

PARZIVAL



WOLFRAM
VON ESCHENBACH

BERSERKER

BOOKS



Parzival

by
WOLFRAM
VON ESCHENBACH

PARZIVAL

A KNIGHTLY EPIC

BY

WOLFRAM VON ESCHENBACH

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VOL. I

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BOOK I GAMURET

ARGUMENT

In the Introduction the poet tells of the evil of doubt and unsteadfastness—against which he would warn both men and women; he will tell them a tale which shall speak of truth and steadfastness, and in which many strange marvels shall befall.

Book I. tells how Gamuret of Anjou at the death of his father, King Gandein, refused to become his brother's vassal, and went forth to seek fame and love-guerdon for himself. How he fought under the Baruch before Alexandria, and came to Patelamunt. How Queen Belakané was accused of having caused the death of her lover Eisenhart, and was besieged by two armies, which Friedebrand, King of Scotland, Eisenhart's uncle, had brought against her. How Gamuret defeated her foemen, and married the Queen, and became King of Assagog and Zassamank. How he grew weary for lack of knightly deeds, and sailed away in secret from Queen Belakané, and left her a letter telling of his name and race. How Feirifis was born, and how Gamuret came to Seville.

BOOK I GAMURET

 If unfaith in the heart find dwelling, then the soul it shall reap
but woe;
shaming alike and honour are his who such doubt shall
show,
it standeth in evil contrast with a true man's dauntless
might,

As one seeth the magpie's plumage, which at one while is black
and white.

And yet he may win to blessing; since I wot well that in his heart, 5
Hell's darkness, and light of Heaven, alike have their lot and part
But he who is false and unsteadfast, he is black as the darkest
night,

And the soul that hath never wavered stainless *its* hue and white!

This my parable so fleeting too swift for the dull shall be,
Ere yet they may seize its meaning from before their face 'twill
flee, 10

As a hare that a sound hath startled: yea, metal behind the glass,
And a blind man's dream yield visions that as swift from the eye
do pass,

For naught shall they have that endureth! And at one while 'tis
bright and sad,

And know of a truth that its glory but for short space shall make
 ye glad.
 And what man shall think to grip me, where no hair for his grasp
 shall grow, 15
 In the palm of mine hand? The mystery of a close clasp he sure
 doth know!

If I cry aloud in such peril, it 'seemeth my wisdom well.
 Shall I look for truth where it fleeteth? In the fire that the stream
 doth quell,
 Or the dew that the sun doth banish? Ne'er knew I a man so wise,
 But was fain to learn the wisdom my fable doth ill disguise, 20
 And the teaching that springeth from it: for so shall he ne'er delay
 To fly and to chase as shall fit him, to shun and to seek away,
 And to give fitting blame and honour. He who knoweth the twain
 to tell,
 In their changing ways, then wisdom has tutored that man right
 well.
 And he sits not o'er-long at leisure, nor his goal doth he
 overreach, 25
 But in wisdom his ways discerning, he dealeth with all and each.
 But his comrade, of heart unfaithful, in hell-fire shall his portion
 be,
 Yea, a hailstorm that dims the glory of a knightly fame is he.
 As a short tail it is, his honour, that but for two bites holds good,
 When the steer by the gad-fly driven doth roam thro' the lonely
 wood. 30

And tho' manifold be my counsel not to *men* alone I'd speak,
 For fain would I show to women the goal that their heart should
 seek.
 And they who shall mark my counsel, they shall learn where they
 may bestow
 Their praise and their maiden honour; and the manner of man
 shall know
 Whom they freely may love and honour, and never may fear to
 rue 35
 Their maidenhood, and the true love they gave him of heart so
 true.
 In God's sight I pray all good women to keep them in wisdom's
 way,
 For true shame on all sides doth guard them: such bliss I for them
 would pray.
 But the false heart shall win false honour—How long doth the
 thin ice last,
 If the sun shineth hot as in August? So their praise shall be soon
 o'erpast. 40

Many women are praised for beauty; if at heart they shall be
 untrue,
 Then I praise them as I would praise it, the glass of a sapphire hue

That in gold shall be set as a jewel! Tho' I hold it an evil thing,
 If a man take a costly ruby, with the virtue the stone doth bring,
 And set it in worthless setting: I would liken such costly stone 45
 To the heart of a faithful woman, who true womanhood doth
 own.
 I would look not upon her colour, nor the heart's roof all men can
 see,
 If the heart beateth true beneath it, true praise shall she win from
 me!

Should I speak of both man and woman as I know, nor my skill
 should fail,
 O'er-long would it be my story. List ye now to my wonder-tale: 50
 And this venture it telleth tidings of love, and anon of woe,
 Joy and sorrow it bringeth with it. 'Stead of *one* man if *three* ye
 know,
 And each one of the three hath wisdom and skill that outweigh
 my skill,
 Yet o'erstrange shall they find the labour, tho' they toil with a
 right good-will
 To tell ye this tale, which I think me to tell ye myself, alone, 55
 And worn with their task and weary would they be ere the work
 was done.

A tale I anew will tell ye, that speaks of a mighty love;
 Of the womanhood of true women; how a man did his manhood
 prove;
 Of one that endured all hardness, whose heart never failed in
 fight,
 Steel he in the face of conflict: with victorious hand of might 60
 Did he win him fair meed of honour; a brave man yet slowly wise
 Is he whom I hail my hero! The delight he of woman's eyes,
 Yet of woman's heart the sorrow! 'Gainst all evil his face he set;
 Yet he whom I thus have chosen my song knoweth not as yet,
 For not yet is he born of whom men this wondrous tale shall tell, 65
 And many and great the marvels that unto this knight befell.

NOW they do to-day as of old time, where a foreign law holds
 sway
 (Yea, in part of our German kingdom, as ye oft shall have heard
 men say),
 Whoever might rule that country, 'twas the law, and none
 thought it shame
 ('Tis the truth and no lie I tell ye) that the elder son might claim 70
 The whole of his father's heirdom—And the younger sons must
 grieve,
 What was theirs in their father's lifetime, they perforce at his
 death must leave.
 Before, all was theirs in common, now it fell unto one alone.
 So a wise man planned in his wisdom, that the eldest the lands
 should own,

For youth it hath many a fair gift, but old age knoweth grief and
 pain, 75
 And he who is poor in his old age an ill harvest alone doth gain.
 Kings, Counts, Dukes (and no lie I tell ye) the law holdeth all as
 one,
 And no man of them all may inherit, save only the eldest son,
 And methinks 'tis an evil custom—So the knight in his youthful
 pride,
 Gamuret, the gallant hero, lost his Burg, and his fair lands wide, 80
 Where his father had ruled with sceptre and crown as a mighty
 king,
 Till kighthood, and lust of battle, to his death did the monarch
 bring.

And all men were sore for his sorrow, who truth and unbroken
 faith
 Bare ever throughout his lifetime, yea even unto his death.
 Then the elder son he summoned the princes from out his land, 85
 And knightly they came, who rightly might claim from their
 monarch's hand,
 To hold, as of yore, their fiefdoms. So came they unto his hall,
 And the claim of each man he hearkened, and gave fiefs unto
 each and all.

Now hear how they dealt—As their true heart it bade them, both
 great and small,
 They made to their king petition, with one voice from the people
 all, 90
 That to Gamuret grace and favour he would show with true
 brother's hand,
 And honour himself in the doing. That he drive him not from the
 land
 But give him, within his kingdom, a fair Burg that all men might
 see,
 That he take from that Burg his title, and he held of all tribute
 free!—
 Nor the king was ill-pleased at their pleading, and he quoth, 'A
 small grace, I trow, 95
 Have ye asked, I would e'en be better than your prayer, as ye
 straight shall know,
 Why name ye not this my brother as Gamuret Angevin?
 Since Anjou is my land, I think me the title we *both* may win!'

Then further he spake, the monarch, 'My brother in sooth may
 seek
 Yet more from my hand of favour than my mouth may as swiftly
 speak, 100
 With me shall he have his dwelling—I would that ye all should see
 How one mother alike hath borne us; his riches but small shall be,
 While I have enough; of free hand would I give him both lands
 and gold,

That my bliss may be ne'er held forfeit by Him, Who can aye
 withhold,
 Or give, as He deemeth rightful! Then the princes they heard
 alway, 105
 How the king would deal well with his brother, and they deemed
 it a joyful day!

And each one bowed him low before him. Nor Gamuret long
 delayed,
 But he spake as his heart would bid him, and friendly the words
 he said:
 'Now hearken, my lord and brother, if vassal I think to be
 To thee, or to any other, then a fair lot awaiteth me. 110
 But think thou upon mine honour, for faithful art thou and wise,
 And give counsel as shall beseem thee, and help as thou shalt
 devise.
 For naught have I now save mine armour, if within it I more had
 done,
 Then far lands should speak my praises, and remembrance from
 men were won!'

Then further he spake, the hero: 'Full sixteen my squires shall be, 115
 And six of them shall bear harness; four pages give thou to me
 Of noble birth and breeding, and nothing to them I'll spare
 Of all that my hand may win them. Afar in the world I'd fare,
 (Somewhat I ere now have journeyed,) if Good Fortune on me
 shall smile,
 I may win from fair women favour. If a woman I serve awhile, 120
 And to serve her she hold me worthy, and my heart speaketh not
 amiss,
 True knight shall I be and faithful! God show me the way of bliss!
 As comrades we rode together (but then o'er thy land did reign
 The King Gandein, our father), and sorrow and bitter pain
 We bare for Love's sake! At one while I knew thee as *thief* and
knight, 125
 Thou couldst serve, and thou couldst dissemble, for the sake of
 thy lady bright.
 Ah! could I steal love as thou couldst, if my skill were but like to
 thine,
 That women should show me favour, then a blissful lot were
 mine!'

'Alas! that I ever saw thee,' spake, sighing, the king so true,
 'Who lightly, with words of mocking, my heart would in pieces
 hew 130
 And would fain that we part asunder! One father hath left us both
 A mighty store of riches, I would share with thee, nothing loth.
 Right dear from my heart I hold thee; red gold and jewels bright,
 Folk, weapons, horse, and raiment, take thou as shall seem thee
 right,
 That thou at thy will mayst journey, and thy free hand to all be
 known. 135

Elect do we deem thy manhood, didst thou Gylstram as
birthplace own,
Or thou camest here from Rankulat, yet still would that place be
thine,
Which thou boldest to-day in my favour; true brother art thou of
mine!

'Sir King, thou of need must praise me, so great is thy courtesy!
So, courteous, thine aid be given, if thou and my mother free
Will share with me now your riches, I mount upward, nor fear to
fall,
And my heart ever beateth higher—Yet I know not how I should
call
This life, which my left breast swelleth! Ah! whither wouldst go
mine heart?
I would fain know where thou shalt guide me—'Tis time that we
twain should part.'

And all did the monarch give him, yea, more than the knight
might crave,
Five chargers, picked and chosen, the best in his land he gave
High-couraged, swift to battle; and many a cup of gold,
And many a golden nugget, for naught would his hand withhold.
Four chests for the road he gave him, with many a jewel rare
Were they filled. Then the squires he took him who should for the
treasure care,
And well were they clad and mounted; and none might his grief
withhold
When the knight gat him unto his mother, who her son in her
arms did fold.

Spake the woman, as woman grieving: 'Wilt thou tarry with me no
more,
King Gandein's son? Woe is me! yet my womb this burden bore
And the son of my husband art thou. Is the eye of God waxed
blind,
Or His ear grown deaf in the hearing, that my prayer doth no
credence find?
Is fresh sorrow to be my portion? I have buried my heart's desire,
And the light of mine eyes; will He rob me, who have suffered a
grief so dire,
Who judgeth with righteous judgment? Then the tale it hath told
a lie,
That spake of His help so mighty, Who doth help unto me deny!'

'God comfort thee,' quoth the hero, 'for the death of my father
dear,
For truly we both must mourn him—But I think from no lips to
hear
Such wailing for my departing! As valour shall show the way,
I seek knighthood in distant countries—So it standeth with me
to-day.'

Quoth the queen, 'Since to high love's service thou turnest both
 hand and heart, 165
 Sweet son, let it not displease thee to take of my wealth a part
 That may serve thee upon thy journey; let thy chamberlain take
 from me
 Four chests, each a pack-horse burden, and heavy their weight
 shall be.
 And within, uncut, there lieth rich silk of Orient rare,
 No man as yet hath cut it, and many a samite fair. 170
 Sweet son, I prithee tell me what time thou wilt come again,
 That my joy may wax the greater, and I look for thee not in vain!'

'Nay, that I know not, Lady, nor the land that shall see my face,
 But wherever I take my journey, thou hast shown unto me such
 grace
 As befitteth knightly honour: and the king he hath dealt with me 175
 In such wise that grateful service his rewarding shall ever be.
 And this trust have I, O Lady, that for this thou wilt love him more
 Henceforward, whate'er the future yet keepeth for me in store.'
 And as the venture telleth, to the hand of this dauntless knight,
 Thro' the favour he won from a woman, and the working of true
 love's might, 180
 Came a token fair, and its value was full thousand marks, I trow,
 E'en to-day an a Jew were craving a pledge, he would deem enow
 Such jewel, and ne'er disdain it—'Twas sent by his lady true,
 And fame did he win in her service, and her love and her greeting
 knew,
 Yet seldom his pain found easing—Then the hero he took his
 leave 185
 Of mother, brother, and brother's kingdom, and many I ween
 must grieve
 Since his eyes never more beheld them. And all who his friends
 had been,
 Ere he passed from the land of his fathers, tho' the grace were
 but small, I ween,
 He gave them of thanks full measure; he deemed they too much
 had done,
 And, courteous, little thought him, that of right he their love had
 won! 190
 Straighter his heart than straightness; did one of his praises speak
 In a full and fitting measure, then doubt were not far to seek,
 But ask ye of those his neighbours, or of men who in distant
 lands
 Had seen his deeds, then the marvel ye were swifter to
 understand.

And Gamuret he trode ever where Temperance aye should guide, 195
 And naught else might rule his doings, nor he boasted him in his
 pride
 But bare great honour meekly; from loose ways he e'er had flown;

And he thought him, the gallant hero, that none bare on earth a
 crown,
 Were they King, or Queen, or Kaiser, whom he deemed of his
 service worth
 Were they not the mightiest reckoned of all monarchs that be on
 earth. 200
 This will in his heart he cherished—Then men spake, at Bagdad
 did reign
 A monarch so strong and powerful, that homage he well might
 claim
 From two-thirds or more of earth's kingdoms. The heathen his
 name held great,
 And they spake of him as the Baruch, and kings did on his
 bidding wait,
 And crownèd heads were his servants; and his office it lasts to-
 day— 205
 See how Christian men baptizèd to Rome wend their pilgrim way,
 So there was the heathen custom. At Bagdad was their papal
 right,
 And the Baruch as 'seemed his office purged their sins with his
 word of might.

From Pompey and Ipomidon, two brothers of Babylon,
 Nineveh, the town of their fathers, the Baruch with force had won,
 And bravely 'gainst him they battled. Then came the young 210
 Angevin,
 And the Baruch he showed him favour, yea, he did to his service
 win
 Gamuret the gallant hero—And he deemed it were well he bore
 Other arms than Gandein his father had given to him of yore.
 Then the hero he well bethought him; on his charger's cloth they
 laid 215
 An anchor of ermine fashioned, and the same at his will they
 made
 For shield alike and vesture—And green as the emerald rare
 Was his riding-gear, and 'twas fashioned and wrought of
 Achmardi fair,
 ('Tis a silken stuff,) and he bade them to make of it at his will
 Both blazoned coat and surcoat, (than velvet 'tis richer still;) 220
 And he bade them to sew upon it the anchor of ermine white,
 And with golden threads inwoven was the badge of this gallant
 knight.

And his anchors they never tested or mainland or haven fair
 And found in that place abiding—But the hero must further bear
 Thro' many a land, a brave guest, the load of this heraldry, 225
 And behind the sign of this anchor but short space might his
 resting be,
 And nowhere he found abiding—The tale of the lands he saw,
 And the vessels in which he sailed him? If the truth unto ye I
 swear,

On mine own oath must I swear it, and my knightly honour true
 In such wise as the venture told me; other witness I never knew! 230

And men say that his manly courage held the prize in far
 heathendom,
 In Morocco's land, and in Persia, and elsewhere he high honour
 won,
 At Damascus and at Aleppo, and where knightly deeds should be:
 In Arabia and lands around it was he held of all conflict free,
 For no man might dare withstand him, he won him such crown of
 fame; 235

And his heart for honour lusted, and all deeds were brought to
 shame,
 And became as naught before him, as all men bare witness true
 Who a joust with him had ridden, and Bagdad of his glory knew.

And his heart never failed or faltered, but onward his course he
 bare
 To Zassamank's land and kingdom; there all men wept that hero
 fair, 240

Eisenhart, who in knightly service gave his life for a woman's
 smile;
 Belakané thereto constrained him, sweet maid she, and free from
 guile.
 (Since her love she never gave him, for love's sake did the hero
 die,)

And his kinsmen would fain avenge him, and with force and with
 subtlety
 Their armies beset the maiden, but in sooth she could guard her
 well 245

Ere Gamuret came to her kingdom, and her wrath on her foemen
 fell.
 For the Prince Friedebrand of Scotland, and his host that against
 her came
 By ship, ere he left her kingdom had she wasted with fire and
 flame.

Now hear what befell our hero; storm-driven he was that day,
 And scarce might he win to safety, and his boat in the haven lay 250
 Beneath the royal palace; and the folk they beheld him there,
 And he looked around on the meadow, and he saw many tents
 stand fair
 Around the town, save the sea-coast, and two armies he thought
 to see.

Then he bade them to tell the story, and whose that fair Burg
 should be?
 Since he knew it not, nor his shipmen—And an answer they
 straightway gave, 255

'Twas Patelamunt; then the townsfolk a boon from the knight
 would crave,

And their speech it was soft and friendly—In the name of their
gods they'd pray
He should help them, so great their peril that in danger of death
they lay.

When the young Angevin had hearkened to the tale of their bitter
pain,
He proffered to them his service for such payment as knight may
gain, 260

(As it oft shall befit a hero)—They should say for what goodly
prize
He should dare the hate of their foemen? And they answered him
in this wise

With one mouth the hale and the wounded—Naught would they
from him withhold,

But lord should he be of their treasure, of their jewels alike and
gold,

A fair life should he lead among them!—But such payment he
little sought, 265

For many a golden nugget from Araby had he brought.
And dark as night were the people who in Zassamank dwelt away
—

And the time it seemed long unto him that he need in their midst
must stay—

But he bade them prepare a lodging, and methinks it became
them well

The best of their land to give him, since awhile he with them
would dwell. 270

And the women they looked from the windows, and they gazed
on the noble knight,

And they looked on his squires, and his harness, how 'twas
fashioned for deeds of might.

Then they saw how the knight, free-handed, on his shield of
ermine bare

Full many a pelt of sable; the Queen's Marshal he read it fair,
The badge, for a mighty anchor, and little he rued the sight, 275
If his eye spake the truth unto him ere this had he seen the
knight,

Or one who bare his semblance—At Alexandria it needs must be,
When the Baruch besieged the city—and unequalled in strife was
he!

So rode the gallant hero, in stately guise and meet;
Ten pack-horses heavy-laden they led first adown the street, 280
And twenty squires behind them; and his people they went
before,

And lackeys, cooks, and cook-boys, at the head of the train they
saw.

And stately I ween his household, twelve pages of lineage high
Rode next to the squires, well-mannered, and trained in all
courtesy,

And Saracens were among them; and behind them in order fair 285
 Came chargers eight, and a covering of sendal did each one bear.
 But the ninth it bore a saddle, and the shield ye have known ere
 now
 Was borne by a squire beside it, and joyful his mien, I trow.
 And trumpeters rode behind it, for in sooth they must needs be
 there,
 And a drummer he smote his tambour, and swung it aloft in air. 290
 And as naught had the hero deemed it, this pomp, if there failed
 to ride
 Men who on the flute were skilful, and three fiddlers were at their
 side,
 And they hasted not nor hurried; and behind them the hero
 came,
 And his shipman he rode beside him, a wise man of goodly fame.

 And much folk was within the city, and Moors were both man and 295
 maid.
 Then the hero he looked around him, and, lo! many a shield
 displayed,
 Battle-hewn and with spear-thrust piercèd they hung on each
 wall and door.
 And wailing and woe was their portion; for the knight at each
 window saw
 Many men lie sorely wounded, who to breathe the air were fain,
 And e'en tho' a leech might tend them no help might they think
 to gain 300
 Who were hurt too sore for healing—In the field had they faced
 the foe,
 And such shall be their rewarding who in conflict no flight will
 know—
 Many horses were led towards him, sword-hewn and with lance
 thrust through;
 And on each side stood dusky maidens, and black as the night
 their hue.

 Then his host gave him kindly greeting—and of joy did he reap 305
 his meed—
 A rich man was he and mighty, and many a knightly deed
 With thrust and blow had his hand wrought when his post at the
 gate he found;
 And many a knight was with him, and bandaged their heads and
 bound,
 And their hands in slings were holden; yet tho' sorely wounded
 still
 They did many deeds of knighthood, nor were lacking in strength
 and skill. 310

 Then the Burg-grave of the city, with fair words did he pray his
 guest

To deal with him and his household in such wise as should seem
 him best.
 And the host, he led the hero to his wife, and courteously
 Did Gamuret kiss the lady, small joy in the kiss had he!
 Then they sat them down to the table, and e'en as the feast was
 o'er, 315
 The Marshal he gat him swiftly to the queen, and the tidings bore,
 And craved from her goodly payment, as to messenger shall be
 due.
 And he spake, 'It shall end in gladness, the grief that erewhile we
 knew,
 We have welcomed here, O Lady, a knight of such gallant mien,
 We must thank the gods who have sent him, for our need they
 have surely seen.' 320

 'Now tell me upon thine honour who this gallant knight may be?'
 'Lady, a dauntless hero, and the Baruch's man is he,
 An Angevin he, of high lineage; Ah me! little did he spare
 Himself, when his foemen seeking he forth to the field would fare.
 How wisely, with skill and cunning, he avoided the threatening
 blow, 325
 And turned him again to the onslaught! Much sorrow he wrought
 his foe—
 Ere this have I seen him battle, when the princes of Babylon
 Their city of Alexandria had fain from the Baruch won,
 And with force from its walls would drive him, and many a man
 lay dead
 In the overthrow of their army, for their venture was but ill-spel. 330
 And such deeds did he do, this hero, that no counsel was theirs
 but flight:
 And there did I hear his praises, for all spake of this gallant knight
 As one who, without denial, had won him, in many a land,
 The crown of true knightly honour, by the strength of his own
 right hand.

 'Now fain would I speak with the hero, see thou to the time and
 way; 335
 E'en now might he ride to the castle, for peace shall be kept to-
 day.
 Were it better that I should seek him? He is other than we in face,
 Pray Heaven it not displease him, but our need with the knight
 find grace!
 I would that I first might know this, ere the rede from my folk I
 hear
 That I show to this stranger honour—If it pleaseth him to draw
 near, 340
 Say, how shall I best receive him? Shall the knight be so nobly
 born
 That my kiss be not lost, if I kiss him?' 'Nay, hold me of life
 forsworn
 If he be not of kings the kinsman! Lady, this word I'll bear

To thy princes, that they shall clothe them in raiment both fit and
 fair,
 And stand before thee, in due order, ere yet to thy court we ride, 345
 And the same shalt thou say to thy ladies—In the city he doth
 abide;
 I will ride below, and will bring him to thy palace, a worthy guest,
 For no fair or knightly virtue shall be lacking that noble breast.'

But little space they delayed them, for the Marshal, with ready
 skill,
 Strove that all in such wise be ordered as should pleasure his 350
 lady's will.
 But soon did they bear to the hero rich garments, he did them on,
 And this hath the venture told me that their cost should be hardly
 won;
 And thereon lay the anchors, heavy, and wrought of Arabian gold,
 For so had he willed. Then the hero, who fair payment for love
 had told
 A charger bestrode that 'fore Babylon a knight rode, for jousting 355
 fain,
 From the saddle did Gamuret smite him, and I wot it hath
 wrought him pain.

If his host thought to ride beside him? He and his gallant knights?
 Yea, in sooth they would do so, gladly—So wended they up the
 height,
 And dismounted before the palace; and many a knight stood
 there,
 And each, as was fit, had clothed him in raiment both rich and 360
 fair.
 And his pages they ran before him, and each twain they went
 hand in hand,
 And in marvellous fair arraying he saw many ladies stand.
 And the queen, her eyes brought her sorrow as she looked on the
 Angevin,
 So lovely was he to look on that he needs must an entrance win
 Thro' the gates of her heart, if 'twere anguish or joy that within he
 bore, 365
 Tho' her womanhood 'gainst all comers had held them fast closed
 before.

Then a space did she step towards him, and a kiss from her guest
 she prayed;
 And, herself, by the hand she took him and they sat them, both
 man and maid
 In a window wide, that looked forth from the palace upon the foe,
 And a covering of wadded samite was spread o'er the couch
 below. 370
 Is there aught that than day is lighter? Then it likeneth not the
 queen!
 Yet else was she fair to look on, as a woman should be, I ween,

But unlike to the dew-dipped roses was her colour, yea, black as
 night.
 And her crown was a costly ruby, and thro' it ye saw aright
 Her raven head. Then as hostess she spake to her guest this word,
 That greatly she joyed at his coming, 'Sir, Knight, I such tale have
 heard 375
 Of thy knightly strength and prowess—Of thy courtesy, hear me
 fair,
 For fain would I tell of my sorrow, and the woe that my heart
 doth bear!'

'My help shall not fail thee, Lady! What hath grieved, or doth
 grieve thee now,
 I think me aside to turn it, to thy service my hand I vow! 380
 I am naught but one man only—Who hath wronged or now
 wrongeth thee
 My shield will I hold against him—Little wroth shall thy foeman
 be!'

Then a prince he spake out courteous, 'The foe would we little
 spare,
 Did our host not lack a captain, since Friedebrand hence must
 fare.
 He defendeth afar his kingdom—A king, one Hernant by name 385
 (Whom he slew for the sake of Herlindè) his kinsmen against him
 came,
 And evil enow have they wrought him, nor yet from their strife
 forbear—
 Yet he left here full many a hero, and among them, Duke
 Heuteger
 With his gallant deeds of knighthood, and his army, hath pressed
 us sore,
 They have skill and strength for the conflict. And many a soldier
 more 390
 With Gaschier of Normandy came here, and a hero wise is he.
 Many knights hath he brought to this country (and wrathful
 guests they be):
 Kaillet of Hoscurast. All these hath he brought upon our fair land
 With his comrades four, and his soldiers, the Scottish king
 Friedebrand!
 And there, to the West, by the sea-coast doth Eisenhart's army lie, 395
 And their eyes shall be fain for weeping; nor in secret, nor openly
 Hath one seen them, and failed to marvel at their grief and their
 sorrow sore,
 Since their lord hath been slain in battle with the heart's rain their
 eyes run o'er.'

Then the guest courteous spake to his hostess, 'I would, an it
 seem thee right,
 Thou shouldst say why thy foeman threaten, why they seek thee
 with war-like might! 400

Thou hast here many gallant heroes, it grieveth me sore to see
Thy land thus with hate o'erladen, for woe must it bring to thee.'

'Wouldst thou know? Then, Sir Knight, I will tell thee—A knight
did me service true,

And the fruit of all manly virtue his life as its decking knew,
And gallant and wise was the hero, and his faith as a goodly tree 405
Was fast-rooted, and none so courteous but were shamed by his
courtesy.

And modest was he as a woman, tho' dauntless and strong, I
trow,

And a knight e'en as he free-handed ere his day never land might
know.

(But they that shall come hereafter, other folk shall their doings
see.)

A fool was he in false dealing, and a Moor, as myself shall be; 410
And his father's name was Tánkaneis, a king of a kingly heart,
And his son, he who was my lover, men knew him as Eisenhart.
That for love's sake I took his service, as a woman I did not well,
It hath brought me but lasting sorrow since no joy to his portion
fell,

They deem I to death betrayed him! Yet such treason were far
from me, 415

Tho' his folk bring such charge against me; and dear to my heart
was he,

Far dearer than *they* e'er held him. Nor witnesses here shall fail
To speak to the truth of my saying, if it please them to tell the
tale.

His gods and mine, they know it, the truth—I must sorrow deep
Since my womanly shame hath brought him a guerdon I needs
must weep! 420

'Thus he won in my maiden service much honour by knighthood
fair,

I thought thus to prove my lover; his deeds did his worth declare.
For my sake he put off his harness (that which like to a hall doth
stand

Is a lofty tent, the Scotch folk they brought it into this land),
Then e'en tho' he bare no armour his body he little spared, 425
For he held his life as worthless, many ventures unarmed he
dared.

As the matter so stood between us, a prince who my man should
be,

Prothizilas did men call him, a bold knight, from all cowardice
free,

Rode forth in search of venture, and evil for him that day
For there, in Assagog's forest, his death in waiting lay. 430

In a knightly joust he met it, and there too he found his end
The gallant knight who faced him—'Twas Prince Eisenhart my
friend.

For both of the twain were piercèd with a spear thro' heart and
 shield,
 And I, alas! poor woman, must weep for that fatal field.
 And ever their death doth grieve me, and sorrow from love shall
 grow, 435
 And never henceforth as my husband a man do I think to know.'

Then e'en tho' she was a heathen Gamuret he bethought him
 well,
 That a heart more true and tender ne'er in woman's breast might
 dwell.
 Her purity was her baptism, and as water that washed her o'er
 Was the rain that streamed from her eyelids o'er her breast, and
 the robe she wore; 440
 All her joy did she find in sorrow, and grief o'er her life did reign

—
 Then the queen she looked on the hero, and in this wise she
 spake again:

'With his army the king of Scotland hath sought me across the
 sea,
 For the knight was son to his uncle; yet no ill can he do to me,
 If here the truth be spoken, that is worse than the grief I knew 445
 For Eisenhart's death!' and sorely she sighed that lady true;

And many a glance thro' her tear-drops on Gamuret shyly fell,
 And her eyes to her heart gave counsel, and his beauty it pleased
 her well,
 (And she knew how to judge a fair face, since fair heathen she oft
 had seen,)

And the root of true love and longing it sprang up the twain
 between. 450
 She looked upon him, and his glances, they answering sought her
 own—
 Then she bade them to fill the wine-cup, had she dared, it were
 left undone,
 And she grieved she might not delay it, since to many a hero
 brave
 Who spake with the maids this wine-cup the signal of parting
 gave.
 Yet her body was e'en as his body, and his look did such courage
 give 455
 To the maid, that she thought henceforward in the life of the
 knight to live.

Then he stood upright, and he spake thus, 'Lady, I weary thee,
 Too long methinks do I sit here, I were lacking in courtesy!
 As befitting true knight and servant I mourn for thy woe so great,
 Lady, do thou command me, I will on thy bidding wait. 460
 Wherever thou wilt, there I wend me. I will serve thee in all I may!'

And the lady she quoth in answer, 'I believe thee, Sir Knight,
 alway!'

Then his kindly host the Burg-grave, of his labour would nothing
 spare
 Lest the hours of his stay be heavy; and he asked if he forth
 would fare,
 And ride round the walls of the city? 'The battle-field shalt thou
 see, 465
 And how we would guard our portals!' then Gamuret courteously
 Made answer, he fain would see it, the field where they late had
 fought,
 And the place where brave deeds of knighthood had by gallant
 hands been wrought.

And noble knights rode with him adown from the palace hall,
 Some were wise, some were young and foolish,—So rode they
 around the wall 470
 To sixteen gates, and they told him not one of them might they
 close
 Since Eisenhart's death called for vengeance—'So wrathful shall
 be our foes
 Our conflict it resteth never, but we fight both by night and day,
 Nor our portals since then we fasten, but open they stand alway.
 At eight of our gates they beset us, true Eisenhart's gallant
 knights, 475
 And evil shall they have wrought us; spurred by anger each man
 doth fight,
 The princes of lofty lineage, the king of Assagog's ban!
 And there floated before each portal a banner, so pale and wan,
 With a piercèd knight upon it. When Eisenhart lost his life
 His folk chose to them this symbol, as badge in the coming strife. 480
 'But against these arms have we others, wherewith we their grief
 would still,
 And thus shalt thou know our banner; 'twas wrought at our lady's
 will,
 Two fingers in oath she stretcheth, that never such grief she knew
 As Eisenhart's death hath brought her (true sorrow for heart so
 true),
 And so doth it stand the semblance of our queen, on a samite
 white 485
 Belakané in sable fashioned,—Since against us they came in
 might,
 (To avenge him for whom she sorrows) so she looks from our
 portals high.
 And proud Friedebrand's mighty army doth to eight of our gates
 stand nigh,
 Baptized men, from o'er the waters. A prince doth each portal
 hold,
 And forth from the gate he sallies, with his banners and warriors
 bold.' 490
 'From the host of Gaschier the Norman, a count have we captive
 ta'en,

And heavy methinks the ransom we may hope from that knight
 to gain;
 He is sister's son to Kaillet, and the harm *he* to us hath done
 His nephew I ween shall pay for! Yet such prize have we seldom
 won.

Here have we no grassy meadow, but sand, thirty gallops wide 495
 Betwixt the tents and the trenches; here many a joust we ride.

And further his host would tell him, 'One knight, he doth never
 fail
 To ride forth, a fair joust seeking. (If his service shall nought avail
 With her who hath sent him hither, what boots it how well he
 fight?)

Proud Heuteger is the hero, of him may I speak with right 500
 For since our besiegers threaten there dawneth never a day
 But before the gates 'neath the castle, that knight doth his
 charger stay.

And oft from that dauntless hero many tokens we needs must
 bear,
 That he smote through our shields at his spear-point, and costly
 their worth and rare
 When the squire from the shield doth break them. Many knights
 'fore his joust must fall; 505
 He would that all men may behold him, and our women they
 praise him all.

And he who is praised of women, one knoweth that he doth hold
 The prize in his hand, and his heart's joy in full measure shall aye
 be told!

But now would the sun, grown weary, its wandering rays recall;
 'Twas time that the ride was ended—Then he sought with his host
 the hall, 510
 And the evening meal was ready; and I needs of that feast must
 tell,

'Twas laid in a fitting order, and knightly 'twas served, and well.
 And the queen with mien so stately she unto his table came,
 (Here stood the fish, there the heron) and she counted it not for
 shame

To ride adown from her palace, that herself she might be aware 515
 If they cared for the guest as 'twas fitting, and with her rode her
 maidens fair.

Low she knelt (and but ill it pleased him) and cut as it seemed her
 best
 For the knight a fitting portion; she was glad in her goodly guest.
 And she filled for him the wine-cup, and care for his needs would
 take,

And well did he mark, the hero, her mien, and the words she
 spake. 520
 And his fiddlers sat at the table, and over against the knight
 Was his chaplain: with shy looks shamefast, he spake to the lady
 bright:

'I looked not to find such welcome as, Lady, thou gavest me,
 Too much must I deem the honour! If rede I might give to thee,
 Then to-day I had claimed naught from thee save was due to my
 worth alone, 525
 Nor adown the hill hadst thou ridden, nor such service to me
 hadst shown.
 And, Lady, if I may venture to make unto thee request,
 Let me live but as best befits me, thou dost honour o'ermuch thy
 guest!'

Yet her kindly care she stayed not; for she stept to his page's seat
 And with gentle words and friendly she prayed them to freely eat,
 This she did her guest to honour: and the noble lads, I trow, 530
 Bare goodwill to the royal lady. Nor the queen methinks was slow
 To pass where the host was seated and his lady, the Burg-gravine,
 And she raised the golden goblet, and she spake as should fit a
 queen:

'Now unto your care I give him, our guest, and I rede ye both 535
 Since the honour is yours, to hearken, and do my will nothing
 loth!'

And she bade them farewell, and she turned her, and passed to
 her guest once more,
 Whose heart for her sake was heavy; and such sorrow for him she
 bore,
 And her heart and her eyes they answered, and they spake to her
 sorrow yea!
 And courteous she spake, the lady, 'Sir Knight, thou the word
 shalt say, 540
 And whate'er be thy will, I will do it, for I hold thee a worthy
 guest.
 Now give me, I pray, dismissal; if here thou in peace shalt rest,
 Of that shall we all be joyful.' Her torch-holders were of gold,
 And four tapers they bare before her, so she rode to her fortress-
 hold.

Nor long at the board they lingered—The hero was sad, and gay, 545
 He was glad for the honour done him, yet a sorrow upon him lay,
 And that was strong Love's compelling, that a proud heart and
 courage high
 Can bend to her will, and gladness shall oft at her bidding fly.

Then the hostess she passed to her chamber, yea, e'en as the
 meal was o'er;
 And a couch did they spread for the hero, and love to the labour
 bore. 550
 And the host to his guest spake kindly, 'Now here shall thy sleep
 be sweet,
 Thou shalt rest thro' the night that cometh, to thy need shall such
 rest be meet.'
 Then he spake to his men, and he bade them they should hence
 from the hall away,

And the noble youths his pages, their couches around his lay
 Each one with the head toward his master, for so was the custom
 good; 555
 And tapers so tall and flaming alight round the chamber stood.
 Yet ill did it please the hero that so long were the hours of night,
 For the Moorish queen so dusky, had vanquished his heart of
 might.
 And he turned as a willow wand bendeth, till his joints they were
 heard to crack,
 The strife and the love that he craved for he deemed he o'er-long
 did lack. 560
 And his heart-beats they echoed loudly, as it swelled high for
 knighthood fain,
 And he stretched himself as an archer who bendeth a bow amain.
 And so eager his lust for battle that sleepless the hero lay
 Till he saw the grey light of morning, though as yet it should
 scarce be day.
 And his chaplain for Mass was ready, and to God and the knight
 they sing, 565
 For so did he give commandment. Then he bade them his
 harness bring,

 And he rode where a joust should wait him, and that self-same
 hour would ride
 A horse that could charge the foeman, and turn swiftly to either
 side,
 And answer to bit and bridle if its rider would backward draw.
 And the watchers, both man and woman, his helm in the gateway
 saw, 570
 And the anchor shone fair upon it; and no man ere this might see
 So wondrous fair a hero, for like to a god was he!

 And strong spears they bare for his using—How then was he
 decked, the knight?
 With iron was his charger covered, as should serve for a shield in
 fight,
 And above lay another covering, nor heavy methinks it weighed, 575
 'Twas a samite green; and his surcoat and blazoned coat were
 made
 Of Achmardi, green to look on, and in Araby fashioned fair,
 And no lie I tell, but the shield-thongs that the weight of the
 shield should bear
 Were of silk and gold untarnished, and jewel-bedecked their
 pride,
 And the boss of the shield was covered with red gold, in the
 furnace tried. 580
 He served but for love's rewarding; sharp conflict he held it light;
 And the queen she looked from her window, with many a lady
 bright.
 And see, there Heuteger held him, who the prize ne'er had failed
 to gain;

When he saw the knight draw nearer, in swift gallop across the
 plain,
 He thought, 'Now whence came this Frenchman? Who hither this
 knight hath sent? 585
 If a *Moor* I had thought this hero, my wit were to madness bent!'

No whit they delayed the onslaught, from gallop to swifter flight
 Each man spurred amain his charger; and as fitting a valiant
 knight
 Nor one would evade the other, but would meet him in jousting
 fair,
 From brave Heuteger's spear the splinters flew high thro' the
 summer air, 590
 But his foeman so well withstood him that he thrust him from off
 his steed
 Adown on the grass; but seldom might he win for his joust such
 meed!
 And his foe in his course rode o'er him, and trode him unto the
 ground,
 Yet he sprang up again, and valiant, fresh lust for the strife he
 found,
 But Gamuret's lance had pierced him thro' the arm, and he bade
 him yield, 595
 And he knew he had found his master, and he spake from the
 foughten field,
 'Now who shall have o'erthrown me?' and the victor he swiftly
 spake,
 'Gamuret Angevin do men call me!' then he quoth, 'Thou my
 pledge canst take!'

Then his pledge the knight took, and straightway he sent him
 within the wall,
 And much praise did he win from the women who looked from
 the castle hall. 600
 And swiftly there came towards him, Gaschier of Normandy,
 A proud and wealthy hero and mighty in strife was he.
 And Gamuret made him ready, for a second joust he'd ride,
 And strong and new was his spear-shaft, and the iron was both
 sharp and wide,
 And the strangers they faced each other—But unequal their lot, I
 trow, 605
 For Gaschier and his gallant charger full swiftly were they laid low,
 And the knight with his arms and harness he fell in the shock of
 strife;
 If he thought it for good or for evil, by his pledge must he win his
 life.

Then Gamuret quoth, the hero, 'Thou hast pledged unto me thine
 hand,
 Yet the weapon it well hath wielded! Ride thou to the Scottish
 band, 610

And bid them to cease from troubling; if they to thy will are fain,
 Thou canst follow me to the city.' Then the knight hied him o'er
 the plain.
 If he prayed them, or gave commandment, they did at the last his
 will,
 And the Scottish host they rested, and from conflict they held
 them still.

Then Kaillet spurred swift towards him, but Gamuret turned his
 rein, 615
 His cousin he was, and near kinsman, why then bring him grief
 and pain?
 And the Spaniard cried loudly on him; on his helm he an ostrich
 bare,
 And so far as I know to tell ye the knight he was decked so fair
 With silken raiment goodly, and long were his robes and wide,
 And the plain rang clear with the chiming of sweet bells as he o'er
 it hied. 620
 The flower he of manly beauty, and his fairness it held the field,
 Save for two who should come hereafter, and his fame unto theirs
 must yield;
 But Parzival and brave Beaucorps, King Lot's son, they are not
 here,
 Not yet were they born, but hereafter for their beauty men held
 them dear!

Then Gaschier he grasped his bridle. 'Now checked will it be thy
 race, 625
 So I tell thee upon mine honour, if the Angevin thou shalt face
 Who there my pledge hath taken. Sir Knight, thou shalt list my
 prayer
 And hearken unto my counsel; in Gamuret's hand I swear
 From strife aside to turn thee: stay thy steed then for my sake,
 For mighty is he in conflict!' Then aloud King Kaillet spake, 630
 'Is he Gamuret my cousin, and son unto King Gandein?
 Then I care not with him to battle, no foe shall he be of mine!
 Take thine hand from off my bridle'—'Nay, further thou shalt not
 fare
 Till mine eyes have first beheld thee, with thine head of the
 helmet bare,
 For *mine* with blows is deafened!' Then his helmet the prince
 unbound. 635
 And yet, tho' with him he fought not, Gamuret other foemen
 found.

And the day had grown to high morning—And the folk who the
 joust might see
 Were glad at heart, and they gat them to their bulwarks right
 speedily,
 For he was as a net before them, and none might escape his hold.
 And he chose him another charger, so the tale unto me was told, 640

And it flew, and the earth it spurnèd, and its work could aright
 fulfil,
 Bold when the knight would battle, yet its speed could he check
 at will.
 And what would he do the rider? His valour I praise alway,
 For he rode where the Moorish army to the west by the sea-coast
 lay.

Thence a prince, Rassalig men called him, forgot not each coming
 morn 645
 (He was Assagog's richest hero, to riches and honour born
 Since he came of a royal lineage) to take from the camp his way
 He would fain joust before the city—But his strength it was
 quelled that day
 By Anjou's dauntless hero; and a dusky maid made moan
 (Since 'twas she who sent him hither) that her knight should be
 thus o'erthrown. 650
 For a squire brought, without his bidding, to his master, brave
 Gamuret,
 A spear, with light reed-shaft fashioned, and its point 'gainst the
 Moor he set,
 And with it he smote the paynim from his steed down upon the
 sand,
 Nor longer he bade him lie there than as surety he pledged his
 hand.
 So the strife it had found its ending, and the hero had won him
 fame; 655
 Then Gamuret saw eight banners toward the city that onward
 came,
 And he bade the conquered hero the force with his word to stay,
 And follow him to the city. And that word must he needs obey.

