chastised in Bridewell". (Strong, 1969, p. 26.) This perhaps explains why, at the age of 55, she was lodged up two flights of stairs, among obscure officials and very junior courtiers, rather than with the other great nobles near the Queen. Burleigh's explanation would no doubt be the chimney in the room, which would provide warmth for an old lady. (pp. 151-2)

As in such notes on particulars, Wilson is most helpful when discussing the peculiar traits of each entertainment. Wilson goes beyond the work of Yates and Strong "to explain and explore what this imagery [the imagery of the cults of Elizabeth] tells us of how the Elizabethan courtiers saw themselves and their relationship to their queen" (p. 3). These relationships are an appropriate, interesting focus for the study of entertainments, for in tilts and manor house shows the Queen and the court really shared a privileged meeting place. Lady Russell, for example, assigned the central roles in her entertainment of Elizabeth at Bisham to her daughters in order to bring her girls to the attention of the Queen because Lady Russell hoped to make advantageous matches for them. If Lord Montague affirmed and reaffirmed his loyalty in the shows at Cowdray, the reason was partly that his Catholicism made him suspect. *The Four Foster Children of Desire* provided gentle advice to the French ambassadors wooing Elizabeth on behalf of Alençon: the resolution of its fiction demonstrated that the Fortress of Perfect Beauty was impregnable and the lady within it – Elizabeth herself – not to be taken. In Nichols' *Progresses*, these entertainments appear to the good-humoured allegorical drama, clever ways of paying compliments and giving gifts, witty diversions. Though it overlooks an important study of the politics of the entertainment at Elvetham (H.H. Boyle, *SP*, 68 [1971], 146-166), *Entertainments for Elizabeth I* makes it clear that entertainments were also important expressions of the politics both of noble families and of the realm, from "the small-scale, personal divertissements of the Norrises and Russells, through the expressions of regional loyalty at Cowdray, the lavish Italianate aquaticisms of Elvetham, to the urban political chivalry of *The Four Foster Children of Desire*, and its rural counterpart at Ditchley..." (p. 58).

Jean Wilson's study is important because informed and perceptive; moreover, it is the only attempt to explain the significance of most of these entertainments. Given the fine texts provided, the selection of shows, and the information about the contexts in which they were performed and enjoyed, there is no better introduction to the study of Elizabethan entertainments.

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Richard Firth Green, *Poets and Princepleasers: Literature and the English Court in the Late Middle Ages*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980. Pp. i-x, 1-253; bibliography 225-38. \$20.00.

That the poetry of late fourteenth and fifteenth century England (and to a lesser extent France) owes far more to royal and noble than to bourgeois influence is the thesis of this informative and well-researched book. Professor Green states modestly that his objective is to "shed some light on the condition of authors

employed in the households of late medieval kings and princes, and to elucidate both the kind of life they led and the kind of work, literary and otherwise, expected of them" (p. 4). He succeeds admirably in attaining this objective; and if questions still remain unanswered at the end of the book, they are questions to a large extent stimulated and clarified by the book itself.

Green's thesis ranges him against those who see increasing bourgeois influence on literature in the later Middle Ages. The growing literacy, wealth, and leisure of middle class society has suggested to some scholars that poets must have sought to please the tastes of this new and wider audience. Green's response to this is to suggest that a rising middle class may well have been consumers of literature, but its taste was more likely to be an imitation of that of the upper classes. And to that taste and its shapers he turns his attention, providing a volume of social history and custom against which to read late Middle English literature, especially such literature that seeks to inculcate manners and morals. He also provides information that may help to answer such seemingly unanswerable questions as the following: why did Chaucer abandon a family business of some prosperity for a seemingly insecure succession of appointments at royal pleasure? Was it as anomalous for Thomas Hoccleve, a civil servant in the office of the privy seal, to write poetry as for Wallace Stevens, vice-president of a large insurance company, to do so? Why is it that John Lydgate, a cloistered monk from Bury St. Edmunds, should write so much poetry that reflects the concerns of royalty and nobility?

