 was sent and ascribed
 were called in those times
 120 singers, playing the viol and singing
 to entertain king and dukes,
 princes, bourgeois, and lower class,
 for by way of instrument there was nothing out of the
 ordinary
 except only the viol.
 125 Now it happened that in anno Domini
 (as *Holy Writ* says)
 1105, there were
 two singers who then lived.
 They set out to occupy themselves
 130 with singing, and with all their ardor
 they secured their livelihood
 for themselves with viol-playing.
 The one lived in Brabant
 and was called Itier,
 135 and the other at Saint-Pol-sur-Ternoise,
 Norman was his name, so tells the report.
 These two, through the intervention
 of the devil, fell into discord,
 for the one, through all too great disgrace,
 140 had killed the other's brother.
 As a result, if they should meet,
 they would kill each other.

High Voice

Low Voice

And nevertheless, considering such an offense,
 they were full of foresight
 145 and of the most perfect faith
 and they performed great penance
 to obtain their salvation.
 According to their understanding,
 each one on his side rendered
 150 the Virgin a share of all goods gained.
 For each of them, according to his sense,
 would offer praise with his instruments
 before the image in a loud voice
 and would greet her with an anthem.
 155 From when they frequented each other,
 they arranged this practice,
 and when they parted company,
 they did not therefore depart
 from the service of the lovely lady
 160 who delivers every soul to salvation.
 Now it happened that the [Brabanter](#)
 Itier, of whom I made mention,
 in whom there was [little sin](#),
 lay properly on his bed
 165 one day on a Wednesday,
 but while he was sleeping, a vision
 befell him in visible form
 of which afterward he had good recollection,
 for while sleeping it seemed to him
 170 that a lady appeared to him
 who was the Virgin and a young maid,
 clad in a new robe,
 by far whiter than [fleur-de-lis](#),
 for which his heart was in great delight.
 175 And when she drew near his sleeping place, Reading
 she said to him in a sweet voice,
 "Are you sleeping?" She said, "Wake up
 and hear what I will tell you.
 Arise and go off
 180 straight to Arras: don't stop.
 Make your way to the mother church.
 There you will find in great distress
 many sick sufferers
 who endure various torments,
 185 because they have been set on fire in many places
 by the cutting fire which has taken hold of them.
 But through you they will soon have remedy
 and will recover from this grievous sickness,
 if I tell you in what manner:

190 as soon as you have left,
 make your way to the bishop
 and confess to him
 and tell him in a very low voice
 the vision that you are seeing.
 195 And then on Sunday morning,
 when Saturday has ended,
 you will with the bishop make the rounds
 of the sick, and there you will see
 a lady similar to me
 200 who will appear to you
 and to your enemy Norman
 and to the most knowledgeable bishop.
 And know well that this Virgin
 will deliver to the two of you, into your hands,
 205 a candle all lit up,
 by which the grievous fire will be extinguished
 in the bodies of many human beings
 who will commit their understanding and attention
 to have true faith in them.
 210 But all those who accept
 the medicine in inconstancy
 will, for an extremely hard chastisement,
 die a hard and somber death,
 and I will not devote my care to them,
 215 that they can return to health.
 Now think of readying yourself
 and tell the bishop these facts,
 and if you make known to him your misdeeds
 and forgive all ill temper,
 220 you will come by this means to salvation."
 At this word Itier awoke
 and marveled at this event.
 He does not know if it is a truth or lie,
 and says, "I believe that I have been dreaming
 225 or fantasizing for sure,
 or there is some enchantment.
 Yet all the same I want to go
 to Arras to speak to the bishop,
 so as to see if this vision
 230 will have verification.
 So he prepared himself immediately
 and during that night truly
 that very voice revealed itself
 to the other who was in Ternoise.
 235 So it told him in all certainty
 in the same way as to Itier.