Nor Gaschier delayed his coming; and unto the Burg-grave told
 How his guest sought for further conflict nor his wrath might the
 host withhold. 660
 If he swallowed not iron as an ostrich, nor his wrath did on stones
 assuage
 'Twas but that he might not find them! Then he gnashed his teeth
 for rage,
 And he growled as a mighty lion, and the hair of his head he tare,
 And he quoth, 'So the years of my lifetime a harvest of folly bear,
 The gods they had sent to my keeping a valiant and worthy
 friend, 665
 If with strife he shall be o'erladen, then mine honour hath found
 an end;
 Sword and shield they shall little profit—Yea, shame he would on
 me cast
 Who should bring this to my remembrance!' Then swift from his
 place he passed,
 And he gat him into the portal, and a squire towards him drew,

And he bare a shield that was painted with a knight by a spear
 pierced thro', 670
 In Eisenhart's land was it fashioned; and a helmet his hand must
 hold,
 And a sword that Rassalig carried in battle, that heathen bold,
 But now was he parted from it whose fame was in every place;
 Were he slain unbaptized I think me, God had shown to this hero
 grace!

And e'en as the Burg-grave saw it, ne'er of yore was his joy so
 great, 675
 For the coat-of-arms he knew it—So he rode thro' the city gate,
 And without, his guest had halted, young hero he, not yet old,
 As one of a joust desirous, and his bridle the Burg-grave bold,
 Lahfilirost was his name, he grasped it, and he led him within the
 wall;
 And I wot well no other foeman that day 'neath his spear must
 fall. 680

Quoth Lahfilirost the Burg-grave, 'Sir Knight, thou shalt tell to me
 If thine hand Rassalig hath vanquished?' 'Then our land from all
 strife is free;
 For he of the Moors is chieftain, the men of true Eisenhart
 Who have brought unto us such sorrow—But now shall our woe
 depart,
 'Twas a wrathful god who bade him thus seek us with all his host,
 But his weapons to naught are smitten, and to folly is turned his
 boast!' 685

Then he led him in (ill it pleased him) and there met then the
 royal maid,
 And she loosened the bands of his vizor, and her hand on his
 bridle laid,
 To her care must the Burg-grave yield it: nor his squires to their
 task were slack,
 For they turned them about, and swiftly they rode on their
 master's track. 690

So men saw the queen so gracious lead her guest thro' the city
 street
 Who here should be hailed the victor—Then she lighted her on
 her feet,
 'Ah me! but thy squires are faithful! Fear ye lest your lord be lost?
 Without ye shall he be cared for; take his steed, here am I his
 host!'

And above found he many a maiden: then her hands of dusky
 hue 695
 The queen set unto his harness, and disarmed the knight so true.
 And the bed-covering was of sable, and the couch it was spread
 so fair,
 And in secret a hidden honour they did for the knight prepare,

For no one was there to witness—The maidens they might not
 stay,
 And the door was fast closed behind them, and Frau Minne might
 have her way. 700
 So the queen in the arms of her true love found guerdon of sweet
 delight,
 Tho' unlike were the twain in their colour, Moorish princess and
 Christian knight!

Then the townsfolk brought many an offering to the gods who
 had seen their woe.
 That which Rassalig needs must promise ere he from the field
 might go
 That he did, in all truth and honour, yet heavy was he at heart, 705
 And afresh sprang the fount of his sorrow for his prince gallant
 Eisenhart.
 And the Burg-grave he heard of his coming; then loud rang the
 trumpet call,
 And no man of Zassamank's princes but came to the palace hall.
 They gave Gamuret thanks for the honour he had won in the field
 that day,
 Four-and-twenty had fallen before him, and their chargers he
 bore away, 710
 And three chieftains had he made captive. And there rode in the
 princes' train
 Many gallant knights, in the courtyard of the palace did they draw
 rein.
 And the hero had slept and eaten, and clad him in raiment fair,
 Chief host was he, for his body fit garments would they prepare.
 And she who afore was a maiden but now was a wife would take 715
 Her lord by the hand, forth she led him, and unto her princes
 spake:
 'My body and this my kingdom are vassals unto this knight,
 If so be that his foemen fearing, resist not his hand of might!'

Then Gamuret spake, and his bidding was courteous, for hero
 meet,
 Sir Rassalig, go thou nearer, with a kiss thou my wife shalt greet; 720
 And Sir Gaschier, thou shalt do likewise.' Then the Scotch knight
 proud Heuteger
 He bade on the lips to kiss her (and the wounds won in joust he
 bare).

Then he bade them all be seated, and standing, he wisely spake:
 'I were fain to behold my kinsman, if he who did captive take
 The knight shall have naught against it—As kinsman it seemeth
 me 725
 That I find here no other counsel save straightway to set him
 free!
 Then the queen she smiled, and bade them go swiftly and seek
 the knight,

And then thro' the throng he pressed him, that count so fair and
 bright,
 Yet bare he the wounds of knighthood, and bravely and well had
 fought;
 With the host of Gaschier the Norman the land of the Moors he
 sought. 730
 He was courteous; his sire a Frenchman he was Kaillet's sister's
 son,
 Killirjacac his name; in the service of fair women fair meed he
 won,

 And the fairest of men they deemed him. When Gamuret saw his
 face
 (For like were they each to the other, as men of a kindred race)
 He bade his queen to kiss him and embrace him as kinsman true, 735
 And he spake, 'Now come thou and greet me!' and the knight to
 his arms he drew,
 And he kissed him, and each was joyful that the other he here
 might meet:
 And Gamuret quoth unto him, 'Alas! cousin fair and sweet,
 What doth thy young strength in this conflict? Say, if woman hath
 sent thee here?'
 'Nay, never a woman sent me, with my cousin I came, Gaschier, 740
 He knoweth why he hath brought me—A thousand men have I,
 And I do to him loyal service—To Rouen in Normandy
 I came, where his force was gathered, and many a youthful knight
 I brought from Champagne in mine army; 'neath his banner we
 fain would fight.
 Now evil hath turned against him what of cunning is hers and
 skill, 745
 Thou wilt honour thyself if thou free him for my sake, and cure his
 ill!'
 'Thyself shalt fulfil thy counsel! Go thou, take with thee Gaschier,
 I would fain see my kinsman Kaillet, do thou bring him unto me
 here!'
 So they wrought out the host's desiring, and brought him at his
 behest,
 And in loving wise and kindly did Gamuret greet his guest; 750
 And ofttimes the queen embraced him, and kissed him with
 kisses sweet:
 And nothing it wronged her honour in such wise the prince to
 greet,
 He was cousin unto her husband, by birth was himself a king.
 Then smiling his host spake to him, 'God knows, 'twere an evil
 thing,
 Had I taken from thee Toledo, and thy goodly land of Spain 755
 For Gascony's king, who wrathful doth plague thee with strife
 amain;
 'Twere faithless of me, Sir Kaillet, since mine aunt's son thou sure
 shalt be;

The bravest of knights shall be with thee; say, who forced this
 strife on thee?

Then out spake the proud young hero, 'My cousin Schiltung bade
 (Since his daughter Friedebrand wedded) that I lend to the king
 mine aid. 760

For the sake of his wife hath he won him, yea even from me alone
 Six thousand chosen heroes, who valour and skill have shown.
 And other men did I bring him, but a part they shall hence have
 sailed,
 For the Scottish folk came they hither, brave bands who in strife
 ne'er failed.

And there came to his aid from Greenland, strong heroes who
 bravely fought, 765

Two mighty kings, and a torrent of knighthood with them they
 brought,
 And many a goodly vessel: and they pleased me, those men of
 might—
 And here for his sake came Morhold, who hath cunning and skill
 in fight.'

'But now have they turned them homewards, and that which the
 queen shall say
 Even that will I do with mine army, her servant am I alway! 770

Thou shalt thank me not for this service, from kinsman 'twas due,
 I ween.
 Now *thine* are these gallant heroes, if like mine they baptized had
 been

And were even as they in colour, then never a monarch crowned
 But if they should fight against him, of conflict his fill had found!
 But I marvel what here hath brought thee? Say, how didst thou
 reach this strand?' 775

'Yestreen I came, and this morning I am lord o'er this goodly land!
 The queen by the hand she took me, and with love I myself would
 shield,
 For so did my wit give counsel—' 'Yea, so hast thou won the field,
 Those sweet weapons two hosts have vanquished!' 'Thou wouldst
 say, since I fled from *thee*,
 So loudly on me thou calledst, say, what wouldst thou force from
 me? 780

Let us speak of the thing in friendship!' 'Thine anchor I failed to
 know,
 But seldom mine aunt's brave husband Gandein, did such token
 show!'
 'But I, I knew well thine ostrich with the snake's head upon thy
 breast,
 Aloft stood thy bird so stately, nor hid it within a nest!'

'And I saw in thy mien and bearing that that pledge would have
 'seemed thee ill 785

Which two heroes afore had given, tho' first had they fought their fill.'
'E'en such fate as theirs were my portion—But this thing I needs must say,
Tho' little I like a devil, were he victor as thou this day
For love of his gallant doings the women had deemed him sweet,
Yea, as sugar were fain to eat him!' 'Now thou praisest me more than meet!' 790
'Nay, of flattery know I little, thou shalt see that I hold thee dear
In other wise!' Then the hero bade Rassalig draw anear.

And courteous he spake, King Kaillet, 'My kinsman with valiant hand
Hath made of thee here his captive?' 'Yea, Sire, so the thing doth stand,
And I hold him for such a hero that Assagog's kingdom fair 795
Should fail not to yield him homage, since the crown he may never wear,
Our prince Eisenhart! In her service was he slain who shall now be wife
To thy kinsman, as knight so faithful he gave for her love his life.
With my kiss have I sealed forgiveness, yet my lord and my friend I lost!
If thy cousin by knightly dealing will repay of his death the cost 800
I will fold my hands as his vassal: and wealth shall be his and fame,
All that Eisenhart from Tánkaneis as his heritage thought to claim.
Embalmed here the hero lieth, and I gaze on his wounds each day
Since this spear thro' his true heart piercing, my lord and my king did slay!'

Then he drew it forth from his bosom by a silken cord so fine, 805
And the heroes saw the spear-blade 'neath his robe on his bare chest shine.
And he quoth, 'It is now high morning, if my lord Sir Killirjacac
My token will bear to my princes, with him will the knights ride back.'
And a finger-ring he sent them: dark as hell were those heroes all
And they rode who were there of princes, thro' the town to the 810
castle hall.
As his vassals he gave with their banners to Assagog's lords their land,
And each one rejoiced in the fiefdom he won from his ruler's hand,
But the better part was his portion, Gamuret's, as their lord and king.
And these were the first—as they passed hence their homage they fain would bring
The princes of Zassamank's kingdom, and they came in their 815
order due,

And each as their queen had bade them, they took from his hand
 anew
 Their land, and the fruit it should bear them, as to each man was
 fit and right,
 And poverty fled from his presence. Now he who was slain in
 fight
 And in life was a prince by lineage, Prothizilas, he had left
 A Dukedom fair, and this country which was thus of its lord bereft
 He gave unto him who much honour had won by his strong right
 hand, 820
 The Burg-grave, in combat dauntless—With its banners he took
 the land.

Then Assagog's noble princes took the Scotch Duke, proud
 Heuteger,
 And Gaschier, the Norman hero, to their lord did they lead them
 there,
 And he spake them free for their asking, and they thanked brave
 Gamuret. 825

Then Heuteger of Scotland with prayers did these knights beset,
 'Now give to our lord the armour, as prize for his deeds so brave,
 That Eisenhart's life took from us, when to Friedebrand he gave
 That which was of our land the glory—Forfeit of joy the knight,
 And dead on his bier he lieth, since no love might his love requite
 —', 830

And earth knoweth naught so goodly, the helm it was strong and
 hard,
 Yea even of diamond fashioned, in battle a goodly guard.
 Then Heuteger sware unto them, if the land of his lord he saw
 He would pray of his hand the armour, and send it to them once
 more.

And this did he swear them freely—Then leave would the princes
 pray 835
 Who stood in the royal presence, and they wend from the hall
 their way.
 And tho' sorely the land was wasted, yet Gamuret scattered free
 Such royal gifts and goodly as if laden with gold each tree.
 And costly I ween the presents that vassal and friend must share
 From the open hand of the hero; and the queen deemed it right
 and fair. 840

Full many a bitter conflict had been fought ere the bridal feast,
 But peace had the foeman sealèd, and the land was from strife
 released;
 (Nor this song I myself have woven, but so was it told to me)
 And Eisenhart did they bury with honours right royally.
 To his grave did his kinsmen bear him, and the gold that his lands
 might bring 845
 In a whole year long, did they spend there, of their free will they
 did this thing.

And Gamuret bade his kinsfolk his riches and lands to hold
And use as they would; tho' they craved not such boon from the
hero bold.

At dawn from before the fortress the foe would their camp
withdraw,
And those who were there departed; many litters with them they
bore. 850
And the field was left unsheltered, save for one tent so great and
fair,
And the king he bade his servants that tent to his vessel bear.
And he said to his folk that to Assagog would he take it, and yet I
wot
He did with that speech deceive them, for Assagog saw him not.

Now that proud and gallant hero, his heart gave him little rest 855
Since he found there no deeds of knighthood, and gladness
forsook his breast;
Yet his dusky wife was dearer than e'en his own life might be,
Ne'er knew he a truer lady whose heart was from falsehood free,
She forgot not what 'seemed a woman, and with her as comrades
good
Went purity untarnished, and the ways of true womanhood. 860

He was born in Seville's fair city whom the knight would hereafter
pray,
When he grew of his sojourn weary, to sail with him far away;
For many a mile had he led him, and he brought him unto this
place,
And a Christian was he, the steersman, nor like to a Moor in face.
And wisely he spake, 'Thou shalt hide it from them who a dark
skin bear, 865
Too swift is my barque for pursuing, from hence shall we quickly
fare!'

Then his gold it was borne to the vessel. Now of parting I needs
must tell,
By night did he go, the hero, and his purpose he hid it well;
But when from his wife he sailèd, in her womb did she bear his
child:
And fair blew the wind, and the breezes bare him hence o'er the
waters wild. 870

And the lady she found a letter, and 'twas writ by her husband's
hand;
And in French (for she well could read it) did the words of the
writing stand:
'Here one love to another speaketh—As a thief have I stolen away
That mine eyes might not see thy sorrow—But this thing I needs
must say,
Wert thou, e'en as I, a Christian I ever should weep for thee, 875

For e'en now I must sorely mourn thee. If it chance that our child
 shall be
 In face like unto one other, then his is a dowry fair,
 Of Anjou was *he* born, and Frau Minne for his lady he did declare.
 Yet was he in strife a hailstorm, ill neighbour unto his foe;
 That his grandsire hath been King Gandein, this I will that my son
 shall know. 880
 Dead he lay thro' his deeds of knighthood; and his father the
 same death won,
 Addanz was his name, and unsplintered his shield hath been seen
 of none;
 And by birth he hath been a Breton, and two brothers' sons were
 they,
 He and the brave Pendragon, and their sires' names I here will
 say;
 For Lassalies he hath been the elder, and Brickus was his brother's
 name, 885
 And Mazadan was their father whom a fay for her love did claim.
 Terre-de-la-schoie did they call her, to Fay-Morgan she led the
 king,
 For he was her true heart's fetters; and my race from those twain
 did spring.
 And fair shall they be, and valiant, and as crownèd kings they
 reign—
 If lady, thou'lt be baptizèd thou mayst win me to thee again! 890
 Yet had she no thought of anger, but she spake, 'Ah! too soon 'tis
 o'er,
 Of a sooth would I do his bidding, would it bring him to me once
 more.
 In whose charge hath my courteous hero left the fruit of his love
 so true?
 Alas! for the sweet communion that we twain for a short space
 knew!
 Shall the strength of my bitter sorrow rule body and soul away? 895
 And she quoth, 'Now his God to honour, his will would I fain
 obey,
 And gladly I'd be baptizèd, and live as should please my love!
 And sorrow with her heart struggled, and e'en as the turtle dove
 Her joy sought the withered branches, for the same mind was
 hers, I ween,
 When the mate of the turtle dieth, she forsaketh the branches
 green. 900
 Then the queen at the time appointed bare a son, who was dark
 and light,
 For in him had God wrought a wonder, at one while was he black
 and white.
 And a thousand times she kissed him where white as his sire's his
 skin.
 And she named the babe of her sorrows Feirefis Angevin.


And he was a woodland-waster, many spears did he shatter fair, 905
 And shields did he pierce—as a magpie the hue of his face and
 hair.
 Now a year and more was ended since Gamuret won such fame
 At Zassamank, and his right hand the victor's prize might claim,
 And yet o'er the seas he drifted, for the winds vexed the hero
 bold.
 Then a silken sail red gleaming he saw, and the barque did hold 910
 The men whom the King of Scotland, Friedebrand, sent upon
 their way
 At the bidding of Queen Belakané: from her would they pardon
 pray
 That ever he came against her, tho' in sooth he had lost the more.
 And with them the diamond helmet, the corslet and sword they
 bore,
 And hosen e'en such as the harness, and a marvel it needs must 915
 be
 That the barque was thus borne towards him, as the venture hath
 told to me!
 And they gave him the goodly armour, and an oath unto them he
 swore
 That his mouth it should speak their message, an he came to the
 queen once more.
 And they parted; and one hath told me that the sea bare him
 onward bound
 Till he came to a goodly haven, and in Seville his goal he found. 920
 And with gold did he pay his steersman right well for his
 guidance true,
 And they parted, those twain, and sorrow the heart of that
 steersman knew!

BOOK II HERZELEIDE

ARGUMENT

This Book tells how Gamuret sought for King Kaillet, and found him before Kanvoleis. How the Queen of the Waleis ordered a Tourney to be holden, and of the heroes there assembled. How Gamuret did valiant deeds, and was adjudged the victor; and how two queens laid claim to his love. Of the wedding of Gamuret and Queen Herzeleide and their love to each other. How Gamuret went to the aid of the Baruch, and was treacherously slain before Alexandria. How the news was brought to the land of the Waleis; of the sorrow of Herzeleide; and of the birth of Parzival.

BOOK II HERZELEIDE

Now there in the Spanish country he thought him the king to
greet,
 his kinsman and cousin Kaillet, and he followed with footsteps
fleet
to Toledo, but thence had he ridden unto deeds of knighthood
fair,
Where many a spear should be splintered, and men thought not
their shields to spare.
Then he thought him to make him ready (so the venture doth tell
I ween) 5
With many a blazoned spear-shaft, and many a sendal green;
For each spear it bare a pennon, with the anchor in ermine white,
And well was it wrought, the symbol, and costly in all men's sight.
And long and broad were the pennons, and e'en to the hand
hung low
When men on the spear-blade bound them, a span-breadth the
point below. 10
And a hundred spears were ready for that true and gallant knight,
And his cousin's folk they bare them, and with him went forth to
fight;
And honour and loyal service they showed him as fit and fair,
Nor I think had their lord been wrathful that his kinsman their
love should share.
I know not how long he sought him, till shelter at length he found
In the Waleis land: 'fore Kanvoleis were pitched on the open
ground 15
Many tents so fair and knightly; (I speak not from fancy light
But sooth are the words I tell ye if the tale ye would hear aright)
Then he bade his folk to halt there, and he sent on before his face

The chief of his squires, and he bade him to seek them a resting-
 place. 20
 He would fain do his master's bidding, and swift to the town he
 sped,
 And many a pack-horse laden his comrades behind him led.
 And never a house he saw there but its roof was a shield I trow,
 And the walls were hung and circled with spears in a goodly row,
 For the queen of the Wales country had ordered at Kanvoleis 25
 That a Tourney fair be holden, and they ordered it in such wise
 That a coward had little liked it—for whoever would seek such
 strife
 At his will doth it chance but seldom! She was maiden, not yet a
 wife,
 And herself and two lands she offered to him who the prize
 should hold;
 And many to earth had fallen in whose ear had this tale been
 told, 30
 And he who such fall must suffer he held that his chance was o'er.
 And many a dauntless hero showed knighthood those walls
 before,
 And many a horse rushed onward as the knight spurred to
 onslaught fierce,
 And the sword-blades rang clear on each other, and spears did
 the shield rims pierce.

A bridge from the plain was builded that crossed o'er the river's
 flow, 35
 And 'twas closed by a tower-portal; nor the squire at his task was
 slow,
 But he opened the gates, unwearied, when one would an
 entrance win.
 And above it there stood the palace, and the queen sat the hall
 within,
 And she gazed from the high hall window with many a maiden
 fair,
 And they looked on the squires beneath them to see what had
 brought them there. 40
 'Twixt themselves had they taken counsel, and a tent did they rear
 on high
 For the winning of love ungranted a king wrought it in days gone
 by,
 ('Twas in service of Queen Belakané). The squires laboured with
 might and main
 Till the burden of thirty pack-steeds they raised on the grassy
 plain, 45
 A pavilion rich to look on, and the meadow it was so wide
 That the silken ropes that held it might stretch forth on either
 side.
 And Gamuret, their master, ate without in the open air—
 And then for his courtly entrance with skill would the knight
 prepare,

Nor longer might be delaying—His squires take the spears
straightway,
And they bind them fast together, and five in each band they lay, 50
And the sixth in their hand they carry, with its pennon and anchor
white;
So proudly into the city came riding this gallant knight.

Then the queen she heard the tidings that a noble guest was
come
From a far-off land and distant, and in sooth was he known to
none.
'And courteous his folk in bearing; both heathen and French I
trow, 55
And Angevin, some among them if their speech I aright may
know;
And their courage is high, and their raiment both rich and well
shaped shall be.
But now was I with his people, and they seem me from falsehood
free,
And they say, 'Who hath lust for riches, if he to our lord shall seek
He will free him from fear of scarceness!' The while I with them
did speak, 60
I asked them to tell of their master, and they thought not to hide
the thing,
But spake of a true heart freely, 'Of Zassamank is he king.'

'Twas a page who brought the tidings—'Ah me! that pavilion fair!
Wouldst thou pledge thy crown and thy kingdom not half of its
cost were there!
'Thou needst not to praise so highly, my mouth ne'er shall say
thee nay, 65
A rich man shall be its owner, no lack doth he know alway.'
And in this wise she spake, the lady, the fair and gracious queen,
'Why cometh he not to the castle? For fain I his face had seen.'

This she bade her page to ask him—Then the hero was fain to
make
Brave entry into the city, and the sleepers must needs awake. 70
Many shields he saw fair shining—The blast of the trumpets clear
Rang loud and long before him, and two drummers ye needs
must hear
As they tossed and smote their tambours, and the walls echoed
back the sound,
With the notes of the flutes 'twas mingled as the train through
the city wound,
'Twas a march that they played so gaily—Nor forget we how he
must ride 75
Their master and lord, he followed with the fiddlers his rein
beside.

Then he threw his leg o'er his charger, that hero so bold and fair,
And boots did he wear of leather, or else had his limbs been bare.

And his mouth it was e'en as a ruby, and red, as a fire doth burn,
 And full, not too thin; fair his body wherever the eye might turn; 80
 And fair was his hair and curling, and wherever one saw the skin
 I ween 'twas as costly cover as ever a head might win.
 And of samite green was his mantle, and the sable shone dark
 thereon
 Tho' white was his vest, and the gazers they came in a goodly
 throng.
 And many must ask the question, 'Who was he, the beardless
 knight 85
 Who rode with such pomp of riches?' Then the tale it was spread
 aright,
 For they spake it as truth who knew it—So they drew to the
 bridge anear
 The folk of the town, and his people; and so bright was the
 radiance clear
 That shone from the queen that it thrilled him thro' his strong
 limbs, that goodly knight,
 And he braced himself as a falcon that plumeth its wings for
 flight, 90
 And the lodging he deemed it goodly; so thought he that hero
 wise;
 And his hostess with joy beheld him, the lady of fair Wales!

 Then the king of Spain he heard it, how there stood on the open
 plain
 The tent that at Rassalig's bidding Gamuret as his prize did gain
 At Patelamunt, and the tidings a knight to his lord would bring— 95
 Then he sped as a deer, joy's vassal I ween was the gallant king!
 And thus spake the knight, 'Thy kinsman, and the son of thine
 aunt I saw,
 And with pomp and in state as aforetime, so to-day doth he
 hither draw;
 There are floating a hundred pennons full fair by his knightly
 shield,
 And around his high pavilion they stand on the grassy field, 100
 And green as the grass the pennons, and the hero bold doth bear
 Three anchors of snow-white ermine on every sendal fair.'

 'Hath he come here arrayed for battle? Ah! then shall men see
 straightway
 How he spurreth him swift to the onslaught, how he striveth in
 knightly fray!
 Long time hath the proud King Hardeiss his anger against me
 shown, 105
 Here in joust shall Gamuret fell him, and good fortune shall be
 mine own!'

Then straightway he sent a message to Gaschier, the Norman
 knight,

Where he lay with many a vassal; and Killirjacac the fair and
 bright,
 For here had they come at his bidding—The twain at King Kaillet's
 side
 Towards the fair pavilion with a goodly following hied. 110
 And Zassamank's king was joyful, for he held them dear at heart:
 And the time over-long had seemed them since they must from
 each other part,
 This they spake of a true heart truly—And the king he was fain to
 know
 What knights should be here for the Tourney, who valour and skill
 should show.
 Then spake unto him his kinsmen, 'From distant lands they came, 115
 The knights whom love's power hath brought here, many heroes
 of dauntless fame.'

 'Here Uther Pendragon fighteth, and with him his Breton host;
 One grief as a thorn doth vex him, his wife hath the hero lost,
 The queen who was Arthur's mother; a clerk who all magic knew
 With him hath she fled, and Arthur doth after the twain pursue; 120
 'Tis now the third year since he lost them, his son alike and wife—
 And here is his daughter's husband, a hero well skilled in strife,
 King Lot is his name, of Norway—swift seeketh he knighthood's
 prize,
 But slow are his feet to falsehood, the knight so bold and wise.
 And here is his young son Gawain; as yet he too weak shall be 125
 For any deed of knighthood—but now was the boy with me,
 And he spake, were he not too feeble a spear-shaft as yet to
 break
 He were fain to do deeds of knighthood, in the Tourney his part
 would take!
 His lust for strife waketh early! Here Patrigalt's king hath brought
 Of spears a goodly forest; yet their valour shall be as naught 130
 When weighed against the gallant doings of the men of Portugal,
 Yea, *bold* we in truth may call them, and shields do they pierce
 right well.
 And here are the men of Provence, with many a blazoned shield;
 And here the Waleis, to their onslaught the foemen perforce must
 yield,
 And they ride at their will thro' the combat, for men of the land
 are they. 135
 Many fight here for love's rewarding whose title I may not say,
 But all whom I here have named thee now lie, and the truth I tell,
 At great cost here within the city, for so the queen deemed it
 well.'

 'And without on the plain they hold them who deem their prize
 lightly won,
 Proud Arragon's haughty monarch, and the brave king of
 Askalon. 140
 Eidagast, he is there from Logrois, and the King Brandelidelein

(The monarch is he of Punturtois), there too is bold Lähelein.
 And Morhold is there of Ireland, many pledges that knight hath
 ta'en;
 And many a haughty German doth camp on that battle plain.
 To this country the Duke of Brabant hath come thro' the King
 Hardeiss; 145

The king of Gascony gave him his sister the fair Aleiss,
 (Yet his service ere that won payment) wrath against me those
 princes drew:
 Now I trust *thee* to think of our kinship—For love's sake do me
 service true!
 Quoth the king of Zassamank, 'Cousin, no thanks would I have
 from thee

Whate'er I may do for thine honour, my will e'en as thine shall be. 150
 Doth thine ostrich yet stand un-nested? Thou shalt carry its
 serpent's head
 'Gainst thy foeman's demi-gryphon, *my* anchor shall swift be
 sped,
 And find in his onslaught landing; himself shall a haven seek
 Behind his steed on the gravel! If our wrath we be fain to wreak,
 And ride one against the other, I fell him, or he felleth me— 155
 On my knightly faith as a kinsman this word do I swear to thee!

Then Kaillet he sought his lodging, and his heart it was gay and
 light.
 Then arose on the plain a war-cry, 'fore the face of two gallant
 knights,
 They were Schyolarz of Poitou, and Gurnemanz of Graharz,
 On the plain did they meet together; ere the eventide might pass 160
 The knights in their troops they rode forth, here by six and there
 by three,
 And they did gallant deeds of knighthood—nor otherwise might
 it be.

And now it was fully noontide, and the knight in his tent abode;
 Then the king of Zassamank heard this, that o'er all the field they
 rode,
 'O'er the length and the breadth they gallop, and in knightly
 order fight.' 165

And thither he rode, the hero, with many a banner bright;
 But he rode not in search of conflict, at his leisure he thought to
 see
 What was done by one side and the other of fair deeds of
 chivalry.
 On the plain did they spread his carpet, where the knights in strife
 would close,
 And the shriek of the wounded horses o'er all the tumult rose. 170
 The squires stood round in a circle mid the clash of the ringing
 steel,
 And the heroes for fair fame battled, and the swords sang for
 woe or weal.

There was sound as of splintered spear-shafts, but none need to
 question, Where?
 And his walls were of meeting foemen, by knightly hands builded
 fair.

And so near was I ween the jousting that the maids from the hall
 above 175
 Might look on the toil of the heroes—But sorrow the queen did
 move
 Since the king of Zassamank did naught, nor mingled him in the
 fight,
 And she quoth, 'Ah! why came he hither? I had deemed him a
 gallant knight!
 (Now the King of France, whose fair wife brought Gamuret sorrow
 sore
 When he fought for her sake, lay lifeless, and the queen sought
 the wide world o'er 180
 To know if from heathen countries he had come to his land again.
 'Twas love's power to the search that drove her, for love did her
 heart constrain.)

And many brave deeds were done there of many a poor man
 bold,
 Who yet for the highest strove not, which the queen for their
 prize had told,
 Herself and her two fair kingdoms,—they thought not such prize
 to gain, 185
 But they battled for other booty, tho' their hearts were for
 payment fain.

Now clad was Gamuret's body in the harness whereby his wife
 Might bring to her mind forgiveness, and the ending of bitter
 strife.

The Scotch King Friedebrand sent it, as a gift, to repay the woe
 That with conflict he heaped upon her, nor shall earth of its fellow
 know. 190
 Then he looked well upon the diamond—'twas a helmet, thereon
 they bound
 An anchor, and jewels so precious were within its setting found;
 Nor small were the stones, but costly, and the weight it was none
 too light
 Of that helmet, and yet he bare it, and decked was the guest for
 fight

And what was his shield's adorning? of gold of Araby fair, 195
 And the boss it was rich and costly, and heavy the weight he bare.
 And the red gold shone so brightly that mirrored the face therein,
 And an anchor beneath of sable—I were fain to myself to win
 That wherewith the knight was girded, full many a mark its worth.
 And wide was the coat emblazoned, and it reached e'en unto the
 earth, 200
 And I ween that few in battle such raiment shall think to wear.

And the furrows were trodden level, and their locks must the
 sword-blade know,
 And many a wood was wasted, and many a knight laid low—
 And they who thus fell, 'twas told me, they turned their chargers
 round
 And hied to the back of the Tourney, where none but the cowards
 were found.

And so near was I ween the combat that the women might see
 aright 235
 Who there won the prize of valour; Rivalein that love-lorn knight
 With his spear hewed afresh a token, of Loheneis was he king,
 And the crash of the splintered spear-shaft did aye with his
 onslaught ring.
 Of a knight did Morhold rob them, for he drew him from off his
 steed
 And lifted him up before him (unseemly methinks such deed) 340
 And Killirjacac they called him,—and ere this King Lac had ta'en
 Such payment from him as in falling a knight from the earth may
 gain—
 So his deeds had been fair and knightly; then this valiant man he
 thought
 He would take him with never a sword-thrust, and the knight in
 his arms he caught.
 Then the hand of the valiant Kaillet it smote from the saddle-bow 245
 The Duke of Brabant, Prince Lambekein, and the hero was laid
 alow.
 And what think ye they did, his soldiers? Their swords into shields
 they turned,
 And with them did they guard their monarch—And ever for strife
 they yearned.

Then the King of Arragon smote him Uther Pendragon old,
 From his charger adown on the meadow fell the king of the
 Bretons bold, 250
 And the flowers stood fair around him—Ah! I courteous am I, I
 trow,
 Since the Breton before Kanvoleis I lay on such couch alow,
 Where never the foot of a peasant hath trodden unto this day,
 Nay, perchance they may never tread there—'tis the truth and no
 lie I say—
 No more might he keep his saddle as he sat on his steed of yore, 255
 But his peril his friends forgat not, they fought fiercely the hero
 o'er.

And many a course was ridden; and the king of Punturtois
 Fell prone in his horse's hoof-tracks on the field before Kanvoleis,
 And low did he lie behind it—'Twas Gamuret dealt the blow—
 'Ride on, on thy course, thou hero, and tread thy foemen low!' 260
 Strife giveth whereon to trample! Then Kaillet, his kinsman true,

Made the Punturtois his captive, tho' he scarce pierced the mêlée thro'.

Brandelidelein was prisoner, and his folk they had lost their king,
 In his stead another monarch to their host did they captive bring. 265
 And hither and thither sped they, the heroes, in armour good,
 And by blows and by trampling kneaded, of alum I ween their
 food;
 And dark on their skin the swellings, and many a gallant knight
 Might speak, as he knew, of bruises he had won him in hard-
 fought fight.

Now as simple truth I say it, little rest was their portion here,
 By love were they forced to conflict, many shields with their
 blazon clear, 270
 And many a goodly helmet whose covering the dust should be.
 And the meadow with flowers was sprinkled, and green turf ye
 there might see,
 And there fell on it many a hero, who of honour had won such
 meed—
 More modest were my desiring! 'Twould content me to sit my
 steed.

Then the king of Zassamank rode forth a space from the knightly
 fray 275
 Where a rested steed did wait him, and the diamond he loosed
 alway,
 With no thought of pride in the doing, but the breezes blew fresh
 and cool,
 And the squires unbound his vizor, and his lips shone so red and
 full.

I have named unto ye a lady—Her chaplain did hither ride,
 And with him three noble pages, and strong squires were there
 beside; 280
 And pack-horses twain they led there, and the will of their queen
 they'd do,
 She was Lady of France, Anflisé—Her chaplain was wise and true,
 And straightway he knew the hero, and in French should his
 greeting be,
 'Soit le bien venu, mon beau sire' to my lady as e'en to me,
 As queen of France she reigneth whom the lance of thy love doth
 smite, 285
 And he gave to his hand a letter, and therein read the gallant
 knight
 A greeting fair, and a token it held of a finger-ring—
 As pledge of the truth of his mission the chaplain the same must
 bring
 His lady of old received it from the hand of the Angevin—
 Then he bowed as he saw the letter. Would ye hear what was writ
 therein? 290

'Here biddeth thee love and greeting a heart that hath ne'er been
free
From grief since it knew thy service—Thy love is both lock and
key
To my heart, and my heart's rejoicing! For thy love am I like to die,
If thy love afar abideth, then all love from my heart shall fly.
Come thou, and take from my true hand crown, sceptre, and
kingdom fair, 295
It falleth to me as heirdom, and thy love well may claim a share.
As payment for this thy service rich presents I send to thee,
Four pack-horses' chests well laden—I would thou my knight
shouldst be
In this the land of the Walesis, 'fore the city of Kanvoleis.
I care not if the queen shall see it, small harm may therefrom
arise, 300
For fairer am I, and richer, and I think me shall better know
To take the love that is proffered, and love in return bestow.
Wilt thou live in true love as shall 'seem thee? Then here do I bid
thee take
My crown as thy love's rewarding—This I pray for my true love's
sake.'
And no more did he find in the letter—Then his squires once
more they drew 305
O'er his head the under-helmet; from Gamuret sorrow flew,
And he bound on the helm of diamond, 'twas harder than blade
might pierce,
For he thought again to prove him, and ride forth to conflict
fierce.
And the messengers did he bid them to lead to the tent for rest:
And he cleared a space around him wherever the conflict pressed. 310
This was vanquished, and that one victor—Did a knight o'er-long
delay
To win to him fame in battle, his chance might he find to-day.
Here twain would joust together; in troops would these others
ride;
And the customs of friendly combat for a space did they lay
aside,
And sworn brotherhood nothing counted 'fore the strength of
fierce anger's might, 315
And the crooked was seldom straightened; nor spake they of
knightly right,
What they captured they kept, uncaring if another's hate they
won,
And from many lands had they ridden who with brave hands
brave deeds had done,
And their hurts but little grieved them. Here Gamuret heard her
prayer,
And e'en as Anflisé bade him, as her knight to the field would
fare; 320

'Twas a letter had brought the tidings—Ah! he giveth his courage
rein,
Is it love or the lust of battle that driveth him on amain?
Great love and strong faith they quicken his strength into life
anew.
Now see where his shield he beareth, King Lot, that hero true,
His foemen to flight had forced him save for Gamuret's strong
right hand, 325
His charger in gallant onslaught brake its way thro' the
threatening band,
And Arragon's king was smitten from his horse with a spear of
reed,
'Schaffilor was his name, and the spear-point which thrust him
from off his steed
Bare never a waving pennon, from paynim lands 'twas brought,'
And the knight made the king his captive, tho' his folk they had
bravely fought. 330
And the inner force drave the outer far back on the grassy plain.
'Twas a good vesper-play, yea, a Tourney; many spears did they
smite in twain—

Then Lähelein 'gain wax wrathful, 'Shall our honour be reft away?
'Tis the fault of him of the Anchor! Now one of us twain to-day
Shall lay in short space the other on a couch that he liketh ill, 335
For here are they well-nigh victors!' Then they cleared them a
space at will,
And no child's play it was that combat—In such wise with their
hands they wrought
That a woodland was well-nigh wasted; and alike from their
squires they sought
'New spears! New spears! Bring them hither!' Yet Lähelein he
must know
Sorrow and shame, for his foeman thrust him down from his
horse alow, 340
And he smote him the length of the spear-iron in a shaft of reed
made fast,
And one read of itself his surety, for the knight to the earth was
cast.
(Yet better I like to read them, sweet pears on the ground that lie
As thick as the knights lay round him! for his was the victory!)

And the cry arose from many who had fallen in joust before, 345
'Fly! Fly! For the Anchor cometh!' Then a knight towards him
bore,
(A prince of the Angevin country) and grief was his comrade true,
For he bare a shield inverted, and sorrow it taught anew
To the King, for the badge he knew it—Ah! why did he turn aside?
If ye will, I the truth will tell ye, 'twas given in royal pride 350
By Galoes the son of Gandein, Gamuret's brother true,
Ere Love this guerdon gave him that the hero in joust she slew.

Then he loosed from his head the helmet: nor thro' grass, nor
 thro' dust and sand
 Did he make him a way to the conflict, but he yielded to grief's
 command;
 And his thoughts within him battled, that he sought not ere this
 to hear 355
 From Kaillet, his friend and kinsman, how it fared with his brother
 dear
 That he came not here to the Tourney—Alas! tho' he knew it not,
 He had fallen before Monthorie—Sore sorrow was there his lot,
 For to anguish did love constrain him, the love of a noble queen;
 For his loss had she grieved so sorely that death had her portion
 been. 360

And tho' sorely Gamuret sorrowed, yet had he in half a day
 So many spear-shafts broken, were it Tourney indeed this fray
 Then had he a woodland wasted. Did I think me to count each
 spear
 One hundred in fight had he shattered, each blazoned with
 colours clear—
 But the heralds, they won his pennons, in sooth were they theirs
 of right— 365
 Then toward the fair pavilion he turned him, the gallant knight.
 And the Wales squire rode after; and his was the coat so fair,
 All pierced and hewn with sword-thrust, which he did to his lady
 bear;
 And yet with gold was it precious, and it shone with a fiery glow,
 And right well might ye see its richness. Then joy did the queen's
 heart know, 370
 And she spake, 'A fair woman sent thee, with this knight, to this
 distant land!
 Now, courteous, I must bethink me lest these heroes ashamed
 shall stand
 Who have risked their fate in this venture—goodwill unto all I
 bear,
 For all do I count my kinsmen, since Adam's flesh we share,
 Yet Gamuret's hand, I think me, the highest prize hath won.' 375
 But by wrath constrained they battled till the shadows of night
 drew on,
 And the inner host the outer by force to their tents had brought,
 Save for Askalon's king and Morhold thro' the camp they their
 way had fought.

Some were winners, and some were losers, and many sore shame
 had earned,
 While others won praise and honour. Then the foe from each
 other turned, 380
 Here no man might see—He who holdeth the stakes, if no light
 he show,
 Who would cast the dice in the darkness? To such sport were the
 weary slow!

Men well might forget the darkness where Gamuret did abide,
 'Twas as day—That in sooth it was not, but light shone on every
 side
 From many small tapers clustered. There, laid on the olive wood, 385
 Was many a costly cushion, and by each couch a carpet good.
 Then the queen, she rode to the doorway with many a maid of
 rank,
 For fain would they see, those ladies, the brave king of
 Zassamank.

Many wearied knights thronged after—The cloth had they borne
 away
 Ere she came to the fair pavilion; then the host he uprose
 straightway, 390
 And the monarchs four his captives (and many a prince was
 there),
 And she welcomed him with due honour, and she saw him, and
 deemed him fair.
 Then glad spake the queen of the Walesis, 'Thou art host where we
 twain do stand,
 And I, even so I think me, am hostess o'er all this land,
 If thou deem it well I should kiss thee, such kiss seemeth good to
 me!' 395
 'Thy kiss shall be mine if these heroes, e'en as I, shall be kissed by
 thee,
 But if princes and kings must forego it, 'twere unfit I such boon
 should crave!
 'Yea, e'en as thou wilt, so be it, tho' ne'er saw I these heroes
 brave!
 Then she kissed, e'en as Gamuret prayed her, these princes of
 noble line,
 And he prayed her to sit, and beside her sat the King
 Brandelidelein! 400

Then lightly they strewed, o'er the carpet, green rushes yet wet
 with dew,
 And he sat him down upon them whose presence brought joy
 anew
 To the gracious queen of the Walesis; and love did her soul
 constrain,
 And as Gamuret sat before her his hand did she clasp again,
 And she drew him once more towards her, and she set him her
 seat beside. 405
 No wife was she, but a maiden, from whose hand did such grace
 betide.
 Would ye know the name they called her? Herzeleide the queen
 was she,
 (And her cousin was hight Rischoydè, King Kaillet should her
 husband be,
 And *he* was Gamuret's cousin), and so radiant the queen, and
 bright,

That e'en though they quenched the tapers, in her presence
 'twould still be light! 410
 (Were it not that a mighty sorrow his joy which aloft would fly
 Had beaten to earth, I think me he had wooed her right readily.)

And courteous they spake to each other: then cup-bearers drew
 anigh,
 And from Assagog the vessels, and their cost might no man deny;
 And noble pages bare them, many costly bowls and fair, 415
 Of precious jewels wroughten, and wide, none too small, they
 were,
 And none of them all were golden—'twas the tribute of that fair
 land,
 Which Eisenhart oft had proffered, when love's need nerved his
 knightly hand.
 And the drink unto each they proffered in many a coloured stone,
 And of emerald some, and of sardius, and of ruby some wrought
 alone. 420

Then there drew near to his pavilion two knights who their word
 must swear,
 (To the outer host were they captive and from thence to the town
 would fare.)
 And one of them was King Kailet; and he looked upon Gamuret,
 And he saw him sit heavy-hearted, and he spake, 'Dost thou
 sorrow yet
 For all men they own thy valour; Herzeleide and kingdoms twain 425
 Hast thou won, and all tongues have said it, to thy praises all men
 are fain,
 Be they Britons or men of Ireland—Who speaketh with foreign
 tongue,
 If France be their land, or Brabant, with one voice they thy praise
 have sung,
 That none here both skill and wisdom in strife like to thine have
 shown.

True letter it is I read thee! No slumber thy strength hath known, 430
 When these knights thou hast put in peril who surety ne'er sware
 of old,
 Brandelidelein the monarch, and Lähelein, hero bold;
 And Hardeiss and King Schaffilor; yea, and Rassalig the Moor,
 Whom thine hand before Patelamunt o'erthrew and he surety
 swore,
 Such lesson thou there didst teach him—Yea, this doth thy fame
 desire 435
 That with every coming conflict it broader shall wax and higher.'

'The queen sure will deem thou ravest, if in this wise thou praisest
 me,
 Yet I think not that thou shalt sell me, since the buyer the flaw
 shall see;
 Thy mouth is o'er-full of praises! Say, how hast thou come again?'

