a general readership.” The press materials for the Octavo edition of Shakespeare Sonnets, (London, 1609) were not readily accessible on a home computer, so I was not sure how stable the technology was over time, which is one of the recurring difficulties of electronic resources. What happens when large companies like Adobe and Microsoft change their software and the hardware develops different capacities to keep up with those changes (making earlier versions hard to read or even incompatible)? It is interesting to compare this Octavo edition with printed facsimiles and with various texts available for free on the Internet. On the one hand, if marvellous institutions like the British Library benefit financially from this edition, which is well done, then this would be a welcome benefit. Octavo has given readers a look into the British Library and this copy of one of the great books in English. As someone who does archival research and is given originals to look at in the British Library and elsewhere, I find this CD-ROM and strong print editions helpful for approaching Shakespeare from many angles. This edition is a valuable contribution – benefiting readers, students, librarians, book collectors, and scholars – much to be wished for and not to be regretted. Apparently, Shakespeare did not fuss over the printing of these poems in a volume, but these poems are well worth fussing over.

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Chaucer Illustrated is a collection of ten essays by twelve contributors who examine pictorial representations of The Canterbury Tales from fifteenth-century manuscripts to the limited editions 500 years later that William Morris described as “visible works of art.” Mary C. Olson explicates what are probably the best known, the marginal portraits of individual pilgrims that, in the Ellesmere Manuscript, mark the beginning of each tale. She relies on The Ellesmere Chaucer: Essays in Interpretation, edited by Martin Stevens and Daniel Woodward,
which accompanied the magisterial *The Canterbury Tales: The New Ellesmere Chaucer Monochromatic Facsimile (of Huntington Library MS EL 26 C 9)* published in 1997. The remaining five illustrated manuscripts contain five historiated initials picturing the poet/narrator, six equestrian pilgrim portraits, and three pairs of figures representing a Sin (mounted on a beast) and a Virtue to accompany “The Parson’s Tale” in Cambridge University Library MS Gg.4.27.

In Philippa Hardman’s scholarly analysis, comments on costume, physical appearance, setting, marginal decoration, iconography, and the use of pigments and gold enable the reader not only to visualize the illustrations but to appreciate the artists’ intentions.

After William Caxton introduced the printing press, woodcuts replaced hand-painted illuminations. His 1483 edition of the *Tales* with its pilgrim woodcuts (possibly based on the Oxford Fragments miniatures) were the source for subsequent texts to 1602, asserts David Carlson. Not until the eighteenth century, after Sir Joshua Reynolds had founded the Royal Academy to encourage history painting (based on literature), did artists seek subjects in the pilgrims’ stories. Betsy Bowden’s overview of Chaucerian art, some of it inspired by Dryden’s, Pope’s, and Ogle’s modernized versions of the texts, points particularly to John Mortimer’s folio-sized scenes. The engravings in heroic style illustrate “The Knight’s Tale” and five fabliaux. Curiously, Bowden seems unaware of Angelica Kauffman’s painting, “Gualtherius and Griselda” (ca. 1785) based on Ogle’s modernization of “The Clerk’s Tale” and now part of the Iveagh Bequest, Kenwood House, London.

The rival paintings, widely circulated as engravings, William Blake’s “Canterbury Pilgrims” (drawn in 1806, painted 1809) and Thomas Stothard’s “The Pilgrimage to Canterbury” (1806), are the subject of two essays. Beginning with Blake’s own *Descriptive Catalogue* (reprinted in Appendix I), Warren Stevenson convincingly explicates the personal mythology that the poet-artist imposed on the literary characters, allegorically converting the pilgrimage into the human journey to the New Jerusalem. In contrast, Dennis Read’s discussion of Stothard’s cavalcade substantiates the claim, promoted by Robert Cromek, that the work was “one of the most commercially successful enterprises of its kind.”

In Britain the Industrial Revolution produced a new kind of art-buying public, one that favoured pictures based on morally uplifting literature and found social order and virtuous chivalry in an idealized Middle Ages model of Christian faith. Treating Chaucerian subjects
with the theatricality of the stage, write Judith Fisher and Mark Allen, the artists evoked a “return to a past that was a golden age of social relations.” While scrupulously re-creating medieval costumes, they imposed Victorian values, physiognomies, and sentiments. Patient Griselda, for example, became an iconic wife and “a parable for a conservative view of class relations.”

Pre-Raphaelitism is the context for Duncan Robertson’s discussion of William Morris’s Kelmscott Chaucer (1890), one of three concluding essays dealing with the book as art object. Illustrated with wood engravings printed from Edward Burne-Jones’s pencil drawings, characterized by fidelity to the text and sensitivity to emotional states, they contrast with the independence of Eric Gill’s wood engravings. In the Golden Cockerel Press Canterbury Tales (1929–31), the impact of the page spread is better related to typography than to illustration, for reasons that Peter Holliday exhaustively explains. Rockwell Kent’s Freudian pilgrim portraits show another direction that artistic invention might take, according to Jake Wein’s interpretation.

Even a book exceeding 400 pages cannot include every eligible example. Yet I regret the omission of the Museum of London’s Chaucer Chest (ca. 1400) decorated with scenes from “The Pardoner’s Tale” of the “riotours” who sought “Deeth.” A firm editorial hand might have curbed excessive digressions into literary analysis, biography, and the history of wood engraving. As only two essayists provide bibliographies, a general bibliography would have been welcome. Chaucer Illustrated is generously supplied with 149 black-and-white and 42 colour reproductions. For its scholarly essays, its checklists of extant works, and its pictorial material, this is a valuable addition to an underdeveloped area of research and publication, the interrelationship of literature and art.

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