High Voice

Norman, when he saw the likeness
 of the humble Virgin, worthy and white,
 understands her bidding.
 240 Now he reaches his hands on high
 and says, "Oh Virgin, very much honored,
 you will be adored by me,
 when to this poor and great sinner
 you appear in such honor.
 245 I will obey your bidding,
 and I will go off to Arras."
 At once he arose from his bed
 and dressed himself in his clothes,
 and hung his viol from his neck,
 250 and then made his departure.
 Norman, of whom I am telling you, did so much
 that he came to Arras on Friday
 before Itier, quite plain to see,
 for Itier was more exhausted
 255 for having left from Brabant.
 So he was coming from a more distant land,
 such that he did not have the capacity to come
 on Friday in the evening,
 but instead he came there on Saturday.
 260 And Norman, of whom I have told you,
 arose on Saturday morning
 and then set off
 for the mother church of Arras.
 At the entrance, on the first step,
 265 he knelt piously
 while praying humbly from the heart
 to the Virgin, *Queen of Glory*,
 that if his vision is true,
 she should wish to make a demonstration
 270 of the reality as a true proof.
 There he was in great piety,
 making his petition,
 then he arose and left
 to greet the crucifix.
 275 After he goes off through the church, Reading
 he chose many sick, tormented
 in various ways by cutting fire, it is the truth,
 who because of their frightful torments
 280 made many moans.
 From this he felt much great compassion.
 When he sees the apparition
 and beyond, he left, saying
 "*May God have mercy on us.*"

285 He recalled this psalm
 and then found the bishop
 bowed in his chapel
 before the altar of Saint Séverin.
 Norman put himself on his knees,
 290 recalling entirely his prayers.
 For a little while he wishes to draw near the bishop, High Voice
 but he does not dare to greet him,
 and the bishop watched him
 and asked him with kindness,
 295 "Friend, do you wish to speak to me?"
 And "Yes, sir, in good faith,"
 Norman says to him, "If it pleased you,
 willingly my heart would tell you
 a little bit of my secret."
 300 Then when the bishop finished,
 Norman came to sit at his feet
 and related all his deeds
 through sure confession.
 Then he recounted to him the vision,
 305 how the *mother of concord*,
 queen of mercy,
 appeared to him three nights earlier,
 all dressed in white,
 and had enjoined upon him and said
 310 that he should come to him without any delay,
 and when Saturday ends
 and Sunday breaks,
 they should go as a threesome
 in the church of Saint Mary
 315 to visit the sick
 who are inflamed by the cutting hellfire
 in different forms of suffering.
 "And the mother of the lofty lord
 at her pleasure will deliver us
 320 a candle that will extinguish
 the frightful fire and fumes.
 So I will tell you in what fashion
 just as through the vision
 the arrangement was brought home to me.
 325 When the candle is lit,
 we will take a vessel full of water
 over which you will make the sign of the cross
 and you will drip the wax there.
 We will make use of these worthy drops
 330 with the water without deceit
 for the sick who have need of

this grace and who have faith in it;
 and the person who does not wish to have faith in it,
 know that he will die within nine days."
 335 When Bishop Lambert hears High Voice
 Norman, he raises his hands toward heaven
 and says, "Virgin, I give thanks to you
 for your grace if it is so."
 Then he asks of Norman his name
 340 and from what he earns his living.
 "Father," he says, "I assure you
 that I have as name Pierre Norman.
 I was born at Saint-Pol-sur-Ternoise.
 A true singer of song and of voice,
 345 I like to occupy myself
 in fiddling and singing for a living."
 And when the bishop heard him, Low Voice
 he reflected a great length of time
 and said, "I believe these are mockeries
 350 and trickeries that you are telling me,
 for all jongleurs and singers
 according to their custom are liars,
 and for that reason, I would not believe
 that this vision was true."
 355 When Norman heard this speech,
 all ashamed, he left the bishop.
 He went off through the church,
 very greatly wretched and tearful.
 We will take our leave of Norman High Voice
 360 and we would like to speak to you of Itier,
 who departed from Brabant,
 dressed in beautiful and elegant clothes.
 He had hastened his pace so much
 that on the Saturday he went to bed
 365 two miles from Arras,
 and in the morning he awoke
 and then went directly to the city.
 Thus as third, in truth,
 he went to the bishop's court.
 370 He arrived there at this moment so well
 that the bishop was chanting the Mass
 in his chapel where he was.
 Itier listened to his Mass,
 and when it was finished,
 375 he made himself known before the bishop,
 and he knelt before him,
 saying, "Please hear
 what I would like to recite.