'The worthy folk of Punturtois, this knight from fair Champagne 440
 And myself have loosed, and Morhold who this nephew hath
 stolen of mine
 Will set him free, if on thy part thou wilt free Brandelidelein;
 Otherwise are we captive to them, both I and my sister's son,
 But such grace thou wilt surely show us—Here such vesper-play
 was run
 That it cometh not to a Tourney this while before Kanvoleis, 445
 And in sooth do I know how it standeth! Here sit they before
 mine eyes,
 The strength of the outer army—now speak, tell me when and
 how
 They could hold the field against us? Much fame hast thou won, I
 trow!'

Then the queen she spake to the hero from a true heart full
 tenderly,
 'Whate'er be my claim upon thee, I pray thee to let it be. 450
 I were fain of thy service worthy—If here I my right shall claim,
 And thine honour thereby be tarnished, I will leave thee nor mar
 thy fame!'

Then he sprang to his feet, the chaplain of Anflisé the wise and
 fair,
 And he quoth, 'Nay, my queen doth claim him, at her will to this
 land I fare.
 For his love hath she sent me hither, for his love she afar doth
 pine, 455
 And her love layeth claim upon him and *hers* shall he be, not
thine.
 O'er all women I ween doth she love him: here as messengers
 hath she sent
 Three princes, lads free from falsehood; and the one is hight
 Lazident
 Of noble birth from Greenland, and in Kärlingen doth he dwell,
 And his own hath he made the language; and the second his
 name I'll tell, 460
 Liodarz he, a count his father, and Schyolarz was he hight.
 And who was the third? Will ye hearken, his kinship I'll tell aright:
 Belleflur she hath been his mother, Pansamur was his father's
 name,
 Liahturteltart they called him, of the race of the fays he came.
 Then they ran all three before him, and they spake, 'Wouldst thy
 fortune prove? 465
 (The queen of France doth proffer the chance of a worthy love.)
 Thou shalt play the game, and never a pledge shall be asked from
 thee,
 Nor thy joy be to sorrow forfeit, as it waxeth still fair and free!'
 Then e'en while they spake their errand Kailet he had ta'en his
 seat

'Neath a fold of the royal mantle, and she spake to him low and sweet, 470
'Now say, hath worse harm befallen? Methinks I the wounds have seen?'
In that same hour his wounds and bruises she sought out, the gracious queen,
With her white hands so small and shapely, which their wisdom from God must win,
And sore was he cut and wounded on nose and on cheek and chin.
He had won for his wife the cousin of the queen who such honour fair 475
Would show him, herself would she tend him, and her hands for his hurts should care.

Then e'en as courtesy bade her she spake unto Gamuret,
'The fair queen of France, it seemeth, her heart upon thee hath set;
Now honour in me all women, and give what I here may claim,
Go not till men judge betwixt us, else thou leavest me here to shame.' 480
This he sware unto her, the hero, and leave she from him would crave,
And she passed thence, and then King Kailet, that monarch so true and brave,
He lifted her to her saddle; and he turned him about once more
And came into the pavilion, where his kinsman and friends he saw.

Then spake he unto King Hardeiss, 'Aleiss thy sister fair 485
She proffered her love, I took it—Now wedded is she elsewhere,
And a better than I is her husband! No longer thus wrathful frown,
Prince Lambekein, he hath won her—tho' in sooth she shall wear no crown,
Yet honour enough is her portion—Brabant and Hennegau
Do her service, and many a brave knight doth unto her bidding bow. 490
If thy mind it shall turn to greet me let thy favour be mine once more,
And take thou again my service of a true heart as aye of yore.'

Then the king of Gascony answered as befitted a hero brave,
'Yea, soft is thy speech, yet if greeting I give thee as thou dost crave,
Who hath offered to me such insult, men will deem *fear* such grace hath won, 495
For captive am I to thy cousin!' 'Yet ill shall he deal with none,
Gamuret, he shall grant thy freedom, that boon my first prayer shall be:

No man shall thereto constrain thee, yet my service the day shall see
 When thou as thy friend shalt claim me. For the shame, 'tis enow I wot,
 For whate'er *thou* mayst do against me, thy sister, she slayeth me not!' 500

Then all at his words laughed loudly. But their mirth it was soon o'erpast
 For his true heart the host constrainèd, and desire held him once more fast,
 And a sharp goad I ween is sorrow—Then the heroes they saw right well
 How he wrestled anew with sorrow and his joy in the conflict fell;
 And his cousin he waxed right wrathful, and he spake, 'Now thou doest ill.' 505

'Nay, nay, for I needs must sorrow, and naught may my yearning still
 For the queen I have left behind me, afar on a heathen shore,
 Pure wife and true is that lady, and my heart she hath wounded sore.'

'And her purity doth constrain me to mourn for her love so sweet,
 Vassals and lands she gave me; yet joy for a true knight meet 510
 Belakané of that hath robbed me! yet shame for a wavering mind
 I think me is right and manly—With such fetters her love did bind
 That she held me afar from Tourney, nor in search of strife I went;
 Then I thought me that deeds of knighthood should free me from ill-content,
 And here have I somewhat striven—Now many a fool would say 515
 That I, for her colour, fled her, to my eyes was she light as day!
 For her womanhood true I sorrow; o'er all others her worth stood high
 As the boss from the shield outstandeth. And another grief have I,
 And here make I my moan unto ye, my brother's arms I saw,
 But the shield on which they were blazoned, with point up-turned they bore.' 520

(Ah! woe for the words that are spoken, and the tidings of grief they bring!)

His eyes they o'erflowed with water, that gallant Spanish king,
 'Alas! O queen for thy madness, thro' thy love is Galoes slain,
 Whom every faithful woman from her heart shall mourn amain
 If she would that her dealing win her true honour in true man's thought. 525

Ah! queen of Auvergne I think me, tho' small grief it to thee hath brought,
 Yet thro' thee have I lost my kinsman, tho' his ending was fit and fair,
 For a knightly joust hath slain him who thy token in strife would bear!

And these princes here, his comrades, their heartfelt grief they
 show,
 As in funeral train their shield's-breadth do they turn to the earth
 below, 530
 For thus hath great sorrow taught them—In this guise do they
 knightly deeds,
 Heavy-hearted that he, my cousin, serveth no more for true love's
 meed!'

He hath won him another heart-grief as his brother's death is
 told,
 And he spake aloud in his sorrow, 'Now mine anchor hath found
 its hold
 And its haven in bitter rueing,' and the badge did he lay aside, 535
 And his grief taught him bitter anguish, and aloud the hero cried,
 'Galoes of Anjou! henceforward shall never a man deny
 That on earth ne'er was born thine equal for manhood and
 courtesy,
 And the fruit of a free hand knightly from thine heart did it bloom
 amain.

Ah! woe is me for thy goodness!' then to Kaillet he spake again, 540
 'How goeth it with Schoettè, my mother, of joy bereft?'
 'So that God hath had pity on her! When Gandein this life had
 left,
 And dead was Galoes thy brother, and thou wert not by her side,
 And she saw thee no more, then death brake her heart, and she
 too hath died!'

Then out quoth the Gascon Hardeiss, 'Turn thy will to a manly
 mien, 545
 Thou shalt mourn but in fitting measure if true manhood thine
 own hath been!'
 But too great was the load of his sorrow, and the tears as a flood
 must flow
 From his eyes—Then all things he ordered that the knights a fair
 rest might know,
 And he went where he saw his chamber, of samite the little tent,
 And in grief and sore lamentation the hours of the night he spent. 550

When there dawned another morning the knights together came,
 The inner host and the outer, all who thought there to win them
 fame;
 Were they young or old, were they cowardly or brave, they fought
 not that day.
 And the light grew to middle morning: yet so worn were they
 with the fray,
 And the horses so spent with spurring, that the knights in battle
 tried 555
 Were yet by weariness vanquished—Then the queen herself
 would ride,

And the valiant men from the open would she bring to the town
 again,
 And the best of the knights within there she bade ride to the Leo-
 plain;
 And straightway they did her bidding, and they rode in their
 knightly ranks,
 And they came ere the Mass was ended to the sad king of
 Zassamank. 560

Then the benediction spoken, Herzeleide the queen she came,
 And e'en as the folk upheld her, so she laid to the knight her
 claim:
 Then he spake, 'A wife have I Lady, and than life shall she be more
 dear,
 Yea, and e'en if I were without her thou another tale shouldst hear
 That afar should drive me from thee, if men here shall list my
 right!' 565

But the queen she looked upon him, and she spake to the gallant
 knight:
 'Thou shalt leave thy Moorish lady for my love; stronger far shall
 be
 The blessing that baptism giveth! From heathendom set thee
 free,
 And wed me in Christian marriage, since my heart for thy love
 doth yearn.
 Or say shall the French queen's message to my shame and my
 sorrow turn? 570

Sweet words did they speak her people, and thou heardest them
 to the end!
 'Yea, she is in truth my lady. When I back to Anjou must wend,
 Then fair counsels and courteous customs with me from her land
 I brought;
 Yea, even to-day doth she help me whom from childhood to man
 she taught.
 She hath fled all that mars a woman—We were children then, she
 and I, 575

Yet gladly we saw each other in the days that are long gone by!
 The noble queen Anflisé, in true womanhood hath she share,
 From her lands a goodly income she gave me, that lady fair,
 (In those days was I still a poor man), yet I took it right willingly,
 As a poor man thou still shalt count me, and Lady, shalt pity me, 580
 He is dead, my gallant brother—Of thy courtesy press me not,
 Turn thy love where thou findest gladness, for sorrow is aye my
 lot!'

'Nay, let me not longer sorrow; how wilt thou deny my claim?'
 'Thy question I'll gladly answer, here a *Tourney* thou didst
 proclaim,
 That *Tourney* hath not been holden, as many shall witness bear' 585

'For the vesper-play hath marred it! The knights who had
 foughten there
 So well have they tamed their ardour that the Tourney hath come
 to naught,'
 'I did but defend thy city with others that bravely fought;
 Thou shouldst force me not to withstand thee, here have others
 done more than I,
 Mine the greeting that *all* may claim here, other right would I still
 deny!' 590

Then, so hath the venture told me, they chose them, both man
 and maid,
 A judge o'er the claim of the lady, and their cause they before
 him laid,
 And it drew near to middle morning, and thus did the verdict run,
 'What knight hath bound on his helmet, and hath hither for
 conflict come,
 And hath fought, and the prize hath holden, then that knight he
 shall wed the queen.' 595

And unto the judgment spoken the knights gave consent I ween.
 Spake the queen, 'Mine thou art, and I'll yield thee fair service thy
 love to gain,
 And will give thee of joy such portion that thy life shall be free of
 pain!'

And yet bare he grief and sorrow—Now the April sun was o'er,
 And had left behind a token in the garment the meadow bore,
 With short green grass was it covered, so that coward hearts
 waxed bold, 600
 And won afresh high courage; and the trees did their buds unfold
 In the soft sweet air of the May-tide, and he came of the fairy
 race
 That aye loveth, or sweet love seeketh, and his friend she would
 show him grace.

Then he looked on Queen Herzeleide, and he spake to her
 courteously, 605
 'If in joy we would live, O Lady, then my warder thou shalt not be,
 When loosed from the bonds of sorrow, for knighthood my heart
 is fain;
 If thou holdest me back from Tourney I may practise such wiles
 again
 As of old when I fled from the lady whom I won with mine own
 right hand;
 When from strife she would fain have kept me I fled from her folk
 and land!' 610
 Then she spake, 'Set what bonds thou willest, by thy word will I
 still abide.'
 'Many spears would I break asunder, and each month would to
 Tourney ride,
 Thou shalt murmur not O Lady when such knightly joust I'd run!'

This she sware, so the tale was told me, and the maid and her
 lands he won.
 The three pages of Queen Anflisé and her chaplain were nigh at
 hand, 615
 As the judgment was sealed and spoken they must hearken and
 understand,
 And he spake to the knight in secret, 'To my lady this tale was
 told
 How at Patelamunt thy valour did the guerdon of victory hold,
 And that there two kingdoms served thee—And she too hath
 lands I trow,
 And she thinketh *herself* to give thee, and riches and gold enow!' 620
 'As knighthood of old she taught me so must I hold fast away
 By the strength of the knightly order, and the rule of the shield
 obey.
 Thro' her my shield have I won me, else perchance I had worn it
 not,
 Here doth knightly verdict bind me, be sorrow or joy my lot.
 Go ye homeward, and bear my service, her knight will I ever be, 625
 And for her is my deepest sorrow tho' all crowns were awaiting
 me!
 Then he proffered to them of his riches, but his gifts did they cast
 aside.
 Yet was she not shamed their lady, tho' homeward they needs
 must ride!
 And they craved not leave, but they rode thence, as in anger ye
 oft shall find,
 And the princes' sons, her pages, well-nigh did they weep them
 blind. 630
 They who bare their shields inverted their friends spake to them
 this word,
 'The queen, fair Herzeleide, hath the Angevin for her lord.'
 'Say, who from Anjou hath fought here? Our lord is, alas,
 elsewhere;
 He seeketh him fame 'gainst the heathen, and grief for his sake
 we bear!
 'He who shall be here the victor, who hath smitten full many a
 knight, 635
 He who smote and pierced so fiercely, he who bare on his helm
 of light
 An anchor rare and costly, that knight is the knight we mean,
 And King Kaillet he spake his title, Gamuret Angevin—I ween
 Good fortune doth here befall him!' Then swift to their steeds
 they sprung,
 And their raiment was wet with the tear-drops that grief from
 their eye-lids wrung, 640
 When they came where their lord was seated they gave him a
 welcome fair,

And he in his turn would greet them, and sorrow and joy were there.

Then he kissed his knights so faithful, and spake, 'Ye no more shall make
Such measureless moan for my brother, his place I with ye will take.

Turn your shields again as befits them, and as men who would joyful fare;

645

My anchor hath struck its haven; my father's arms I'll bear,
For the anchor it is a symbol that befitteth a wandering knight,
He who willeth may take and wear it. I must rule my life aright
As now shall become my station: I am rich now, when shall I be
The lord of this folk? For my sorrow it worketh but ill to me.

650

Queen Herzeleide, help me that thou and I may pray
The kings that are here and princes for my service awhile to stay,
Till thou unto me hast yielded that which love from true love may crave!

Thus both of them made petition, and the heroes their promise gave.

Then each one went to his chamber, and the queen to her knight spake low,

655

'Now yield thyself to my tending, and a hidden way I'll show!
For his guests did they care as fitting tho' the host was no longer there,

The folk they were all together, but the knight he alone must fare
Save for two of his pages only—Then the queen and her maidens bright

They led him where gladness waited, and his sorrow was put to flight,

660

And regret was o'erthrown and vanquished—And his heart it waxed high and brave

As is ever the lot of lovers! and her maidenhood she gave
The queen, fair Herzeleide: nor their lips did they think to spare,
But close did they cling in kisses; grief was conquered by joy so fair!

Then courteous deeds were begun there; for free were his captives set,

665

And the Kings Hardeiss and Kaillet were made friends by Gamuret.
And such marriage feast was holden that he who had proudly thought

Hereafter to hold such another much riches thereto had brought.
For this did Gamuret purpose, his wealth he would little spare,
But Arabian gold did he scatter mid the poor knights; and jewels rare

670

Did he give to the kings and princes who were there with the host I ween;

And glad were the wandering players, for rich gifts had their portion been.

Let them ride whom he there had feasted, from the Angevin leave
 they prayed.
 Then the panther the badge of his father on his shield they in
 sable laid;
 And a small white silken garment, a shift that the queen did wear,
 That had touched her naked body who now was his wife so fair, 675
 This should be his corslet's cover. And of foemen it saw eighteen
 Pierced thro' and hewn with sword-blade ere he parted from her
 his queen,
 And aye as her love came homeward on her body that shift she
 drew:
 And many a shield had he shattered; and their love it waxed
 strong and true. 680

And honour enow was his portion ere his manly courage bore
 The knight o'er the seas to conflict, for his journey I sorrow sore.
 For there came unto him true tidings, how the Baruch, his lord of
 old,
 Was beset by mighty foemen, by Babylon's princes bold:
 And the one he was called Ipomidon, and Pompey his brother's
 name 685
 (For so hath the venture told me), a proud man of warlike fame.
 ('Twas not he whom Julius Cæsar had driven from Rome of yore).
 His uncle was Nebuchadnezzar, who in books found the lying lore
 That he himself should a god be, (o'er this would our folk make
 sport)
 And of noble race these brothers, nor of strength nor of gold
 spared aught. 690
 From Ninus they came who was ruler ere ever Bagdad might be,
 Nineveh did he found—Now an insult and a shame vexed them
 bitterly,
 The Baruch as vassals claimed them—So the combat was won
 and lost,
 And bravely the heroes battled, and on each side they paid the
 cost.
 Thus Gamuret sailed the water, and aid to the Baruch brought, 695
 And gladly he bade him welcome; tho' I weep that that land he
 sought!

How it chanced there, how went the conflict, gain or loss, how the
 thing might be
 Naught of that knew Queen Herzeleide; and bright as the sun was
 she,
 And her form it was fair to look on, and both riches had she and
 youth,
 And more than too much her gladness! I think me in very truth 700
 She had sped past the goal of all wishes—And on wisdom her
 heart was set,
 And she won from the whole world favour; her fair deeds with fair
 guerdon met,
 And all men praised Herzeleide, the queen, as both fair and true,

And the queen of three kingdoms was she, of Waleis and fair
 Anjou,
 Of these twain was she aye the ruler; and beside them in far
 Norgals 705
 Did she bear the crown and sceptre, in the city of Kingrivals.
 And so dear did she hold her husband, if never a maid might win
 So gallant a man, what recked she? She counted it not for sin.

As for half a year he was absent she looked for his coming sure,
 For but in the thought of that meeting might the life of the queen
 endure. 710
 Then brake the sword of her gladness thro' the midst of the hilt in
 twain,
 Ah me! and alas! for her mourning, that goodness should bear
 such pain
 And faith ever waken sorrow! Yea, so doth it run alway
 With the life of men, and to-morrow must they mourn who
 rejoice to-day!

So it chanced that the queen one noontide in a restless slumber
 lay, 715
 'Twas as if with a start she wakened and by lightning was borne
 away,
 And towards the clouds it bare her, and they smote her with
 mighty force,
 The fiery bolts of Heaven, as they sped on their downward course,
 And sparks sprang from her floating tresses mid the fire of the
 circling spheres,
 And the thunder crashed loud around her, and the rain-drops
 were burning tears. 720

For a little space was she conscious, then a grip on her right hand
 fell,
 And, lo! it was changed, the vision, and wondrous things befell;
 For then did she nurse a dragon, that forth from her body sprung,
 And its dragon life to nourish awhile at her breast it hung,
 Then it fled from her sight so swiftly she might look on it never
 more: 725
 And her heart it brake for the anguish, and the terror and grief
 she bore.

And never methinks a woman in slumber such woe hath seen,
 But now had she been so joyful, alas! all was changed I ween,
 And sorrow should be her portion, and her ill it waxed long and
 wide,
 And the shadow of coming sorrow did still on her heart abide. 730

Then she did what afore she could not, for the terror that on her
 lay,
 She stretched her limbs in her slumber, and moaned in her grief
 alway,
 And she cried aloud on her people; and many a maid sat by

And they sprang to her side at her summons, and wakened her speedily.

Then Tampaneis he came riding, of her husband's squires the chief, 735

And many a page was with him, and joy's goal was o'erpassed in grief,

And they cried, 'He was dead, their master!' And her senses forsook the queen,

And she fell aback in her anguish—And the knights spake, 'How hath this been?

Hath our lord been slain in his harness, who ever was armed so well?'

And tho' sorely the squire must sorrow, to the heroes the tale he'd tell: 740

'No long life should he have, my master! His helm he put off awhile,

The heat thereto constrained him—'twas accursed heathen guile That stole him from us, our hero—A knight took a he-goats blood,

And from a long glass he poured it on the helmet of diamond good,

And softer than sponge grew the diamond. May He Whom as Lamb they show 745

With the Cross in His hold, have mercy on the deeds that are wrought below!'

'Then when one host met the other: Ah! that was indeed a fight, And the knights who were with the Baruch they fought all as men of might,

And there in the field by Bagdad full many a shield was pierced, As they flew each one on the other, and they mingled in charges fierce, 750

And banner was mixed with banner, many fell who had bravely fought,

And my lord's hand it did such wonders that his foemen became as nought,

But Ipomidon he came riding, and with death would reward the knight,

And he smote him down, and I think me many thousands they saw that sight.'

'For my master, free from falsehood, rode against Alexandria's king, 755

But, alas! for the guile of the heathen, this joust but his death should bring,

For the spear cut sheer thro' the helmet, and it pierced thro' my master's brain

(In his head did they find the splinters), yet the hero still held the rein,

And dying he rode from the combat, o'er a wide plain his way
 he'ld take,
 And his chaplain he knelt above him, and in few words his shrift
 he spake. 760
 And he sent here the shift and the spear-blade that hath robbed
 us of our friend,
 He died free from sin—us his servants he did to the queen
 commend!'

'At Bagdad was the hero buried, and the Baruch the cost would
 pay,
 With gold is it fair to look on, and rich is the tomb alway;
 And many a costly jewel doth gleam where he lies at rest, 765
 And embalmed was the fair young body (sad was many a faithful
 breast);
 And the grave-stone it is a ruby, and thro' it he shineth clear,
 And they granted us as with martyrs, the cross o'er his tomb to
 rear,—
 For as Christ by His death hath freed us, and to comfort that soul
 so brave,
 And for shelter we raised the symbol—And the Baruch the cost
 he gave. 770
 For the cross was of emerald wroughten: heathen counsel we
 asked it not,
 For they know not the Cross, nor the blessing that Christ's death
 won for us I wot!
 And the heathen they pray unto him as if he were a god in truth,
 Nor they do it the Cross to honour, nor hath Baptism taught them
 ruth
 (Tho' it looseneth us from Hell's fetters when the uttermost day
 shall dawn), 775
 But his knightly faith and honour, who leaveth us here forlorn,
 Have wrought him a place in Heaven where he shineth with
 Heaven's light,
 And true penitence and confession—for falsehood e'er fled that
 knight.'

'And there in his diamond helmet an epitaph did they grave,
 And fast to the cross they fixed it o'er the tomb of that hero
 brave, 780
 And thus do they run the letters: '*Through this helmet a joust
 hath slain*
This hero who bare all manhood, and Gamuret was his name,
*As king did he rule o'er three kingdoms, in each land the Crown he
 wore*
Whom mighty princes followed—Anjou's land this hero bore,
And he lost his life for the Baruch at the city of Bagdad fair. 785
*And so high did it soar, his honour, that no knight may with him
 compare,*
Howe'er ye may test their dealings. Nor is he of woman born,

*(I mean of the knightly order) to whose hand he his strength had
 sworn.
 But help and true manly counsel to his friends did he steadfast
 give;
 And thro' women much grief he suffered, for he would in their
 favour live.* 790

*Baptized was he as a Christian tho' Saracens mourn him yet,
 (This is truth and no lie)—All his lifetime since his years were on
 wisdom set
 His strength strove for fame and honour, till he fell in his knightly
 pride,
 Wish him bliss who here lieth buried! 'Twas by treason's hand he
 died!*

So spake the squire, and the Waleis who heard it must weep full
 sore, 795

Cause hast they enow for sorrow! A living child she bore
 Who of men was left unaided, Herzeleide the gracious queen,
 With death the mother battled: her maidens were crazed I ween,
 Since they thought not to help their lady, for within her womb
 she bare

Him who should be flower of all knighthood, if death did not
 claim him there. 800

Then there came a wise man ancient to weep with his lady's grief,
 And he saw how with death she struggled, and he brought to her
 swift relief;

For he forced her teeth asunder, and betwixt her lips they pour
 Water, and at their tending her senses they came once more.
 Then she spake, and aloud she mourned him, 'My heart's dearest,
 Ah! where is he?' 805

For in sooth my heart's deepest gladness was in Gamuret's
 chivalry,
 Yet his valour of this hath robbed me—Now his *mother* am I and
wife,

Tho' far younger was I, for within me do I carry his flesh and life;
 The love that we bore to each other hath been of such flower the
 root,

And if God shall in truth be faithful, He withholdeth not here the
 fruit. 810

Already too sore my sorrow for my husband so proud and brave,
 What ill death hath wrought upon me! Her love never woman
 gave,
 But his heart it rejoiced in her gladness, and sad for her grief was
 he,

Thus his true heart it gave him counsel who was aye from all
 falsehood free.'

Now hearken yet more the story how the noble queen must
 mourn, 815

Within her arms would she hold him, her child who was yet
 unborn,

And she spake, 'Now God send me safely the child of my hero
fair,
For this is my heart's petition; God keep me from dark despair,
'Twere Gamuret's second slaying if I thought myself to slay
While I bear of his love the token who was faithful to me alway!' 820

Then careless of who might see her, the robe from her neck she
tore,
And her fair white breasts she tended with the wisdom of
mother-lore,
To her rosy lips she pressed them, 'Ah, thou food that shall feed
my son,
He hath sent thee before his coming who life from my life hath
won!'

And the queen it nothing vexed her that above her heart it lay 825
The milk that her child should nourish, and softly she spake alway,
'Twas true love that brought thee hither, if I yet unbaptized
should be
From thee had I won my baptism, and the tears which shall flow
so free,

And openly and in secret will I mourn for my husband dear!
Then the shift with his life-blood crimsoned she bade them to
bring anear, 830
(Thus clad in the Baruch's army had Gamuret lost his life,
For he chose him a gallant ending in the turmoil and stress of
strife),

And then for the spear she prayed them wherewith was her
husband slain,
From Nineveh's Prince Ipomidon such guerdon he needs must
gain.
And tho' tattered and hewn to pieces yet the queen fain the shift
would wear, 835

As aforetime had been her custom when her lord did from
Tourney fare,
But her maidens who stood around her they took it from out her
hand,
And they carried them to the Minster, the highest from out her
land,
And the spear and the blood they buried as men bury a hero
dead,
And sorrow and bitter mourning thro' Gamuret's kingdom
spread. 840

And when fourteen days were ended a babe lay the queen
beside,
'Twas a son, and so great and goodly that the mother had well-
nigh died.

Now 'tis cast the die of the venture, and here doth my tale begin,
For now is he born who henceforward this song for his own shall
win.

And now have ye heard the story of his father, his love and grief, 845
 Of his gallant life, and the treason that ended its span so brief;
 And ye know whence he came, the hero of this tale, and how for
 long
 He was hidden from deeds of knighthood, till his youth it waxed
 bold and strong.

When the queen found sight and hearing she was fain on her
 child to look,
 And her maidens they bare him to her and the babe in her arms
 she took; 850
 And she saw his limbs soft rounded, and she knew she had born a
 son,
 And her maidens with her were joyful that the earth had a man-
 child won.
 (As he bare of a man the body, so manly was he of heart,
 As a smith did he wield the sword-blade till fire from the helm
 would start)
 And no joy did she know, the mother, save ever her babe to kiss, 855
 And with soft words she spake to him ever, '*Bon fils, Cher fils,*
Beau fils.'

And e'en as herself she bare him, so herself she his nurse would
 be,
 At his mother's breast was he nourished who was ever from
 falsehood free.
 And she thought she had won her husband by her prayers to her
 arms again,
 She all folly forsook, and meekness and truth in her heart did
 reign. 860

And musing spake Herzeleide, 'The queen of Heaven high
 Gave her breast to the dear Lord Jesu Who a bitter death would
 die
 As Man on the cross for man's sake, for thus did His love begin:
 Who thinketh light of His anger his soul's peace shall hardly win,
 Tho' he else were brave man and worthy—and this tale do I know
 for true!' 865

Then the queen of the land she bathed her in heart sorrow's
 bitter dew,
 And her eyes on the babe rained tear-drops as soft in her arms it
 lay,
 For hers was the way of women, where a true heart holdeth sway;
 She could laugh and weep together, her heart joyed for her
 baby's birth,
 Yet the ford of her bitter sorrow had drowned in short space her
 mirth. 870

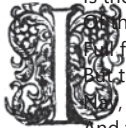
BOOK III GURNEMANZ

ARGUMENT

In the Introduction the poet speaks of the honour in which he holds all true women, though he be wroth with one who has wronged him. Yet, though women shall count him their friend, he would fain that they should honour him for his knightly deeds, rather than for this his song.

In Book III. he tells of the sorrow and the faith of Queen Herzeleide; of Parzival's childhood; of his meeting with the knights; of his faring forth to seek knighthood from King Arthur; and of the death of Herzeleide. How Parzival met with Jeschuté, and robbed her of her token, and of the wrath of her husband Orilus. Of the sorrow of Siguné, and how Parzival learnt his name and his lineage. How Parzival met with the Red Knight and bare his challenge to the court of King Arthur, and how he craved a boon of the king. Of the shaming of Kunnewaaré; and of the death of the Red Knight. How Parzival came to Gurnemanz of Graharz and was cured by him of his folly and taught all knightly wisdom, and how he rode forth from the land of Graharz.

BOOK III GURNEMANZ

 Is there ever a singer among you, who singeth a sweeter song
In the favour and love of women, I hold not he does me wrong!
Nay, fain am I still to hearken to aught that may give them joy,
But to one alone among women my homage I still deny. 5
Nay, ever the fire of my anger doth kindle and flame anew,
And the sorrow her treason wrought me, it grieveth me still I
 trow!
I, whom men have named the singer, I, Wolfram of Eschenbach,
The words that against a woman I spake, I may ne'er take back.
Nay, I hold fast my wrath for ever, and clasp it closer still,
As I think how in soul and body alike hath she wrought me ill! 10
How can I do aught but hate her, till death setteth seal on life?
Yet it grieveth me sore that others should mingle in this our strife;

It grieveth me sore that maidens should say, as they name my
 name,
'Forsooth he hath shamed all women, let it be unto him for
 shame!'
Nay, then, an they reckon for evil the words that in grief I spake, 15
I will speak them no more for ever, though my heart should in
 silence break!
But let them beware in their anger, these warlike maidens fair,
How they stir from his eyrie the eagle, rouse the lion from his lair!
Full well I know how to defend me, full well know I what beseems

The maid of a knight's devotion, the maid of the poet's dreams! 20
 Let a maiden be steadfast-hearted, pure and true in word and
 deed,
 And her champion true she'll find me, comes there ever an hour
 of need.

I hold his renown waxeth slowly, and halteth upon the road,
 Who, for wrong at the hand of one woman, shall slander all
 womanhood:

But if any will look upon me, and hearken to what I sing, 25
 Of a sooth I will not deceive them, though my tale over-strange
 may ring.
 Born was I unto the bearing of knightly shield and spear,
 And though sweet be the song of the singer, I hold it not all too
 dear:

I had rather my love should love me for my deeds of high
 renown,
 Than because in the hall of the Wartburg they should crown me
 with music's crown! 30
 With the shield and the spear of knighthood will I seek for a
 knight's reward,
 Nor charm, with the harp of the singer, what I failed to win with
 the sword!

Nor in praise of fair women only runs this tale that I have to tell,
 Full many strange deeds it holdeth, and marvels that once befell
 Ere the course of this wondrous venture be tracèd unto its end; 35
 Yet he who heareth shall reckon, if he fain would account me
 friend,
 That this is no book he readeth, for no maker of books am I!
 But a singer of strange adventures, and of knightly prowess high:
 Stripped bare will I be of all honour, naked and reft of fame,
 Ere I trust my renown unto letters, and give to a book my name! 40

It vexes me, soul and body, that so many should bear the name
 And speak with the tongue of women, who reck not of woman's
 fame;

That those who have known no falsehood, and those who are
 swift to fall,
 Should carry one name in common, be counted as sisters all!
 A truth that has faltered never, a faith that has aye withstood, 45
 Is the only glory of woman, the crown of her womanhood!

Many will say, 'What good thing can come out of poverty?'
 She who for love endures it, she 'scapeth Hell thereby,
 And, in the kingdom of Heaven, receiveth a hundredfold
 For all she has borne for love's sake, new joys for her sorrows old! 50
 Not one have I known in my lifetime, I count it a bitter truth,
 Neither a man nor a maiden, who the joy and the pride of youth,
 And all earth's riches and honour, will leave as a worthless thing
 If weighed with the glory of Heaven, and the service of Heaven's
 King!

But Queen Herzeleide only, she left her fair estate, 55
 In her youth of all joy bereavèd, with sorrow afar to mate.
 So holy was she and gentle, so faithful and pure of mind,
 That no tongue spake a word against her, and no eye a fault
 could find.
 Sunlight or shadow, what recked she? the day was to her as night,
 For her heart was the home of sorrow, and dead was the world's
 delight. 60
 And in sorrow and grief she wandered, till she came to Soltanè's
 strand,
 A woodland wild and lonely afar from her native land:
 Fair flowers might bloom and blossom without, on the sunlit
 plain,
 And be woven in rosy chaplets, but for her they would bloom in
 vain!
 And there, mid the woodland shadows, she hid with Gamuret's
 son, 65
 For she willed that her life's last treasure be revealed unto none:
 So she called her folk around her, (who toiled in the upland field
 With oxen and plough, that the furrows their daily bread might
 yield,)
 And she charged them all, by the service which she as their queen
 might claim,
 That they hide from the boy his birthright and the fame of his
 father's name. 70
 'For the knightly deeds ye vaunt of, and the glory and pride of
 war,
 Have wrought me but heart's affliction, and trouble and anguish
 sore,
 So, lest I yet more should suffer, I pray you, my servants dear,
 That ye speak no word of knighthood, lest my son perchance
 should hear!'

Then full sore were her people grievèd, for they held it an evil
 thing, 75
 And a training that ill beseemèd the son of a mighty king.
 But his mother kept him hidden in the woodland valleys wild,
 Nor thought in her love and sorrow how she wronged the kingly
 child:
 No knightly weapon she gave him, save such as in childish play
 He wrought himself from the bushes that grew on his lonely way, 80
 A bow and arrows he made him, and with these, in thoughtless
 glee,
 He shot at the birds as they carolled o'erhead in the leafy tree.

But when the feathered songster of the woods at his feet lay
 dead,
 In wonder and dumb amazement he bowed down his golden
 head,
 And in childish wrath and sorrow tore the locks of his sunny hair; 85
 (For I wot well of all earth's children was never a child so fair

As this boy, who afar in the desert from the haunts of mankind
 did dwell,
 Who bathed in the mountain streamlet, and roamed o'er the
 rock-strewn fell!)
 Then he thought him well how the music, which his hand had for
 ever stilled,
 Had thrilled his soul with its sweetness, and his heart was with
 sorrow filled, 90
 And the ready tears of childhood flowed forth from their
 fountains free
 As he ran to his mother weeping, and bowed him beside her
 knee.
 'What aileth thee child?' quoth the mother, 'but now wast thou
 gay and glad'—
 But, childlike, he gave no answer, scarce wist he what made him
 sad!

But Queen Herzeleide watched him through the sunny summer
 days, 95
 Till beneath a tree she saw him stand silent, with upturned gaze,
 And a look of joyful rapture in the radiant childish eyes,
 As he listed the bird, that, soaring, sang clear thro' the cloudless
 skies;
 And the mother's heart was troubled, and her wrath waxed to
 fever heat,
 She would brook in his love no rival—not even God's singers
 sweet! 100
 So she sent forth in haste her servants, with many a cunning
 snare
 To capture the singers whose music made joyful the woodlands
 fair.
 Then, alas! for the birds, who struggled in the cruel snare in vain,
 Yet some few burst their bonds, and joyful, brake forth into song
 again!

Then the boy spake, 'Now sweet my mother, why trouble the birds
 so sore? 105
 Forsooth they can ne'er have harmed thee, ah, leave them in
 peace once more!
 And his mother kissed him gently, 'Perchance I have wrought a
 wrong,
 Of a truth, the dear God who made them, He gave unto them
 their song,
 And I would not that one of his creatures should sorrow because
 of me.'
 But the boy looked up in wonder, 'God, Mother? Who may God
 be?' 110
 'My son, He is light beyond all light, brighter than summer's day,
 And He bare a Man's Face, that we men might look on His Face
 alway!
 Art thou ever in need of succour? call on Him in thine hour of ill,

And be sure He will fail thee never, but will hear thee, and help
 thee still.
 Yet one there is dwelleth in darkness, and I wot men may fear him
 well, 115
 For his home is the house of falsehood, and his kingdom the
 realm of Hell!
 Turn thy mind away from him ever, nor waver betwixt the twain,
 For he who doubteth, his labour shall ever be wrought in vain.'

Thus his mother read him the riddle, the myst'ry of day and night,
 The dread and the doom of darkness, and the glory and grace of
 light! 120
 Then javelin in hand he hastened thro' the forest pathways wild,
 And the deer sprang up from their thickets, and fled from the
 dauntless child;
 But clear-eyed and eager-footed he hastened upon their track,
 And full oft with a hornèd trophy, at even he hied him back.
 Little cared he for rain or sunshine, summer's storm or winter's
 snow, 125
 And daily in strength and beauty all men might behold him grow;
 Till at length no beast so mighty thro' the forest wild did roam,
 If it fell 'neath his shaft, unaided, on his shoulder he bore it home!

It chanced thro' a woodland thicket one morn as he took his way,
 And brake from o'erhanging bushes full many a leafy spray, 130
 That a pathway steep and winding rose sharply his track anear,
 And the distant beat of horse-hoofs fell strange on his wondering
 ear.
 Then the boy grasped his javelin firmly and thought what the
 sound might be;
 'Perchance 'tis the devil cometh! Well, I care not if it be he!
 Methinks I can still withstand him, be he never so fierce and grim, 135
 Of a truth my lady mother she is o'er-much afraid of *him*!

As he stood there for combat ready, behold, in the morning light,
 Three knights rode into the clearing, in glittering armour bright;
 From head to foot were they armèd, each one on his gallant
 steed,
 And the lad as he saw their glory thought each one a god indeed!
 No longer he stood defiant, but knelt low upon his knee, 140
 And cried, 'God, Who helpeth all men, I pray Thee have thought
 for me!'

Then wroth was the foremost rider as the lad barred his further
 way,
 And he spake out, 'This stupid *Waleis* will hinder our work to-
 day!'
 (Now here would I give to the *Waleis* the fame we Bavarians hold;
 They are duller than e'en our people, yet manly in strife and bold. 145
 And in sooth were one born in both countries such marvel of
 strength and skill

Would he hide in himself that I think me their fame he might well
 fulfill!)

Then there rode swift with hanging bridle, in costly harness dight,
 With plumed and jewelled helmet another gallant knight; 150
 Swiftly he came as thirsting to challenge in mortal fight
 The foe who sped far before him, who had done him a sore
 despite;
 For two knights from out his kingdom a maiden had borne away,
 And he held it a deed most shameful and one he must needs
 repay;
 For the maiden's sorrow grieved him, and fain would he ease her
 pain: 155
 (And the three knights who rode before him were part of his
 warlike train.)
 He rode a Spanish war-horse, and his shield had fierce conflict
 seen,
 And Karnachkarnanz did they call him (he was Ulterleg's count I
 ween).
 Then he cried to his knights, 'Why loiter? who barreth our onward
 way?'
 And straight on the lad did he ride there, who deemed him a god
 alway, 160
 For ne'er had he seen such glory; his harness shone fair with dew,
 And on either foot the stirrups with golden bells rang true.
 And their length was e'en as fitting, and with bells did each
 strong arm ring,
 As he stirred himself, or his sword-blade in battle aloft would
 swing.
 And the hero was swift in seeking the guerdon of knightly prize, 165
 So he rode here, the prince, and had decked him in a fair and
 wondrous wise.

Then spake this flower of all knighthood, 'Say, boy, did they pass
 thy way?
 Two knights who have shamed their knighthood, nay, *robbers* I
 ween are they,
 For they bear a maiden with them, and she rideth against her
 will!'

Yet the boy, tho' he spake with a man's tongue, as a god must
 account him still; 170
 For he thought how Queen Herzeleide had told him that God was
 Light
 And dwelleth in Light for ever; and so to his dazzled sight
 This knight, in his shining armour in the glow of the summer's
 day,
 Was the God of his mother's lesson, and he knelt him again to
 pray.

But the prince he spake full gently, 'Fain am I to do God's will, 175
 And yet for no God I hold me, but a sinful mortal still.

Nay, wert thou more clear of vision, thou wouldst see, an thou
sawest aright,
No Lord of the host of Heaven, but only a humble knight!

'Knight?' quoth the boy in answer, 'Nay! I wot not what that may
be,
Is thy strength not of God, but of knighthood, then I would such
were given to me!' 180

'Then wend thy way to King Arthur, an thou camest unto his
court,
A noble knight he would make thee, ashamed and afeared for
naught,
For sure, now I look upon thee, thou com'st of a noble strain.'
Then his knights they turned their bridles, and gazed at the boy
again.

Full well might they look and wonder, at the work that God's
Hand had wrought, 185

For they say, who tell this story, that never could human thought
Have dreamed of aught so goodly, since ever the world began,
For of all men beloved by women, was there never so fair a man!
Loud they laughed as the boy spake further, 'Good knight, what
may these be?

These rings that so close around thee, above and below I see.' 190

Then he handled, with curious finger, the armour the knight did
bear,
His coat of mail close-linkèd as behovèd a knight to wear;
And he spake as he looked on the harness, 'My mother's maidens
string
On their chains, and around their fingers, full many a shining ring,
But they cling not so close to each other as these rings that here I
see, 195
I cannot force them asunder, what good are they then to thee?'

Then the prince drew forth from its scabbard his shining blade so
keen,
'Now see, he who fights against me, must withstand my sword I
ween,
And lest he, on his part, should slay me, it is fit that with mail and
shield,
I ward me against his spear-thrusts, and the blows that his arm
may wield.' 200

Swiftly the lad made answer, 'Little good would it do the deer
An their coats were e'en such as thine is, they would fall still
beneath my spear.'

Full wroth were the knights and scornful that their lord thus long
had talked
With this lad with the face of an angel, and the speech as of one
distraught;
Then the prince he spake full gently, 'God keep thee in His good
grace, 205

I would that my shield's bright mirror might show me as fair a
 face!
 Nay, an the Giver of all gifts but gave thee wit enow
 To match with a mien so goodly, full rich wert thou then I trow!
 May He keep all sorrow from thee, and thy life be a summer's day
 —,

And with that he turned his bridle, and wended once more his
 way. 210
 Then adown the woodland pathway they rode, till they came full
 soon
 Where the carles of Queen Herzeleide toiled hard thro' the sultry
 noon:
 The fields must they plough and harrow, if a harvest they hoped
 to reap,
 So they goaded the patient oxen to their toil on the hillside steep.

Then the prince he gave them 'Good-morrow,' and asked if there
 passed that way 215
 A maiden in need and sorrow? and they dared not to say him nay;
 But they answered him e'en as he prayed them, and they spake
 'Yea, at early morn
 Two knights and a maiden passed here, and the maiden, she wept
 forlorn,
 And the knights as they rode beside her, spurred ever her flying
 steed.'
 Then the prince knew his foe, Meljakanz, and his wrath waxed hot
 indeed, 220
 On his tracks he followed swiftly, and they who this venture tell,
 Say he won back in fight the maiden ere the shadows of evening
 fell.

But sore were the queen's folk troubled that the heroes had
 chanced that way,
 And they spake, 'God forbid that our queen's son fall in with
 these knights to-day!
 An he chances to light upon them in the pride of their warlike
 gear, 225
 It will anger full sore our mistress if by hap she the tale should
 hear:
 And ill-luck will it bring upon us that, ere ever the dawn of day,
 With us while his mother slumbered, to the woods he stole away!'
 Little recked the boy of their trouble as he chased the flying deer,
 And shouted in youthful gladness, as they fell before his spear, 230
 Then homeward he sped to his mother, but ere he his tale might
 tell
 She was smitten with deadly terror, and low at his feet she fell.

