

PIOUS LEGENDS.

From some poems in praise of the Mass, in MS. Harl. No. 3954, of the latter half of the fourteenth century. It contains, besides these poems, copies of the English version of Sir John Maundevile's Travels and Piers Ploughman. The language bears a considerable resemblance to that of the *Songs and Carols* in MS. Sloane, No. 2593, of which a selection was printed by Mr. Pickering in 1836, and which was conjectured to be in the dialect of Warwickshire or Nottinghamshire.

Narratio Sancti Augustini. (fol. 75 r^o.)

Evyl gostes, wel thu wete,
 Thyn evyl wordes han wrete
 In here bokys ichon;
 This wytnessyt sent Austyn,
 That fyrst in Inglond with gyn
 Trewre prechyng begon.
 Beforn that Austyn to Inglond kome;
 With sen Gregory in Rome,
 For sothe, he gan duelle,
 Tyl on a day of derworthynesse
 Sen Gregory wold seyn a messe,
 Fayre as hymm befelle.
 Onto sent Austyn he made a sygne,
 For to ben hys dekene dygne,
 To redyn hys gospelle;
 And as he redde, he sey a syth,
 .iiij. wyvys setyn to-gydder ryth,
 Here talys gun thei telle.
 Quat thei spokyn he herd al
 Thour a wyndowe at a wal
 Nout fer fro hys face.
 He saw a fend syttyng therin,
 With penne, ink, and parchemyn,
 As God 3af hym grace.
 He wrot so long that hym schant,
 And hys skyn gan to want,
 To spekyn he had space:
 He had so mych haste,
 With hys naylys faste
 Hys rolle gan he race.
 So sore ruffyn toggyd hus rolle,
 That he smot with hys cholle
 A3en the marbyl ston;
 Alle that sotyn ther aboute
 Of the dynt weryn a doute,
 Hee herdynt everychon.
 Quan the fend so foul drow,

Sent Austyn stod and low ;
 Gregory sore gan grame.
 Ner for grame the good man grete ;
 Quan he with Austyn gan mete,
 He made to hym hys mane ;
 And askyd hym with myld mod,
 Qwo made hym so wytles wod
 That day to done that dede.
 Suech a dede was never done
 He answeryd aȝen sone, !
 Of hym he hadde drede :
 " Sere, greve ȝu not tyl ȝe wete ;
 ȝonder I saw Sathanas sete,
 It semed hys hed gan blede ;
 For he wrot before that brayd,
 Al that .iij. wyvys sat and sayd,
 As I stod for to rede.
 Were ȝe not frayid of the dynt ?
 It banyd me and made me stynt
 Out of my ryth stevene.
 I seye but that I sey,
 A word I wyl not ley,
 Be Jhesu Cryst of hevene.
 Sere, ȝe may ful wel trowe."
 He let hym to the wyndowe,
 That I before gan mene.
 Lyk blod ther was bled,
 As blak as ony pyk spred
 Upon the pelerys evene.
 Than the good man grevyd hym lasse ;
 And komaundyd men at every masse
 Of this myracle to mynne ;
 And bad hem, with god wylle,
 Stedfastly holdyn hem styлле
 In chyrch quan thei weryn inne.
 " Kep ȝu out of Goddis warke,
 Ther is no word that ȝow skape,
 But that ȝe don synne.
 To lettyn a prest in hys messe,
 Al aloud myth fare the wersse,
 Out of woo to wynne.
 Of the wyvys gun thei wete,
 Qwat hee spokyn as hee sete
 Sent Austyn besyde.
 Be here answer hee wyste wel
 Thei hadde spokyn mykyl unseyl,
 Hee mythtyn it not hyde.