Father in God, I am your son. Low Voice
 380 May it please you to hear my speech."
 The bishop stopped quite calmly
 and looked him in kindly fashion.
 Then he said, "Good son, speak your complaint."
 Then Itier told him the news
 385 and the vision he had seen,
 which came to him
 in Brabant where he was staying.
 Word by word, he related everything,
 the vision and the whole lot,
 390 in the same way as Norman
 had told him and recited.
 When the bishop had listened, High Voice
 he looked at him very sharply
 and afterward asked him
 395 his station, his way of life, and his name.
 And that man said to him: "I am named Itier.
 I was born and bred in Brabant,
 and I live from being a minstrel,
 from playing the viol and singing
 400 so as to amuse and entertain people."
 When the bishop hears him,
 "Ah, false devil," he says, "Be off!
 You think to tell me
 such lies as the other whom you recall
 405 came to me to tell,
 precisely this vision,
 and it is learned from your trade: Low Voice
 you have taken counsel together
 to bewitch and mislead me.
 410 The one and the other, you know well to conduct
 matters
 so that you may have a little vain glory.
 It is a thing very generally known,
 for your two motivations are the same.
 I have no need to hear
 415 your jokes or stories."
 "Ah!" said Itier, "So be it,
 but do name for me the one,
 if you please, who affirmed to you
 the matters that I have said to you
 420 here precisely, without any repetition."
 The bishop said, "It is a singer, High Voice
 as you are, and a liar,
 who has himself called Norman:
 he related to me the message

425 and the content of this procedure,
 by which the two of you in a conspiracy
 have devised this story."
 "Ha, lord, may you not have had this thought,"
 said Itier, "for if I had hold
 430 of Norman, at once I would thrust
 my sword into his body,
 for my brother died because of him
 and was slain in great dishonor."
 When the bishop heard the case,
 435 he thought that the vision came
 to reconcile the dissension
 of the two enemies,
 so as to bring their wrath into accord.
 He says to Itier, "Hear, good son,
 440 be absolutely sure and set
 that if you keep bitterness and hate
 wrongfully in your heart,
 the Gospel recalls to us
 that that person cannot perform
 445 in the world any act of mercy,
 but on the contrary it is necessary that you cleanse your
 heart
 of resentment by your good will
 in forgiving all ill will
 to your brother out of charity.
 450 For just as it has been revealed,
 see truly that by the reconciliation
 of you two, those will have relief
 who have been struck here by the illness
 in suffering, if by providence
 455 they receive with openness the grace
 that the Virgin has offered them.
 But rather may you be willing to remember
 how God wishes to forgive completely
 the death that the Jews made him suffer
 460 when they made him die.
 So he who will not forgive from the heart,
 surely God will not bring him forgiveness.
 The bishop encouraged him and said so much
 that by the grace of the Holy Spirit
 465 he was stirred to great compassion,
 and he fell near the bishop,
 calling upon him that he engage himself
 in peace from now on.
 So the bishop acts to send
 470 his chaplain through the sanctuary

Reading

High Voice

- and says to him, "Try to find for me that man
who spoke to me in the morning."
The chaplain hurried so much that
he soon found Norman.
- 475 Then he took him by the side,
and brought him to the bishop,
and when the bishop noticed him,
he came opposite him
and had Itier stay,
- 480 whom he made forgive
the death of his brother.
Then he took Norman by the hand,
and together with him soon led him,
and while going related to him
- 485 how Itier had come
who told the vision
in the same way as he had told him.
"Ha, lord, that is my enemy,"
said Norman, "If he can see me here,
- 490 misfortune could truly befall me,
for in the past through evil suggestion
I managed to put to death a brother of his."
"Good son," said the bishop swiftly,
"He has forgiven the ill will.
- 495 I have entreated and requested of him so much
that he promised me to forgive."
Norman is stirred so much by joy
that he fell at the feet of the bishop.
Then the bishop had Itier come
- 500 to keep the peace,
and Norman puts himself on his knees,
moves weeping toward Itier,
and humbly seeks mercy from him,
that he accord him true forgiveness
- 505 for his brother whom he slew.
He would like to make amends to him, as a man
who is repentant of it in his heart.
Then the bishop moves forward,
- 510 In many lovely words he manages to instruct them
and says, "Child of charity,
he who wishes to live in the prosperity
of perfection must swiftly
forgive with a contrite heart
- 515 wrath, rigidity, and ill will,
for [the Gospel](#) deals with the topic and says
that hate, which is unnatural,
- Low Voice
- High Voice
- Reading