Then soon as Queen Herzeleide found hearing and speech once
 more
 Her boy was she fain to question tho' her heart it misgave her
 sore;

'Who spake to thee, son, of knighthood? What knowest thou of
such-like rede?' 235

'I met in the woods, sweet mother, four men I deemed gods
indeed,
So light were they all and shining, God Himself ne'er could
brighter be,
And of knighthood they spake and King Arthur, who might well
make a knight of me!'
Then her sorrow of old-time wakened, and the queen in her heart
she sought
For some cunning wile of woman, that her boy from his will be
brought. 240

When the simple lad and gallant would crave from her hand a
steed,
Tho' heavy her heart, she bethought her in naught to gainsay his
need,
'Yet not as he asks will I give him, no mother's gifts be mine,
But ever the worst and the meanest that my skill may aye divine.'
And she thought her, Queen Herzeleide, 'Many folk thro' the
world shall fare 245
Who love mocking—On his fair body my son shall a Fool's dress
wear,
Then sure when the mockers see him, and to scoff at his garb are
fain,
An he at their hands be smitten, then he cometh to me again!'
Alas! for a woman's cunning, and the cruelty of mother's love,
She chose from her stores a sackcloth, the coarsest that might be
wove, 250
And a garment of this she made him that should reach e'en unto
his knee;
For his sunny hair such covering as on fools men are wont to see;
And instead of hose she bound him on his limbs so strong and
fair
Leggings of undressed calf-skin—And all wept who beheld him
there.

Then his mother with forethought bade him to tarry till morning
light, 255
'Nor from hence would I have thee journey till my rede thou hast
heard aright—
'*Keep thou ever from paths untrodden and ford not the darkling
stream,
Where the waters flow clear and limpid, there safe is the ford I
ween.*
*And be ever fair and courteous, greet all men who pass thy way.
If a wise man old and grey-headed would teach thee, as well he
may,* 260
*All courteous ways and fitting, as his word so shall be thy deed,
Nor wax wrath if by whiles he chide thee, but give to my words
good heed.*

*And one thing, my son, would I tell thee, canst thou win from a
 maid her ring
 And her greeting fair, thou shalt take them, and sorrow hath lost
 her sting!
 If a kiss from her lips she will give thee, and thine arms shall the
 maid enfold,* 265
*Be she pure and true thou art blessèd, and thy strength shall wax
 high and bold!*

'And hearken my son, a proud knight, Lâhelein, do men call his
 name,
 From thy princes two lands hath wrested, else from them couldst
 thou tribute claim.
 And Waleis they are and Norgals—and one of thy princes brave,
 Turkentals, hath he slain, and thy people he hath smitten and
 doth enslave.' 270
 'For such wrong will I vengeance, mother, if vengeance be here
 God's will,
 Be he never so strong with my javelin I think me to wound him
 still.'

Then e'en at the daylight's dawning the boy would no longer
 stay,
 For the thought of King Arthur's glory yet heavy upon him lay.
 Then Queen Herzeleide kissed him, and she sped swift his steed
 behind, 275
 And the sorrow of sorrows smote her when her boy she no more
 might find.
 (Hence he rode and what heart rejoiceth?) Then the queen from
 all falsehood free,
 Fell low on the earth, and grief tare her till death must her portion
 be!
 Yet I wot that her death so faithful it hath saved her from pains of
 Hell,
 And to be of such son the mother, it repayeth all anguish well! 280
 Thus she, the root of all goodness whence humility's flower might
 blow,
 Herself on a pilgrimage wended that a goodly goal should know.
 Woe worth us! that none of their children should live still, to hand
 us down
 In these days when we look on falsehood their honour and fair
 renown.
 And therefore shall faithful women wish well to this lad so bold, 285
 Who rideth fair ventures seeking, whose journey ye now behold!

Then the gallant lad rode onward on his way toward Briziljan's
 wood,
 And he came to a rippling streamlet, and a cock well might wade
 that flood!
 And flowers in the grass were blooming, yet so darkling ran the
 wave

That the lad he thought not to ford it; but as wit the counsel
 gave, 290
 So he followed its course thro' the daylight, and he passed as he
 could the night,
 Till he saw once more the morning, and he came to a fair ford
 bright.
 On the further side was a meadow, and a tent decked the grass
 so green,
 And tall was the tent wide-spreading, and riches thereon were
 seen;
 'Twas of samite of threefold colours, on the seams lay fair ribbons
 wide, 295
 And a leathern covering hung there, 'gainst the rain-cloud to
 guard its pride.

('Twas Duke Orilus of Lalande, whose wife he beneath it found—
 She lay there in peaceful slumber with riches happed fair around,
 A Duchess she was, well worthy the love of a gallant knight,
 And the venture it tells that Jeschuté was the name of that lady
 bright) 300

Softly the princess slumbered,—yet weapons of love she bore;
 A mouth so red and glowing, that a knight's heart had wounded
 sore,
 And e'en as she slept they parted asunder, her lips so bright,
 That the fire of love had kindled, (fit venture for gallant knight)
 And even as ivory snow-white, and little, and close the row 305
 Of the teeth that gleamed white betwixt them—methinks that a
 man were slow
 To use himself to such kisses from a mouth that all men might
 praise—
 I wot that so fair a guerdon but seldom hath crowned my days!

A covering of richest sable over foot and knee was thrown,
 (For the heat she aside hath cast it, whom her lord had thus left
 alone) 310
 And her form it was fairly fashioned, and wrought by a skilful
 hand,
 Since 'twas God Himself in His wisdom who so fair a work had
 planned.
 And long was her arm and rounded: on her snow-white hand a
 ring
 Gleamed golden, and when he saw it the lad to her side did
 spring;
 For had not his mother told him such jewels were the guerdon
 fair 315
 That a knight well might crave? and he thought him he fain would
 such token bear!

Then the lady awoke in terror as his clasp on her white arm fell,
 And gazed in startled wonder and wrath as beseemed her well;

'Who is it, who thus would shame me? Nay, sir, thou art all too free!
 Go, choose thee some fairer maiden, my favours are not for thee!' 320

In vain might she weep and bewail her; he asked not her yea, or nay,
 But took from her lips unwilling the kiss she would fain gainsay;
 And the ring of gold from her finger with ungentle hand he'ld take,
 And the clasp that her shift had fastened from the garment he roughly brake:

In vain were her tears and struggles, she was but a woman still, 325
 And his strength was to hers as an army, perforce must she do his will.

Then the lad spake aloud, he hungered, from his hand was the lady free,
 And she quoth, 'Of a truth 'twere better thou shouldst not make meal of me!
 If thou wert but a little wiser thou wouldst choose thee some other meat,
 There stand bread and wine, and two game-birds, of them mayst thou freely eat, 330
 Methinks when my maiden brought them, 'twas scarcely of thee she thought!'

Then he asked not where sat the hostess, but he ate e'en as hunger taught,
 And he drank his fill; and the lady she deemed all too long his stay,
 For she thought him bereft of his senses, and she wished he were well away,
 And for fear and shame the sweat-drops stood thickly upon her brow— 335
 And she spake, 'Thou my ring shalt give me, and the clasp thou didst take but now,
 And get thee away, if he cometh, my husband, then shalt thou bear
 The weight of his wrath, and I think me thou wouldst then wish thyself elsewhere!'

Quoth the noble youth, 'What care I how fierce thy lord's wrath may be?
 If my presence doth shame thine honour, then from hence will I swiftly flee.' 340
 And he stepped to the bedside boldly, and kissed her as there she lay,
 Tho' little it pleased the Duchess, and without leave he rode away;
 And he spake a word of parting as he vaulted upon his steed,
 'God have thee in His safe keeping, so my mother she gave me rede.'

Then the lad he was glad of his booty, and thus did he ride a
 while— 345
 Methinks there was little lacking that from hence he had gone a
 mile,
 Ere he came of whom I would tell you: on the dew he the tracks
 might see
 Of one who had sought his lady—The tent-ropes displaced
 should be
 Where the lad thro' the grass had ridden; then the gallant Duke
 and proud
 Found his lady within in sorrow, and Orilus spake aloud, 350
 'Alas! for the service done thee—for smitten and put to shame
 Is the crown of my knightly honour, since another thy love can
 claim!'

Then little, alas! might it profit that with streaming eyes she swore
 No lover had she save her husband,—he would hearken her tale
 no more.

Then she spake in her fear and anguish, 'Twas a *fool*, he who
 came to me, 355
 And yet tho' a fool, of all men I wot he may fairest be!
 My ring and my clasp gold-gleaming, he took them against my
 will!'

'Nay, I doubt not so well he pleased thee, thou didst grant him
 more favours still,'
 'Now, God forbid! for his fool's garb and his javelin were e'en too
 near,
 It shameth us both, my husband, such words from thy lips to
 hear! 360
 Are *queens* wont to love thus lowly, that thou speakest such
 words of me?
 Thou wrongest our royal breeding, when thou deemest such
 things may be!'

Then the Duke spake, 'This shame, O lady! alone hast thou won
 from me,
 Thou dost call thyself *Queen* no longer; tho' thy title shall *Duchess*
 be
 Little good hath that bargain brought me—So bold shall my
 manhood be, 365
 That thy brother, King Lac's son Erec, for that cause beareth hate
 to thee:
 He is wise, and right well he knoweth that my fame so high shall
 stand
 That nothing shall stain mine honour, save at Prurein when his
 right hand
 In knightly joust once felled me, but that have I paid right well,
 In a joust at Karnant I smote him, and behind his steed he fell, 370
 And his pledge did he yield unto me,—thro' his shield I thy token
 bare,
 I thought not, my wife Jeschuté, with *another* thy love to share!'

'Thou mayst also well assure thee that the son of King Gandein,
Proud Galoes, once lay lifeless before this arm of mine;
And thou thyself wast witness when the Knight Plihopleheri
Rode swift in a joust against me, nor his strife it hath passed me
by,
My spear from the saddle thrust him that his charger he sat no
more;
Yea, great was the fame that I won me by my prowess in days of
yore,
Many knights have I borne from their chargers,—yet it profiteth
not I ween,
Nor outweigheth the bitter shaming that thro' thee hath my
portion been!' 375

And with reason good do they hate me, those knights of the
Table Round,
Since eight of their bravest champions have I borne unto the
ground,
And many fair maidens saw it, when at Kanedig fierce we fought
For the hawk; there was I the victor, and my hand fame to thee
hath brought
And that didst thou see with King Arthur—At his court doth she
dwell to-day, 385
My sister, sweet Kunnewaaré, and grave is her mien alway,
For her lips may not move to laughter till the day that her eyes
shall light
On him who of all shall be reckoned the fairest and bravest
knight.
Would he come unto me, that hero! Ah! then should a strife be
seen
As to-day in the early morning already my lot hath been. 390
I have fought, and a prince hath suffered, for joust he toward me
sped,
But my spear-point so sorely smote him that he lay there before
me, dead!

'Well I know that in righteous anger for a lesser sin than thine
Full many had slain the sinner, but I would not such deed were
mine!
For the service of knightly honour that to thee I had offered fair,
Henceforth shalt thou know but lacking; nor thy need do I think
to spare— 395
No more with thy white arms circled in love and in peace I'll lie,
Those golden days of love's glory have faded and passed us by,
But pale be thy mouth so rosy, and tear-dimmed thy shining eyes,
For joy shall be put far from thee, and thy heart's songs be turned
to sighs!' 400

Then sadly she looked upon him, that princess so fair and true,
'May it be for the honour of knighthood what seemeth thee best
to do,

Wise art thou indeed and loyal, and I in thy power may be,
 And I know well that heavy sorrow and pain thou canst bring on
 me:
 To the ordeal, I prithee, put me, and do this for all women's sake, 405
 Thereafter, an I be guilty, for my sin do thou vengeance take!
 If another's hand shall slay me, (for *thee* were such deed un-meet)
 Then gladly I'll die—Dost thou scorn me? then welcome is death,
 and sweet!

Then he broke out in bitter anger, 'If thy pride be still so great,
 It is meet I should meekness teach thee, tho' the lesson be all too
 late— 410
 No more shall we be companions, together no more we'll eat;
 Be our marriage couch forgotten and the hours of communion
 sweet.
 This garment in which I found thee thy only robe shall be,
 And instead of jewelled bridle hempen twist will I give to thee;
 Thy steed be the guest of hunger, and thy saddle once decked so
 fair 415
 Shall be robbed of its goodly trappings!' and with hasty hand he
 tare
 The samite adown, and he brake it, the saddle she rode erewhile,
 (Nor her gentle ways and seemly might his angry wrath beguile)
 With a hempen cord he bound it—Too soon had she won his
 hate!
 As he did this he spake, 'Now Lady, 'tis best we no longer wait, 420
 Could I reach him who shared thy favours, then fulfilled were my
 heart's desire,
 The venture I'd face, though as dragon he were breathing forth
 flames and fire!
 Then with weeping instead of laughter she passed from out the
 tent
 That lady so rich in sorrow, and sadly her way she went;
 Yet more than she mourned her shaming she wept her lord's
 grief, I ween, 425
 His sorrow so sorely moved her, e'en death would have lighter
 been.
 Now of true heart shall ye bemoan her who thus did sore anguish
 know,
 And tho' hatred I won from all women, still I'd mourn for
 Jeschuté's woe!

So rode they upon the traces of the lad who before them fled,
 And, dauntless, he little thought him how a foeman behind him
 sped, 430
 But whoever his eyes might light on, as his pathway they drew
 anear,
 He gave to him kindly greeting, 'Thus bade me my mother dear!
 Thus rode he, our lad so foolish, adown a mountain side,

When a woman's voice before him from amid the rocks loud
 cried;
 'Twas a cry of heartfelt sorrow, for her joy was in ruins laid— 435
 Then swift rode the lad towards her,—Now hear what she did,
 this maid:
 She tore, the maid Siguné, her plaits of long brown hair
 From out her head thro' sorrow; and the lad he beheld her there,
 And he saw Schionatulander, the prince, on her knee lie dead,
 And the maiden she wailed above him, and her joy had for ever
 fled. 440

('If sad be their mien or joyful, my mother she bade me still
 Greet all men, whoe'er might meet me) God keep thee from
 greater ill,
 For in sooth a sorry treasure have I found on thy knee to-day!
 Who hath wounded this knight? (For an answer the lad he would
 press away)
 'Did one with a javelin slay him? For Lady, he sure is dead; 445
 Wilt thou tell me naught? Who hath slain him? If he none too far
 hath fled
 Methinks I might overtake him, for gladly with him I'd fight!
 Then the lad he laid hold on his quiver wherein lay the javelins
 bright,
 And still in his hand tight claspèd, the tokens twain he bore
 Which he in his thoughtless folly erewhile from Jeschuté tore. 450
 Had he known the courtly customs with his father's life in-bound,
 His shield were better smitten when the duchess alone he found
 Who thro' him must suffer sorrow—for more than a whole year
 long,
 Her husband withheld his favour, tho' in sooth did he do her
 wrong.

Now list to this maid Siguné who her grief would bemoan as
 meet, 455
 She spake to the lad, 'Thou art courteous, all hail! to thy youth so
 sweet,
 And thy face so fair; yea blessèd thy lot shall hereafter be!
 No javelin pierced this hero, but slain in a joust was he—
 From truth wast thou born who truly for another's woe can
 grieve!
 Then his name she was fain to hearken, ere the lad her side might
 leave, 460
 And she spake, God with skill had wrought him—But his answer
 was naught but this,
 'At home all who know me call me '*Bon fils, Cher fils, Beau fils!*'

Ere ever the word was spoken, the maiden she knew his name—
 Now hearken aright his title, that hereafter ye own his fame
 Who is hero of this my venture, who now standeth the maid
 beside— 465

And her red lips they spake unfaltering, 'Thou art *Parzival*,' she
cried,
And thy name it shall mean 'to pierce thro',' for thy mother's
faithful heart
With furrow of grief was riven when she from her lord must part:
And I speak not that those shouldst vaunt thee; thy mother my
aunt shall be,
And in truth, with no guile of falsehood, thy race will I tell to
thee!' 470

'An Angevin was thy father, thy mother of fair Wales,
And I know for a truth thy birthplace was the city of Kanvoleis;
And thou art the King of Norgals, and there in the citadel
As king shalt thou bear the sceptre and crown as beseems thee
well.
For thy sake was he slain, this hero, who thy kingdom for thee
would guard, 475
His truth it hath faltered never, tho' in death did he find reward.
Two brothers have wrought thee evil, two kingdoms from thee
have reft,

And Orilus this thy kinsman in a joust hath lifeless left.
And me too hath he left in sorrow—He served me nor thought it
shame,
This prince of thy land, where my childhood did thy mother's
tending claim. 480
Now fair and sweet my cousin wouldst thou hear how he met his
end?

'Twas the fair wove leash of a brachet that brought sorrow unto
my friend—
He hath served us twain, in our service hath he won him but
death alone,
And I, I have won but sorrow, and henceforth for his death make
moan,
For scant of wit was I surely, that I gave not my love afore— 485
So God hath my gladness shattered, and the dead I love
evermore!'

Then he spake, 'I must mourn, O cousin, thy grief, and my bitter
wrong,
Of a truth till I may avenge them the time seemeth over-long!
Then straight would he ride to battle, but the way did she falsely
show,
For she feared were he slain then henceforward yet sorer should
wax her woe. 490
But a road he found that led him straightway to the Breton's land,
And smooth and wide was that highway—An there met him on
either hand
Afoot or ahorse a merchant or knight, he would greet them still,
For so was his mother's counsel; and she spake with no thought
of ill.

But great weariness o'ertook him, as darkened the eventide, 495
 And a house that was none too stately the youth in his folly spied.
 'Twas a churl he who sat within it, discourteous by birth and low,
 (A fisherman he, little kindness might one at his hand e'er know)
 Then the lad drew rein for he hungered, and craved of him drink
 and meat.
 But the host quoth, 'Nay, not a half-loaf shalt thou have at mine
 hand to eat 500
 In thirty years; he who waiteth, in the gifts of mine hand to share,
 O'er-long shall delay his journey—For none but myself I care,
 Thereafter perchance for my children—Thou comest not here to-
 day,
 Hadst thou money or pledge 'twere other, then thine host would I
 be straightway!' 505
 Then Jeschuté's clasp all golden the lad he would bid him take,
 And soon as the peasant saw it, with smiling mouth he spake,
 'Wilt thou stay here, sweet lad? then due honour be thy portion
 from all within—'
 'Wilt thou feed me to-night and to-morrow wilt help me the way
 to win
 To King Arthur (for well I love him) then thyself mayst keep the
 gold!' 510
 'Yea, that will I do,' quoth the peasant, 'for ne'er might mine eyes
 behold
 A face and form so comely—I will thee, as a marvel, bring
 To the court, and the good Round Table, and the face of the
 noble king!'

So the lad thro' the night abode there, and ere ever the dawn of
 day
 He roused himself full eager to get on his onward way, 515
 And the fisher, he made him ready, and before the lad he ran,
 And the boy he rode behind him, and swift were both steed and
 man.

(Herr Hartmann von Aue, and thy lady, the queenly Guinevere,
 And thy gallant lord, King Arthur, a guest do I bring ye here;
 No tool is he for your mocking, nay, never a harp or lute, 520
 Ye shall choose ye some other plaything, such as courtesy well
 doth suit;
 Else will I thy lady Enid, and her mother Karnafite
 Pass under the mill, and their honour with bitter scorn I'll smite—
 Tho' I tune my song to mocking, and thy lips with mockery seal,
 Yet here will I guard my hero lest thy scorn he perchance should
 feel!) 525

When the lad with his guide so humble to the city walls drew
 near,
 And Nantes might be well discernèd in the morning light so clear,
 'God keep thee, boy,' said the fisher, 'thou seest where thou must
 ride.'

Quoth the lad yet scant in knowledge, 'Yet nearer must thou be
 guide!'

'Nay, nay, so proud as these court-folk, such folly be far from me, 530
 An' a peasant came nigh unto them, his welcome would sorry be!'

So alone the lad rode onward o'er a plain that was none too wide,
 And the flowers stood fair around him and blossomed on every
 side,
 No Kurwenal was his teacher and of courtesy knew he naught—
 They know it not, the untravelled, till the world hath wisdom
 taught— 535

Of hempen twist his bridle, and feeble and faint his steed,
 And oft it fell, as stumbling it went o'er the flowery mead.
 And nowhere upon his saddle fair leather and new was seen;
 And of samite fair and ermine full great his lack had been.
 No mantle clasp he needed, nor knightly garb he wore, 540
 Of blazoned coat or surcoat; his javelin alone he bore.
 He whose deeds were praised of all men, his father so brave and
 wise,
 Was robed in far other fashion on the carpet 'fore Kanvoles!

He who ne'er felt the sweat of terror, to him did a knight draw
 near;
 Then he greeted him, 'May God keep thee! thus bade me my
 mother dear.' 545
 'God reward thee, lad, and thy mother,' swift answer the knight
 would bring,
 (Uther Pendragon reared him, he was cousin unto the king,
 And unto the land of Bretagne did the self-same knight lay claim)
 He was Ither of Gaheviess, 'The Red Knight' they called his name.

All dazzling red was his armour, the eye from its glow gleamed
 red; 550
 Red was his horse swift-footed, and the plumes that should deck
 its head,
 Of samite red its covering; redder than flame his shield;
 Fair-fashioned and red his surcoat; and the spear that his hand
 would wield
 Was red, yea, the shaft and the iron; and red at the knight's desire
 Was his sword, yet the blade's fair keenness was not dimmed by
 the raging fire. 555
 And the King of Cumberland, stately, in his mailèd hand did hold
 A goblet, with skill engraven, and wrought of the good red gold
 —

From the Table Round had he reft it—All red was his shining hair
 Yet white was his skin, and kindly his speech to the lad and fair.

'Now hail to thy fair young body, that in sooth a true woman
 bare, 560
 Yea, blessèd is she thy mother! Ne'er saw I a face so fair,
 And the light of thine eyes, I think me, is kindled by love alone,
 And Love shall in thee be victor, as by thee Love is overthrown!

And in thee is the joy of woman, whose bliss finds in thee its goal,
 And for thee shall the load of sorrow weigh heavy upon the soul
 — 565
 Now do me this grace I pray thee, an thou wend thee unto the
 town
 Bear greeting from me to King Arthur, and his heroes of high
 renown,
 And say that no fleeting vision am I who now speak with thee,
 But here I abide, and await him who thinketh to joust with me!

 'And never a man will wonder: to the Table Round I came 570
 And there, in the heroes' presence to my kingdom would I lay
 claim,
 And with hasty hand I raised it, this cup, and the wine out-poured
 The robes of the queen besprinkled, as she sat there beside her
 lord.
 This I did as the custom olden of one who would claim his right
 For better I thought the wine-cup, than the straw-wisp all alight, 575
 For its smoke perchance had soiled me, thus I chose it not' spake
 the king,
 'Nor for robbery rode I hither, my crown doth forbid such thing—
 Say thou to the queen that the wine-drops, they fell on her
 'gainst my will
 Where those heroes sit, nor remember, nor their knighthood as
 meet fulfil.
 Whether kings they shall be or princes o'er-long doth he thirst
 their king! 580
 This cup, why delay to fetch it? Their fame it hath taken wing!

 Then the lad spake, 'I'll bear thy message, yea, e'en as thou
 biddest me.'
 And then unto Nantes fair city he gat him right speedily,
 And many a youth they followed to the court of the palace fair,
 And 'twas filled with a motley gathering, and they thronged him
 and pressed him there. 585
 Then Iwanet sprang from out them, and this youth from
 falsehood free
 He gave him a kindly greeting, and he proffered him company.
 And the lad he quoth, 'God keep thee, (so my mother she bade
 me speak
 Ere yet from home I wended) King Arthur I fain would seek
 But here see I full many an Arthur! Who of all these shall make
 me knight?' 590
 Then Iwanet laughed loud 'I will show thee, not yet hast thou
 seen the right!'

To the Table Round he led him where sat the heroes all
 And as best he could for the tumult cried the lad thro' the lofty
 hall,
 'God keep ye all ye heroes! I greet ye both queen and king,
 For thus did my mother bid me fair greeting to ye to bring. 595

And all who have won by their valour at the Table Round a seat
 Ye gallant knights and heroes, ye too did she bid me greet!
 But in one thing my skill doth fail me, who is host here I may not
 know;
 To him do I bear a message from a knight who all red doth glow,
 He waiteth without the portal (methinks he is fain to fight) 600
 That he spilt o'er the queen the wine-cup that sorely doth grieve
 the knight—
 Ah! if I his gear so goodly from the king's hand as gift might take,
 In sooth were I rich in gladness—so knightly and fair its make!'

Thus spake the youth gay and careless, and the courtiers they
 thronged around
 And hither and thither pressed him till scarce might he stand his
 ground: 605
 And well did they look upon him, for each for himself might see
 That never in man or maiden might the fruit of love fairer be.
 And in truth it was no ill working that in Parzival God had
 wrought,
 In whom never a sight of terror had wakened of fear a thought.

Thus they brought him before King Arthur, he whom God for a
 wonder chose, 610
 And no man might bear him hatred—Then the queen from her
 seat arose
 And she gazed for a space upon him ere she passed from out the
 hall
 Where the wine from the golden goblet perforce on her robes
 must fall.

Then Arthur he looked upon him—To the simple youth he spake,
 'Now lad to thy kindly greeting a kindly answer take, 615
 For this would I do thee service, yea with body alike and land;
 This I speak of a true heart truly, so my will doth toward thee
 stand!'

'Would to God that were true! Now I think me it well-nigh a year
 shall be
 That I fain would be knight, lacking knighthood all else seemeth
 ill to me!
 Now make thou no more delaying, be knighthood my lot
 straightway.' 620
 Quoth the king, 'I were fain to do so if worth fail me not away,
 So noble art thou to look on; and goodly gifts and rare
 Would I give thee; to do thee service I'll naught of my treasure
 spare.

Yea, loath had I been to refuse thee, wait but for to-morrow's
 light,
 And I myself will dower thee with all that befits a knight.' 625

The lad like a bird new cagèd, he shook himself to and fro,
 And he quoth, 'For naught do I ask thee! But that knight who as
 fire doth glow

If thou givest me not his armour no gift will I take from thee,
My *mother* will not withhold it—For a queen shall she surely be.'

Then Arthur he quoth, 'That armour so gallant a knight doth wear
That to give thee a gift so goodly methinks I may hardly dare. 630
And guiltless I live in sorrow since his homage I must forego,
Ither he is of Gaheviess; thro' my joy hath he wrought me woe.'

'Now my King sure it were ungracious to say to his pleading nay,
Thou shalt give him what he desireth, nor think it too great,'
quoth Kay, 635

'Let him forth to the plain; bid him bring thee the cup if it be thy
will!

Here hast thou the whip, there the top is, let the child have of
sport his fill.

The women, forsooth, will praise him, and it seemeth good to me
He should learn to take blows an he gives them, many such will
his portion be.

For the life of the twain what care I? Each of us needs must have
his day, 640

If thy dogs for the spoil shall hunger, thou must e'en give thy
dogs their way.'

'I were loath to refuse his pleading, yet I feared lest he here be
slain,

And to knighthood I fain had helped him.' Thus Arthur he spake
again.

Thus the lad won the gift he craved for, which many perforce
must rue,

And young and old they followed, as forth from the hall he flew. 645
By the hand would Iwanet lead him, 'fore a bower that was none
too high,

And backward and forward turning the lad gazed with eager eye.
And the bower was so low that within it the lad he both heard
and saw,

And therefrom did he win a sorrow that vexed him with torment
sore.

The queen from her bower window to look on the sight was fain, 650
And her knights and maidens round her they gazed and they
gazed again.

And the maiden Kunnewaaré she sat there, the fair and proud,
And never, that man might wot of, had she laughed or low or
loud.

For never she vowed, an she died first, would she laugh ere her
eyes might see

That knight, who of knights the bravest or was, or henceforth
should be. 655

As the lad rode beneath the window she brake into laughter
sweet,

And her back was sore from the guerdon—reward for a maid
unmeet!

For Kay the Seneschal seized her, the maiden of fair Lalande,
 By her waving hair, and the tresses he wound fast around his
 hand,
 Without a band he bound her—Tho' never an oath she sware 660
 His staff he laid unknighly on her maiden shoulders fair,
 And ere ever the sound of the smiting on the ear had died away
 Thro' white skin and royal raiment had he wounded the maid that
 day.

And thus did he speak in his folly, 'Now hast thou thine own fair
 fame
 Cast aside, and I wot thou hast done it to thine own mending
 shame! 665
 Now see, e'en in flight have I caught it, and I bring it to thee once
 more
 In such wise thou mayst well remember, and be e'en in the
 memory sore:
 For I wot well unto King Arthur, to his court and his palace hall
 Many gallant men have ridden, yet hast thou despised them all,
 And ne'er hast thou smiled upon them—And now doth thy
 laughter ring 670
 For one knowing naught of knighthood! Unseemly I deem this
 thing!'

Now whate'er might be done in anger I wot well no king's decree
 Had bid him thus smite the maiden; and her friends mourned her
 bitterly.
 (Might she bear knightly shield and armour it had helped not this
 sore disgrace,
 Discourteous the blows were smitten.) She came of a royal race, 675
 Had her gallant brothers seen it, Lähelein and Orilus
 Far fewer blows had fallen; she ne'er had been smitten thus.

Now Sir Antanor the Silent, who thro' silence a fool was thought,
 (His speech and the maiden's laughter on a self-same thread
 were wrought)
 For never a word would he utter till she laughed whom Kay thus
 did smite, 680
 As clear rang the maiden's laughter, aloud spake the silent knight,
 'Now here before God I tell thee, Kunnewaaré of fair Lalande
 Thou hast wronged for that lad, and thy guerdon awaiteth thee at
 his hand,
 Nor so weak shall he be, nor so foolish, but he turneth thy bliss to
 bale!'

'And thy speech thou hast found but to threaten for joy shall it
 naught avail.' 685
 His food would he make full bitter.—Kay smote him upon the ear
 With his fist till naught but a singing and a whispering might he
 hear.
 And Parzival saw the sorrow of the maiden and Antanor,

And his heart was hot for their shaming, and grief for their sake
he bore,
And he grasped his javelin tightly, but the throng pressed so
close around 690
That perforce the dart must he lower, lest some other aim it
found.

Thus alone from the court of King Arthur rode the son of
Gamuret,
And he came to the plain where the Red Knight his foeman
awaited yet;
And he bare unto him the tidings how in Nantes was there never
a knight
Whose heart yet yearned for jousting, or who lusted with him to
fight. 695

'But a gift King Arthur gave me—I spake as thou saidst before,
That without thy will had it chanced thee the wine o'er the queen
to pour,
Thy discourtesy sorely vexed thee—They think not to fight with
thee.
Now give me the steed thou ridest, and thine harness give thou
to me,
They were given me in the palace, therein shall I be a knight, 700
Wouldst withhold them, I will not greet thee—Yield thou what is
mine of right!'

Then the King of Cumberland answered, 'If Arthur hath given to
thee
Mine armour, my *life* he gave thee, if that life thou canst take
from me,
So well doth he love his kinsmen! Hath he known thee before to-
day,
That so swiftly the service done him with such guerdon he would
repay?' 705

'I may win what I will I trow me, of a sooth had he given me more;
Now leave thou thy claim on his kingdom—'Tis time I a knight's
shield bore
For *squire* will I be no longer!' He laid on the rein his hand
'Thou art Lâhelein, so I think me, who hath taken from me my
land!'

Then the knight he turned his spear-shaft, and he struck with so
true a blow 710
That the lad and his sorry charger on the meadow he laid them
low,
And the hero was swift in his anger, and he smote with a will so
good
That there where the spear-shaft struck him there sprang forth
bright drops of blood.
Then Parzival sprang up swiftly and stood wrathful upon his feet

And he grasped his javelin firmly—Where the helm and the visor
 meet 715
 And betwixt the twain is an opening, there the javelin swiftly sped
 And thro' eye and neck it struck him, and the knight on the plain
 lay dead.
 Fierce foe had he been to falsehood; women's sighs, true hearts
 wounded sore,
 Were the fruit of his death, and with tear-drops must many an
 eye run o'er.
 And they whom his love made joyful their gladness asunder
 brake, 720
 And their joy to the goal of sorrow o'er a rough road its way must
 take.

Then Parzival in his folly turned the dead knight o'er and o'er,
 For fain would he loose his armour, yet was lacking the needful
 lore.
 He fingered both helm and corslet with his bare white hands
 alone,
 Yet the fastening he failed to loosen, nor with force might they be
 undone 725
 Tho' oft and again he tried them, who in wisdom was all
 untaught.
 Then the horses they neighed so loudly that the sound on the
 breeze was brought
 To Iwanet's ear, and he heard them, by the city moat he stood,
 (To Queen Guinevere was he kinsman, and he did to her service
 good)
 He heard the cry of the horses, but naught of the riders saw, 730
 As his true heart would give him counsel, Parzival did he seek
 once more.

And Ither lay dead; and his slayer by his folly was vexed amain—
 Then swiftly he sprang to aid him, and Parzival thanks must gain
 For the honour he here had won him o'er the hero of
 Cumberland:
 'God reward thee, but give me counsel for skill here doth fail
 mine hand, 735
 How best may I loose this armour which myself I were fain to
 wear?'
 'Such lore I right well may teach thee,' quoth Iwanet the proud
 and fair,
 So the armour was reft from the dead man, 'fore Nantes on the
 grassy plain,
 And they did it upon the living, o'er whose dealings did folly
 reign.

Quoth Iwanet, 'These leather leggings fit not with the mailèd
 gear, 740
 As a *knight* shalt thou now be clothèd,' and the lad deemed it ill
 to hear;

Quoth Parzival, 'What my mother aforetime hath given me
 That cometh not from my body, or for good or for ill it be!
 And much did Iwanet marvel, for clever was he i' troth,
 Yet he followed perforce his bidding, nor waxed at his folly wroth. 745
 And he drew above the leggings the hosen of shining mail,
 Nor the spurs with red gold in-wroughten should unto the
 harness fail,
 And of silk and gold the laces, nor leather might there be found.
 Ere he gave unto him the corslet he bound him with greaves
 around,
 And tho' o'er-long Parzival deemed it yet the time was swiftly
 sped, 750
 Ere in knightly armour shining he clad him from foot to head.
 Then the lad would have ta'en his quiver, but Iwanet he spake out
 free,
 'Nay, no javelin will I give thee, unknighly such arms shall be!
 Then he girt the sharp sword around him, and he showed how to
 draw the blade,
 And he bade him ne'er fly in battle, nor in conflict to be
 dismayed. 755
 Then nearer he led unto him the charger the dead knight rode,
 And 'twas tall and strong, yet the saddle the youth with one
 spring bestrode,
 He recked not the weight of his armour, and of stirrups had little
 need—
 E'en to-day do men speak of his swiftness, and the fame of his
 mighty deeds.

Nor o'er-much did Iwanet think it to teach him with fitting skill 760
 To hold his shield and to guard him, while he wrought to his
 foeman ill;
 And a spear in his hand he gave him—But Parzival turned aside,
 'Nay, nay, what good may that do me?' 'If a joust one with thee
 would ride
 Thou shalt on thy foeman break it, perchance drive it thro' his
 shield,
 If thou doest that oft, 'fore the maidens will they praise thee for
 well-fought field.' 765

And this hath the venture told me,—Not in Maestricht, or e'en
 Cologne
 Might a painter so fair a picture as this lad and his steed have
 shown.
 Then straightway he spake to Iwanet, 'My friend and companion
 dear,
 The boon that I asked have I won me, of that art thou witness
 here.
 My service bear thou to the city, to Arthur the noble king, 770
 And mourn unto him my shaming—This cup thou again shalt
 bring,

And tell him a knight hath wronged me, since he smote that
 maiden fair
 Who looked, and who laughed upon me, and grief for her grief I
 bear.
 Nor hath it but lightly touched me, it hath pierced to my inmost
 heart
 This maid's woe all undeservèd—Now do thou in her shame have
 part 775
 Thro' the friendship that thou hast shown me! God keep thee in
 peace always,
 And watch o'er us twain, for I think me no longer I here may stay!'

And lither the prince of Gaheviss on the plain had he lifeless left,
 E'en in death was he fair to look on who was thus of fair life
 bereft.
 If in joust by a spear-thrust pierced he thro' knighthood his death
 must gain 780
 Who had mourned for the grief and the marvel? By a javelin he
 here was slain.
 Then Iwanet he strewed above him a covering of blossoms bright,
 And he smote the shaft of the javelin in the ground by the fallen
 knight,
 And that lad so true and faithful, he pierced with the crimson
 blade
 A bough of wood, and in this wise a cross o'er the dead man
 made. 785
 Then he gat him again to the city, and the heavy tidings told;
 And from many a trembling woman, and from many a hero bold
 Rose the wail of love and of sorrow; and the dead would they
 fetch in state,
 And the Host they bare before her, as the queen passed the city
 gate.

Then o'er Cumberland's prince and hero, who by Parzival's hand
 was slain, 790
 Queen Guinevere spake in sorrow while her tear-drops they
 flowed amain,
 'Alas! alas! for broken in twain is King Arthur's might,
 For he whom the good Round Table accounted its bravest knight
 Here slain before Nantes he lieth! His heritage did he claim
 Where men gave him death for his guerdon—For naught marred
 his knightly fame; 795
 Here long hath he dwelt among us in such wise that never an ear
 The tale of a deed unknighly, or wrong he had done, might hear.
 He held him afar from falsehood, to guile was he aye a foe;
 The lock and the seal of knighthood all too soon must we bury
 low.
 His heart wise in courteous wisdom, and steadfast as seal and
 sign, 800
 Taught him ever the fairest counsel that a man's heart might aye
 divine,

Whereby with true love and courage a man woman's love may
 woo
 And show manhood's truth—Fruit-bearing it seedeth itself anew
 The plant of all woman's sorrow! From thy wounds grief shall ever
 grow—
 So red was thy hair that the blossoms that bloom here thy corse
 below
 Scarce redder may be with thy life-blood—All laughter hast thou
 forbid
 To fair women, and joy and gladness by thy death are for ever
 hid.'

805

Thus Ither, beloved of all men, as a king in the grave was laid,—
 With his life must he pay for his armour who taught sighing to
 many a maid,
 Since Parzival in his folly for the harness his death had sought,
 Hereafter, when he won wisdom, he scarcely such deed had
 wrought!

810

NOW this might ye mark in the charger, great labour it held as
 naught,
 Were it hot, were it cold, no journey the sweat on its coat had
 brought;
 It sped over stone or tree-trunk, and scarce was there need to
 draw
 The girth by one hole the tighter if the knight for two days it
 bore.

815

So fully armed, in his folly yet further he rode that day
 Than a wise man unarmed in two days if his steed he betimes
 would stay.
 And ever it onward galloped, and but seldom would walk or trot,
 How to check its speed by the bridle as yet Parzival knew not.

Then he saw the roof of a castle rise fair in the evening glow,
 And the lad he thought in his folly that the towers from the earth
 must grow
 Since the one roof bare so many—And he thought Arthur sowed
 such seed,
 And he who could work such marvels were a holy man indeed!
 Then he said, 'While at home I tarried ne'er looked I on woodland
 field
 That a crop so rich and so stately in growth might ever yield;
 I think me my mother's people their labour but little know,
 For never too dry, I think me, is the soil where their seed they
 sow!'—

820

825

Now Gurnemanz of Graharz of this mighty Burg was lord:
 At his portal a spreading linden stood fair on the summer sward,
 Nor too long nor too wide was the meadow, and the horse and
 the road they led
 To where Parzival found him seated who of castle and land was
 head.

830

Now weariness sore constrained him, nor his shield might he
 rightly hold
 But it backward and forward wavered as beseemed not a rider
 bold.
 And Prince Gurnemanz sat all lonely, and the boughs of the
 linden tree
 Gave shade as was meet to its master, the captain of courtesy— 835
 And his life it fled from falsehood—Then e'en as should be his
 right
 He gave to the guest fair welcome, and with him stood nor squire
 nor knight.

Then Parzival made him answer—In his folly he spake
 straightway,
 'My mother bade me seek counsel from an old man with locks of
 grey;
 For thy rede will I do thee service, for so did my mother speak!' 840
 'If here thou art come for counsel, and aid at my lips would seek,
 Thy favour thou still shalt leave me whatever my counsel be,
 If thou wilt that thy prayer I hearken, and give rede as seem best
 to me!'

Then the prince cast a yearling falcon from his hand and aloft it
 flew,
 And it winged its way to the castle, and its golden bells rang true, 845
 'Twas a messenger; and the pages came swiftly in garments fair,
 And he bade them to lead the guest in, and lodging as meet
 prepare;
 And the lad he spake in his folly, 'My mother she told me true,
 An thou follow an old man's counsel his rede shalt thou never
 rue!

And the pages they led him straightway where stood many a
 gallant knight, 850
 And there in the castle courtyard from his steed did they bid him
 light.
 Spake the youth, and he showed his folly, 'Tis a King who hath
 bidden me
 Be a knight, and whate'er befall me on this charger my seat shall
 be.
 My mother she bade me greet ye!' And mother they thanked and
 son,
 (Both horse and man were wearied) then, the words of greeting
 done, 855
 Full many a time they urged him, but it cost them many a
 thought
 Ere the lad within the castle, and from off his steed they brought.
 Then they led him to a chamber, and they prayed the stranger
 guest,
 'Let us loose thine harness off thee, that thy wearied limbs find
 rest.'

But scarce had they loosed his armour when lo! there came to
 view 860
 A garment e'en such as Fools wear, and leggings of calf-skin new;
 Then startled and shamed they turned them, and they whispered
 each to all,
 And with bated breath the tidings ran swift through the castle
 hall,
 And the host for shame was speechless—But a knight spake in
 courtesy,
 'Let that be as it may, one so noble mine eyes they might never
 see, 865
 And Good Fortune hath looked upon him by his mien so high
 and fair—
 Ah! he whom Love's light hath chosen, who bade him such garb
 to wear?
 And it grieveth me sore to find thus on the World's Joy such poor
 attire.
 Ah! well for the mother who bare him, she hath won her full
 heart's desire!
 And his helmet is decked so costly; ere his harness from him we
 took 870
 It became him well, and knightly and noble I ween his look,
 And many a bruise and blood-stain the lad on his limbs doth
 bear.'
 Quoth the host, 'Tis perchance a woman who bade him such
 garb to wear!'
 'Nay, Sire, for so strange his bearing he would know not a maid
 to pray
 To take from him knightly homage,—Tho' his face is so fair alway 875
 It had fitted him well for Love's service.' Then the host spake, 'Tis
 best we see
 This lad, in whose strange attiring a marvel for sure shall be!'

Then to Parzival they betook them, and they found that a wound
 he bare
 From a spear that was never shattered, and the host for his hurts
 would care,
 And so kindly I ween his tending that a father, whose heartfelt
 love 880
 To his children, found no denial, his faith might no better prove.
 And he washed his wounds and bound them, the prince, with his
 own right hand,
 Ere forth to the hall he led him where the evening meal should
 stand.

And food the guest sore needed, and hungry was he alway,
 From the house of the fisherman fasting had he ridden at break
 of day, 885
 And his wound and the heavy harness which he before Nantes
 had won

Wrought him weariness sore and hunger ere ever the ride was
 done.
 For from Arthur the King of the Bretons the whole day he needs
 must ride,
 Nor his fast at the Court had broken, and now it was eventide.

Then the host bade him eat at his table, and Parzival did his will, 890
 And the food it swiftly vanished, as if one would a manger fill!
 And Gurnemanz was well pleasèd, and ever the lad did pray
 To eat as he would, and his hunger and weariness put away.

When 'twas time, and the meal was ended, 'Now weary art thou, I
 ween,'
 Quoth the host to his guest, 'If this morning betimes thou a-foot
 hast been?' 895
 'God knoweth my mother slumbered, so early she ne'er doth
 wake.'
 Then the host he laughed, and he led him where rest he right well
 might take,
 And he bade him disrobe, tho' unwilling, he needs must—An
 ermine fair
 They cast o'er his naked body,—fairer fruit never woman bare!

By weariness taught to slumber, but seldom throughout the night
 On his other side did he turn him, he might well wait the morning
 light. 900
 Then the prince he bade his servants ere ever 'twas middle day,
 A bath, as was meet, make ready by the couch where the young
 knight lay,
 And roses they threw within it—And tho' he no call might hear
 The guest awoke from his slumbers, and he stepped in the waters
 clear. 905

I know not who sent them hither, but maidens richly dressed,
 Lovely and sweet to look on, all courteous sought the guest,
 They washed his wounds and bound them with their hands so
 soft and white,
 (Nor should this o'er strange have seemed him who was reft of
 wisdom's might)
 And both ease he felt and gladness, nor his folly they made him
 rue— 910

Thus these fair and gentle maidens they tended the lad anew,
 And they spake 'twixt themselves, and he hearkened, yet never a
 word would say,
 Yet too early he might not deem it, for they shone as a second
 day,
 And their beauty it vied with the morning, yet his fairness
 outshone the twain,
 For naught to the youth was lacking that favour and praise might
 gain. 915

Then a linen cloth they proffered, but the lad he took it ill,
 An he robed himself before them, their presence should shame
 him still.