Depending on a variety of household account books, registers, collections of correspondence, catalogues of libraries, inventories, wills, charters, chronicles, treasury accounts, ordinances, and similar documents, Green establishes a rich pattern of court life in the later Middle Ages. A picture emerges of a cultivated group of literate men and women for whom the composition of poetry was not an unusual activity. In such a group the professional poet or minstrel had little place: he was replaced by the gifted amateur. Moreover, Green shows how unlikely it was for such an amateur to be singled out and rewarded for his literary or musical skill. The rewards derived from his position as a member of a royal or noble household, and his poetry was appreciated along with all his other services. Perhaps it is not so surprising, then, that the records fail completely to mention Chaucer as a poet.

Green's book divides in two parts of three chapters each. The first part deals with the nature of the king's court in the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance. We learn of the nature and size of the king's official *familia*, the group of semi-public, semi-private servants who formed the royal entourage. Green is able to show that, far from being an insecure "job" in our sense, "the king's court offered most men a safe and steady job at worst, and at best the prospect of considerable power, prestige, and wealth" (p. 32). From this general sense of the king's retinue, Green turns to the servants of the king's chamber, those more intimately associated with the king himself and generally responsible for his well-being and entertainment. Here he details the process of service and investment by which a man might rise to become a member of the *camera regis*, and he indicates how important these servants were as intermediaries in many types of negotiations, both official and personal. He also points out the role these servants played in a variety of recreations, ranging from sport to literature, and suggests that skill

in these recreations was apt to make a man as useful and valuable to his king as diplomatic or military skill.

Green then undertakes to survey the state of literacy in the late medieval royal court, suggesting in passing that Manly's theory (Chaucer was educated at the Inns of Court) should give way before the evidence that he could have received as good or better education at the king's court. Here Green details the elements of the two-part curriculum, "noriture" and "lettrure," and provides an account of some of the books available and evidently read in noble and royal households.

The last three chapters deal with the sort of literature that court poets produced: love poetry, literature designed to inculcate manners and morals, and literature intended to extol the fame of the court. Green's point of view here is to show how the poetic stances of later medieval poets – Chaucer's irony, for example – may in part derive from changed conditions for poetry. Since other courtiers also practised poetry, it was difficult for a poet reading to the court to adopt a non-critical pose before his material. Self-conscious art had arrived. But literary scholars will find that the greatest service provided by these last three chapters is their re-evaluation of much familiar literature on grounds of its court origins. Information of considerable value and subjects for further reflection come through these pages.

This splendid account of court influence on poetry will cause us to rethink the question whether it is evidence of bourgeois influence that the Squire of Low Degree rises through his merits alone to a position of eminence, in contrast to earlier heroes like Havelock or Octavian who require the right heritage as well as the right deeds. Or again do we see the bourgeois dependence on money reflected in Sir Launfal's disgrace when he has none, or is his lack of money simply a reflection of his not having gold enough to "maintain his degree," as any noble must (cp. Chaucer's "Knight's Tale," l. 1441)? Do "London Lickpenny" and "A Libel of English Policy" clearly reflect the mercantile/bourgeois mind at work, as they seem to do, or is there still some sense of noble concern here too? To these specific questions Green gives no answers, but he does provide much evidence against which such questions may be intelligibly posed.

In closing a word must be said on the design and typography of the book. Where so much care has evidently gone into the proofreading (I detected only four minor slips) and into a system of annotation that is both new and laudibly concise and informative, it is disturbing to find an unjustified right margin. If this practice is prompted by economic considerations, then I suppose we must minimize our grumbling and accept it along with computerized bills and a lack of fuel. But a book like this one, of lasting value and interest, deserves better of its publisher, and I for one hope that its design does not herald a new policy at the University of Toronto Press.

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Lauro Martines. *Power and Imagination. City-States in Renaissance Italy*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979. Pp. ix, 368. \$17.95.

Lauro Martines' masterful study of the growth, grandeur and decline of the Italian city-state, written over a twelve-year period, represents a broad and