and charity differ more
 than white against black.
 520 Hate makes fury arise.
 It is the instigator of all ills.
 But *charity is the principal*:
 it is the path to paradise."
 He spoke to them so many lovely words
 525 that out of burning desire
 they managed to draw near, the one to the other,
 in love and accord,
 and in a sure bond
 to kiss each other sweetly.
 530 Then Itier said very humbly,
 "Norman, I forgive you the death
 of my brother whom you killed wrongly.
 For love and accord,
 with good heart I grant you forgiveness."
 535 When this peace was confirmed High Voice
 which was affirmed by the bishop,
 the bishop wishes to bring them,
 both of them, with him to dine,
 and the three of them out of piety
 540 did not take their sustenance
 except only in bread and water,
 and when it came upon evening,
 all three, like well-informed people,
 went off to the mother church
 545 to visit the sick
 who wailed greatly.
 Because they could not find comfort,
 they would in fact have liked to meet their death.
 The bishop, Norman, and Itier
 550 comfort them wholeheartedly.
 Then they commit themselves to prayer,
 in making petition
 before the image of Our Lady,
 commending body and soul.
 555 But right at the hour of midnight, Low Voice
 she who shines upon the angels
 appeared without delay.
 In her hand the great candle
 that she had promised them beforehand,
 560 this worthy candle was burning Reading
 with true, everlasting light.
 And a heavenly voice
 said to them: "Up, my good friends,
 who have been dispatched to this place!

- 565 To you two who live from song
and from viol-playing, a pleasing game.
{It is necessary} I deliver to you this candle
{to show} straightway and bid you keep it
{the Holy Candle} forever, perpetually.
- 570 And know that by the cleansing
and the dripped wax
and the well-treated sufferer,
he who receives it worthily
will recover from the sickness
575 that people call the cutting hellfire.
But he who, hard as iron,
does not have faith in this grace
will soon die of this sickness.”
- When the glorious queen High Voice
580 had spoken this kindly word,
at once she disappeared,
and the two singers without wasting time
received with kindness,
between the two of them, the gracious gift:
585 it was the candle of grace
that then was spread in many places.
They presented it to the bishop
who had heard well the voice
and also seen the conduct
590 of the lady dressed in white
who made the glorious gift.
Then he spoke this gracious word:
“Virgin, may your grace be praised
and your virtue be increased.”
- 595 Then he said to the two well-known singers,
“I want to oversee your charity:
in your goodness accept me
as your brother in charity,
and then we will go visit
600 and comfort the sick.”
When the two heard the bishop,
they received it gently.
Now they go off, all three of them with vessels Low Voice
full of water and of splendid wax.
- 605 They caused the wax to drip into it;
they never took any other medicine.
They cause the sick to be organized
in three rows without lingering,
to give each sick person
610 from the wax that they dripped,
with the water which was very healthy,

which was from well or fountain,
 and they had them swallow
 and then they had some water
 615 sprinkled on the sickness.
 And so the whole night,
 as it seems to me, they stayed awake,
 all three of them together, for the sick,
 until the third hour of the following day.
 620 But when they came along
 to the last sick person and poured for him
 this holy water, he asked
 if it was wine or clear water.
 So the bishop said to him, "Brother,
 625 this is water of holy purification."
 Then he responds swiftly,
 "I would have greater confidence
 if it were wine, for the contents
 of wine have more potency
 630 than water has." And the bishop said,
 "What are you saying, kind and gentle friend? High Voice
 God has put his high potency
 into the water of our salvation.
 By water you received baptism.
 635 If you pray sincerely
 to receive this worthy drink
 as do the others without doubt,
 so may you have within you solid faith."
 That one received it without sincerity;
 640 no great grace came of it,
 for when it passed through his throat,
 as the others see, it traversed
 shamefully and wildly.
 In this way he died because of his presumption. Reading
 645 Then they were so solid in their faith
 that they were recovered from the infirmity,
 and from the cutting hellfire
 they feel no more pain or illness.
 Praises were offered,
 650 the news spread
 throughout Arras and the city.
 Everyone made haste at a full run
 to come there collectively,
 and the clergy with the bishop
 655 was clothed piously,
 saying, "*We praise you, God,*
 we acknowledge you to be the Lord."
 And the clerks who were in the choir