Perforce must the maidens leave him, nor longer might linger
 there
 Tho' in sooth they would fain have questioned lest deeper the
 wounds he bare.
 (For such was the way of woman, and such is true woman's will, 920
 Tho' scatheless themselves yet the sorrow of a friend it doth work
 them ill.)

Then he strode to the bed, and he found there fresh raiment so
 fine and white,
 With a girdle he bound it round him, 'twas of silk and of gold so
 bright;
 And hosen of scarlet woollen they drew on the fearless knight,
 In sooth they well became him who was comely in all men's sight.
 And of ruddy brown well fashioned, (nor lining they thought to 925
 spare)
 Were robe alike and mantle, and within was the ermine fair,
 And without were they decked with sable, both black and grey in
 hue;
 Then the gallant youth the mantle around his shoulders threw,
 With a belt so rich and costly he girt him found the waist, 930
 And the fastening of the mantle with a golden clasp was graced.

And his mouth was red and glowing—Then his host he drew
 anigh,
 And many a proud knight followed, to greet him courteously,
 And e'en as 'twas done the heroes they spake with a great amaze
 'Ne'er saw they a man so goodly!'—And all would the mother 935
 praise
 Who such son to the world had given—And in truth and in
 courtesy
 They spake, 'Whatsoe'er he asketh for his service fulfilled shall be,
 And favour and love await him if his worth win its meed alway,'
 And of those who hereafter saw him none were there who said
 them nay.

By his hand the host then took him, and forth from his chamber
 led, 940
 And the prince fain would hear the story how the night hours
 with him had sped,
 'Were it otherwise, I think me that living I scarce might wake,
 'Twas well that my mother bade me thus shelter with thee to take
 Ere yet from her I had ridden—May God requite ye both,
 For mercy Sir Knight, and kindness, hast thou shown to me 945
 nothing loth.'

So went our hero witless where to God and the host they'd sing,
 And the prince by the Mass would teach him that which health to
 the soul shall bring.
 He would rede him well of the Offering—How to sign himself
 with the Cross,

And thus work on the Devil vengeance, who seeketh for aye our
loss!

Then again to the hall of the castle and the morning meal they
came, 950
And the host set his guest beside him, and he ate without fear or
shame.
Then out spake the prince so courteous, 'An it seemeth not ill to
thee,
Fain am I to know thy dwelling, and from whence thou art come
to me?'

Then frankly he told the story how his mother's side he fled,
Of the ring and the clasp so golden, and the winning the harness
red. 955
And the prince he knew the Red Knight, and his fate it pleased
him ill,
And the name of his guest he asked not but 'The Red Knight' he
called him still.

Then e'en as the meal was over, were they tamed the ways so
wild,
For the host to his guest he quoth thus 'Thou speakest as doth a
child,
Why hold not thy peace of thy mother, and otherwise turn thy
speech? 960
An thou follow henceforth my counsel far wiser the ways I'll
teach!'

'And thus I begin, do thou hearken—From true shame shalt thou
never flee,
A shameless man, bethink thee, what place in the world hath he?
As a bird that moulteth ever so his honour doth fall away,
And hereafter he hath his portion in the fires of Hell for aye.' 965

'So noble methinks thy bearing, a folk's Lord thou well mayst be;
If high be thy birth, and yet higher the lot that awaiteth thee,
Then see that thy heart hath pity for the poor and needy man
And fight thou against his sorrow with free gifts as best thou can,
For a true knight must aye be humble—A brave man who need
doth know 970
Full often with shame he battles, and sore is that strife I trow,
For him shall thy help be ready—(Who lighteneth his brother's
need
From Heaven he winneth favour as rewarding for righteous deed.)
For in sooth his case is harder than theirs who as beggars stand
'Neath the window, and succour seeking, for bread shall stretch
forth the hand.' 975
'Thou shalt learn in a fitting measure both rich and poor to be,
Who spendeth as lord at all times no lordly soul hath he—
Yet who heapeth o'er-much his treasure he winneth methinks but
shame,

But give thou unto each their honour, so best shalt thou guard thy fame.'

'I saw well as thou earnest hither that thou hadst of my counsel need— 980
 Yield not unto ways discourteous but give to thy bearing heed,
Nor be thou so swift to question—Yet I would not that thou withhold
 An answer good and fitting to the speech one with thee would hold.
 Thou canst hear and see, I wot well full five shalt thy senses be,
 An thou use them aright, then wisdom it draweth anear to thee.' 985

'In thy wrath remember mercy, and slay not a conquered foe,
 He who to thine arms shall yield him take his pledge and let him go;
 Unless he such ill have wrought thee as sorrow of heart doth give,
 An my counsel thou fain wouldst follow, then in sooth shalt thou let him live.'

'Full oft shalt thou bear thy harness—When thy knightly task is sped 990
 Thy hands and face thou shalt cleanse them from the rust and the iron red,
 For such is in truth thy duty, so thy face shall be fair and bright,
 And when maiden's eyes behold thee they shall deem thee a goodly sight.'

'Be manly and of good courage, so shalt thou deserve thy fame;
 Hold women in love and honour, it shall be to thine own good name; 995
 And be ever steadfast-minded as befitteth good man and true,
 An with lies thou wouldst fain deceive them much harm can thy dealings do.
 If true love be repaid with falsehood then swift shalt the judgment be,
 And a speedy end to all honour and renown shall it bring to thee.
 As beneath the stealthy footsteps of the thief the dry stick breaks, 1000
 And the slumbering watcher, startled, to his danger swiftly wakes
 So false ways and dealings crooked in their wake bring but strife and woe;
 Prove this by true love, for true women have skill 'gainst the hidden foe,
 And their wiles can outweigh his cunning—An thou winnest from women hate,
 Then for ever art thou dishonoured, and shame on thy life shall wait.' 1005

'So take thou to heart my counsel—And more would I tell to thee;
 Husband and wife united as one shall they ever be,
 As the sun that this morning shineth, and this morn that we call to-day,

So the twain may be sundered never but *one* shall be held alway.
As twin blossoms from one root springing e'en so shall they
bloom and grow; 1010
With wisdom receive my counsel that its truth thou hereafter
know.'

Then he thanked his host for his teaching, nor spake of his
mother more,
But as true man and son so loving in his heart her memory bore.

Then the prince spake as did him honour, 'Yet more will I teach to
thee,
Thou shalt learn knightly skill and bearing—In such wise didst
thou come to me, 1015
Full many a wall have I looked on that the shields might better
deck
Than that shield erewhile became thee, as it hung there around
thy neck.

None too late shall be the morning, we'll hence to the open field,
And fitting skill I'll teach thee that thine arms thou mayst rightly
wield.

So bring to my guest his charger, and mine shalt thou hither lead, 1020
And each knight shall make him ready, and mount, e'en as I, his
steed.

And pages shall thither follow, and each one shall bear a spear,
And the shaft shall be strong and untested, and blazoned with
colours clear.'

So the prince and his guest together they rode to the grassy
plain,
And many a feat so skilful was shown by that knightly train. 1025
And the lad he learned how to check him his charger in seeming
flight

With touch of spur, and turn him once more 'gainst the foeman's
might;

His spear to sink as needed, and before him hold his shield
As he rode a joust; 'Thus shalt thou thine arms in future wield!'

Thus of lack of skill he cured him better than by the bough 1030
That smiteth unruly children and breaketh their skin I trow.
Then he bade swift knights come hither, and a joust with the
stranger ride,

And himself to the ring he led him, and against the foe would
guide;

And the lad in his first joust carried his spear through the
foeman's shield,
And tho' strong was the knight yet he smote him from his steed
on the open field. 1035

And they marvelled much who beheld it—Then another to joust
rode near,

And Parzival took unto him a fresh and unbroken spear,

And his youth had strength and courage—The beardless lad and fair
 Was spurred by his inborn manhood, and to Gamuret's skill was heir—
 Then he urged his charger onward full swiftly against the foe, 1040
 And his spear rang true on the four nails, and struck nor too high
 nor low,
 Nor the host's knight might keep his saddle, but prone on the
 sward he fell,
 Of the spear-shaft full many a splinter the force of the blow might
 tell.
 Thus five of the knights were smitten ere the host to the Burg
 would ride,
 And the victory was his, and hereafter fierce strife might he well
 abide. 1045

Then they who his deeds had witnessed, the wise men, they
 needs must say
 That great was the skill and valour he had shown in the joust that
 day,
 'Our lord may be free of sorrow, and his youth it may bloom
 anew
 If he give him to wife his daughter, our lady so fair and true.
 If we see him wax in wisdom then the sorrow shall be o'erpast— 1050
 The death of his sons a shadow o'erlong o'er his life hath cast,
 But now to his door hath ridden one who maketh amends for all,
 And gladness no more shall fly him, but it seeketh his palace hall!'

Then homeward they turned at even when the board for the feast
 was spread,
 And the prince bade his daughter hither (for so I the tale have
 read) 1055
 As he saw the maid draw near him the host to Liassé spake,
 'To this knight shalt thou do all honour, and a kiss from his lips
 shalt take,
 With Good Fortune for guide he fareth! And of *thee* would I pray
 this thing,
 If token perchance she beareth, thou wilt leave to the maid her
 ring—
 Yet none hath she, nor clasp—Who should give her what that
 forest princess wore? 1060
 For *she* won from the hand of her husband what thine hand from
 her raiment tore,
 From *Liassé* canst thou take little'—Then the lad he must blush
 for shame,
 On her lips did kiss the maiden, and her mouth it was red as
 flame.
 And Liassé was fair to look on, and gentle of heart and pure,
 And a hero might well have loved her with a love that should aye
 endure. 1065

Full long and low was the table, nor many might sit thereat,
 At its head was the prince so kindly, and his guest by his side he
 set
 Betwixt him and his daughter, and the maiden with snow-white
 hand
 Must carve, as he willed, for the Red Knight, so her father would
 give command,
 And courteous, she did his bidding, and none did the twain
 prevent 1070
 As shy glances rosy-blushing, they each to the other sent!

 The feast over, the maiden left them, but she bade not the guest
 'Farewell,'
 For twice seven days in honour Parzival with his host did dwell.
 But within his heart lay a sorrow, 'twas no other I ween than this,
 He would he enough had striven to be worthy of wedded bliss, 1075
 And he thought him a goal so worthy must lead to a guerdon
 high
 Both in this life and e'en in the other—And these words they shall
 be no lie.

One morning for leave he prayed him, from Graharz he fain
 would ride,
 And his host, sore loth to lose him, awhile rode his steed beside.
 Fresh sprang of grief the fountain as the prince spake, 'I lose once
 more 1080
 A son, Death of *three* hath robbed me, thy loss now shall make
 them *four*.
 And threefold it was, my sorrow—Who my heart would in pieces
 smite
 Fourfold and from hence would bear them, in the pain should I
 find delight.
One for thee, since thou ridest from me, and *three* for my three
 sons slain—
 Bravely they fell in battle, such guerdon doth knighthood gain!' 1085

'And its end is of sorrow woven—One death all my joy doth lame,
 The death of my son so gallant, Schenteflur did they call his
 name;
 When Kondwiramur her kingdom and herself would withhold
 with strife
 From Klamidé the king, and Kingron, in her aid did he lose his life,
 And my heart with the thrust of sorrow, as a hedge is it piercèd
 thro'. 1090
 Now all too soon dost thou leave me since no comfort from thee
 I drew,
 Ah! would Death were here my portion since Liassé, that maiden
 bright,
 And the land I had deemed so goodly find no favour in this thy
 sight!'

'My other son, Count Laskoit, by Idêr son of Noit was slain

<p>Anent a hawk—Little gladness from his death I methinks might gain— Gurzgrei did they call my third son, to whom Mahaut gave her heart, As his wife did he win the maiden from her brother proud Ekunât. 'Gainst Brandigan on a venture for Schoie-de-la-kurt he'ld ride, And the Prince Mabonagrein smote him, and there by his hand he died. And Mahaut she lost her beauty, and his mother, my wife, lay dead, For thro' sorrow and bitter yearning the days of her life were sped.'</p>	<p>1095</p> <p>2000</p>
<p>Then the guest saw his host's deep sorrow as he told unto him his woe, And he quoth, 'Little wisdom have I, yet if ever the day I know When I win knightly fame and honour, so that maiden I well may woo, Thou shalt give unto me Liassé, thy daughter so fair and true. Thou hast told me of o'er-much sorrow; if thy grief I may lift from thee From the load of so sore a burden I gladly will set thee free!'</p>	<p>2005</p>
<p>Then leave from the prince so kindly the young knight that morn would pray, And from all his gallant vassals; and he rode from their land away; And the prince, in the game of sorrow, tho' heavy before his throw, Had lost yet more, for from threefold to fourfold his grief must grow.</p>	<p>2010</p>

BOOK IV KONDWIRAMUR

ARGUMENT

Book IV. tells how Parzival came to Pelrapär, and found it besieged by sea and land, and the folk wasted by famine. How Queen Kondwiramur besought his aid; how he overthrew Kingron, and sent him to the court of King Arthur. How Parzival wedded the Queen; and of the wrath of King Klamidé when he heard the tidings. How the Burgers defended Pelrapär against their foemen; how Klamidé challenged Parzival to single combat, and was overthrown; and how he came to the court of King Arthur at Dianasdrön. Of the love of Parzival and Kondwiramur; and how the hero parted from his wife, and went in search of knightly venture.

BOOK IV KONDWIRAMUR

Thus Parzival parted from them, and courteous he now might
bear
knightly garb, and he knew them, the customs of
kighthood fair.
Alas! he full sore was troubled with many a bitter pain,
And the world was too close, and too narrow the width of the
spreading plain,
And the greensward he thought was faded, and his harness had
paled to white; 5
So the heart the eye constraineth and dimmeth awhile the sight.
For since he had waxed less simple somewhat of his father's lore,
The desire of the man for the maiden, in his wakening heart he
bore;
And he thought but of fair Liassé, that maiden so true and sweet,
How never her love she proffered, yet with honour the guest
would greet. 10
And wherever his horse might turn it he took in his grief no heed,
And if slowly it paced or swiftly he thought not to guide its speed.
Nor many a field well-fencèd nor wayside cross he found;
Nor chariot-wheel nor horse-hoof had furrowed with tracks the
ground;
Untrodden the woodland pathway, nor wide was I ween the way, 15
And he knew not the hills and the valleys—Full oft shall ye hear
men say,
'Who rideth astray, in his wandering the lost axe may often find.'
They lay here unnumbered round him, if for *axe* ye have *trees* in
mind.
Yet tho' far was the road he journeyed yet he went in no wise
astray,

And thus from the land of Graharz he rode through the livelong
 day, 20
 Till he came to the kingdom of Brobarz thro' mountains wild and
 high—
 When the shadows of evening lengthened, and red flushed the
 western sky,
 Then he came to a mountain torrent, and the voice of the raging
 flood
 Rang clear as its waves rushed foaming round the crags that amid
 them stood.
 So he rode adown by the waters till he came to the city fair 25
 Which a king had bequeathed to his daughter; 'twas the city of
 Pelrapär,
 And I wot that tho' fair the maiden who bare of that land the
 crown,
 Great grief and small gladness had they who dwelt in that noble
 town!

Like an arrow that swiftly speedeth from the bow by a strong arm
 bent,
 The waters onward rushing on their downward pathway went; 30
 And a bridge hung high above them with woven work so fair,
 And the stream it flowed swift to the ocean—Well-guarded was
 Pelrapär,
 As children in swings delight them, and swing themselves to and
 fro,
 So swung the bridge, yet ropeless, youthful gladness it scarce
 might know!

And on either side were standing, with helmets for battle bound, 35
 Of knights e'en more than thirty, and they bade him to turn him
 round,
 And with lifted swords, tho' feeble, the strife would they gladly
 wait,
 They thought 'twas the King Klamidé whom they oft had seen of
 late,
 So royally rode the hero to the bridge o'er the field so wide—
 As thus to the youth they shouted, and with one voice his arms
 defied, 40
 Tho' he spurred his steed full sharply it shrank from the bridge in
 fright,
 But ne'er knew he a thought of terror—To the ground sprang the
 gallant knight.
 And he led his horse by the bridle where the bridge hung high in
 air,
 Too faint were a coward's courage so bitter a strife to dare!
 And well must he watch his footsteps for he feared lest his steed
 should fall— 45
 From the other side of the water the knights had ceased their call,
 And with shield and sword-blade gleaming within the town they
 passed,

For they feared lest an army followed, and they closed their
portals fast.

So Parzival crossed the river, and he rode o'er a grassy plain
Where many in search of knighthood must death for their
guerdon gain; 50

And he came to the palace portal, and stately the Burg and high,
And there hung there a ring of iron, and he gripped it right
manfully.

But none to his call made answer, save only a maiden bright
Who looked forth from out her window, and was 'ware of the
gallant knight.

Spake the maiden so fair and courteous, 'An thou comest, Sir
Knight, as foe, 55

Little need have we of thine hatred, for heavy enough our woe,
A wrathful host doth threaten already by sea and land!
Then he quoth, 'Nay, gentle lady, at thy portals a man doth stand
Who will, if he can, do thee service! For thy service my hand is
fain,

And never reward save thy greeting as payment I think to gain.' 60
Then the maiden she went in her wisdom to the queen and an
entrance prayed

For the knight, and in sooth his coming it brought to their sorrow
aid.

So Parzival came to the city; down the roadway on either hand
The folk who would fain defend them in close groups he saw
them stand,

Soldiers on foot, and slingers, and they who the dart could throw,
He saw as he came towards them, in many a goodly row. 65

And many a squire so valiant, the bravest from out the land,
Long, sharp, and strong were the lances they bare in each strong
right hand.

There too, so the story telleth, was many a merchant grave,
And the javelin and axe were their weapons, so their lady
commandment gave. 70

And their skins, they were loose for hunger—Then the Marshal of
the queen

Made his way thro' their ranks to the castle, and heavy his task I
ween.

And well was that castle guarded, with towers o'er the chambers
high;

And barbican, keep, and oriel in such numbers they met his eye
That buildings so strong and so many in his lifetime he never saw,
And on horse or afoot from all sides the knights to his welcome
draw. 75

'Twas a sorry host, for as ashes some were grey, some were pale
as clay,

(My lord the Count of Wertheim sure had starved on such scanty
pay!)

Thro' want full sore they hungered, nor cheese, nor bread, nor
 meat
 Had they, and their teeth were idle since naught might they find
 to eat. 80
 And their palate knew naught of the flavour of the wine-cup, or
 red or white,
 And their doublet hung loosely on them, and wasted each limb of
 might,
 And their skin like wrinkled leather on each rib hung gaunt and
 grim,
 For hunger their flesh had wasted and driven from every limb.
 Thro' want must they sorely suffer, little grease in their fuel ran— 85
 (A hero to this had forced them, the proud King of Brandigan,
 Thus they paid for Klamidé's wooing)—The mead might they
 seldom spill,
 For small was their store, I think me, the vessel or cup to fill.
 In Trühending oft shall ye hearken the hiss of the frying cake,
 In such music, methinks, but seldom the folk might their pleasure
 take! 90
 (And if for such want I'd mock them, then in truth must I share
 their shame,
 For there where I oft dismount me, where men do me '*Master*'
 name,
 At home in mine house, with trouble e'en the mice shall their
 portion steal,
 Nor oft for their food be joyful! Nor need they the bread conceal,
 Unhidden, I scarce may find it—Yea, oft doth it happen so, 95
 And I, Wolfram of Eschenbach, oft times such pleasure and ease
 may know.)
 But enough of my lamentation, once more ye the tale shall hear
 How the city was full of sorrow, and for gladness they paid full
 dear.
 How these heroes, so rich in courage, must in need and in
 scarceness live,
 For so did the manhood bid them, to their need shall ye pity give
 — 100
 For their life stood in pledge, might He free it in Whose Hand all
 power shall be!—
 Yet more of their grief would I tell ye that ye mourn for them
 bitterly,
 With shame their guest did they welcome, for they deemed him
 so rich and great
 That he craved not thro' need their shelter; he knew naught of
 their poor estate.
 On the grass did they spread a carpet, where a linden was walled
 around, 105
 And trained to a welcome shadow—'Neath its boughs they his
 arms unbound,

And the vassals they took his harness; but other than theirs his
 face
 When he in the streamlet washed it, and cleansed it from red rust
 trace;
 Nay, the sunlight's rays were shamèd 'neath the glow of his
 beauty bright,
 And a worthy guest they thought him as they gazed on the
 gallant knight. 110
 Then a mantle rich they brought him e'en like to the robe he
 bare,
 And new was the smell of the sable wherewith it was garnished
 fair.

Then they spake, 'Wilt thou look upon her, the queen, our lady
 true?'
 And the knight made answer straightway, that thing would he
 gladly do.
 To the palace they came, and the stairway steep and high to the
 portal led, 115
 And the light of a fair face met him when his footsteps so far
 were sped.
 Of his eyes should she be the sweetness—There shone from that
 lady bright
 A radiant glow and dazzling, ere she welcomed the stranger
 knight.
 Now Kiot of Katelangen and Manfilot, Dukes the twain,
 Led hither their brother's daughter who as queen o'er this land
 did reign: 120
 (For the love of God their harness, shield, and sword, had they
 put away
 These princes true and stalwart, fair of face tho' their hair was
 grey.)
 Midway adown the staircase all courteous the maid they led,
 And she kissed the gallant hero, and the lips of the twain were
 red;
 And she gave him her hand, and she led him, Sir Parzival, to the
 hall, 125
 And they sat them adown together in the midst of the courtiers
 all.

And feeble and faint the maidens, and the knights who stood
 there around,
 And vassal alike and hostess, small joy in their life they found.
 Yet Kondwiramur, her beauty did high o'er all others stand,
 Were it Enid, or fair Jeschuté or Kunnewaaré of far Lalande, 130
 Whoe'er men had deemed the fairest when they women's beauty
 weighed,
 Their fame to the earth was smitten by the glance of this royal
 maid.
 Yea, even the twain Isoldé, tho' men praise them evermore,
 They must yield the crown of beauty to the lady Kondwiramur.

(And her name in our tongue betokens her shapely form and fair)
 And well had they done, the mothers, who had borne such a
 goodly pair 135
 As these twain who sat here together, naught did they who stood
 around
 But gaze on the one and the other—Many friends had our hero
 found.

And the thoughts of the knight will I tell ye, '*There Liassé, Liassé
 here,—*
 God will free me from care since I see here Liassé that maiden
 dear 140
 The child of a gallant father!'—Yet her fairness was naught I wot,
 'Gainst her beauty who sat beside him, in whom God no wish
 forgot.
 (The maiden was queen of the country) Yea, e'en as by morning
 dew
 Refreshed, the rose from its calyx forth buddeth in beauty new,
 And is white and red together—And grief to her guest it wrought,
 To whose courtesy naught was lacking since Gurnemanz' side he
 sought, 145
 And his words had from folly freed him; and had bidden him
 questions spare
 Save only where they were needful—So he sat by that lady fair,
 And never a word his lips spake, tho' he sat close the maid beside
 —
 Yet to those who know more of woman such silence doth oft
 betide. 150

Then the queen to herself said softly, 'This man disdaineth me,
 He deemeth my fairness faded. Nay, perchance it yet may be
 That in this thing he doeth wisely, his hostess in sooth am I,
 And he is my guest, the first speech should be mine assuredly!
 Gently he looks upon me tho' never a word we speak, 155
 And courteous hath been his bearing, 'twere well I the silence
 break;
 Too long have I yet delayed me since here side by side we sit.'
 To her guest did she turn, the maiden, and she spake as it seemed
 her fit:

'Sir Knight, it were well as hostess that the first words came from
 me,
 Since I wot well my kiss as hostess a greeting hath won from thee,
 And thou offeredst me thy service, so my maiden hath borne me
 word, 160
 Our guests scarce are wont to do so, tho' the tidings I fain had
 heard.
 Now tell me, my guest, I prithee, since the tale I am fain to know,
 From whence art thou come to my kingdom, and whither thou
 yet wouldst go?'

'Lady, at early morning I rode from my host away, 165

A brave knight is he and faithful, yet he sorroweth sore to-day,
 And Prince Gurnemanz do men call him, in Graharz he holds
 command,
 From thence I to-day have ridden, thence came I unto this land!'

 Then the noble maiden answered, 'Sir Knight, had another told
 This tale, methinks that scarcely for truth I the words might hold, 170
 That thou in one day hadst ridden a journey that scarce in twain
 My swiftest squire could compass, tho' his charger he spurred
 amain!
 Thy host was my mother's brother; his daughter's youthful glow,
 It hath paled before the sorrow which she, e'en as I, must know.
 For many sad days and mournful, with sad eyes we've wept our
 fill 175
 I, and the maid Liassé—Wouldst thou show to thy host goodwill?
 Then thou shalt with us, man and woman, this night-tide our
 sorrow share,
 Thou shalt serve him thereby; and I'll tell thee the want we
 perforce must bear.'

Then out spake her uncle Kiot, 'Lady, I send to thee
 Twelve loaves of bread, and of shoulders and hams do I give thee
 three, 180
 And eight cheeses too are with them, and two casks of wine I
 trow,
 And my brother, he too shall aid thee, of such aid hast thou need
 enow!'
 And Manfilot spake, 'Yea, Lady, I send thee the self-same fare.'
 And the maiden she sat in gladness, and of thanks she no word
 would spare.
 Then leave they craved from their lady, and forth would the old
 men ride 185
 To their hunting-house that was nigh there—But the cell where
 they would abide,
 Was in Alpine wilds so lonely, there unarmed did they dwell afar,
 And never a foeman vexed them with tumult or strife of war.

And the messenger sped full swiftly, and the fainting folk were
 fed,
 No Burger within the city but was lacking for other bread, 190
 And many were dead of hunger ere food for their need was
 found.
 Then the queen she bade them share it to the feeble folk around,
 With the cheese, the flesh, and the red wine, as Parzival counsel
 gave,
 Scarce a morsel was left, yet they shared it, the queen and her
 guest so brave.

And swiftly the store had vanished, tho' to many who yet might
 live, 195
 Nor were slain by cruel hunger this succour fresh life might give.

Then they bade them a couch make ready for the guest, and
 'twas soft his bed,
 (Had the Burgers been hawks for the hunting methinks they were
 not o'er-fed
 As their scanty board bare witness) yea, the folk there, one and
 all,
 Bare the marks of bitter hunger, save the gallant Parzival. 200

Then leave he prayed of his hostess, he would lay him down to
 rest.
 Do ye think that for tapers straw-wisps must light so brave a
 guest?
 Nay, better were they I think me; he betook him, the hero fair,
 To a bed so rich and stately a king well might slumber there,
 Nor of poverty bare it token, and a carpet before it lay. 205
 Then he prayed the knights to go hence, nor longer there delay,
 And noble lads un-shod him, and straightway he fell asleep,
 Till the cry of heart-sorrow woke him, and tears that bright eyes
 should weep.

This chanced e'en as I will tell ye; no woman's law she brake,
 For pure was she aye, the maiden of whom this venture spake. 210
 Long stress of war constrained her, and the death of her
 champion true,
 So heavy her heart with sorrow that sleep from her eyelids flew,
 So she went, this royal lady, (but never such love to claim
 As urgeth a gentle maiden to crave of a *wife* the name)
 But she sought help and friendly counsel, tho' clad in a warlike
 gear, 215
 A silken shift, (strife she wakeneth who doth thus to a man draw
 near.)
 And the maiden she wrapped around her a mantle of samite
 long,
 And she went as her steps were guided by sorrow and bitter
 wrong.

Her maidens and waiting women who lay there around her bed
 She left them slumbering softly, and with noiseless footsteps
 sped 220
 To a chamber, there, e'en as she bade them, Parzival all lonely lay,
 And around his couch the tapers burnt bright as the light of day.
 To his bed she turned her footsteps, and she knelt low his couch
 before,
 But no thought of love unlawful the heart of either bore.
 Of joy bereft was the maiden, his help she was fain to claim, 225
 If awhile they lay there together it brought unto neither shame.

So bitter the maiden's sorrow that there fell full many a tear
 On Parzival, and her weeping thro' his slumbers the knight might
 hear,
 And waking, he looked upon her, and sorrow and joy he felt,

And he rose up, the youthful hero, as the maiden before him
 knelt, 230
 And he spake to the queen, 'Say, Lady, wilt thou now make a
 mock of me?
 To God only, and never to mortal methinks shouldst thou bow the
 knee.
 But rise thou and sit beside me, or grant me I pray this grace,
 Lay thyself down where I was lying, I will seek me some other
 place!
 But she spake, '*Thyself* wilt thou honour, and show honour alike
 to me, 235
 And by never a touch wilt shame me, I will e'en lay me down by
 thee.'
 Then the knight he spake by his knighthood he would e'en do as
 he should say,
 So down on the bed beside him in peace the maiden lay.

 Tho' well sped were the hours of the night-time no cock did they
 hear to crow,
 Empty and bare the perches, for the famine had left them so. 240
 Then the maiden, grieving sorely, prayed him courteous her plaint
 to hear,
 "Twill rob thee of sleep an I tell thee, and work to thee ill I fear.
 My foeman the King Klamidé, and Kingron his seneschal,
 My castles and lands have wasted, yea, all but this citadel.
 My father, King Tampentäre, by his death me, poor orphan, left 245
 In peril and need so deadly, of all hope am I well-nigh left.
 Kinsmen and princes many, and vassals, both rich and poor,
 Yea, a mighty army served me, but they serve me now no more.
 One half, nay, far more I think me, in defence of my land are slain,
 Alas! whence shall I, poor maiden, or gladness or succour gain? 250
 In such sore strait do I find me, I am ready myself to kill
 Ere my maidenhood and this body I yield to Klamidé's will.
 His wife he is fain to make me, yet his was the hand that slew
 My Knight Schenteflur, the hero, whose heart was both brave and
 true,
 And the flower was he of all manhood, falsehood he ne'er might
 know, 255
 Who was brother unto Liassé, and she too shall share my woe.'

 But e'en as she named Liassé then sorrow awoke anew
 In his heart who would fain do service, and his spirit, so high and
 true,
 Sank, as sinketh a hill to the valley, at the thought of that maiden
 dear;
 Yet he spake to the queen, 'Say, Lady, how best may I serve thee
 here?' 260
 'Sir Knight an thou couldst but rid me of Kingron the seneschal;
 In knightly joust of my warriors full many before him fell.
 With the morning again he cometh, and he thinketh that free
 from harm

His lord soon shall lie, my husband, in the clasp of my circling
 arm.
 My Burg hast thou seen, and thou knowest how lofty its towers
 and high, 265
 Yet down to the moat below them will I fling myself joyfully,
 Ere of maidenhood King Klamidé shall rob me against my will,
 If no better may be, then by dying, his boasting I yet may still!'
 Then he quoth, 'Lady, French or Breton, of what country soe'er he
 be,
 From Kingron my hand shall shield thee, with what power may be
 given to me.' 270
 The night was spent, with the dawning the queen she arose
 again,
 Lowly she bent before him, nor from thanks would her lips
 restrain.
 Then she passed from the chamber softly, and no man might be
 aware,
 Tho' wise were he else, of her errand, save only the knight so fair.
 Nor Parzival longer slumbered, for the sun was swift to rise, 275
 And it pierced thro' the clouds of morning, and smote on his
 wakened eyes;
 And he heard the sweet bells chiming, as the folk church and
 minster sought,
 For Klamidé their joy had banished, and their land in sore peril
 brought.
 Then up rose the young knight also; the chaplain was in his place
 And he sang to God and his lady; and the guest saw the maiden's
 face, 280
 And he gazed till the Mass was ended, and the benediction o'er.
 Then he bade them to bring his harness, and soon was he armed
 once more,
 A good knight and strong they deemed him, in gallant armour
 fair.
 Then on came Klamidé's army with banners borne high in air.
 And Kingron, he came full swiftly, he sped far before the force, 285
 And, so hath the story told me, of Iserterre's land his horse.
 And there waited before the portal the son of King Gamuret,
 And the prayers and the hopes of the townfolk on the youthful
 knight were set.
 Nor with sword he ere this had striven—From afar did he aim his
 stroke,
 And so swift his joust, in the meeting the gear of both chargers
 broke, 290
 And their girths were burst asunder, and each steed to its knees
 was brought,
 And the heroes who yet bestrode them of their swords must they
 needs take thought;

In their scabbards did they find them—And already did Kingron
bear
Wounds in arm and breast, and I wot me that loss was his portion
there.

For this joust brought him loss of the glory that methinks had
been his alway 295

Till he met with this knight, and their meeting, of his pride was
the dying day.

And valiant did men account him, six knights had he prostrate
laid

Who rode in one field against him, yet here was he well repaid
By Parzival's right hand valiant, and Kingron the seneschal
Thought strange was indeed his peril, for *stones* surely on him fell 300
Cast forth from a mighty engine—Other arms wrought his
overthrow,

For a sword clave clean thro' his helmet, and Parzival laid him low,
And he knelt with one knee upon him, and he bade him forthwith
to give

What he ne'er to a foe had given, his pledge, an he fain would
live.

But he thought not to be his captor who had vanquished him
here in field, 305

But he bade him ride hence to Graharz and his pledge to its lord
to yield.

'Nay, Sir Knight, thou hadst better slay me, 'twas I who slew his
son,
'Twas my hand of life that robbed him, Schenteflur—Thou from
God hast won

Great honour, yea, men shall praise thee for the strength that
thou here hast shown,
Of a sooth art thou here the victor, and Good Fortune shall be
thine own.' 310

Quoth Parzival, 'Yet another is the choice I will give to thee,
Yield thou to the queen whom thy master in his wrath wronged
so grievously!'

'Nay! Then were I lost of a surety, for I wot with their sword-
blades keen

My body they'd hew in pieces, small as dust in the sun is seen!
Such sorrow of heart, I think me, and grief thro' my hand they
win, 315

Full many a gallant hero who dwelleth those walls within.'

'Then hence from this plain shalt thou journey to the kingdom of
Brittany,
And bear to a gentle maiden thy pledge and thy fealty.
For she for my sake hath suffered a sorrow she ne'er had borne,
Had not Kay been of knightly customs, and of courtesy fair
forsworn. 320

Say to her how with me it fareth, that I come not in joy again

Till my spear, thro' his shield sharp-piercing, hath wiped out her
 honour's stain.
 To King Arthur and to his lady, and the knights of the Table Round
 Bear my greeting, and say in their presence shall I never again be
 found
 Till the day I from shame have freed me; from the shame which /
 too must share 325
 With the maiden who smiled upon me, and great grief for that
 greeting bare.
 Say to *her* I am aye her servant, to serve her with service fain!
 So Kingron must swear unto him ere they parted, those heroes
 twain.

Thus he came afoot to the city, for thither had fled his steed,
 The Burgers' help in battle, from their anguish the folk he freed. 330
 But the outer host was troubled that Kingron, their chosen knight,
 In this wise had been dishonoured, and broken his dauntless
 might.
 Then they led Parzival in triumph to their queen so fair and
 young,
 And the maiden was fain to greet him, and her white arms around
 him clung,
 And in close embrace she held him as she spake, 'The wide earth
 doth hold 335
 No man I will have for my husband save him whom these arms
 enfold!'
 And as here they disarmed the hero her part would the maiden
 bear
 With ready hand and skilful, nor her service she thought to spare.

But tho' heavy had been his labour, yet scanty, I ween, the board.
 And the Burgers they came before him, and they sware him with
 one accord 340
 They would have him for lord and master; and the queen in her
 turn she spake,
 And she said that this knight so valiant for her love and her lord
 she'd take
 Who had won him a fame so mighty o'er Kingron the seneschal—
 But now from the castle bulwarks two sails might be seen by all,
 A strong wind to the haven brought them, and their lading must
 needs make glad 345
 The folk, they bare naught but victuals,—God's guidance they
 surely had!

Then they rushed adown from the ramparts, and swift to the
 ships they fled,
 The hungry crowd, for the booty, as leaves by the wind are sped.
 With flesh they were not o'erweighted, so wasted and thin were
 they,
 Nor they strutted with well-filled belly, but bending they went
 their way. 350

The queen's marshal he sware the shipmen, by the doom of the
 hempen cord,
 Safe conduct for life and lading, none should touch that which lay
 aboard.
 Then he bade them to lead these merchants straightway into the
 town,
 And Parzival for their lading the double he paid them down,
 And gladly the merchants took it, for princely they deemed such
 pay; 355
 And the Burgers these welcome viands to their fires did they bear
 straightway.

Now fain would I there take service, no man of them all drank
 beer,
 Wine and food had they there in plenty—Then he did as you now
 shall hear,
 Parzival, the gallant hero, for first in portions small,
 With his own right hand he shared out the viands among them
 all, 360
 Yea, even unto the nobles; so long had they lacked for bread,
 He feared it had wrought them evil if perchance they were over-
 fed.
 But to each one he gave his portion, and his counsel they
 deemed it right,
 And more should they win ere nightfall from the hand of this
 gallant knight.

To their marriage couch they bade them, 'twas the will both of
 king and queen— 365
 Yet throughout the night so courteous he bare him, in truth I
 ween,
 He little had pleased those ladies who now, in these latter days,
 In passion's heat forget all that should win for a woman praise;
 Tho' modest they seem to strangers, yet their heart gives their
 mien the lie,
 And their tenderness worketh sorrow to their friend, tho' in
 secrecy. 370
 But the steadfast knight and faithful guards himself at every hour,
 And well knoweth to spare a woman an she chanceth within his
 power.

For he thinketh, and thinketh truly, 'For many a lonely year
 For her favours I served this lady; now, behold, the day is here
 When her will is to reward me, and here we twain do lie— 375
 Had I touched with bare hand her vesture I were blest to eternity!
 An I vantage take of her slumbers to myself untrue I seem,
 Methinks we were both dishonoured did I waken her from her
 dream,
 For a woman's sleep is holy, and all men shall own its sway.'
 Thus the Walesis, who ne'er had feared him, lay still till the dawn of
 day. 380

Thus he whom men called the Red Knight, a maiden he left the
queen,
Yet surely she deemed in the morning his wife she o'er night had
been,
And for love of her lord her tresses she bound with the morning
light
As matrons are wont to bind them. And he won him, the gallant
knight,
Castles and lands around them from the hand of his maiden
bride, 385
But her *heart* was ere this his guerdon, and in peace did the twain
abide.

Thus glad in their love they held them two days till the third night
fell,
And often he thought might he take her to himself it would
please him well.
Then he thought of his mother's counsel, and how Gurnemanz
spake of yore,
That man and wife should as *one* be, and the doubt vexed his
soul no more, 390
And his wife did he take unto him—Love's custom ever old,
Yet ever new to lovers, to these twain brought joy untold.

'Twas well, not evil, with them—Now hear how the king, their foe,
As he rode in his might to battle, must tidings of evil know.
'Twas a squire who fain had told them, all crimson his spurs with
blood; 395

'Before Pelrapär on the meadow have they foughten those heroes
good,
'Twas a bitter strife and knightly; thy seneschal fell that day,
Kingron, who led thine army, to King Arthur must take his way.
As he in departing bade them lies the army upon the plain.
Pelrapär shalt thou find well guarded 'gainst thyself and thine
armies twain, 400
There within is a gallant hero, and naught doth he crave but
strife;

In the camp of thy hired soldiers is many a rumour rife,
They say from the good Round Table cometh Ither of Cumberland
To the help of the queen, and knightly and valiant methinks his
hand!
'Twas his arms that rode forth for jousting, and no man his deeds
shall blame, 405
In such wise hath he borne his armour as winneth him meed of
fame.'

Quoth the king to the squire, 'My lady, the queen, she desireth
me,
And she and her land so goodly I trow shall my portion be.
And Kingron the seneschal told me, and surely the truth he spake,

That famine doth plague the city, and peace they ere long must
 make, 410
 And the queen she her love shall proffer'—His wrath must the
 squire abide.
 Then the king and his host passed onward, and a knight did
 toward them ride,
 And he spared not his horse but spurred it, and told them the
 self-same tale,
 And the king deemed the loss o'er-heavy, and courage and joy
 must fail.

Then a prince spake from out the army, 'Tho' Kingron hath valour
 shown, 415
 Yet never he fought for *our* manhood, he fought for himself
 alone.
 Now let him to death be stricken—Why then should they be cast
 down,
 Two hosts, this one, and the army that lieth before the town?'
 Then he bade his lord take courage, 'Once more will we try our
 fate,
 Let them look to their arms, the conflict shall be for their strength
 too great, 420
 We will make an end of their gladness! Bid thy vassals and
 kinsmen hear,
 With banners twain before them to the town shall they draw
 anear;
 Down the hill will we ride upon them, but afoot must we storm
 the gate,
 For so shall we work them evil, and victory shall on us wait.'
 Galogandres, the Duke of Gippones, it was who this counsel gave,
 And sorrow he brought on the Burgers—but slain was this hero 425
 brave,
 And slain, too, the brave Count Narant, a prince from Uckerland's
 shore,
 And many another hero whom dead from the field they bore.

Now hear ye another story, how the Burgers would guard their
 wall.
 Strong stakes of wood sharp-pointed they made fast in tree-
 trunks tall; 430
 (Sore pain thus was wrought the besiegers) and the trunks were
 made fast that day
 To a rope that by wheel was guided, so they guarded their walls
 alway.
 And all this had they done and tested ere Klamidé would storm
 the gate
 To avenge the fall of Kingron—There had come to their land of
 late
 Greek fire, for the ships had brought it that of food brought a
 goodly store, 435

And it burnt of the foe the weapons, and the engines of deadly
war;
And battering-ram or tortoise in vain 'gainst the walls were
wheeled,
No weapon had they for onslaught but was forced to the flame to
yield!

Now Kingron the seneschal journeyed till he came on to Breton
ground,
In his hunting-house in Briziljan King Arthur at last he found, 440
And Karminöl did they call it—As 'fore Pelrapär he fought,
So at Parzival's word his surety to the maid of Lalande he
brought,
And glad was fair Kunnewaaré that, faithful, he mourned her
shame
Whom men there knew as the Red Knight, and this knight at his
bidding came.

And soon were the wondrous tidings amid the courtiers spread, 445
And he stood there before King Arthur, a gallant knight ill-spel.
Then he spake unto him and his vassals in such wise as he needs
must speak,
And Kay was with terror smitten, and crimson it grew, his cheek,
And he spake, 'Is it thou, O Kingron? Ah! many a Breton knight,
Thou seneschal of Klamidé, thy hand hath o'erthrown in fight! 450
If thy captor ne'er look upon me with favour, thine office high
Shall turn to thy good; we are rulers of the caldron, both thou
and I,
Of thy wisdom and skill do thou aid me, to win me the favour fair
Of this maiden Kunnewaaré, and sweet cates for her board
prepare!'

Nor they asked from him other ransom—Now leave we that tale
and hear 455
What had passed since we left the story—So the host to the town
drew near,
To Pelrapär came the King Klamidé, and a bitter strife arose.
The inner host strove with the outer, and in sooth were they
gallant foes,
Fresh strength had they won and courage, and bravely they held
the field;
And Parzival, lord of the country, in the vanguard he bare his
shield. 460
And he swung aloft his weapon, thro' the helm clave the blade so
keen,
And the knights he o'erthrew before him found a bitter death I
ween,
For there, where the corslet opened, the Burgers they pierced
them thro',
In such wise would they take their vengeance—this wrought grief
to the hero true,

And Parzival, he forbade them, and they ceased at their lord's
 command, 465
 But of living knights full twenty were captive unto their hand.
 Yet Parzival well had marked it how the king and his bravest
 knights
 Sought not fame before the portals, but far out in the plain would
 fight;
 Then forth by a path untrodden the hero a circuit made,
 And swiftly he charged where the monarch his banner aloft
 displayed. 470
 And, see! there a mighty slaughter the guard of the king befell,
 And the shields they were hewn in pieces, the Burgers they
 fought so well.
 And Parzival's shield had vanished 'fore the blows and the sword-
 blades keen;
 And tho' little his skill rejoiced them, yet all who the strife had
 seen,
 They spoke but to praise his valour—Galogandres the standard
 bare, 475
 (Well he knew how to wake their courage!) but dead lay the hero
 there.
 And Klamidé himself stood in peril, and great stress on his army
 lay;
 Then he bade them withdraw, for the valour of the Burgers had
 won the day.
 But Parzival, gallant hero, bade them treat their captives well
 Till the dawn of the third day's morning, and fear on his foemen
 fell. 480
 Then the young host, proud and joyful, bade the knights on their
 oath go free—
 'Good friends, when the word I send ye, then wend your way back
 to me!
 Their swords and their goodly harness as prisoners they needs
 must yield;
 Unarmed did they fare from the city to the host on the outer
 field.
 'For sooth,' spake their comrades mocking, 'from *wine* must ye
 needs be red, 485
 Poor souls, since within the city ye have hungered for lack of
 bread!
 'Nay! nay! ye may spare your pity,' so spake they, the heroes
 good,
 'If ye lie here a whole year longer, within is such store of food,
 That by them might ye well be nourished! And the queen hath
 the fairest knight
 For her husband, that e'er won knighthood, or carried a shield in
 fight, 490
 He may well be of lofty lineage, for he lacketh no knightly skill!'

And the king needs must hear the tidings, and in sooth did they
 please him ill,
 And heralds he sent to the city, and he bade them this challenge
 bear
 To him whom the queen had wedded, 'If this knight the strife
 shall dare,
 And the queen doth hold him worthy herself, and her lands so
 wide, 495
 To defend in single combat, then in peace may our hosts abide!'

And Parzival he was joyful at the message the heralds bare,
 And his heart was fain for the combat; and out spake the hero
 fair,
 'Now I pledge me upon mine honour that no man within this wall
 Shall lift his hand for my peril, *alone* will I stand or fall!' 500
 So betwixt the moat and the meadow a truce did they swear that
 day,
 And those smiths of battle armed them as meet for the coming
 fray.

On a gallant war-horse armèd sat the King of Brandigan,
 'Twas hight Guverjorz—This charger with many a gallant man,
 And many a goodly present, from Gringorz his nephew, king 505
 Of Ipotente did Count Narant from the north o'er the deep seas
 bring.
 And therewith were a thousand footmen, well armed save no
 shield had they;
 (If the tale speaketh true to the third year the king had made
 good their pay.)
 And Gringorz sent him knights five hundred, each one with his
 helm on head,
 And skilled were they all in battle; with Klamidé they hither sped. 510
 And thus had the mighty army, alike both by sea and land,
 Encircled the town of Pelrapär, and great need must its folk
 withstand!

Forth rode Parzival from the city to the field that should aye
 declare
 If 'twas God's will his wife to leave him, the child of King
 Tampentäre.
 Proudly he rode, yet he spurred not his steed to its swiftest flight, 515
 And 'twas armed for need, and its covering was a samite of red so
 bright,
 And the iron lay beneath it—And the hero himself shone fair
 In his harness red, red his corslet, and the shield that he proudly
 bare.
 And Klamidé began the conflict—A short spear of wood
 unwrought,
 With that would he fell his foeman, and the joust from afar he
 sought; 520

And Guverjorz sprang forth swiftly, and the joust it was ridden
 well
 By those heroes young and beardless, nor one from his saddle
 fell,
 And never a horse or a rider had foughten a better fight;
 And the steam rose in clouds from the chargers on which sat
 each gallant knight,

 And so fierce was the fight that the horses, out-wearied with
 conflict sore, 525
 Stumbled and fell together, in sooth could they do no more.
 And joyful they smote, the heroes, till fire from the helm must
 spring,
 Small time had they there for leisure, but zeal to their task must
 bring;
 And the shields were hewn in pieces, and the splinters were
 tossed on high,
 As shuttlecocks gaily smitten to the winds of heaven fly. 530
 Yet Gamuret's son was unwearied, and never a limb did ache,
 Tho' Klamidé deemed that the foemen from the city the truce
 would break.
 Then he bade his fellow-foeman to look to his honour well,
 And stay the hand of the slingers, for the blows heavy on him fell
 As of stones shot forth from an engine—But Parzival made reply, 535
 'Nay, safe art thou from the slingers, my word is thy surety,
 Thou hast peace from mine hand, and I swear thee that never a
 sling shall break
 Head, or breast, or thigh, thou art safe here, were it but for mine
 honour's sake!'

All too soon was Klamidé wearied and spent with the deadly
 fight,
 Who was victor, and who was vanquished, ere long might be seen
 aright, 540
 And they looked on the King Klamidé, on the grass was he laid
 a low,
 And Parzival's right hand gripped him till forth streamed the
 crimson flow
 Of blood from the ears and nostrils, and the green turf was dyed
 with red;
 And his foeman unbound the helmet and visor, and bared his
 head,
 The vanquished would face the death-blow, and the victor spake,
 'Here I free 545
 My wife for aye from thy wooing! Learn thou what Death may be!'

'Nay! nay! thou gallant hero, thirty-fold doth thy glory grow
 Thro' the valour thine hand hath shown here, since in strife thou
 hast laid me low.
 What higher fame dost thou look for? Kondwiramur sure shall say

That Good Fortune hath smiled upon thee, whilst / am
 Misfortune's prey; 550
 Thy land hast thou now delivered—As when one a leaking boat
 Doth free from the load of water, that it light o'er the waves may
 float,
 So lightened am I of honour! Manly honour and joy I trow
 Are waxen thin and faded, what profit to slay me *now*?
 From children and children's children mine heritage shall be
 shame, 555
 To do more here methinks were needless—For joy thou hast won
 and fame,
 And a living death is my portion, since for ever from her I part,
 Who fast in love's magic fetters hath held me both mind and
 heart,
 Little good it forsooth hath brought me, ah! most wretched
 henceforth am I,
 And this land and its lovely lady for aye in thy power shall lie! 560

Now he who was here the victor on Gurnemanz' counsel thought,
 How mercy should well beseem him who with manhood had
 valiant fought,
 And he thought him the rede to follow; and thus to the king he
 spake,
 'I free thee not, to the father of Liassé submission make!
 'Nay, Sir Knight, I have wrought him evil, 'twas thro' me that his
 son was slain, 565
 An ill-fate wouldst thou bring upon me! The hand of thy queen to
 gain,
 With Schenteflur I battled, and in sooth had I died that day,
 Save that Kingron came to my succour, and his hand did the hero
 slay.
 For Gurnemanz of Graharz had sent him to Brobarz' land
 At the head of a gallant army; 'twas a fair and knightly band, 570
 Nine hundred knights who fought well, and rode upon mail-clad
 steeds,
 And fifteen hundred footmen all armed for valiant deeds,
 For naught but shields should fail them—Too great their might I
 thought,
 But the seed of such goodly harvest once more their country
 sought.
 Yet now hath my loss been greater! Of my heroes but few are left,
 What more would thine hand take from me, who of gladness am 575
 now bereft?'

'An easier way I'll show thee, to Brittany shalt thou ride,
 Kingron has gone before thee, there King Arthur he doth abide,
 To *him* shalt thou bear my greeting, and bid him to mourn away 580
 The shame I bare as my portion when I rode from his court away.
 A maiden who smiled upon me for my sake was smitten sore—
 Of all that in life e'er grieved me naught ever hath grieved me
 more!

And that maid shalt thou tell of my sorrow; and thy pledge to her
 hand shalt yield,
 And do even as she shall bid thee—Or die here on this foughten
 field!'

'So, if here I must choose betwixt them, not long shall my choice
 delay,' 585
 Spake the King of Brandigan swiftly, 'From hence will I ride
 straightway!'

But his oath did he swear ere he parted whom pride had in peril
 brought.
 Then Parzival, the hero, for his wearied charger sought,
 And his foot touched nor horse nor stirrup as he light to the
 saddle sprung,
 And his steed the hewn shields' splinters around him in circles
 flung. 590

And the Burgers I ween were joyful—but their foemen were sad
 and sore,
 For flesh and bone were wearied, and sorrow of heart they bore.
 And they brought King Klamidé wounded to those who might
 give him aid,
 And the dead on the bier they bare them, and to rest in the grave
 they laid.

From many a guest unwelcome the land at last was freed, 595
 And the gallant King Klamidé to Löver he rode with speed.

Now it fell at this time King Arthur and the knights of the Table
 Round,
 And many another hero, at Dianasdrön were found.
 And in sooth no lie I tell ye when I say that this plain so good
 Bare of tent-poles a greater number than the trees in Spessart's
 wood. 600

For 'twas ever the wont of King Arthur the high feast of Pentecost
 To keep with his knights and vassals, and of maidens a goodly
 host.
 There were many a noble banner, and many a warlike shield
 With coat of arms emblazoned, and fair tents stood adown the
 field;

'Twould be thought of the world a marvel, who should make all
 the travelling gear 605
 For such wondrous host of ladies as those that were gathered
 here!
 And I think me that never a maiden but had counted it to her
 shame
 If no knight mid the knights around her she might as her lover
 claim!
 Came I myself to such gathering, an such youthful knights were
 there,
 I were loth if my wife beside me thro' such tumult were fain to
 fare— 610

(Nay, when folk thus come together far liefer were I away)
 May be one might speak unto her, and some such words would
 say—
 'With love of her was he smitten, and ne'er might he healing
 know
 Save that she herself should heal him. Yea, an but her will were so,
 Her knight would he be for ever, to serve her his whole life long' 615
 I were swift, with my wife beside me, to flee from such foolish
 throng!

Yet enough of myself have I spoken—Now hear how King
 Arthur's tent
 Might be known apart from the others; before it on gladness bent
 He feasted, the king, with his vassals whose hearts never
 falsehood knew,
 And with many a stately maiden, whose thoughts aye to jousting
 flew, 620
 As if with darts they sported, and their friend 'gainst the foe
 would aim,
 And if ill befell their hero with sweet words to his aid they came.

Then the youthful King Klamidé in the ring would he bridle draw;
 His steel-clad limbs and charger the wife of King Arthur saw,
 His helmet and good shield cloven her maidens they saw right
 well— 625
 So he came to the court, (who had sent him small need have I
 here to tell.)
 So sprang he adown from his charger, and they thronged him on
 either hand
 Ere he came where she sat whom he sought for, Kunnewaaré of
 fair Lalande.

And he spake, 'Art thou she, O Lady, to whom I owe service fair?
 (Yet need doth in part constrain me) from the Red Knight I
 greeting bear, 630
 He willeth to take upon him the shame that thy lot hath been;
 He prays that King Arthur mourn it—Thou wast smitten for him I
 ween,
 Here, Lady, my pledge I bring thee, so my victor hath bidden me,
 Else my body to death were forfeit—I will do here as pleaseth
 thee!'

Then the maiden Kunnewaaré by his hand led the gallant knight 635
 Where Queen Guinevere was seated, she ate with her maidens
 bright;
 And Kay arose from the table as the tidings he needs must hear,
 They brought gladness to Kunnewaaré, but to Kay had they
 wrought but fear.

And he quoth, 'What he speaketh, Lady, who thus unto thee hath
 sped
 He speaketh perforce, yet I think me he greatly hath been misled!

I thought but to teach thee better, yet for this cause thou hatest me! 640
 Now bid thou this knight disarm him, for his standing o'er-long shall be.'

Then she bade him put off his helmet and visor, the maiden true,
 And e'en as the bands were loosened Klamidé the king they knew,
 And Kingron he looked upon him, and he saw his lord again, 645
 And he wrung his hands in his anguish till as dry twigs they cracked amain.

Then the seneschal of Klamidé, from the table he sprung straightway,
 And he asked of his lord the tidings; and joyless was he that day,
 For he spake, 'I am born to sorrow; I have lost such a gallant host,
 No man that was born of woman, I think me shall more have lost. 650
 And the load of such bitter sorrow lieth heavy upon my breast,
 And joy is to me a stranger, and gladness a fleeting guest!
 And grey am I grown for the anguish she hath wrought me,
 Kondwiramur,—
 Yea, the sorrow of Pontius Pilate, and false Judas who evermore
 Must grieve for his faithless dealings, who did Christ unto death betray, 655
 What of punishment God layeth on them that woe would I bear alway—
 If so be that the Lady of Brobarz were my wife of goodwill and free,
 And mine arms held her fast, I had recked not what hereafter should chance to me.
 But, alas! for her love is withholden from the ruler of Iserterre,
 And my land and my folk henceforward for her sake shall sorrow bear. 660
 Mine uncle's son, Mabonagrein, for her love long hath suffered pain;
 And by knightly hand constrained in thy court I, O king, draw rein!
 And well dost thou know in my kingdom much harm have I done to thee,
 Forget that, true knight and faithful, from thy hate do thou set me free
 Since here I abide, a captive—And this maiden my life shall shield, 665
 Since I stand in her sight, her servant, and my pledge to her hand would yield!
 Then of knightly heart King Arthur forgave him as he would pray,
 And with faithful words, and kindly, showed favour to him that day.

Far and wide did they tell the tidings how the King of Brandigan Rode hither, and man and maiden in thronging crowds they ran. 670
 Then the king he would crave a comrade, and he spake out with joyless mien,

'Commend me unto Sir Gawain, if thou deemest me worth, O
Queen!
Well I know that he would desire it, and if he thy word obey,
Then he honoureth thee, and the Red Knight shall win praise at
his hand to-day.'
Then King Arthur he bade his nephew deal well with the captive
king, 675
(Tho' I wot well, without his bidding, Sir Gawain had done this
thing.)
And the conquered knight, in whose dealings no falsehood had
part or share,
From the vassals and gallant heroes won a welcome both fit and
fair.

Then Kingron he spake in sorrow, 'Alas! that I needs must see
The day when in Breton dwellings my king shall a captive be! 680
For richer wert thou than Arthur, and of vassals a greater host
Hath served thee, nor strength was lacking, and of youth canst
thou make thy boast.
Shall men count it to *Arthur's* honour that Kay in his wrath did
smite
A princess whose heart hath shown her the wisdom to choose
aright,
And smile upon one whom henceforward all men may with truth
proclaim 685
Elect to the highest honour and crown of true knightly fame?
The tree of their fame these Bretons may deem to have waxen
high;
Dead lay Cumberland's king, but I wot well be by no deed of
theirs must die!
Nor the fame shall be theirs that, my master, thou didst yield to
that self-same knight,
Or that I myself have been vanquished in fair and open fight; 690
And the sparks sprang bright from our helmets, and our swords
clave the whistling air
As for life and death we battled, and men looked on our combat
fair.'

Then all at the good Round Table, both rich and poor alike,
With one voice spake that Kay did evil when a maiden he thought
to strike.
But now will we leave their story, and fare back unto Pelrapär 695
Where Parzival reigned as monarch; the waste lands were builded
fair,
And joy was their lot and singing, (and red gold and jewels bright
King Tampentäre left in the city where awhile he had reigned in
might)
Then rich gifts he gave till men loved him for his knightly hand
and free;
New shields and costly banners the pride of his land should be, 700
And many a joust and Tourney did he and his heroes ride.

And e'en on the distant borders in gallant deeds he vied,
 That hero young and dauntless, and no foeman might e'er deny
 That on battle-field or in Tourney his hand won the victory.

And now of the queen would I tell ye—What lot might ye hold so
 fair 705
 As hers, that gentle lady? In earth's joys had she fullest share.
 Her love it might bud and blossom, nor weakness nor wavering
 show,
 For the worth of her lord and husband her heart scarce might fail
 to know.
 And each found their life in the other, and each was the other's
 love.
 If, as saith the tale, they were parted, what grief must each true
 heart move! 710
 And I mourn for that gentle lady, her body, her folk, her land,
 (So he won of her love the guerdon) had he freed with his strong
 right hand.


Thus courteous he spake one morning (and the knights stood
 their lord beside),
 'Lady, an it so please thee, give me leave that I hence may ride
 And see how my mother fareth, if weal be her lot, or woe, 715
 For naught of all that befalls her methinks I for long may know.
 For a short space would I go thither; and if ventures my skill
 approve
 Therewith would I do thee service, and be worthy my lady's love.'
 Thus he spake, and the story telleth she thought not to say him
 'Nay,'
 For she deemed it well; from his vassals all lonely he took his way. 720

BOOK V ANFORTAS

ARGUMENT

Book V. tells of the wonderful adventure of the Grail Castle; how Parzival met with the Fisher King, and became his guest; and of the great feast in the hall of Monsalväsich. How Parzival saw the bleeding spear, and all the marvels of the Grail, and how he asked no question. How he in the morning found the palace deserted, and was mocked by the squire as he rode away. Of Parzival meeting with Siguné, and how she reproached him for his silence. Of Orilus and Jeschuté; of the fight between the heroes; and of Parzival's oath. How Orilus and his wife were made friends again, and of their welcome at the court of King Arthur.

BOOK V ANFORTAS

Now he who would hear what befell him who thus for ventures
sought,
 All hearken many a marvel ere the tale to an end be wrought
Of the son of Gamuret ride forth, and all ye good folk and true
Wish him well, for bitter sorrow this hero hereafter knew,
Tho' honour and joy should crown him—And sorely his heart
did grieve 5
That the wife he loved so dearly he now for a space must leave.
For the mouth never read of woman, and never hath tale been
told
Of a fairer wife and truer, and his heart did she captive hold,
And his spirit so high was troubled by thoughts of his wife and
queen—
Had courage not been his birthright he had lost it ere this, I ween! 10
O'er rock and marshy moorland, with loosened reins the steed
Dashed free, the rider thought not to guide or check its speed.
Of a truth the venture telleth, so far did he ride that day
E'en a bird had been outwearied, and its flight were fain to stay.
An the tale hath not betrayed me, no further the knight did fare 15
When Ither he slew, or from Graharz rode swift unto Pelrapär.

Now hear ye what chanced unto him; he came at the close of day
To a water fair, and upon it many boats at anchor lay,
And the fishers were lords of the water; to the shore did they lie
so near
That e'en as they saw him riding his question they well might
hear. 20
And one he saw in a vessel all clad in such royal pride
Scarce richer had been his vesture were he lord of the world so
wide;

Of peacock's plumes his head-gear—Then the knight to the
 Fisher spake
 And he prayed him for knighthood's bidding, and he prayed him
 for God's dear sake,
 To help him unto a shelter where he might thro' the night hours
 rest. 25
 And the Fisher sad he answered in this wise the stranger guest;

 And he quoth, 'Nay, Sir Knight, I know not for full thirty miles
 around,
 By land alike or water, where dwelling may yet be found
 Save one house, I would bid thee seek it, for it lieth in sooth
 anear,
 Thro' the livelong day wert thou riding none other thou findest
 here. 30
 Ride there to the high cliff's ending, then turn thee to thy right
 hand
 Until to the moat thou comest, and thy charger perforce must
 stand;
 Then bid thou the castle warder to let the drawbridge fall
 And open to thee the portals, then ride thou unto the hall.'

 Then he did as the Fisher bade him, and leave would he
 courteous pray, 35
 But he quoth, 'I myself will thine host be, an thou fail not to find
 the way,
 Be thy thanks then as is our tendance—As thou ridest around the
 hill
 Have a care lest the wood mislead thee, such mischance would
 but please me ill.'

 Then Parzival turned his bridle, and gaily he took his way,
 Nor missed he the path till before him the moat of the castle lay; 40
 And the drawbridge was raised, and the fortress it lacked not for
 strength I trow,
 As a turner with skill had wrought them stood the turrets in
 goodly row.
 But with wings, or on winds of heaven uplifted, might ye have
 won
 To that Burg, an a foeman stormed it little harm he methinks had
 done.
 And so strong were the towers and the palace that its folk they
 had held the hall 45
 And mocked at the foe, if all armies thirty years long beset the
 wall.

 Then a squire looked forth from the castle, of the knight was he
 well aware,
 And he asked whence he came? and wherefore he thought to
 their Burg to fare?
 And Parzival spake, 'Tis the Fisher who hath bidden me ride to
 thee,

With all courtesy have I thanked him for the shelter he proffered
 free, 50
 'Tis his will that the bridge be lowered, and I ride here the Burg
 within.
 'Sir Knight thou shalt here be welcome, and thy way to the Burg
 shalt win
 Since the Fisher so spake—And honour would we shew unto thee
 his guest!
 Then the squire he let fall the drawbridge, for so was their lord's
 behest.

So the hero came to the fortress, to a courtyard so broad and
 wide, 55
 By knightly sports untrodden—Nor oft would they Tourneys ride,
 (By short green turf was it covered) and but seldom with banners
 bright
 As on Abenberg's field did they ride there, as fitting for gallant
 knight.
 'Twas long since they might disport them in such pastimes of
 warlike skill,
 For sorrow lay heavy on them, and mirth it beseemed them ill. 60

But little the guest should rue that, for knights both old and
 young,
 They welcomed him with all honour, and swift to his bridle
 sprung.
 And pages of noble breeding laid their hands on his bridle rein,
 And others would hold his stirrup as the knight to dismount was
 fain.
 And the knights they prayed him enter, and they led him where
 he might rest, 65
 And with ready hands and skilful of his armour they freed the
 guest,
 And they looked on the beardless hero, and they saw his face so
 fair,
 And they spake, of a truth Good Fortune and blessing should be
 his share.

Then he bade them to bring him water, and the rust-stains he
 washed away
 From face and hands, and they saw him as the light of a second
 day, 70
 So he sat in all eyes lovely—Then a mantle rich they brought
 Of silk of Araby fashioned, and flaw therein was there naught;
 And he laid it around his shoulder, that hero so fair and bright,
 But the clasp did he leave unfastened, and with one voice they
 praised the knight.

'Repanse de Schoie, our lady and queen, did this mantle bear,' 75
 Quoth the chamberlain, 'She hath lent it while fit robes they for
 thee prepare.
 And I feared not this boon to ask her since it seemeth sure to me

That a gallant man and faithful, Sir Knight, thou shalt prove to
be!

'God reward thee who lookest on me with such true and trusting
heart,

Methinks, an thou seest rightly, Good Fortune shall be my part, 80
Yet I wot well such gifts come only from the power of God on
high.'

Then gladly they pledged the hero, and in honour and loyalty
They who sorrowed with him were joyful; far more had they there,
I ween,

Than at Pelrapär, when his right hand their shelter from grief had
been!

Then sadly he thought, as his harness the squires on one side
would bear, 85

That in knightly joust and Tourney he here might find little share.
Then one to the host would call him, and fast came his words and
free,

And boldly he spake to the stranger, yea, e'en as in wrath might
be.

With his life had he nigh paid forfeit to Parzival's youthful pride,
For he laid his hand to his sword-hilt—When he found it not by
his side 90

Then he clenched his fist so tightly that the clasp rung the blood-
drops red
From beneath his nails, and crimson to the sleeve of his robe they
spread.

'Nay, nay,' quoth the knights, 'be not wrathful, for fain would he
make us smile,
He hath licence to jest, and with jesting our sadness would he
beguile.

Show thy courtesy here towards him, nor be wroth for a foolish
word, 95

That the Fisher hath come to the castle, naught else shalt thou
here have heard.

Now do thou to our lord betake thee, here art thou an honoured
guest,
And the load of thy heavy anger be banished from off thy breast.'

To the palace hall they gat them, where a hundred crowns hung
low

With many a taper laden; round the walls shone the tapers' glow. 100
And beneath stood a hundred couches, with a hundred cushions
fair,
And each of these goodly couches four knights should between
them share.

And betwixt each twain of the couches an open space was found,
And before each there lay a carpet of cunning work fashioned
round.

Thereto had he wealth in plenty, King Frimutel's son and heir: 105

And one thing had they not forgotten, nor their gold did they
think to spare,
For within the hall were builded three hearths of marble rare,
With skill and wisdom fashioned, and each hearth stood four-
square,
And the wood was Lignum aloe, and so great a fire, I ween,
Ne'er hath burnt on the hearth at Wildberg—Such things have
aye costly been. 110

And the host had bid them lay him on a costly folding bed
'Fore the central hearth; and gladness from before his face had
fled,
And his life was but a dying—Parzival the hero fair
In the hall found kindly welcome from him who had sent him
there.
Then his host bade him stand no longer, but be seated his couch
anear, 115
'Yea, here by my side, didst thou seat thee yet further from me, I
fear
'Twere treating thee as a stranger'—In this wise to his gallant
guest
Spake the host thus rich in sorrow, whose heart was by grief
opprest.

And the host he craved thro' his sickness great fires, and warm
robes would wear
Both wide and long, and with sable were they lined and
garnished fair. 120
And the poorest skin was costly, and black was its hue and grey;
And a cap of the self-same fashioned he wore on his head that
day,
'Twas within and without of sable, with bands of Arabian gold
Wrought around, and a flashing ruby in the centre might all
behold.

Now many brave knights they sat there, and grief passed their
face before, 125
For a squire sprang swift thro' the doorway, and a lance in his
hand he bore,
(And thus did he wake their weeping) from the point did the
blood run fast
Adown to the hand of the holder till 'twas lost in his sleeve at last.
And then thro' the lofty palace was weeping and wailing sore,
The folk of thirty kingdoms could scarce have bemoaned them
more. 130
And thus to each of the four walls with the lance in his hand he
drew,
Till he reached once again the doorway, and passed him the
portal thro'.
And stilled was the lamentation, and the grief that this folk must
know

When the squire bare the lance before them, and thus bade them
to think on woe.

(An here ye be not outwearied I gladly would tell the tale, 135
How the feast in this Burg was ordered, for in courtesy naught did
fail.)

At the end of the hall a doorway of steel did they open fair,
And two noble children entered—Now hearken what guise they
bare,
An a knight for love would serve them, with love they his task
might pay,
Two fair and gracious maidens as e'er man might woo were they. 140
And each wore on her hair loose flowing, a chaplet of blossoms
bound
With silken band, beneath it their tresses sought the ground.
And the hand of each maiden carried a candlestick all of gold,
And every golden socket did a burning taper hold.
Nor would I forget the raiment these gentle maidens ware, 145
For one was Tenabroc's countess, ruddy-brown was her robe so
fair,
And the self-same garb wore the maiden who beside the
countess paced,
And with girdles rich and costly were they girt round each slender
waist.
And behind them there came a Duchess and her fellow; of ivory
white
Two stools they bare, and glowing their lips e'en as fire is bright. 150
Then they bowed, the four, and bending, the stools 'fore the host
they laid,
Nor was aught to their service lacking, but fitly their part they
played.
Then they stood all four together, and their faces were fair to see,
And the vesture of each fair maiden was like to the other three.

Now see how they followed swiftly, fair maidens twice told four, 155
And this was I ween their office, four tapers tall they bore;
Nor the others deemed too heavy the weight of a precious stone,
And by day the sun shone thro' it, and as Jacinth its name is
known.
'Twas long and broad, and for lightness had they fashioned it fair
and meet
To serve at will for a table where a wealthy host might eat. 160
And straight to the host they stepped them, and they bowed their
fair heads low,
And four laid the costly table on the ivory white as snow,
The stools they had placed aforetime—and courteous they turned
aside,
And there by their four companions stood the eight in their
maiden pride.

And green were the robes of these maidens, green as grass in the
 month of May, 165
 Of Samite in Assagog woven, and long and wide were they.
 At the waist were they girt with a girdle, narrow, and long, and
 fair,
 And each of these gentle maidens ware a wreath on her shining
 hair.

Now Iwan, the Count of Nonel, and Jernis, the lord of Reil,
 To the Grail were their daughters summoned from many a distant
 mile. 170
 And they came, these two princesses, in raiment wondrous fair,
 And two keen-edged knives, a marvel, on cloths did those
 maidens bear.
 Of silver white and shining were they wrought with such cunning
 skill,
 And so sharp, that methinks their edges e'en steel might they cut
 at will.
 And maidens four went before them, for this should their office
 be 175
 To bear lights before the silver; four children from falsehood free.
 Six maidens in all they entered and took thro' the hall their way,
 Now hearken, and I will tell ye the service they did that day.

They bowed, and the twain who carried the silver they laid it low
 On the Jacinth, and courteous turning to the first twelve in order
 go. 180
 And now, have I counted rightly, here shall eighteen maidens
 stand;
 And lo! see six more come hither in vesture from distant lands,
 Half their robes were of silk, gold inwoven, half of silk of Nineveh
 bright,
 For both they and the six before them, parti-coloured their robes
 of light.

And last of those maids a maiden, o'er the others was she the
 queen, 185
 So fair her face that they thought them 'twas the morning's dawn,
 I ween!
 And they saw her clad in raiment of Pfellel of Araby,
 And she bare aloft on a cushion of verdant Achmardi
 Root and blossom of Paradise garden, that thing which men call
 'The Grail,'
 The crown of all earthly wishes, fair fulness that ne'er shall fail! 190
 Repanse de Schoie did they call her, in whose hands the Grail
 might lie,
 By the Grail Itself elected was she to this office high.
 And they who would here do service, those maids must be pure
 of heart,
 And true in life, nor falsehood shall have in their dealings part.

And lights both rare and costly before the Grail they bore 195

(Would I here betray another then in sooth ye shall lie with me)
Food warm or cold, or dishes that known or unknown shall be, 230
Food wild or tame—Such riches ye never on earth shall find,
So many have said, yet I think me that folly doth rule their mind—
For the Grail was the crown of blessing, the fulness of earth's
delight,
And Its joys I right well may liken to the glories of Heaven's
height!

Then they brought in small golden vessels that which every man
should need 235
Of sauces, or salt, or pepper—would one sparely or fully feed,
Yet each found enough—and courteous they bare to each noble
guest;
And red wine and sweet drinks luscious, each one as he liked him
best
Might speak the word, and proffer the cup, and behold! 'twas
filled
By the power of the Grail—Thus the hunger of that gallant host
was stilled, 240
And the Grail itself sustained them, and Parzival wondering saw
The riches and mighty marvels, yet to question his host forbore.

And he thought, 'Gurnemanz he bade me, in truth, without
thought of guile,
To withhold my lips from question—If here I abide awhile
Methinks it will then befall me as aforetime in Graharz land, 245
They will tell me, without my question, how here with this folk it
stands.'
Then e'en as he sat thus musing came a squire who a sword did
bear,
And its sheath was a thousand marks' worth, and its hilt was a
ruby rare,
And the blade, it might well work wonders—Then the host gave it
to the knight,
And he spake, 'I full oft have borne it in many a deadly fight 250
Ere God's Hand thus sorely smote me; now with this shalt thou be
repaid
If aught hath in care been lacking—Henceforth shalt thou bear
this blade
Whatever chance befall thee, and when thou its power hast tried
Thou wilt know thou art fully armèd, whatever strife betide.'

Ah! woe to the guest that asked not, I am sorrowful for his sake, 255
When his hand clasped the sword 'twas a token that his silence
he well might break.
For the host too my heart is heavy, thus tortured by nameless
woe,
And a question therefrom had freed him, yet to question his
guest was slow.

But now the feast was ended, who the vessels hither bore

Again to their task they turn them, and they bear them forth once
 more. 260
 The cars again they circle; each maid to her task was fain
 From last to first; the noblest she turned to the Grail again,
 To host and guest all-courteous the queen and her maidens
 bend,
 What they brought they once more would bear forth thro' the
 door at the high hall's end.

And Parzival he gazed after, and lo! thro' the open door 265
 Within an outer chamber, on a folding couch he saw
 The fairest of old men ancient whom ever his eyes had seen,
 Grey was he as mists of morning—Nor o'er rash is the tale, I
 ween,
 Who he was shalt thou know hereafter, when a fitting time shall
 be,
 The host, his Burg, and his kingdom, yea, all will I name to ye, 270
 And all shall be clear and in order, no halting my tale shall know;
 Methinks that I then shall show ye the bowstring without the
 bow.

'Tis a symbol good, the bowstring, for swift as ye deem the bow,
 Yet the shaft that the bowstring speedeth findeth swifter its aim, I
 trow!
 And not without thought I said it, for the string, it seemeth me, 275
 Is like to the simple story wherewith men well-pleased shall be;
 For it goeth straight to its ending, while he who aside shall stray,
 Tho' his goal at last he reacheth findeth all too long his way.
 When unbent the bow thou sawest, then straight was, I ween, the
 string,
 From the straight line thou erst must draw it, ere the shaft to its
 goal may wing. 280

But he who his story aimeth at the ear of a fool shall find
 His shaft go astray, for no dwelling it findeth within his mind.
 Too wide is the road, I think me, and that which he chance to hear
 Ere yet he may know the meaning flies out at the other ear.
 Far rather at home I 'ld bide me than in such ears my story tell, 285
 A beast, or a stock, I think me, as a hearer would serve as well.

But further I fain would tell ye of this people so full of woe
 To whom he had come, our hero, glad song might they seldom
 know,
 Or sound of dance or of Tourney; so heavy were they at heart
 That never a thought of gladness might find in their life a part, 290
 And oft shall the folk be fewer yet of joy shall have fuller share,
 But here every nook was crowded, nor space in the court to
 spare.

The host to his guest spake kindly, 'Methinks they thy couch have
 spread,
 Art thou weary? then list my counsel, and get thee, my guest, to
 bed.'

(Now here might I raise my war-cry at the parting betwixt the
twain,
For I wot well that bitter sorrow each must from the venture
gain.) 295

To the side of his host he stepped him, Parzival the fair of face,
And the Fisher a fair night wished him—Then the knights stepped
each from his place,
And a part drew near towards him, and they led the stranger
guest
Straightway to a sleeping chamber, and goodly should be his rest.
'Twas richly decked for his honour, and the couch it was spread so
fair 300
That my poverty sorely grieves me since the earth doth such
riches bear.

And that bed knew, I ween, no lacking, and a rich silk above it lay,
Bright-coloured its hue, and glowing as tho' fire-light did on it
play;
Then Parzival prayed the heroes to get them again to rest, 305
For he saw there but one couch only, and they passed hence at
his behest.

But he lacked not for other service—His fair face and tapers light
Gave challenge unto each other—What day e'er might shine so
bright?
And before his couch was another, thereon would he take his seat
While pages drew them nearer, and proffered him service meet. 310
And they bared his white feet comely, and they laid his robes
aside,
And of noble birth were these children, and fair in their youthful
pride.
Then there passed thro' the open doorway four maidens fair and
bright,
They would know if they well had served him, and if soft lay the
stranger knight.
And so the venture telleth, a squire a taper bare 315
Before each gentle maiden—Parzival, that hero fair,
Sprang swift to his couch; then the maidens with gentle voice
they spake,
'Sir Knight, we fain would pray thee for our sake awhile to
wake'—
Yet as children sport with each other had he hidden him from
their sight
Ere yet they might hear his greeting, yet their eyes had found
swift delight, 320
And their heart's desire was quickened at the sight of his red lips'
glow
That for youth were as yet unhidden, for no hair did upon them
grow.

Now hear what they bare, these maidens, three in their hands so
 white
 Brought syrups sweet, and red wine, and the fourth, that maiden
 bright,
 Bare fruit that e'erwhile had ripened in the garden of Paradise 325
 On a cloth fair and white, and she knelt low before him that
 maiden wise,
 And he bade her sit, but she answered, 'Nay, Sir Knight, so is it
 best
 For else were I sure unworthy to serve such a gallant guest.'
 Then he drank and would eat a little, and he spake to them soft
 and sweet,
 And he laid him adown, and the maidens craved leave of him as
 was meet. 330
 Then down on the costly carpet the squires set the tapers bright
 When they saw that he slept, and swiftly they gat from the gallant
 knight.

Yet Parzival lay not lonely, for until the dawn of day
 Heart-sorrow would lie beside him, nor passed with the dawn
 away.
 And every coming anguish its heralds before would speed, 335
 E'en so that the fair youth's vision out-weighed e'en his mother's
 need
 When she dreamed ere the death of her husband. As a carpet
 unrolled his dream,
 The centre of fair jousts woven, while the edge was with swords
 a gleam.
 And in slumber his foemen pressed him, and would swiftly upon
 him ride;
 So fearful his dream that, wakened, thirty times had he rather
 died. 340
 Thus fear and unrest awoke him, and the sweat streamed from
 every limb;
 The daylight shone fair thro' the windows, yet no voice had called
 on him.
 Then he spake, 'Where are now the pages, who stood before me
 of late?
 Who shall hand unto me my garments?' Then awhile would he
 patient wait
 Till slumber again o'ercame him; none spake, none aloud would
 cry, 345
 Vanished the folk—When he wakened the noon-tide sun was
 high.

Then he sprang up, and lo! before him on the carpet his harness
 lay,
 And two swords, his host's gift, and the other from Prince Ither he
 bare away.
 Then he spake to himself, 'Now wherefore was this done? I these
 arms will take,

In sleep I such anguish suffered, methinks that I surely wake 350
 To-day to some task of knighthood—If mine host doth some
 foeman fear
 Then his will will I do right gladly, and faithful her prayer will hear
 Who of true heart this mantle lent me—If my service she think to
 take
 Then I were for such service joyful; yet not for her sweet love's
 sake,
 For my wife hath a face as lovely as ever this castle's queen, 355
 Nay more, an the truth be spoken she is fairer far I ween!'

Then he did e'en as seemed him fitting, and he armed himself for
 fight
 From foot to head, and beside him he girded those swords of
 might.
 Then forth went the gallant hero, and his steed to the palace stair
 Was bound, shield and spear stood by it, and he joyed as he
 found them there. 360

Then ere Parzival, the hero, his charger would mount again,
 He sought thro' many a chamber, and he called on the folk
 amain,
 But none might he see or hearken, and it vexed the knight full
 sore,
 And wrathful he grew—Yet seeking, the hero he came once more
 To where he at eve dismounted when first he the castle found, 365
 And the earth and grass were trampled, and the dew brushed
 from off the ground.

Then, shouting, he turned, the young knight, once more to his
 charger good,
 And with bitter words he mounted—Wide open the gateway
 stood,
 And the track led across the threshold; nor longer he thought to
 stay
 But he turned his rein, and swiftly to the drawbridge he made his
 way, 370
 But a hidden hand drew the rope taut, and the forepart it rose on
 high
 And well-nigh had his charger fallen, then he turned him right
 speedily
 For fain would he ask the meaning, but the squire cried aloud in
 scorn,
 'Goose that thou art, ride onward, to the sun's hate hast thou
 been born!
 Thy mouth hadst thou thought to open, of these wonders hadst
 asked thine host, 375
 Great fame had been thine—But I tell thee now hast thou this fair
 chance lost!'

Then the guest cried aloud for his meaning, but answer he ne'er
 might win,

For the squire made as if he slumbered, and the portal he barred
 within.
 Too early for peace his parting, and the hour it hath brought him
 woe,
 And he payeth in joy the tribute, nor longer may gladness know; 380
 And doubled the throw of sorrow since here he had found the
 Grail,
 With his eyes, not his hand, had he cast it, and dice to the throw
 should fail.
 If by grief he be now awakened such was never his wont of yore,
 For naught had he known but gladness, nor sorrow of heart he
 bore.

On the track that he saw before him would Parzival ride apace, 385
 And he thought, 'They who go before me to-day will a foeman
 face
 And fight for their master's honour; an they knew it, their ring of
 might
 Methinks would be little weakened if I in their ranks should fight!
 I would waver not, but would aid them whate'er be their need to-
 day,
 Thus my bread would I earn, and this fair sword, the gift of my
 host, repay, 390
 Undeserved as yet do I bear it—Sure they hold me for coward
 knight!
 Then he turned him, the free from falsehood, where the hoof-
 tracks still met his sight,
 (And sorely I rue his parting—Now the venture doth grow apace,
 They had parted who rode before him, and their track he might
 scarcely trace,
 What aforesaid was broad waxed narrow till he lost it nor found
 it more 395
 And tidings he heard, the hero, that wrought to him sorrow sore.

For the young knight, rich in courage, heard a woman's voice
 make moan.
 (On the grass lay the dew of morning.) On a linden there sat
 alone
 A maiden, whose truth wrought her sorrow, for between her arms
 so white
 Embalmed did she lifeless hold him who living had been her
 knight. 400
 Were there one who saw her sorrow and mourned not for her
 bitter woe
 Then false of heart must I hold him, one who true love might
 never know!
 Then he turned his steed towards her, tho' as yet unknown was
 she,
 (Tho' the child of his mother's sister)—As the wind that fleeteth
 free
 Is all earthly faith to her true love—Then Parzival greeting spake, 405

'Lady, methinks that sorrow I must bear for thy sorrow's sake,
 An thou needst in aught my service, would it free thee from
 further ill,
 Then look thou on me as thy servant, thy grief were I fain to still!'

Then sadly her thanks she bade him, and asked him, 'Whence
 camest thou here?
 He were ill-advised who his journey should take thro' this
 woodland drear. 410

To them who know not its pathways great evil might here betide.
 Yea, oft have I seen and hearkened how men in this wood have
 died,
 For death was in strife their portion—Turn hence then, thou
 gallant knight,
 An thou lovest life—Yet tell me in what shelter didst pass the
 night?'

'But a mile from here stands a castle, there I thro' the night
 abode, 415

And naught have I seen like its riches, from thence in short space
 I rode.'

Then the maiden she looked upon him, and she spake, 'Now,
 methinks, 'twere ill
 With falsehood to thus betray them who trust thee with right
 goodwill.
 From thy shield art thou here a stranger, and canst naught but
 woods have found,
 An here thou hast ta'en thy journey from planted and builded
 ground, 420

For thirty miles round have they never, for a dwelling, hewn wood
 or stone,
 Save but for one Burg, in this region that Burg it doth stand
 alone.

'Tis rich in all earthly riches, yet he who that castle fair
 Would seek, he may never find it, tho' many that quest shall dare.
 Unawares must they chance upon it, for I wot in no other wise 425

Shall that Burg and all that it holdeth be looked on by mortal
 eyes.

Sir Knight, *thou* hast never seen it; Monsalväsch I ween its name,
 Terre de Salväsch the kingdom where its lord the crown may
 claim,
 And Titurel once bequeathed it to his son King Frimutel,
 So they called him, the dauntless hero; much fame to his portion
 fell, 430

In a joust was he slain at Love's bidding, and four children fair he
 left,
 And three, they have store of riches, yet are they of joy bereft.
 And poor is the fourth, for penance hath he chosen this lot I trow,
 Trevrezent is his name—Anfortas, his brother, hath grief enow,
 He can neither stand, nor be seated, nor walk, but must aye
 recline, 435

At Monsalväsch he hath his dwelling, the head of that noble line.'

Then she spake, 'If indeed thou camest to that folk who so sore
doth mourn
Then perchance is their king released from the burden he long
hath borne?'
Out spake the Waleis, 'I saw truly great marvels, and many a maid
Of beauty rare'—she knew him by his voice ere the words were
said. 440

And she quoth, 'Now indeed I know thee, for in sooth art thou
Parzival!
Didst thou see the mournful monarch? Didst thou see the
wondrous Grail?
Ah! tell me the joyful tidings, may his woe at last be stilled?
Well is thee that the blessed journey thou hast ta'en, now shall
earth be filled,
As far as the winds of heaven may blow, with thy fair renown; 445
Naught on earth but shall do thee service, fulfilment each wish
shall crown!'

Then Parzival spake in wonder, 'Say, Lady, whence knowest thou
me?'
And she answered, 'I am that maiden who erewhile made her
plaint to thee,
I am she who thy name first told thee, near of kin to that gracious
queen
Thy mother, of all earth's blossoms the fairest flower, I ween, 450
Tho' a flower that the dew ne'er nourished! May God reward thee
well
Who didst truly mourn my hero who in knightly combat fell.
See, here in my arms I hold him, now think thou upon the woe
God hath laid for his sake upon me who too short a life must
know;
Rich was he in all manly virtues, his death it has wrought me pain, 455
And day by day as it dawneth reneweth my plaint again!

'Alas! is it thou, Siguné? Say, where are thy lips so red
That gave me to wit so truly who I was? From thy youthful head
Have thy locks so brown and waving been shorn since I saw thee
last;
Then wert thou still fair to look on, tho' sorrow might hold thee
fast, 460
Now pale art thou waxed and feeble, such friendship, methinks
with woe
Had vexed me too much, hear my counsel, and bury this dead
knight low!'

Great tears bedewed her garments, for ne'er to that maiden fair
Had any given such counsel as Lunete to her lady bare.
(This rede did she give to her lady, 'Let him live who thy lord hath
slain, 465
Thou shalt in his love hereafter amends for thy sorrow gain.)
Not such was the will of Siguné, as maidens of wavering mind,

(On their names I had best keep silence) here the tale of true love
ye'll find.