sang it through to the end, very loudly.
 660 In that night were healed,
 by the grace that I am telling you,
 144 sufferers
 who were enduring various torments.
 All of them were cured and healthy
 665 except one alone who was last,
 who because of his lack of faith
 died in great fearfulness.
 After this noble procedure, High Voice
 many wished by common agreement
 670 to enter this charity,
 and people of great authority—
 priests, knights, and bourgeois—
 because the report of this miracle spread
 everywhere, high and low.
 675 The candle was placed in Arras.
 The masters and lords of it were,
 owing to the great honor, the two singers;
 but the knights of the region Low Voice
 who became brothers of the confraternity
 680 felt great indignation
 when they saw two singers
 with such a possession hold sway
 and govern over them.
 They took among them such counsel
 685 as afterward redounded to their grief.
 When Norman and Itier died, High Voice
 there were two knights in Arras
 who had very great contempt
 that this charity
 690 was led by two singers
 and that they were necessarily above
 those who had renown.
 Now I will tell you the names of those knights.
 The one was Nicholas aux Grenons, Low Voice
 695 a very powerful and wealthy man.
 He held Bailleul and Imercourt.
 The other was Jean of Waencort.
 These two wished to begin
 the outrage and were the prime movers,
 700 for which afterward they would have shame and
 disgrace,
 as the charter gives evidence.
 These two who began this deed High Voice
 gathered many knights
 and said in making their case,

- 705 "Good sirs, see the great shame
that this esteemed charity,
which has such great authority,
that singers are the lords of it
and receive the honors from it.
- 710 It is shame and insult to us.
Among us, who are confreres,
let us maintain this confraternity,
all together from our side,
and let them not be any longer with us,
- 715 in like fashion these two singers.
But let them go to make their charity
elsewhere, in another location,
and we will keep this one for ourselves.
What do you think? Is it good to proceed in this way?"
- 720 Those replied, "We agree
with your wish, without holding back.
Forbid them to come to us
any further but let them keep to their peers."
So their consultation was concluded.
- 725 It was forbidden to the two singers
that they should be any further so impudent
as to manage the charity.
In this way those two were removed
who had begun to manage
- 730 the charity
and who ought to have retained it,
for the grace had been dispatched
and the charity delivered to them.
For this they would lament very loudly
- 735 and they entreated the Mother of God.
Thirdly, after a great while it happened
that none of the singers came any more
but the Virgin did not forget her poor company
for long at all.
- 740 On the contrary, she took cruel vengeance for it,
because those who had caused
the disorder by their outrage
were seized by so grievous a malady
that all their limbs failed them
- 745 and they could not support themselves.
The two who were the beginning
of the misfortune
by which the two singers were sundered
from them and rejected,
- 750 those were so strongly burned
by the cutting fire that seized them

that they could not help themselves
 except by wailing and crying out.
 In this grim illness
 755 an unexpected event happened to one of them,
 because one night, where he lay
 in his bed, there appeared to him
 the Virgin, adorned with grace,
 who is devoid of sin.
 760 "Oh you," she said, "who lie here,
 you know why you are thus languishing:
 it is because of the sin of your misdeed.
 You have undone what I did.
 You have led grace astray
 765 from those to whom I had delivered it,
 and if it is not set right by you,
 you will die shortly in great degradation."
 And when that one heard the voice,
 entreating mercy he raised his hands.
 770 "Lady," he said, "what have I misdone
 with regard to you? Tell me the deed,
 because I have never ever seen you."
 "I am the mother of Jesus Christ,"
 the Virgin said very humbly,
 775 "who complain harshly of you,
 because you have taken the confraternity
 from those to whom I had delivered it.
 It belongs to the singers, bringers of joy,
 because to those two I had delivered
 780 my burning candle in the presence
 of the bishop, full of wisdom,
 so as to establish the confraternity.
 But if you do not have restored to them
 what you have done out of presumption,
 785 in returning to them their inheritance,
 that I gave them forever in fief,
 I promise you that you will languish
 in grievous sorrows and in great pain
 and afterward you will die a bad death.
 790 But if you wish to make amends to them,
 in a short while I will make you recover,
 and you will be cured and healed."
 At that moment she vanished from there
 and returned to the other sick man,
 795 whom misfortune befell for this deed.
 She told him once and told him again
 the whole topic as she had the other.
 Thus the voice told him everything