Then she spake, 'If joy e'er befall me that shall be when I know
relief

Is his, who so long hath suffered, when is lightened his load of
grief. 470

If thro' *thee* he hath found this succour then in truth shall all
praise be thine;

Methinketh e'en now at thy girdle do I see his sword to shine—
If its magic spell thou knowest then to strife mayest thou fearless
fare,

For its edge is keen—Its maker a noble name doth bear,
Trebuchet's hand hath wrought it; by Karnant there flows a spring,
And '*Lac*' from the name of that streamlet methinks is he named,
the king. 475

The sword will withstand the first blow, at the next it will break in
twain,

An thou to these waters bring it from their flow 'twill be whole
again.

Yet where at its source the streamlet flows forth from its rocky
bed,

Shalt thou seek those healing waters ere the sun stand high
overhead. 480

Lac is the name of that fountain—If unsplintered shall be the
blade

Then press thou its halves together, from the waters shall it be
made,

Not whole alone, but stronger the blade and the edge shall grow,
Nor their brightness and fair adorning be dimmed by the water's
flow.

Yet a spell thou first must master, ere thou draw that sword of
might, 485

Thou hast left it behind, I fear me! Hast thou learnt its words
aright,

Then in truth all earthly blessings shall blossom and bear for thee
—

Believe me, dear my cousin, what of marvels thou there couldst
see,

To thine hand shall they all do service; the crown of blessings fair
Uplifted o'er all earth's noblest henceforward thine head shall
bear. 490

And thine is desire's fulfilment, and none with thy wealth and
might

May measure himself, if the question hath won at thy lips its
right!

Then he quoth, 'Nay, I asked no question!' 'Alas I' cried the
mournful maid,

'That ever mine eyes have seen thee, who to question wast sore
afraid!

Such marvels they there have shown thee, yet no word might
they win from thee, 495
When thou sawest the Grail, and those maidens who serve it,
from falsehood free,
Fair Garschiloe, and yet fairer Repanse de Schoie the queen.
Thou hast seen the knives of silver, thou the bleeding spear hast
seen—
Alas! wherefore hast thou sought me? Dishonoured, accurst art
thou
Who bearest wolf's fang empoisoned! And deep in thine heart I
throw 500
Is it rooted, the plant of falsehood, and afresh doth it ever spring!
Thou shouldst have had pity on him, Anfortas, their host and
king,
And have asked of his bitter sorrow, on whom God hath a wonder
sped,
Now thou livest, and yet I tell thee to bliss art thou henceforth
dead!'

Then he spake, 'Nay, gentle cousin, show kindness to me I pray,
If in aught I have sinned, repentance my sin sure shall put away!'
'Little good may repentance do thee,' quoth the maiden, 'for well
I know
That thy knightly fame and honour at Monsalväsch were laid
alow.
And never a further answer or word shalt thou win from me.'
Then Parzival turned his bridle and left her right mournfully. 510

That his lips were so slow to question when he sat by the
mournful king,
To the heart of the gallant hero must sorrow and rueing bring;
And thus thro' his heavy trouble, and the heat of the summer's
day,
Great sweat-drops stood on his forehead as he rode on his lonely
way.
For the sake of the air he loosened his helmet and visor band,
And his face shone fair thro' the iron-rust as he carried them in
his hand. 515

Then he saw a fresh track, and before him short space did two
horses fare,
A war-horse was one, well harnessed, but unshod was, I ween, the
mare,
And it bare on its back a woman—Behind her he took his way,
And he looked on her steed, to hunger o'er-long had it been a
prey; 520
Thro' its skin might its ribs be counted, a halter of hemp its rein,
Its colour was white as an ermine, to the hoofs hung the
untrimmed mane;
The eyeballs were sunk in the sockets, the hollows were deep and
wide,

And I ween that this lady's palfrey by famine had oft been tried.
 'Twas lean and dry as touchwood, 'twas a marvel it yet could go, 525
 For little should she who rode it of the care of a charger know.

Narrow and poor the trappings that lay on that charger's back,
 The saddle and bells were shattered, and much did the harness
 lack;
 And the lady was sad, not joyful, and her girth was a hempen
 cord,

Yet, I ween, was her birth too noble in such guise to ride abroad. 530
 By twigs and thorny branches tattered her shift and torn,
 And the rags had she knit together where'er it had been out-
 worn,
 But beneath her skin gleamed spotless, white as the swan's white
 wing;
 And naught but rags was her clothing—where they might some
 shelter bring
 There her skin was fair to look on, but elsewhere 'twas by sunburn
 dyed. 535

Yet her lips were red, tho' sorrow and want she must long abide,
 And so glowing and bright their colour a fire had ye kindled
 there,
 And where-e'er one would ride beside her on that side had ye
 found her bare.

Yet of base degree to hold her were to do her a wrong, I ween,
 Tho' little had she upon her, yet guiltless she aye had been— 540
 (Of your courtesy shall ye heed me, she forgot not her
 womanhood)

Of her poverty have I told ye, yet wherefore? If ye deem good
 Then this will I say, that ragged and bare I this dame would take
 O'er many a well-clad maiden, were it fitting my choice to make.

As Parzival bade her greeting, she saw him, and red she grew, 545
 Of all men was he the fairest, small marvel his face she knew.
 Then she quoth, 'Once before have I seen thee, great grief have I
 won thro' thee:
 God grant to thee greater honour than thou hast deserved from
 me!
 Far other hath been my raiment when thou sawest me last, I wot,
 Hadst thou ne'er in that hour come near me then honour were
 still my lot!' 550

Then he spake, 'Now bethink thee, Lady, who thus should thy
 hatred claim,
 For never my hand, I think me, hath brought to a woman shame,
 (So had I *myself* dishonoured) since ever I bare a shield,
 Or thought upon deeds of knighthood, or hath striven in battle-
 field;
 Yet else am I sad for thy sorrow!' Then forth brake the tear-drops
 bright, 555
 And ran fast adown her bosom, and over her breasts so white,

So fair, and so softly moulded, that never might turner's skill,
Tho' swiftly he wrought and rounded, his task in such wise fulfil.
And so lovely was she in her sorrow his heart was to pity fain,
And with hands and arms a cover from his glance did she strive to
gain. 560

Then Parzival spake, 'Now, Lady, of true service from mocking
free,
In God's Name take thou here my surcoat, a covering 'twill be for
thee.'
'Nay, Sir Knight, I may never take it, e'en tho' bliss I thereby
should gain,
Ride swift on thy way, I pray thee, an thou wouldst not we both
were slain;
Tho' my death it would little grieve me, if I fear me, 'tis for thy
sake!' 565
'Say, Lady, who thus would wrong us? Who thinketh our life to
take?
'Twas God's hand that gave it to us—Nay, were they an armèd
host
Who here for our life were thirsting, I would face them nor fear
the cost!'

Then she spake, 'Tis a dauntless hero, so gallant in strife is he
That heavy would be their labour if six should his foemen be; 570
(I would thou wert not beside me) I aforetime his wife had been,
Yet so poor am I now and wretched, for his slave were I all too
mean,
Thus his wrath doth he wreak upon me.' To that lady he spake
again,
'Say, who rideth here with thy husband? For if I to fly were fain,
As here thou dost give me counsel, thyself sure wouldst deem it
ill, 575
Ere of flight I have learnt the lesson I would die with a right good
will!'

Then out spake the Duchess sadly, 'Alone with my lord I fare,
But yet that may little serve thee, nor shall victory be here thy
share.'
And in rags was all her vesture, and naught but the hem untorn,
Yet the crown of woman's honour in her poverty had she worn, 580
And her ways were ways of goodness, and falsehood afar had
fled—
Then he bound afresh his visor and the helmet upon his head
As one who to battle rideth—Then his charger aloft would rear,
It was 'ware of the steed beside it, and its neigh rang out loud
and clear;
And he who a space before them on the woodland way would
ride, 585
He hearkened the sound, and would see him who rode there by
his lady's side.

Then he turned his bridle wrathful by the side of the narrow way,
 And with lance in rest for jousting Duke Orilus rode that day,
 And manly, I ween, his bearing, from Gaheviess came his spear,
 And weapon alike and harness of one colour were blazoned clear. 590

His helmet, Trebuchet wrought it; the shield in distant Spain
 Was welded fair for the hero, King Kaillet in that land doth reign,
 And strong were the rim and the centre—In Alexandria's city fair
 Was the costly pfellel woven that for surcoat and coat he ware.
 The covering of his charger at Tenabroc was it made 595
 Of rings of steel close welded—And thus he his pride displayed,
 For over the iron cover lay a pfellel so fair to see,
 And all men who saw bare witness that costly its worth must be—
 And gorget, and greaves, and headgear, tho' rich, yet their weight
 was light,

And many a plate of iron it guarded this gallant knight; 600
 In Beälzenan was it fashioned, chief city of fair Anjou.
 (But she who rode bare behind him far other her garb to view,
 For in sooth might she find none better) from Soissons his
 breastplate came,
 But he won his gallant charger from the far-off lake Brimbane,
 In the mountains of Monsalväsch—Lähelein, his brother bold, 605
 In a joust o'erthrew the rider, and the steed as his prize would
 hold.

And Parzival too was ready—his charger in onward flight
 'Gainst Orilus of Lalande bare swiftly the gallant knight;
 And he saw on his shield a dragon, yea, e'en as it were alive, 610
 And another upon the helmet fast bounden did upward strive.
 And many small golden dragons on surcoat and robe he bare,
 Enriched with many a jewel, and with red eyes of ruby fair.
 From afar would they make their onslaught, these dauntless
 heroes twain,
 No need to renounce their friendship, nor thro' kinship from strife
 refrain,

Aloft flew the spears in splinters—Methinks I might vaunt me well
 If I such a joust had witnessed as here in this wood befell! 615

Thus they rode at swiftest gallop not one joust alone, I ween,
 And Jeschuté at heart bare witness fairer jousting she ne'er had
 seen;
 So she stood, and her hands she wrung them, this lady of joy
 bereft,
 Nor harm did she wish to either, that one should be lifeless left. 620
 In sweat were they bathed, the chargers, and the knights they
 strove for fame,
 And sparks sprang bright from the sword-blades, and forth from
 the helm flashed flame,
 And the blows fell fierce and mighty, and far flashed the light of
 strife,

None were better than they in battle, and they met here for death
 or life,
 And tho' willing and swift the chargers that the heroes would
 here bestride, 625
 They forgot not their spurs, and their sword-blades bright-
 glancing they deftly plied.
 And Parzival won him honour, for here hath he rightly shown
 How before a hundred dragons one man well might hold his own.

 And ill did it fare with one dragon, and sore were its wounds that
 day,
 'Twas the crest that aloft in glory on Orilus' helmet lay, 630
 And so clear that the light shone thro' them were the costly
 jewels bright
 That fell when the helm was smitten by Parzival's sword of might;
 'Twas on horse, not afoot, that they fought thus—The love of her
 angry lord
 Was won back again for Jeschuté by the play of the glittering
 sword.
 Then they dashed again on each other so close that they smote
 away, 635
 With their knees, the rings of iron—So valiant in strife were they!
 I will tell ye why one was wrathful; that his lady of royal race
 Ere this had been shamed; her guardian, from him might she look
 for grace;
 Yet he deemed that with wandering fancy her heart from her lord
 had strayed,
 And that she, in the love of another, her honour had lowly laid. 640
 And he would for such wrong have vengeance, and his judgment
 on her was done
 In such wise, save were *death* her portion no woman such woe
 had won,
 And yet she in naught had wronged him—If his favour he would
 withhold,
 What man e'er might think to hinder? For ever from days of old
 The man hath power o'er the woman, the husband shall rule the
 wife. 645
 Yet Parzival the hero, he thought him to win with strife
 For Jeschuté her husband's favour—Methinks one should pray
 such grace
 In courteous wise, but flattery it here found but little place.
 And both they were right, I think me—He who ruleth the ways of
 life,
 Or straight they may be or crooked, 'twas His so to rule their
 strife 650
 That never to one nor the other the joust death for guerdon
 brought,
 Harm enow had they done to each other the while they so
 fiercely fought.

 Now hotter it waxed, the conflict, each hero would fain defend

His knightly fame 'gainst the other; Duke Orilus of Lalande,
 He fought with the skill and cunning his hand had learnt of yore, 655
 For I ween none like him had battled—he had courage and
 strength in war,
 And therefore had he been victor on many a foughten field,
 Tho' other were here the ending—His foe would he force to yield;
 And he threw his arms around him, the hero so proud and bold,
 But Parzival, little daunted, on his foeman made good his hold, 660
 And he drew him from off his saddle; as a sheaf from the field ye
 reap
 So beneath his arm he swung him, and light from his horse did
 leap.
 O'er a fallen tree he held him, for here was he overthrown
 Who never of need or peril such fortune before had known.
 'Now do penance for this thine anger that hath wrought to thy
 lady woe, 665
 An thy favour be yet withholden, then death shalt thou surely
 know!'

'Nay, nay, not so swift,' quoth his foeman, Duke Orilus of Lalande,
 'Tho' o'erthrown, I am not so vanquished that I may not thy will
 withstand!'

Then Parzival, strong and valiant, his foeman he gripped amain,
 And forth thro' the visor gushing streamed the blood in a crimson
 rain, 670
 And the prince, I ween, was vanquished, he could win from him
 what he would,
 To die was he all unwilling, and he spake to the hero good,
 'Alas! thou bold knight dauntless, who evil on me hath sped,
 Say how have I earned this peril, to lie here before thee, dead?'

Then Parzival quoth, 'Right gladly, Sir Knight, will I let thee live, 675
 If favour and love to thy lady thou swearest again to give!'

'That I will not! Her sin against me I trow all too great shall be.
 Rich in honour she was; she hath injured herself, and she
 plungeth me,
 Her lord, in yet deeper sorrow. In all else thy will I'll heed,
 An thou thinkest my life to leave me—'Twas God gave it me
 indeed, 680
 Now thine hand is become His servant, to give it to me anew,
 And I to thy valour owe it'—In this wise spake the hero true:

'For my life will I give fair ransom, for kingdoms twain, I trow,
 My brother with might hath won him, of riches he hath enow.
 Thou shalt ask as it best may please thee: if from death thou wilt
 set me free, 685
 He loveth me, and will loose me whatever the cost may be.
 And my Dukedom again as thy vassal will I take from thy valiant
 hand,
 Thy fame it shall gain new lustre, since I might not thy power
 withstand.

Now release me, thou hero dauntless, from forgiveness of her, my
 wife;
 Whatever shall be for thine honour, by that will I buy my life, 690
 But with her, my dishonoured Duchess, at peace will I never be,
 Nay, not for all pain or sorrow that shall otherwise fall to me!

Quoth Parzival, 'Folk or kingdoms, or riches or jewels rare,
 All these they shall nothing profit—Thy pledge thou to me shalt
 swear
 In naught to delay thy journey, but to haste thee to Brittany 695
 Where dwelleth a gentle maiden—One hath smitten her sore for
 me,
 And I will on that man have vengeance, an his safety she shall not
 pray—
 Thy pledge and my loyal service bear thou to that maid
 straightway,
 Or here, without fail, I slay thee—To King Arthur and to his queen,
 To both shalt thou bear my greeting; well paid hath my service
 been, 700
 If they for that blow ill-smitten the maiden do well entreat.
 But first will I see that thou givest to this lady thine homage meet,
 And that without guile—Dost withstand me, and thinkest my will
 to dare,
 On a bier, and no more on a charger, from hence shalt thou
 lifeless fare!
 Now mark thou my words, for their doing a pledge shalt thou
 straightway give, 705
 And thy surety swear unto me, if longer thou fain wouldst live!
 To King Parzival spake his foeman, Duke Orilus, 'Helpeth naught
 'Gainst this thy will, I will do it, for fain I my life had bought!'

In the fear for the life of her husband Jeschuté, that lady fair,
 Mourned sore for his woe, yet the foemen to part might she little
 dare. 710
 Then Parzival bade him rise up, and speak to his lady bright
 The words of peace and of pardon; and thus quoth the
 vanquished knight,
 'Lady, since this my shaming in strife hath been for thy sake,
 So be it, the kiss of forgiveness from my lips shalt thou herewith
 take.
 Thro' thee have I lost much honour—What boots it? I pardon
 sware!' 715
 Then swift from her steed on the meadow sprang the lady with
 white limbs bare,
 Tho' the blood that ran from his nostrils had dyed his mouth with
 red,
 Yet she kissed him e'en as he bade her, so was Parzival's bidding
 sped.

Then the three rode on together till a hermit's cell they saw
 In the rocky wall, and our hero his bridle was fain to draw; 720

For he saw there a shrine so holy, and a spear with fair colours
blent
Stood beside the shrine; 'twas the dwelling of the hermit
Trevrezent.

There Parzival dealt with honour—On the relic an oath he sware,
Himself laid the oath upon him, and he spake and they hearkened
fair;

'If I have worth or valour, as 'seemeth a gallant knight— 725
If I have it or not let those witness who have looked on my shield
in fight;

Yea, let them approve my knighthood, for knighthood's power
may claim,
As the shield-bearer oft shall tell us, high guerdon of praise and
fame,

And the name of knight is honoured—My body to shame for aye
Will I give, and my fame and honour henceforth shall be put
away; 730

(With these words I my bliss would pledge here in the Hand that
shall highest be,

And that Hand is God's Hand, I think me)—All loss, bitter
mockery,

In this life and the next be my portion from His power, if this lady
fair

E'er did thee wrong when it chanced her that the clasp from her
robe I tare—

(Of a token of gold I robbed her)—A *fool* and no man was I, 735
Not yet had I waxed to wisdom—And sore did she weep thereby,
And anguish and grief she suffered; yea, guiltless was she that
day—

And forfeit my bliss and mine honour if the words be not truth I
say!

Now see, dost thou hold her guiltless thou shalt give her her ring
again,

From the clasp I in such wise parted that my folly must bear the
blame!' 740

Then the Duke took the ring, and the blood-stains he wiped from
his lips away,

And he kissed her, his heart's best treasure—And a covering she
won straightway;

The ring he placed on her finger, with his surcoat her shame
would hide,

Tho' hewn by the hand of hero, of rich silk was it fashioned wide.
But seldom in coat emblazoned mine eyes have a woman seen, 745
And this one was marred in combat. No war-cry was hers, I ween,
That should summon the knights to Tourney, and never a spear
she brake

Whatever her garb—In Tourney far better the part they'd take,
Lambekein, methinks, and the good squire, if together they
thought to fight—

But now was the lady pardoned, and her sorrow had taken flight. 750
 Quoth Orilus, 'Now, thou hero, the oath thou didst freely swear,
 Great joy and small grief hath brought me; tho' shaming I needs
 must bear,
 Yet gladness therefrom I win me—In all honour I will repay
 This lady true for her sorrow when I put her in shame away.
 And since all alone I left her she was guiltless did aught betide; 755
 Yet so did she speak of thy beauty, methought there was more
 beside.
 But now may God reward thee, thou hast shown her from
 falsehood free,
 I have done her a wrong—Thro' the young wood have I ridden in
 search of thee
 Afar from Briziljan's forest.' Then Parzival took the spear,
 Wild Taurian, Dodine's brother, erewhile had he left it here. 760
 Now say where the heroes rested, or how they would pass the
 night—
 Helmet and shield had suffered, they were shattered and hewn in
 fight.
 Then Parzival to the lady, and her husband, a farewell bade;
 The Duke to his hearth would bid him, 'twas in vain howsoe'er he
 prayed.
 So here, as the venture telleth, they parted, those heroes twain, 765
 And the Prince Orilus he sought him his pavilion and folk again.
 And glad were his faithful people with one mind when at last they
 saw
 Their lord and his gracious lady dwell in peace and in love once
 more.
 Nor longer was there delaying, the Duke he aside would lay
 His arms, and the rust and blood-stains from his face did he wash
 away; 770
 By her hand he led the Duchess where atonement he fain would
 make,
 Weeping she lay beside him for joy, not for sorrow's sake.
 For such is the way of women, know ye not the saying well?
 'Tearful eyes make sweet lips,' of such lore methinks I yet more
 might tell!
 For Love knoweth joy as sorrow, and he who the twain would
 weigh 775
 In a balance shall find them equal an he testeth the scales away!
 At peace were they now, full surely, forthwith to the bath they
 went,
 Twelve fair maidens they waited on her, with them had she shared
 her tent,
 They had tended her since, all guiltless, the wrath of her love she
 bare;
 (At night might she lie well covered, tho' by day she ill-clad must
 fare) 780

And joyful they bathed their lady—But now are ye fain to hear
How Orilus won him tidings that King Arthur would now draw
near.

For thus spake a knight to his master, 'On a grassy plain I saw
In fair and knightly order a thousand tents, yea, more,
For Arthur the noble monarch, the King of the Breton's land 785
With a wondrous fair host of maidens his court holdeth nigh at
hand;

Methinks scarce a mile are they distant, nor shout of knights shall
fail,

On either side Plimizöl's waters their camp lies adown the vale.'

Then the Duke in haste and gladness forth from his bath he stept
—

Would ye know how she fared, Jeschuté? No longer the lady
wept, 790

But she went, the fair and gentle, from her bath to her couch
straightway,

And far fairer, I ween, her garments than she ware for many a day.
And closely they clung together, the prince and the princess wise,
And Love came to the aid of gladness, and joy here hath won the
prize.

Then the maidens they clad their lady, but the knights their lord's
armour brought, 795

And much had ye praised the vesture of Jeschuté, 'twas fairly
wrought

And birds caught in snares they brought them, on their couch did
they sit the twain,

And joyful they ate; many kisses from her lord did Jeschuté gain!

Then they brought to the lovely lady a palfrey, so strong and fair,
'Twas bridled, and richly saddled, and a lady right well might bear, 800
And they lifted her to the saddle, with her brave lord she hence
would ride;

But his charger was armed, as for battle the knight would his
steed bestride,

And the sword he that morn had wielded hung the saddle-bow
before.

Then from foot to head well armèd he came forth to his steed
once more,

And there, where his lady waited, to the saddle he sprung, the
knight, 805

He would ride forth without delaying, with Jeschuté his lady
bright.

But his folk should fare back to Lalande, save one knight who
should show the way

To the camp and the court of King Arthur, so he counselled his
folk that day.

Soon came they anear King Arthur, and his tents they right well
espied,

For the space of a mile they stretched them adown by the water's
 side. 810
 The knight who had led him hither he bade to his folk repair,
 No comrade he'd have save Jeschuté, his lady so true and fair.
 And Arthur, the brave and humble, he sat where at eve he'd eat,
 On a plain with his vassals round him, in order due and meet.
 Duke Orilus rode to their circle, and none might his blazon know, 815
 So hewn were both shield and helmet—'twas Parzival dealt such
 blow!

From his horse sprang the gallant hero, Jeschuté she held his rein;
 Swift sprang the squires to aid them, and thronged close around
 the twain,
 And they spake, 'We will care for the horses,'—Orilus, on the
 grass he laid
 His shield so marred and splintered, and he asked of the gracious 820
 maid
 For whose sake he had ridden thither, and they showed him the
 lady's seat,
 Kunnewaaré she was of Lalande, and her mien for a maid was
 meet.

Then, armed, he drew near unto them—King and queen bade him
 welcome fair,
 He thanked them, and to his sister his pledge was he fain to
 swear,
 But the maiden, right well she knew him by the golden dragon's
 shine, 825
 And she spake, 'Thou art sure my brother, Orilus, or Lähelein,
 And pledge will I take from neither, for both of ye aye were fain
 To render to me such service as I from your hands would gain.
 I were dead to all truth and honour if I dealt with thee as a foe,
 My courtesy sure were shamèd by my own hand, and laid alow.' 830

Then the prince knelt before the maiden and he spake, 'Thou the
 truth hath said,
 I am Orilus thy brother; the Red Knight this oath hath laid
 On me that my pledge I yield thee, for so must I buy my life,
 Wilt thou take it, then have I done that which I sware after bitter
 strife.'
 Then his pledge, who had borne the dragon, in her white hand 835
 the maid must take,
 And she set him free, and he rose up, and thus to his sister spake:

'Now to sorrow shall faith constrain me, alas! who hath smitten
 thee?
 The blows perforce must wound me—He who lusted thereto
 might see,
 If this were the hour for vengeance, that grief I with thee must
 share;
 And the bravest of men mourneth with me that ever a woman 840
 bare,

He calleth himself the Red Knight—O king! he doth bid me greet
Both thee and the queen thy lady, he doth offer ye service meet,
As he fain would serve this my sister—His service ye will repay,
If ye kindly entreat this maiden that her shaming be put away.
And I, too, had fared far better at the hand of this dauntless
knight, 845
Had he known the maid for my sister, and her blows on my heart
must light.'

Now Kay, he hath earned fresh hatred from all who would there
abide,
Both knights and gentle ladies, by Plimizöl's flowing tide,
From Iofreit the son of Idöl, from Gawain, and the vanquished
king
Klamidé, of whose sore peril I of yore unto ye would sing. 850
And from many another hero whose names I right well had told,
But o'er-long would it be my story—So they thronged round the
hero bold,
And, courteous, he took their service—his wife would they nearer
bring,
She sat as yet on her palfrey, and they welcomed her, queen and
king.

Then the women they kissed each other, and thus spake the king
so true, 855
'Thy father, King Lac of Karnant, for a gallant man I knew,
For his sake I mourned thy sorrow when first men the tale did
bear,
Methinks that thy lord should have spared thee for the sake of
thy face so fair!
For the prize was thine at Kanedig thro' the light of thy beauty's
ray,
And the hawk didst thou win for thy fairness, on thine hand did it
ride away. 860

If Orilus wrong hath done me, yet I wished unto thee no ill,
And never I liked his judgment; and so doth it please me still
To see thee restored to favour, and clad in these garments fair,
As fitting thy state, O Lady! since woe thou o'er-long didst bear.'
And she quoth, 'Now may God reward thee, O Sire! for these
words so true, 865
That thy fame may wax the higher, and may blossom and bloom
anew!'

Then Jeschuté and her husband, the twain, she took by the hand,
And forth from the circle led them, the maiden of fair Lalande.
And near to the royal pavilion, where a stream from the meadow
sprung,
Stood her tent on the plain, and above it a wingèd dragon hung; 870
Half an apple it held in its clutches, and four ropes did it draw on
high,
E'en as if the tent it lifted, and aloft to the clouds would fly.

And Orilus thereby knew it, for the self-same arms he bare,
And beneath it would they disarm him—Then his sister so true
and fair,
She gave him due care and honour, and the vassals, each one
they spake, 875
How the Red Knight's valour dauntless would Fame for its
comrade take.

As thus aloud men praised him, in Kingron's ear spake Kay,
And he bade him do Orilus service—(Well he might, whom he
thus did pray,
For oft had he done such service for Klamidé in Brandigan.)
And for this Kay would give his office to the hand of another man,
His ill-star had bid him smite her, the prince's sister fair, 880
So hard with his staff, 'twas fitting from their service he should
forbear.
Nor pardon she found for his trespass, this maiden of royal race;
But viands he sent, and Kingron, he set them before their face.

Kunnewaaré, the wise and gentle, with her slender hands and
white, 885
Would cut the food for her brother, at his side sat his lady bright.
And Jeschuté of Karnant bare her with courteous and comely
mien,

And Arthur the King forgat not, for fain he the twain had seen,
And he came where they sat together, and ate with right friendly
will,
And he spake, 'Be good service lacking, then for sure it shall
please me ill, 890
For ne'er hath a host received ye, I trow, with a will so good,
And a heart so free from falsehood!' And he spake in kindly
mood,

'My Lady Kunnewaaré, see thou well to this gallant knight,
And the blessing of God be on ye, and keep ye till morning light!'
Then Arthur to rest betook him, and a couch for the twain they
spread, 895
And till daylight in peace they slumbered, and sorrow afar had
fled.

BOOK VI ARTHUR

ARGUMENT

Book VI. tells how King Arthur sought for the Red Knight; and how he took an oath of his heroes to refrain from fighting. Of the blood-stained snow, and the love-trance of Parzival; and how, unknowing, he overthrew Segramor, and took vengeance on Kay. How Gawain led Parzival to the court of King Arthur; and how he was made a knight of the Round Table. Of the coming of Kondrie, and Kingrimursel, and the shaming of Parzival and Gawain. Of Parzival's wrath and despair, and how he rode forth to seek the Grail. How the knights went forth to the venture of Château Merveil; and how Gawain rode to Askalon; and of the scattering of this goodly company.

BOOK VI ARTHUR

Now perchance it were well I should tell ye, how, as this his folk
did pray,
From Karidöl and his kingdom, King Arthur had ridden away.
And now the venture telleth, on his own and on stranger ground
For eight days long had they ridden, nor yet had the Red Knight
found.
For in truth 'twas for him they were seeking, to honour his hand
were fain, 5
From sorrow had he released them, who had erst Prince Ither
slain;
And Klamidé the king, and Kingron, in a welcome hour had sent
To the court of the Breton Monarch: for on this was King Arthur
bent,
He would make him one of his circle, a knight of the Table Round,
No labour too great he counted, so the hero at last he found! 10
Thus o'er mountain and vale they sought him—All who knightly
shield might bear,
King Arthur now called around him, and in this wise he bade
them swear:
What deeds so e'er of knighthood they should see, by this their
oath,
They should on no conflict venture, but faithful still keep their
troth,
As they sware unto him, their monarch, and fight but as he
thereto 15
Should give them leave—He spake thus, 'Now, 'tis well! Since we
needs must go
Thro' many a stranger country, where many a stranger spear,

And many a gallant hero are waiting us, I fear,
 If ye, like hounds untrained whose leash shall have slipped the
 hand
 Of him who was late their master, shall roam free o'er all the land, 20
 Much evil might there befall ye, and such chance should but
 please me ill,
 And by this your oath, I think me, such rashness I best may still.
 Be ye sure and need ariseth, your king ne'er will say you Nay,
 Till then, as I here command ye, ride peaceful upon your way.'

Now the oath, ye shall well have heard it—Now hear ye how
 Parzival, 25
 The Waleis, rode near unto them: thro' the night did the snow-
 flakes fall,
 Light they fell, yet lay thickly on him, yet if well I the tale may
 know,
 And the singer aright hath sung it, it was never the time of snow;
 For whate'er men have sung or spoken of King Arthur, at
 Whitsuntide,
 Or when May-blossoms deck the meadow, these marvels did aye
 betide. 30
 For sweetly the springtide bloometh, and many a garb, I ween,
 Shall it bear this song of my singing, tho' snow-clad it now be
 seen.

The falconers from Karidöl, as the shadows of evening fell,
 Rode, hawking, by Plimizöl's waters, when an evil chance befell,
 For the best of their hawks flew from them, nor stooped to the
 lure again, 35
 But all night in the dusky shadows of the woodland it did remain.

With Parzival it sheltered; to the twain was the woodland way
 A road unknown, sharp the frost stung, in the far east uprose the
 day,
 And, lo! all around the hero, the snow-flakes lay thick and white:
 Thro' the forest paths untrodden, in ever waxing light, 40
 Rode our hero by hedge or thicket, by rock and by fallen tree,
 Till clear grew the shadowy woodland, and its depths he well
 might see,
 And a mighty tree of the forest had fallen where he would ride,
 (The falcon yet followed after) 'mid its clustering boughs he spied
 A flock of wild-geese from the Northland, their hissing he first
 had heard, 45
 Swift swooped the falcon upon them and struck to the earth a
 bird:
 And scarce might it fly the clutches of its foe, and fresh shelter
 take
 'Neath the shade of the fallen branches; in its flight from the
 wounds there brake
 Three blood-drops, all glowing crimson, and fell on the spotless
 snow,

As Parzival's eyes beheld them, swift sorrow his heart must know! 50
 Now hear ye his love so loyal—As he looked on these blood-
 drops bright,
 That stained with a stain of crimson the snow-flakes that lay so
 white,
 He thought, 'Say what hand hath painted these colours that here I
 see?
 Kondwiramur, I think well, these tints sure shall liken thee!
 And white snow and blood-drops crimson, do ever thy likeness
 share, 55
 For this favour I praise God's working, and the world he hath
 wrought so fair!
 For in this wise I read the vision,—in this snow that so spotless
 lies,
 'Gainst the blood-drops, that ruddy-gleaming, glow crimson
 beneath mine eyes,
 I find ever thy face so gracious, my lady, Kondwiramur,
 Red as blood-drops and white as the snowdrift, it rejoiceth me
 evermore!' 60
 Then her sweet face arose before him, in that night she first
 sought his side,
 When on each cheek a tear-drop glistened, and a third to her
 chin did glide.
 And so true was his love and steadfast, little recked he of aught
 around,
 But wrapped round in love and longing, saw naught but the
 blood-stained ground.
 Frau Minne with force constrained him, as here on his wife he
 thought, 65
 And by magic of colours mystic, a spell on his senses wrought.
 So held he him still, as sleeping—Would ye know who found him
 there?
 The squire of fair Kunnewaaré would forth unto Lalande fare,
 And as on his way he journeyed, by the woodland green he saw
 A helmet all battle-dinted, and a shield which yet traces bore 70
 Of many a bitter conflict that was foughten for lady fair;
 And a knight there abode in armour, and his lance he aloft did
 bear
 As one who here patient waited the joust that he fain would ride.
 The squire swiftly turned his bridle and back to the camp he hied.
 Yet in sooth had he seen the stranger, and his lady's champion
 known, 75
 He had ne'er been so swift to decry him, nor had wished he were
 overthrown,
 Nor e'en as he were an outlaw, set the heroes upon his track:
 The squire he of queen unfaithful, small wonder he knighthood
 lacked!

And in this wise he called upon them, 'Fie! Fie! on ye, coward
 knights!
 Hold ye not Gawain for a marvel? Have ye not in a hundred fights
 Won honour and fame as heroes, who fight for a hero king? 80
 Know now that ye stand dishonoured, and broken your goodly
 ring!'

Ah! then there arose a clamour, and none but was fain to know
 Of the deed of knightly prowess, that should shame their honour
 so.

When they heard how but one knight dared them, that but one
 knight a foe did wait, 85
 Then sorely they mourned the promise that they sware to their
 king of late.

Then Knight Segramor sprang swiftly from amid the angry
 throng,

He ran, for in sooth he walked not, and ever his heart did long
 To be in the midst of conflict, where conflict might chance to be,
 An they failèd with cords to bind him, in the thick of the fight was
 he! 90

And nowhere the Rhine's swift waters may flow so strong and
 wide,
 Tho' the stream should run swift between them, an men fought
 on the further side,
 He stayed not to test the waters, if the current be hot or cold,
 But straightway the stream he breasted, as fitted a swimmer bold!

Swift-foot to the tent of the monarch, the eager youth he sped, 95
 For the day was but yet in its dawning, and the king he lay yet
 abed.

Then straight thro' the lists he hied him, and he gat him thro' the
 door,
 And the covering all of sable, with hasty hand he tore
 From the twain who lay warm beneath it, and slumbered a
 slumber deep,
 Yet his haste moved them but to laughter, tho' he waked them
 from out their sleep! 100

And loudly he cried on his cousin—'Queen, Lady, Guinevere,
 Since the world knoweth well our kinship, thou must do me this
 service here,
 Speak thou for me to thine husband, and pray thou of him this
 grace,
 Since a knightly venture nears us, my lot *first* the foe to face!'

Yet Arthur spake, 'Now bethink thee of the oath thou didst swear
 to me, 105
 In all things my will to follow, nor rashly to venture thee;
 For if thou a joust now ridest, hereafter shall many a knight
 Crave leave at mine hand to ride forth, and seek for fame in fight,
 And 'twere ill thus our force to weaken, for know thou that near
 at hand,
 Anfortas of Monsalväsch with a mighty host doth stand. 110

This wood of his he guardeth, and since we but little know
Where he and his force shall hold them, such chance well might
work us woe!

Yet Guinevere wrought so wisely Segramor was well-nigh fain
To die of joy, from King Arthur, his lady this grace did gain. 115
And on fame and honour only was the gallant youth intent,
Nor for gold had he sold the venture on which his heart was bent.

Now the hero young and beardless, well armed his steed
bestrode,
And over the fresh young greensward his charger at full speed
rode;
And the bushes were bent beneath him, and the golden bells
rang clear
On trapping alike and armour; and I deem well an need were here
To seek for the magic pheasant mid thicket and thorny brake, 120
He who fain this knight had followed, the bells for his guide
might take!

Thus rashly rode the hero, to him whom Frau Minne's spell
Fast fettered in magic fetters, and no blow at the first there fell,
For the peace by his word was broken—There held fast by
threefold might, 125
And the power of red blood-drops threefold stood ever the
stranger knight.

(Yea, well I myself have known this, how Frau Minne with power
may hold,
And holding, the senses scatter, and with passion of grief untold
Shall fill the heart to o'erflowing—'Twas a woman who wrought
this ill,
And vanquished, she doth condemn me, and refuseth me comfort
still. 130
Thus draweth she guilt upon her, for the sin shall be hers, I ween,
And afar must I fly from the presence, that of old time my joy
hath been.)

Thus Segramor quoth unto him, 'Now it seemeth but ill to me
That thus near our army lieth, and our presence rejoiceth thee!
And thou holdest his fame too lightly, whom with pride we may
hail our king, 135
And 'tis meet thou for this do penance,—or the death-chime for
me shall ring!
Thus armed, all too near thou ridest; yet first would I courteous
pray
That thou yield thee at this my bidding, or my wrong will I here
repay,
And my blow shall be swift, and thy falling shall scatter these
snow-flakes white!
And I call on thee here to yield thee, ere I put thee to shame, Sir
Knight!' 140

Yet Parzival still kept silence—for Frau Minne, so fair and young,
 In a sorer conflict held him—Then his steed Segramor swung
 Aside, as for jousting ready, round wheeled him the war-horse
 good
 On whose back the gallant hero yet sate in mystic mood,
 And ever he gazed on the blood-drops; as his charger turned him
 round 145
 Awhile from his eyes they vanished, and fame in their stead he
 found!
 For swift as the blood-drops crimson thus passed from his
 dazzled sight,
 He hearkened the voice of the foeman, and braced him anew for
 fight.

Then as Segramor rode against him, Parzival sought afresh the
 spear
 That he found by the woodland chapel, with blazon of colours
 clear; 150
 For tough was the shaft, and he gripped it, and he held the point
 full low,
 As his foeman dashed fair against him, his shield rang with the
 ringing blow.
 Then he spurred him anew to the onslaught, and the joust he so
 well repaid,
 That the knight in his golden armour was low in the snowdrift
 laid!
 Yet still was the spear unsplintered, tho' it bare him from off his
 horse; 155
 And Parzival still kept silence, and he wheeled him upon his
 course,
 And his eyes sought once more the blood-drops, and e'en as
 they met his sight
 Frau Minne with fetters bound him, and held him in cords of
 might,
 And he spake never word, nor question, but gazed ever upon the
 ground,
 And, dreaming, he lost the knowledge which he for a space had
 found! 160

But affrighted, the gallant charger had fled back into its stall,
 And its rider arose, little comfort might he find, though he soft
 might fall!
 Outstretched had he lain in the snowdrift, in such wise e'en as
 men shall go
 To rest, yet but ill he sleepeth, who sleepeth on couch of snow!
 And such bed had sorrow brought me! for he to whom ill betides 165
 Hath but mocking for his bedfellow, but the lucky doth God's
 hand guide.

So near was King Arthur's army, that right well might Parzival

Be seen of all men, and the wonders, and the conflict that then
 befell.
 The victor by Love was vanquished, by Love that in days of old
 Did the king of all kings the wisest, King Solomon, captive hold! 170
 Short space, then, ere back to the army once more Knight
 Segramor came,
 An with praise or with blame they should greet him, he counted it
 still the same.
 And sharp words he flung among them, with mocking tongue
 and bold,
 Tho' vanquished, yet not dishonoured, must they ever the hero
 hold!

And he quoth, 'Have ye never heard this, that strife bringeth loss
 as gain? 175
 And never a joust, I wot me, but the victor doth one remain,
 While one eye shall be the vanquished: The best ship in storm
 may sink,
 And I wot that ye ne'er have heard me to speak, for I ne'er did
 think,
 An he knew of my shield the blazon, he had faced me not as a
 foe!
 Much evil, in sooth, hath he wrought me, and yet doth he wait
 below 180
 All those who would ride against him, for he seemeth for conflict
 fain,
 An a knight should in joust o'erthrow him, such chance might he
 count for gain.'

Then straightway unto King Arthur Sir Kay did the tidings bring,
 How his knight, Segramor, had fallen, and his victor, without their
 ring,
 A young knight, for jousting ready, yet waited with ill intent— 185
 'Nay, I think an this stranger warrior of so many unpunished went,
 A burden both sore and shameful on our honour such lack would
 lay;
 Now, my king, an thou hold me worthy, do thou grant me this
 grace, I pray,
 I would ride hence to ask his meaning, who thus in the presence
 fair
 Of our Queen Guinevere and her maidens his lance-point aloft
 doth bear; 190
 But if thou shouldst this boon refuse me, then know, not another
 hour
 I abide here as this thy servant; for I hold that the knightly power
 And the fair fame of thy Round Table are stainèd if we delay
 To arm ourselves 'gainst the stranger who dareth our strength to-
 day!
 Now, I prithee, give leave to fight him—For tho' blind and deaf
 were we, 195

Yet 'tis time that we should defend us'—'As thou willest, so let it
 be!'

Then swift did the seneschal arm him, and I ween in fierce anger's
 fire
 A woodland he fain had wasted 'gainst the foe, who with strong
 desire
 And love was thus sorely burdened; for Frau Minne a magic spell
 Had wrought with the snow-flakes spotless, and the blood-drops
 that crimson fell. 200
 And his knighthood he sorely shamèd, who thought here to work
 him harm,
 Since he faileth true Love to honour, who denieth of Love the
 charm.

Frau Minne, say, why dost thou make glad the souls that mourn
 With bliss that too swiftly fleeting, but leaveth them more forlorn?
 And how canst thou, Frau Minne, true worth and knightly fame, 205
 And manly strength and courage, thus vanquish and put to
 shame?
 For the least is to thee as the greatest, and the earth shall no hero
 boast,
 Who thinketh to scorn thine empire, but he learneth unto his cost
 That thou canst, an thou wilt, o'erthrow him; yea, all men thy
 power obey,
 For thy sceptre we own as mighty, and wide as the world its sway. 210

Yet this one thing it doth thee honour, tho' thou rulest all else but
 ill,
 Joy maketh her dwelling with thee, and for this would I praise
 thee still!

Frau Minne, alas! of old time full false were thy ways, I ween,
 Nor hast thou thy dealings mended, nor to-day hast thou truer
 been, 215
 Thou hast many a maiden shamèd, who love forbidden sought;
 Thro' thy dealings, upon the vassal, his lord hath sorrow brought;
 And the friend shall false and faithless to the friend of his bosom
 prove,
 And the servant betray his master; such deeds do but shame
 thee, Love!
 And I would that it were far from thee, the body to yield to lust,
 In such wise that the soul ashamed is stricken with sorrow's
 thrust, 220
 And that with force compelling, the young thou makest old,
 Though their years but few be counted, this must we for treason
 hold!