	and afterward left without delay.	
800	When the two sick men have heard	High Voice
	the topic that the Virgin Lady	
	revealed to them in such manner,	
	they had themselves carried to the church	
	of Our Lady and met each other	
805	and afterward recounted	
	the vision that they have had.	
	They rendered, each one	
	with pleasure, thanks and praise	
	to the likeness of the very glorious <i>servant</i> ,	
810	Mother of God, Virgin and young maid,	Low Voice
	and afterward they had sought out,	
	by way of their people, everywhere rapidly	
	in all places the singers of Arras	
	who were viol-players and songmakers	
815	and many others, I know not how many,	
	and they entreated pardon from the singers	
	and they returned into their hands	
	the worthy candle in truth.	
	Restoring to them their charity,	
820	they promised to them at that point	
	all their time, assistance, and aid,	
	and because of this deed they were joined	
	to the bourgeois and all the singers	
	were joined with them too for having brought	
825	aid, help, and comfort.	
	And the bourgeois supervised	
	the temporal, while the two singers justly have	
	completely in their oversight	
	the spiritual,	
830	and must perform the miracle	
	of the worthy candle that brightens	
	the hearts of those who because of its substance	
	will have it in solid faith.	
	After these events, to verify	High Voice
835	that it is true without going astray at all,	
	noble-hearted Bishop Lambert	
	drew up the charter in Latin	
	on which many seals	
	of royal religious communities were put	
840	—and assuredly right in the place	
	where the Virgin made the gift	
	of the worthy and valuable candle	
	to her servants and true singers.	
	Without lingering, the bishop had	
845	a dark-colored marble swiftly installed	

where that procedure is portrayed,
 just as the text explains,
 for which there is great approval
 and yet through piety
 850 we beseech the Virgin Mary
 that she petition for us her son Jesus
 to defend us from the hellfire
 and take us to good mercy.
 Amen.

D. Alfonso X the Wise, *Songs of Holy Mary*:
 “The Two Jongleurs of Arras”

Concluding this section is the Galician-Portuguese song on the miracle of “The Jongleurs and the Holy Candle of Arras” as shaped by King Alfonso X the Wise. This *cantiga* distills the chief events of the story with exceptional brevity. In its antepenultimate and penultimate stanzas it imposes upon the bishop, here left unnamed, some of the misconduct ascribed in other versions to knights.

The edition followed, in both text and line numbering, is the standard *Cantigas de Santa María*, no. 259, ed. Mettmann, 3: 24–25. The piece has been put into English previously in *Songs of Holy Mary of Alfonso X, The Wise: A Translation of the “Cantigas de Santa Maria,”* no. 259, Kulp-Hill, 315, and into Italian in Pier Carlo Beretta, ed. and trans., *Miracoli della Vergine: testi volgari medievali* (Turin: G. Einaudi, 1999), 1042–47.

How Saint Mary caused two jongleurs who wished each other ill
 to reconcile in her church of Arras, and gave them a candle, which
 no one but they could carry.

5 *Refrain: Saint Mary strives to reconcile*
 her devotees so as to be served better by them.

10 **R**elating to this, the Virgin effected a great miracle,
 which I wish to recount to you,
 of two jongleurs whom she made wish each other well,
 but the demon tried to drive them apart.
 Saint Mary strives to reconcile ...

For though they knew to love each other much,
 the demon made them so quarrel
 that they then challenged each other to fight,
 but the Virgin did not want to allow them,

15 *Saint Mary strives to reconcile ...*

For she came to them in dreams and thus
spoke to them: "Friends, go both of you to me
at my church of Arras, and there
I will tell you how I send you to heal."

20 *Saint Mary strives to reconcile ...*

Each one of them when he awoke
remembered what she said to them,
and they went there where she commanded them,
and saw her coming opposite them.

25 *Saint Mary strives to reconcile ...*

And she said: "Friends, leave off
your intention, and both of you love me and each other
wholeheartedly, and do not do
otherwise, for I will not act to fail you."

30 *Saint Mary strives to reconcile ...*

And she gave them then such a candle
with which to cure people of the ill
they call [Saint Martial's fire](#),
and they cure all those who wish to go there.

35 *Saint Mary strives to reconcile ...*

They both went from there in great love
and cured the people of pain,
as had been commanded to them by our Lady
who never lied and doesn't have the capacity to lie.

40 *Saint Mary strives to reconcile ...*

The bishop of that place took the candle
from them, but he made a very bad bargain,
for the fire began in his foot
and sought to rise.

45 *Saint Mary strives to reconcile ...*

When the dull-witted bishop saw this,
he asked them for some of that wax,
and they gave it to drink, and it caused
the fire then very nicely to depart from him.

50 *Saint Mary strives to reconcile ...*

To this very day the jongleurs of the country
who go there have this power,
and they heal completely the people, so well
that afterward they do not have anything from which to feel ill.
Saint Mary strives to reconcile ...