Such speech, I ween, beseems not the man who in serving thee
 Hath comfort found! If succour thine hand ever brought to me,
 I had been less slow to praise thee, but sorrow and loss alone 225

Hast thou counted to me as guerdon, and such glamour thine art
hath thrown
O'er mine eyes, that, methinks, henceforward I trust thee never
more,
Though small profit it brought unto thee, the bitter grief I bore!
And yet too high above me art thou, that whate'er my wrong,
I should e'en as a fool upbraid thee with bitter words and strong: 230
For thy spear too sharply pierces, and scarce may we bear the
weight,
Thou layest at will upon us—Methinks he who sang of late,
'Neath a tree, of thy mystic dealings, and thy wondrous ways of
old,
Had better done had he told us how we thy grace might hold!
(Heinrich of Veldeck was he, and he taught us, I ween, right well 235
Of the winning of Love, of its guarding, alas! he failed to tell.)
For oft one thro' folly loses the prize that he late did win;
Yea, to me hath such fate befallen, yet Frau Minne, *thine* was the
sin!
Since all wisdom shall be thy portion, since against thee nor
spear, nor shield,
Nor charger, nor guarded fortress their vaunted power can wield, 240
I know not what shall withstand thee, nor on earth, nor on the
sea!
He who feareth to face thy conflict, say whither shall he flee?
'Twas thy mystic power, Frau Minne, that dealt thus with Parzival,
And reft him awhile of knowledge, and wrought with him as a
fool.
For fair was the queen and gracious who reigned in far Pelrapär, 245
And she thought on her lord and husband, and she made thee
her message bear.
And for this cause Kardeiss her brother, hast thou for thy
payment slair,
And since thou such tribute askest, 'tis well that I ne'er have ta'en
From thine hand aught of good, since in such wise thou dost for
thy debtors care—
This I spake for the sake of all men—List ye now how Sir Kay did
fare: 250
Now he rode forth in knightly armour to the strife that he sore
did crave,
And Gamuret's son, right willing, to his wish fulfilment gave.
And wherever fair maids compelling, their voices uplift in prayer,
And the grace they shall ask be granted, let them pray here for
his welfare,
Since it was thro' a woman's beauty, that the spell of a woman
wrought 255
Love's magic, of senses robbed him—Then his charger to halt Kay
brought;
And he spake to the gallant Waleis, 'Sir Knight, since thou thus
our king

Hast shamed, thou shalt hear my counsel, for wisdom perchance
'twill bring;
Thou shalt hang thee a hempen halter around thy neck
straightway,
For so may I lightly lead thee, and take thou with me thy way. 260
Nor think thou, thou canst escape me, but with me unto my lord
Shalt thou go, as befits a captive, else worse may be thy reward!

By love constrained, the Waleis nor word nor answer spoke,
Kay gripped his spear-shaft tightly and he smote with a mighty
stroke
On the hero's head, till the helmet rang loudly beneath his hand; 265
And he quoth, 'Now will I awake thee! Dost think here to take thy
stand,
And standing sleep unsheeted? Nay, other shalt thou fare,
Low on the snow I'll lay thee! The ass that is wont to bear
The sack from the mill would rue it, did one smite him in such
wise,
As here I think now to smite thee, and thy sloth and thy sleep
chastise!' 270

Frau Minne, now bethink thee, for sore this shameth thee,
For an one should wrong a peasant, in this wise his speech will
be,
'My lord will sure repay thee!' Vengeance from thee he'd seek
Methinks, this gallant Waleis, an thou wouldst let him speak!
Now let him from out thy circle, and loose him from thy ban, 275
This stranger guest shalt prove him, a true and valiant man!

Swift rode Sir Kay unto him, and he turned his bridle round,
And no more his longing glances their joy and their sorrow
found,
The white snow and blood-drops crimson, that mystic likeness
bare
To the queen of his love and his longing, the Lady of Pelrapär; 280
He knew all that passed around him—His charger Sir Kay address
To jousting, he spurred him onward, and his spear he laid in rest.

In the joust, that which Kay had aimed at he smote, for his spear
did pierce
The Waleis' shield, yet swift payment was his, for in onslaught
fierce
The seneschal of King Arthur fell prone on the fallen tree, 285
Where the geese erewhile had hid them, and hurt full sore was
he,
And dead lay his gallant charger—"Twixt a stone and the saddle-
bow,
Right arm, and left leg had he broken—so mighty his overthrow
That all that had decked his charger, girths, saddle, bells of gold,
By the force of the fall were shattered, thus the stranger his
payment told, 290

And with one blow, for twain repaid him—the one that erst for
 his sake,
 A maiden had borne and the other, which he from Kay's hand
 must take.

Thus he who knew naught of falsehood was guided of truth to
 know
 Her message in blood-drops threefold, on the white of the drifted
 snow.
 'Twas tear-drops, not blood, that he saw there, and well might his
 senses fail, 295
 And the thoughts of his heart wax heavy, as he mused on the
 wondrous Grail,
 And sorely the semblance grieved him that spake of his wife and
 queen.
 Yet tho' o'er the twain he sorrowed, the greater woe, I ween,
 Was the woe that Frau Minne wrought him, for there liveth not
 heart so strong,
 But longing and love united break its power, ere the time be long.
 Count we here those twain as ventures? Nay, 'twere better 300
 methinks to hold,
 That they were naught but pain and sorrow, that vanquished the
 hero bold.

Now ye unto whom I tell this, I rede ye to mourn Kay's woe,
 For full oft as his manhood bade him, he many a strife did know.
 And in many a land they speak thus, that Kay, Arthur's seneschal, 305
 Was a firebrand, hell-born, yet I wot well far other the tale I'd tell.
 From reproach would I gladly free him, tho' few but should say
 me nay,
 Yet a gallant man and a worthy, I swear was this knight, Sir Kay.
 And my mouth to this truth beareth witness, and more would I
 tell to thee;

Unto Arthur's Court came strangers in many a company, 310
 And their manners and ways were diverse, nor all there might
 honour claim,
 But Kay an he saw false dealing, he counted such ways as shame,
 And his face he turned from the sinner, yet he who dealt
 courteously,
 And true man with true men would hold him, Kay served him
 right heartily.

And one who fall well discernèd the manner of men was Kay, 315
 Thus he did to his lord good service, for his harsh words drave far
 away
 The men who would falsely vaunt them good knights and true to
 be,
 Ill was he to them as a hailstorm, sharp as sting of an angry bee.
 Small wonder that these deny him his honour and knightly fame,
 True servant and wise they found him, and for this cause upon his
 name 320

Their hatred doth still heap slander—Prince Herman, Thuringia's
 lord,
 Thou with vassals that crowd around thee, and strangers who
 seek thy board,
 Good service might Kay have done thee, since so free art thou
 aye of hand,
 That true men and men dishonoured, side by side in thine hall
 they stand;
 And therefore Knight Walter singeth, 'Now greeting to all I bring, 325
 Men evil and good!' And I trow well, where a singer such song
 may sing,
 There the false are too highly honoured—Nay, far other Sir Kay
 had taught,
 (Yea, and Heinrich of Rispach also)—Now hearken ye in what sort
 On Plimizöl's plain men bare them; from the field Sir Kay was
 borne
 To the tent of his king, and around him, o'er his ill-fate his friends 330
 did mourn;
 And maiden and knight they stood there; to the tent where his
 comrade lay
 Came Gawain, and he quoth in sadness, 'Alas! for the woeful day
 That so ill a joust was ridden that hath robbed me of a friend!
 Then out spake Kay in his anger, 'Now make of thy moan an end,
 If comfort thou here wouldst bring me, do not as the women do, 335
 Since thou art my monarch's nephew! I would do to thee service
 true,
 As of free heart I ever did it, in the day that God gave me power,
 Nor long for my aid hadst thou prayed me! There cometh,
 perchance, an hour
 When I, as of old, may serve thee: now cease thou thy moan I
 pray,
 For tho' mine be the pain, yet my monarch shall ne'er find 340
 another Kay,
 And I wot that for mine avenger art thou all too nobly born;
 An yet hadst *thou* lost a finger I had counted myself forsworn
 An I risked not mine head to pay it! Let that be as it may,
 Believe me or not, as shall please thee, yet sooth are the words I
 say!'

'No joust shalt thou ride at my urging, for roughly he greets his
 foe, 345
 Who holdeth without his station, and rideth nor swift nor slow.
 And I think me, of maidens' tresses, tho' frail be such cord and
 fair,
 Enough from such strife to bind thee, the chain of a single hair!
 And the man who shall show such meekness, he well doth his
mother love,
 Since his *sire* would fain in the conflict his knightly mettle prove. 350
 But follow thou aye thy mother, Sir Gawain, list well her rede.
 Turn thou pale at the glancing sword-blade, and shrink from the
 manly deed!'

And thus on the gallant hero the bitter words he spake
Fell sharply, he looked not for them, nor on Kay might he
 vengeance take,
Full seldom a knight may do so, since shame on his lips setteth
 seal, 355
But they who thus speak discourteous, such shame shall they
 never feel.

Then Gawain he quoth in answer, 'Where men knightly sword
 might bear,
And have foughten, and I fought with them, then no man beheld
 me there,
And saw that my cheek waxed paler at sight of wound or blow.
I was ever thy friend—'twas needless that thou shouldst reproach
 me so!' 360
Then he strode from the tent, and he bade them bring hither his
 charger good,
Nor spur on his heel he buckled, unarmed he his steed bestrode.

So came he unto the Waleis (whose sense was of love held fast),
And his shield to all eyes bare witness of three spears thro' its
 circle passed,
For three jousts of late had he ridden, and he rode them with
 heroes twain, 365
Of Orilus too was he smitten—Then gently uprode Gawain,
And he spurred not his steed to gallop, nor conflict nor strife he
 sought,
For he rode but in love and in kindness, to seek him who here
 had fought.

Fair spake Gawain the stranger, to greeting deaf was he,
Frau Minne yet held him captive, how other might it be? 370
True son of Herzeleide, to this lot was he born,
To lose himself for love's sake; such passion as had torn
The hearts of these his parents, afresh in his heart awoke,
And but little his ear might hearken what the mouth of Gawain
 spoke.

Quoth King Lot's son unto the Waleis, 'Sir Knight, here thou doest
 ill 375
In that thou withholdest greeting—tho' patient I wait thy will
Far otherwise can I bear me! Know thou that to friend and king,
Yea, to all whom I count my fellows, thy deed doth dishonour
 bring,
And our shame ever waxeth greater; yet prayed I for thee this
 grace,
The king of free heart forgives thee, if now thou shalt seek his
 face. 380
So hearken, I pray, my counsel, and do thou as I shall say,
And ride thou with me to King Arthur, nor too long shalt thou
 find the way.'

Nor threatening nor prayer might move him, this fair son of
 Gamuret:
 Then the pride of King Arthur's knighthood his memory backward
 set,
 And he thought of Frau Minne's dealings, and the time when the
 knife's sharp blade 385
 He drave thro' his hand unwitting, thro' the love of a gracious
 maid.
 And that time when from death's cold clutches, a queen's hand
 had set him free,
 When of Lâhelein was he vanquished, and captive in joust was he,
 And a queen in the day of his danger must pledge her fair life for
 his,
 And her name shall of men be praised, Queen Ingus of
 Bachtarliess. 390
 Thought Gawain, 'It may be Frau Minne dealeth so with this
 goodly man,
 As she dealt with me of old time, so claspeth him in the ban
 Of her magic spells fair-woven, that his spirit within the snare
 She holdeth fast entangled'—Then his eyes on the snow-flakes
 fair
 He cast, and he knew the token, and swift from the spell-bound
 sight 395
 With cloth of fair silk and sendal, he covered the blood-drops
 bright.

The blood-stained snow was hidden, nor longer its spell was
 seen,
 And his sight and his sense unclouded she gave him, his wife and
 queen;
 Yet his heart did she hold in her keeping, and its dwelling was
 Pelrapär,
 And he cried aloud in his sorrow thro' the silent summer air; 400
 'Alas! who of thee hath robbed me, who erewhile wast my queen
 and wife,
 For thy love, thy crown, and thy kingdom my right hand hath won
 in strife.

Say, say, am I he who saved thee from Klamidé the warrior king?
 Yea, sorrow and bitter sighing, and grief that the heart doth wring
 Are the guerdons I won in thy service, and now from mine eyes
 be-dazed 405
 Art thou reft, and thy place I know not, tho' but now on thy face I
 gazed.'

Then he quoth, 'Now, where shall my spear be, since I wot well I
 brought it here?'
 Quoth Gawain, 'A joust hast thou ridden, and splintered shall be
 thy spear.'
 'With whom should I joust?' quoth the Walesis, 'thou bearest nor
 sword nor shield,
 And little had been mine honour, an thou to my hand didst yield! 410

Yet bear I awhile thy mocking, nor will I thy friendship pray,
 Tho' many a joust have I ridden, yet my saddle I kept alway.
 An thou be not for jousting minded, and I find not in thee a foe,
 Yet the world lieth wide before me, and hence on my way I go;
 For labour and strife am I seeking and fain would I win me praise, 415
 Be anguish or joy my portion; nor unfruitful shall be my days.'

Quoth Gawain, 'What I spake aforetime I spake of true heart and
 free,
 Nor my thoughts were the thoughts of evil, for well would I deal
 with thee;
 And the boon that I crave will I win me, my monarch with many a
 knight
 Lieth here at hand with his army, and with many a lady bright, 420
 An it please thee, Sir Knight, to betake thee to our goodly
 company,
 From all strife shall this right hand guard thee, and gladly I'll ride
 with thee.'
 'I thank thee, Sir Knight, fair thou speakest, yet say ere with thee I
 ride,
 Who the monarch may be whom thou servest? and who rideth
 here at my side?'

'A man do I hail as master, thro' whose fame much fame I won, 425
 Nor here shall my mouth keep silence on the things he for me
 hath done.
 For dear hath he ever held me, and as true knight did me entreat:
 (His sister King Lot hath wedded, and the twain I as parents
 greet.)
 And the good gifts God gave unto me, to his service I yield them
 all,
 For my hand and my heart he ruleth, whom men do King Arthur
 call. 430
 Nor mine own name need here be hidden, nor a secret shall long
 remain,
 For the folk and the lands that know me, they call on me as
 Gawain:
 And fain would I do thee service, alike with my hand and name,
 If thou turnest here at my bidding, nor bringest upon me shame!'

Then he quoth, 'Is it thou, O Gawain? too little I yet have done 435
 That thou shouldst as a friend entreat me; yet hast thou this
 honour won
 That all men thou gently treatest—and thy friendship I here will
 take,
 Yet not for mine own deserving, but repayment I fain would
 make.
 Now say where thine army lieth, since so many tents I see
 That stand fair by the brink of the river? If King Arthur in truth
 shall be 440
 So near, then must I bemoan me, that in honour I may not dare

To enter his royal presence, or look on his queen so fair.
 Since 'tis meet that I first avenge me of a foul and discourteous
 blow,
 For which, since the day I left them, I sorrow and shame must
 know.
 For a maiden as she beheld me, laughed sweetly, the seneschal 445
 For my sake smote the maid so sorely, 'twas a wood that upon
 her fell.'

'Rough vengeance thou here hast taken! (Gawain to the Wales
 spake)
 Since thou in a joust hast felled him, and right arm and left leg he
 brake.
 Ride here, see his charger lifeless, that lieth the stone below;
 On the snowdrift behold the splinters of the spear that hath dealt
 the blow! 450
 'Tis the spear thou but now wast seeking!' Then the truth knew Sir
 Parzival,
 And straightway he spake unto Gawain, 'Now, if this be the
 seneschal,
 And the man who so sorely shamed me, if thou swear me that
 this was he,
 Thou mayst ride where thou wilt, and gladly will I ride in thy
 company!'
 'Nay, never a lie do I tell thee,' quoth Gawain, 'thou hast
 overthrown 455
 Segramor, who ere now in battle was ever as victor known,
 He fell ere yet Kay had met thee: great deeds hast thou done to-
 day,
 Since o'er two of our bravest heroes the prize thou hast borne
 away.'

So rode they, the one with the other, the Wales and Knight
 Gawain,
 And the folk, both afoot and on horseback, with honour would
 greet the twain, 460
 Gawain and his guest the Red Knight, this did they of courtesy,
 And the twain to his fair pavilion they gat them right speedily.
 And the lady, fair Kunnewaaré, whose tent by Gawain's did stand,
 Rejoiced, and she joyful greeted the hero, whose strong right
 hand
 Had failed not to wreak stern vengeance for the ill that Kay
 wrought that day; 465
 Then her brother and fair Jeschuté she led by the hand
 straightway,
 And Parzival looked upon them as the three to his tent drew near,
 And his face, thro' the rust of his armour, it shone ever fair and
 clear,
 As roses dew-dipped had flown there: his harness aside he laid,
 And he stood before Kunnewaaré, and thus spake the gentle
 maid: 470

'To God shalt thou first be welcome, as welcome thou art to me,
 Since thy manhood thou well hast proven, and the faith that I had
 in thee!
 Ere the day that my heart beheld thee, nor laughter nor smiles I
 knew,
 And Kay, who in that hour smote me, with stern hand my
 gladness slew.
 But now hast thou well avenged me! With a kiss I thy deed would
 pay, 475
 If I of thy kiss were worthy!' 'Nay, so had I thought to-day
 To crave of thy lips my payment,' quoth Parzival, 'if thou still
 Wilt give me such gracious greeting, right gladly I'll do thy will!'

Then she kissed him, and down they sate them, and the princess
 a maiden sent
 And bade her to bring rich raiment; so sped she unto the tent; 480
 And the garments they lay there ready, of rich silk of Nineveh,
 For her prisoner, King Klamidé, had she fashioned them
 cunningly.
 Then the maiden who bare the garments, full sorely must she
 bewail
 That the mantle was yet unfinished, since the silken cord did fail.
 Then the lady, Kunnewaaré, from her side drew a silken band 485
 From the folds of her robe, in the mantle she wove it with skilful
 hand.

Then courteous her leave he prayed him, the rust would he wash
 away,
 And fair shone his face, and youthful, and his lips they were red
 that day.
 And robed was the gallant hero, and so bright and so fair was he,
 That all men who there beheld him, they sware he for sure must
 be 490
 The flower and the crown of manhood, a knight without shame or
 fear;
 And they looked upon him, and they praised him and his colour
 waxed bright and clear,
 And right well did his garb become him; an emerald green and
 rare,
 The gift of fair Kunnewaaré, as clasp at his neck he bare;
 And a girdle beside she gave him, all wrought in a cunning row 495
 With mystic beasts, bejewelled, that burnt with a fiery glow,
 And its clasp was a red-fire ruby—How think ye the beardless
 youth
 Was seen when thus richly girded? Fair was he in very sooth,
 For so the story runneth—the folk bare him right goodwill,
 Men and women who looked upon him, they counted him worthy
 still. 500

Forthwith, as the Mass was ended, came Arthur the noble king,
 And the knights of his Table with him, a goodly following.

No man there whose lips spake falsehood. Yea, all heard the word
that day,
'With Gawain the Red Knight dwelleth!' the king thither took his
way.

Then the knight who so sore was beaten came swiftly, Sir
Antanor, 505

For, fain to behold the Waleis, his feet sped the king before,
And he asked, 'Art thou he who avenged me, and the lady of fair
Lalande?

Now vanished shall be Kay's honour, for it falleth unto thine hand,
And an end hast thou made of his threatening, and the days of
his strife are o'er,
For his arm it is weak, and his vengeance I fear for it never more!' 510

And so fair was the knight and radiant, that all men beheld his
face
As an angel from heaven, that wingless, abideth on earth a space.
And well did King Arthur greet him, and his knights were no whit
behind,

And all they who looked upon him, naught but love in their
hearts might find,
And their lips to their heart made answer, and all spake to his
praises, 'Yea,' 515
And no man gainsaid the other, so lovely his mien that day!

Then Arthur spake fair unto him, 'Thou hast wrought me both joy
and pain,
Yet ne'er from the hand of a hero such honour I thought to gain
As the honour that thou hast brought me! yet no service I did to
thee,

An I did, then thy fame had repaid it, tho' no other thy deeds
should be 520

Than the deed thou hast done in the winning for Jeschuté her
husband's grace!

Nor Kay's guilt had been unavengèd, if ere this I had seen thy
face

Myself had, unasked, chastised him.' Then Arthur in this wise
spake,

'Since so far they had come, and their journey had they taken but
for his sake,

They all with one voice did pray him, to swear to them
brotherhood, 525

And be one of the gallant Table, a comrade both true and good.'
And their prayer it seemed good unto him, and joyful at heart
was he,

And he sware them the oath that they asked for, and their knight
would he gladly be.

Now hear ye, and speak the verdict, if on this day the Table
Round

Its right, and its due observance had here, as aforetime found; 530

Since for many a day King Arthur in this wise had ruled his court,
 No knight should break bread before him, if there came of fair
 venture naught.
 But enough should have chanced this morning, and to Table they
 well might go,
 Though from Nantes might they never bear it, yet they here
 would its semblance show.
 Wide enow was the flowery meadow, nor hindered them tree or
 tent, 535
 As they did here their monarch's bidding—for this was his heart's
 intent,
 Fair honour to give the Red Knight, and his valour, as meet,
 reward—
 Then a silk in Acraton woven, they laid on the grassy sward,
 'Twas brought from far lands of paynim, and 'twas shapen both
 wide and round;
 For ever this courteous custom mid these gallant knights was
 found, 540
 No high seat had they of honour, but all men were equal there;
 And thus had King Arthur willed it, both the knights and their
 ladies fair
 At the Table Round were welcome, yea, an they might honour
 claim,
 Knight, lady, or gentle maiden, at his court all should fare the
 same!

And there, with her maiden following, came fair Guinevere the
 queen, 545
 And many a noble princess amid her train was seen,
 And none but was fair to look on, and the ring it was spread so
 wide
 That within, without strife or crowding, each maid sat her knight
 beside.
 And Arthur, who ne'er knew falsehood, led the Waleis by the
 hand,
 And Kunnewaaré she walked beside him, the lady of fair Lalande, 550
 From sorrow the knight had freed her—Then, with kind and
 friendly eyes,
 Looked Arthur upon the hero, and he spake to him in this wise:

'My queen will I bid to kiss thee, who art fair both of form and
 face,
 For ne'er, in this court, of lady I ween wouldst thou crave this
 grace,
 Since from Pelrapär thou hast ridden, and wert thou on kissing
 bent 555
 From lips of all lips the fairest, hast thou there thy full heart's
 content!
 Yet this one grace will I pray thee, if ever there dawn the day
 That I find 'neath thy roof abiding, this kiss I may then repay!'

'In sooth, will I do thy bidding,' quoth the Waleis, 'both there and here!'
 Then unto the gallant hero stepped the Lady Guinevere, 560
 And fair on the lips she kissed him, and she quoth, 'Here I pardon thee
 The ill thou aforetime didst me, and the sorrow thou gavest me.
 Thou didst leave me sorely grieving, when from hence thou didst ride away.
 By thy hand and thy dart my kinsman Prince Ither was slain that day!'

And all tear-bedewed were the eyelids of the Lady Guinevere, 565
 For Prince Ither's death wrought sorrow unto many a woman dear.
 Now must King Klamidé seat him, on the bank by Plimizöl,
 And beside him sate Iofreit, who was son unto King Idöl;
 And 'twixt Klamidé and Gawain must the Waleis have his place—
 And they know who tell the venture, none sate here of royal 570
 grace,
 None who woman's breast had suckled, whose fame stood so high and fair,
 For courage and youthful beauty did the Waleis, as jewels, wear.
 And they owned, who there looked upon him, that many a maiden bright
 Saw herself in a darker mirror than the lips of this fair young knight.
 And on cheek and on chin his colour might well as fetters be 575
 For those who should need such fetters, whose fancy flitteth free.
 Here might there be naught of changing—(of women my rede I trow
 For some they are ever wavering, and ever new friendships know!)
 But his look ever constant held them, till I wot well that thro' their eyes
 His entry he gained triumphant, and made of their hearts his 580
 prize!

Thus maiden and man beheld him, and his honour all men did praise,
 Till he found here the goal of sighing, and the end of his joyous days.
 For hither came one I must tell of, and faithful was she in truth
 Tho' discourteous her ways, and for sorrow, I ween, had she little ruth!
 And the folk for her message sorrowed—Now hear how the maid 585
 must ride,
 Her mule it was tall as a war-horse, and branded on either side;
 And its nostrils were slit as is custom in the far land of Hungary,
 Yet her harness and bridle were costly, with rich work broidered cunningly.

Soft and slow paced her mule, yet the maiden was not as a maid,
 I trow.
 What sought she? She came as 'twas fated, and sorrow must
 Arthur know. 690
 And of wisdom forsooth this maiden might boast her a wondrous
 store,
 No tongue but she spake, French, Latin, and Paynim: in all such
 lore
 As men read in the highest heavens, Dialectics, Geometry,
 In all was she courteous trained, and her name it was called
 Kondrie.
 'The sorceress' did men name her, nor her speech halted on its
 way, 695
 Too ready her tongue, since rejoicing she smote into grief that
 day.

This maiden, so rich in wisdom, bare little of maiden grace,
 No lover e'er praised her beauty, no tongue spake her fair of face.
 A tempest she, joy destroying, yet of bridal cloth from Ghent
 Did she wear a mantle, bluer than azure the soft tints blent. 600
 As a cap was it fairly fashioned, such as maidens in France shall
 wear,
 And beneath it, around her body, a silken robe she bare.
 And a hat of the English peacock, with silk of orient lined,
 And new was the hat, and the fastening, and it hung low the maid
 behind.
 And like to a bridge her message, that sorrow o'er joy had
 crossed, 605
 And shame enough did she bring them, till laughter in tears was
 lost.

In a thick plait above her headgear had she flung her tresses
 back,
 And adown on the mule were they hanging, so long, and so
 coarse, and black,
 Nor softer to touch than the bristles, which swine on their backs
 shall show.
 And her nose as a dog's was shapen, and from out her mouth did
 grow 610
 Two tusks as had 'seemed a wild boar, a hand's-breadth long
 were they;
 And above her eyes the eyebrows as thick as plaits they lay.
 And I speak but the truth, as I needs must, tho' my words lack in
 courtesy
 Since I speak of a maid, yet, for such cause, none other
 reproacheth me.

And ears as a bear had Kondrie, and never the eye might trace 615
 A shy glance of love, or of longing, I ween in that wondrous face.
 And a scourge did she bear, and the handle was a ruby, of silk the
 cord;

And the hands of this winsome maiden like a lion's were sharply
 clawed,
 And the skin as an ape's was dusky, and the nails they were not
 too light,
 And I ween, for her maiden favours, but seldom would heroes
 fight! 620

So rode she unto the circle, and her coming did sorrow bring,
 And fair joy did she put in peril—Then turned she unto the king,
 (And Kunnewaaré sat beside him, his table-mate was she,
 And fair Guinevere, his consort, a queen bare her company.)
 Thus in royal state King Arthur as monarch sat that day— 625
 To the Breton king rode Kondrie, and in French did she speak
 alway;
 And tho' I in another language than hers shall the venture tell,
 Yet I rede ye to wit that the telling it pleaseth me none too well!

'Thou son of high Pendragon, thyself, and thy Breton host,
 By thy deed hast thou shamed—From all lands the noblest that
 they might boast 630
 Once sat here a gallant circle, but poisoned is now their fame,
 And thy Table Round dishonoured by traitor, and brought to
 shame.
 King Arthur, o'er all thy fellows, thy praises of old stood high,
 But it sinketh now, thy glory, and thy fame, that did swiftly fly,
 Henceforward goeth halting; thine honour doth seek the ground 635
 Since it showeth stain of falsehood—The fame of thy Table Round
 It suffered for the friendship ye with Parzival did swear,
 Tho' I wot well the outward token of a spotless knight he bear.
 "The Red Knight" ye here do call him, the name of one who lay
 Dead before Nantes, yet I tell thee unlike in their life are they! 640
 For no mouth hath read of a hero whose fame knew nor fault nor
 flaw,
 As his!' From the king she turned her, and did rein by the Waleis
 draw,

And she quoth, 'Now sore shalt thou rue it, since I, for thy sake
 deny
 My greeting unto King Arthur, and the knights of his company.
 May thy fair face be dishonoured, and thy manhood I look on
 here. 645
 Of forgiveness and joy were I merchant, in sooth shouldst thou
 buy them dear!
 And I deem thou art but a monster, and myself shall far fairer be!
 Speak, Sir Parzival, as I bid thee, and this riddle read thou to me,
 When thou sawest the fisher sit there, joyless, of comfort reft,
 Why didst thou not loose his sighing? Why was he in bondage
 left?' 650

'For he showed thee of his sorrow—Oh! thou false and faithless
 guest,
 For hadst thou had pity on him, his anguish had gotten rest.

I would that thy mouth might perish, yea, the tongue thy mouth
 within,
 For e'en as the heart the tongue is, in thine *heart* is the root of
 sin.

To Hell shalt thou be predestined, by the Ruler of Heaven high, 655
 And this be on earth thy portion, that true men thy face shall fly.
 And ban hast thou won for blessing, and for bliss shalt thou find
 but bale,
 For too late dost thou strive for honour, and thy striving shall
 naught avail.
 And so feeble shall wax thy manhood, and thy fame it shall be so
 weak,

That never shall soul's physician the promise of healing speak. 660
 An one to the oath should drive me, on thine head were I fain to
 swear,
 That never a darker treason was wrought by a man so fair.
 Thou hook in fair feathers hidden, bright serpent with poisoned
 fang,
 Who ne'er of the sword was worthy, which thine host at thy side
 did hang!
 The goal of thy sins, this thy silence, of Hell's horde art thou now 665
 the sport,
 And dishonour upon thy body, Sir Parzival, hast thou wrought.
 Saw'st thou not how they bare before thee the Grail, and the
 bleeding spear,
 And sharp silver? Thy joy's destruction, and thy shelter from grief
 were here!'

'Yea, hadst thou but asked at Monsalväsch; afar, in a heathen
 land,
 Rich o'er all earthly riches, doth the town of Tabronit stand; 670
 Yet the riches thy speech had won thee had been greater far, I
 ween—
 And with gallant strife of knighthood the hand of that country's
 queen
 Feirefis Angevin hath won him: no fear doth his manhood stain;
 One father, I ween, hath borne ye, yet unlike shall ye be, ye twain.
 And thy brother is strange to look on, for both white and black 675
 his face,
 And at Zassamank he reigneth o'er the folk of his mother's race.'

'And my thoughts to thy sire are turning; his country was fair
 Anjou,
 And he left thee far other heirdom (for his heart never falsehood
 knew,)
 Than the heritage thou hast won thee, and the crown of an evil
 fame!
 And could I but think thy mother had wrought here a deed of
 shame 680
 I had said that *his* child thou wert not! Yet her faith it but wrought
 her woe,

And of her naught but good be spoken! And thy father, as all
 men know,
 In his manhood was true and steadfast, and in many a distant
 land
 He won for him meed of honour, and his praise o'er all men did
 stand.
 For great heart and little falsehood as a roof did defend his
 breast, 685
 A dam 'gainst the flood of evil, and a home for his love to rest.
 And in manly strength and courage was his honour for aye held
 fast,
 But *thy* truth it is turned to falsehood, and thine honour to earth
 is cast!
 Alas! for the day I heard it, alas! for the mournful tale,
 That the child of fair Herzeleide in knighthood and faith should
 fail.' 690
 She herself was the prey of sorrow, and her hands did she wring
 amain,
 While the teardrops they chased each other down her cheeks like
 a shower of rain.
 And her eyes they gave faithful witness to the grief that her
 bosom filled,
 For of true heart she spake, the maiden, nor e'en then was the
 sorrow stilled.
 Then unto the king she turned her, and she spake 'Is there here a
 knight 695
 Who yearneth for love's rewarding, and for honour and fame
 would fight?
 For I know of four queens, and maidens four hundred, and all are
 fair,
 In Château Merveil is their dwelling; and like to the empty air
 Shall be all knightly ventures to the venture that Burg within,
 Yet he who shall face its peril, from true love shall his guerdon
 win. 700
 And tho' far be that Burg and distant, and weary and rough the
 way,
 Its walls must I seek if haply I reach them ere close of day.'
 And sad was the maid, not joyful, nor courteous she bade
 farewell,
 But weeping she gazed around her, and she cried as the
 teardrops fell,
 'Ah! woe unto thee, Monsalväsch, thou dwelling and goal of grief,
 Since no man hath pity on thee, or bringeth thy woe relief!' 705
 Thus had the sorceress Kondrie, that maiden fierce and proud,
 Wrought evil upon the Walesis, and his fame to the earth had
 bowed.
 Naught they helped him, his bold heart's counsel, his manhood
 and knightly fame,
 And high o'er all other virtues, the virtue of knightly shame. 710

(For falsehood he ne'er had hearkened,) and true shame doth
rewarding bring,
And it crowneth the soul with honour as the circlet doth crown a
king.
And he who true shame doth cherish his work shall for ever stand
—
Then she lifted her voice o'er the maidens, the maiden of fair
Lalande,
And she wept for the words of Kondrie, and the sorrow of
Parzival, 715
For the fairest of men did she deem him; and swiftly the
teardrops fell
From the eyes of many a woman, for the sake of that hero bold,
And they sorrowed at heart, and their weeping must many a
knight behold!

Now sorrow had Kondrie brought them; and e'en as her way she
went
Another must ride towards them on a warlike errand bent; 720
A knight of a haughty bearing, and his harness was fair to see,
From his foot to the goodly helmet, and royal its cost must be,
And richly plumed was the helmet; and, e'en as the man, the
steed
Was clad in such glittering armour as serveth for knightly need.
And he found them, both man and maiden, heavy and sad at
heart, 725
As he rode nigh unto the circle; hear ye how he bare his part—
Tho' his mien it was high and haughty, yet his heart it was full of
woe,
Of the twain shall ye learn the reason; thro' his manhood he pride
must know,
Yet grief to his heart taught mourning—Thus rode he unto the
ring,
Were it well he should come within it? Then squires to his aid did
spring, 730
And the gallant knight they greeted, yet were he and his shield
unknown,
Nor he doffed from his head the helmet, and sorrow was his
alone;
And his hand bare a sword unsheathèd, and he asked for those
heroes twain,
'Where are they whom I fain would speak with, King Arthur and
Knight Gawain?'

Then straight thro' the ring he passed him, and a costly coat he
bare, 735
And 'twas wrought of silk all shining, in Orient woven fair;
And before the host he halted as he sate there within the ring,
And he spake aloud, 'God's favour be on thee, thou gracious king,
And upon these knights and ladies—To all whom mine eyes here
see,

I offer, in greeting, service, yet be *one* from my greeting free; 740
 For ne'er will I do him service, nay, rather I choose his hate,
 If ill-will he beareth to me, mine ill-will with his may mate!'

'And 'twere well that I name him to ye. Alas! alas! woe is me!
 My heart he so sore hath wounded, mine anguish o'er-great shall
 be!
 And here doth he sit, Sir Gawain, whom all men were wont to
 praise, 745
 High standeth his fame, yet dishonour it ruleth, methinks, his
 ways;
 Since avarice to this betrayed him, in greeting my lord he slew,
 The kiss once by Judas given, it taugth him such guile anew.
 Many thousand hearts hath he wounded—'Twas murder base,
 abhorred,
 And he, upon whom he wrought it, erewhile was my dearest lord. 750
 An Sir Gawain would here deny it, true answer our strife shall
 yield,
 Forty days from to-day shall he meet me, and face me on
 battlefield,
 Before Askalon's king and ruler, in the city of Schamfanzon;
 Thus I bid him in honour face me, and for conflict his armour
 don.'

'And this grace shall he not refuse me, but thither his shield shall
 bear, 755
 And yet further shall he bethink him, by the helmet he weareth
 fair,
 And the life that a knight beseemeth, who two treasures in
 pledge doth hold,
 True shame, and a faith unwavering, and their fame shall be new,
 as old.
 But from shame may Gawain ne'er free him, if a knight of the
 Table Round,
 Whose heroes stand here before me, he thinketh he may be
 found. 760
 For its honour and fame are vanished, if false knight sit its board
 beside—
 Methinks ye have heard mine errand, and ye know I came not to
 chide,
 For here would I not blame, but battle, and death shall my
 guerdon be,
 An it be not a life of honour, that Good Fortune shall hold for
 me!'

Then sad was the king and silent, yet answer at last he gave, 765
 'Know, Sir Knight, that Gawain is my nephew, and myself would
 the conflict brave
 Ere his bones should lie dishonoured—If Good Fortune by
 Gawain stand

In strife shalt thou well acknowledge, 'neath the might of his
 strong right hand
 That his body in faith he keepeth, and falsehood afar doth hold. 770
 If another hath done thee evil methinks art thou over-bold,
 His shame dost thou speak too loudly, who never hath done thee
 ill—
 If he winneth, perchance, thine homage, and thou ownest him
 guiltless still,
 Yet hast thou in short space spoken such words of a blameless
 knight
 As have shamèd for aye thine honour, if this folk read the thing
 aright!'

Then upsprang the proud Knight Beaucorps, brother to Gawain
 he, 775
 And he spake in his wrath, 'Wouldst thou fight him? Then myself
 his pledge will be,
 For thou speakest false of Gawain; and know that thy words of
 shame
 Have kindled anew within me fierce wrath's devouring flame.
 An thou speakest not Gawain guiltless of all dishonour, I
 Stand here to fight his battle, and to be his surety. 780
 Think not by thy words of scorning to lower his lofty fame,
 Unstainèd is Gawain's honour, and thy words are but words of
 shame!'

Then he turned him to his brother, and he spake of true heart and
 free,
 'Bethink thee now, my brother, of all thou hast done for me,
 Thou hast helped me unto the winning of fame, for thy toil's
 reward 785
 Bid me here to be hostage for thee, and bid me thine honour
 guard.
 If Good Fortune be here my portion, and I win here my meed of
 fame,
 Then *thine* be the crown of honour, and thy foeman hath naught
 but shame.'
 By his knighthood and love as a brother he besought him right
 earnestly;
 Quoth Gawain, 'Now in sooth, my brother, too wise shall I surely
 be 790
 To hearken to thee, and to grant thee what thou askest of right
 good-will;
 What meaneth this strife, I wot not, and of fighting have had my
 fill,
 Of good-will would I ne'er deny thee what boon thou from me
 shouldst crave,
 Yet shame must I bear for ever if this conflict I fail to brave!'

Yet Beaucorps he prayed him straitly—then out spake the
 stranger knight, 795

'A man whom I ne'er have heard of now lusteth with me to fight!
I spake not of *him*, and no evil, methinks, hath he done to me.
Strong, gallant, and fair to look on, and faithful and rich is he,
And well might he be my hostage, yet against *him* no wrath I
bear—
My lord and my kinsman was he for whose death I this strife
declare, 800
And brothers twain were our fathers, as comrades and kinsmen
true;
And were he a crownèd monarch against whom my sword I drew,
By my birth might I give him battle, and vengeance of right
demand,
Of a royal race, and a princely, was I born in a distant land.
And Askalon is my country, I am Landgrave of Schamfanzon, 805
Kingrimursel do they call me; if Gawain's fame be not outrun
No otherwise may he free him, but conflict with me must dare.
Yet safe-conduct throughout my kingdom, from all save my hand,
I swear,
In peace may he ride, and safety, to the field where I vengeance
claim;
God keep in His grace those I leave here, save one, and ye know
his name!' 810

So passed he, the gallant hero, from the plain of Plimizöl,
And e'en as his name was namèd, all men knew Kingrimursel,
For the fame of this knight so valiant was known thro' the far
lands wide,
And it seemèd them well that to Gawain might ill thro' this strife
betide
When they thought of the strength and the manhood of this
knight who rode swift away. 815
And many must sorely vex them that no honour he won that day;
Yet full often a message cometh, I myself shall such venture know,
Of such wise, that the guest who bears it, of his host must
ungreeted go!

From Kondrie they heard the tidings of Parzival's name and kin,
How a queen, she had been his mother, and his sire was an
Angevin. 820
And they spake—"Twas at fair Kanvoleis, and the story we know
full well,
He served her with deeds of knighthood, and many a joust befell,
And there by his dauntless manhood he won him that lady bright;
And the noble Queen Anflisé, she taught him, that gallant knight,
Such courtesy as befitted a hero of lineage high; 825
And no Breton but shall rejoice him, that his son now draweth
nigh,
For of him, e'en as of his father, may this tale of a truth be told
That honour is his yoke-fellow, as she was of his sire of old.'

Thus joy alike and sorrow came to Arthur's host that day,

And mingled, the life of the heroes, since the twain they must
 have their way. 830
 Upstood they all as one man, and all with one voice they wept,
 And the bravest knights among them within the circle stept,
 And they looked on Gawain and the Waleis where each by the
 other stood,
 And they wove them fair words of comfort to pleasure the heroes
 good.

But Klamidé the king bethought him that the loss which should
 be his share 835
 Was greater than that of another, and too sharp was his pain to
 bear,
 And to Parzival he quoth thus, 'If the Grail thee for lord must own,
 Yet still would I mourn my sorrow, and of true heart my woe make
 known.

For the kingdom of Tribalibot, and Caucasus' golden strand,
 Whatsoe'er shall be writ of riches in Christian or paynim land, 840
 Yea, even the Grail and its glory, they had failèd the hurt to cure
 Which at Pelrapär was my portion, or the grief that I here endure!
 Ah me! Of all men most wretched am I since thy valiant hand
 Of joy and of blessing robbed me!—See the princess of fair
 Lalande,

Know thou that this noble lady she keepeth such faith with thee, 845
 That no service else she craveth, and none other knight will she;
 Yet well might she crown his service who served her for love
 alone!
 And that I am so long her captive, methinks may she well
 bemoan.

If my joy thou to life wouldst quicken, then give me thine aid, I
 pray,
 And teach her herself to honour in such wise that her love repay 850
 In a measure the ill thou didst me, and that which thro' thee I lost,
 When the goal of my joy fled from me and my pathway by thee
 was crossed,
 But for thee, I, methinks, had reached it, and if thou art foeman
 true
 Thou wilt help me with this fair maiden, and my gladness shall
 wax anew!'

'Right gladly will I,' quoth the Waleis, 'if so be she will grant my
 prayer, 855
 For fain would I bring thee comfort, since *mine* is that maiden fair
 For whose sake thou sore didst sorrow, my wife and my queen is
 she,
 Kondwiramur, the fairest of all women on earth that be!
 Then the heathen Queen of Ianfus, King Arthur, and Guinevere,
 Kunnewaaré of Lalande, and Jeschuté of Karnant, who these
 words must hear, 860
 Came near with sweet words of comfort—what would ye they
 should do more?

Kunnewaaré they gave to Klamidé, who yearned for her love so
sore,
And he gave her, as her rewarding, himself, his body fair,
And a queenly crown and golden henceforth on her head she
bare!

Quoth the heathen unto the Waleis, 'Kondrie a man hath named, 865
Whom thou as in truth thy brother, rejoicing, might well have
claimed;
For far and wide he ruleth in the power of a double crown,
And alike by land and water men in fear to his hand bow down.
And Assagog is one kingdom, Zassamank shall the other be,
Two mighty lands and powerful from fear and from weakness
free. 870
And naught shall be like his riches save those the Baruch doth
own,
Or those of far Tribalibot, he is worshipped as God alone!
A marvel his skin to look on, and like unto none his face,
For 'tis black, and 'tis white, as his parents, who sprang of a
diverse race. 875
Thro' one of his lands I journeyed as hither I took my way,
And full fain had he been my wanderings in a far-off land to stay.
Yet but little his will prevailed, tho' I am his near of kin,
The cousin unto his mother, and *he* is a mighty king!
Yet hear thou more of his prowess; his saddle no man may keep
Who rideth a joust against him, and fame doth he richly reap. 880
And no gentler knight or truer e'er lay on a mother's breast,
And falsehood it fleeth from him, and truth in his heart doth rest.
Yea, true and fair in his dealings is Feirefis Angevin,
And women he serveth duly, tho' he pain thro' his service win!'

'Tho' all men to me were strangers, yet hither I came to know 885
What ventures of gallant knighthood a Christian land might show;
And of all Heaven's gifts the highest, I ween, shall thy portion be,
And Christendom winneth honour thro' the praise it doth give to
thee.
And thine is a noble bearing, and fair is thy form and face,
And in thee beauty mates with manhood, and strength doth thy
youth embrace!' 890
(Both rich and wise was the heathen, and of wisdom she token
gave,
In the French tongue her speech was holden.) Then out spake the
hero brave,
And he quoth, 'God reward thee, Lady, who thinkest to comfort
me,
Yet sorrow it fast doth bind me, and the cause would I tell to thee,
For the shame that has here befallen think not I shall lightly bear, 895
And here many sin against me, who give to my plaint no ear,
The while I must list their mocking!—No joy shall my portion be
Or long or short be my wanderings, till the Grail once again I see!
For my soul's unrest constrains me, and it driveth me on my way,

Nor so long as my life endureth shall my feet from their
wanderings stay!' 900

'If a courteous and knightly bearing but bringeth rewarding still
In shame, and in this world's mocking, then methinks I was
counselled ill!

For 'twas Gurnemanz who bade me of questions rash beware,
And from words and ways unfitting a courteous knight forbear.
Here standeth full many a hero, I pray ye give counsel true, 905
By your courtesy and knighthood, that your grace I may win
anew.

Here hath judgment been passed upon me with bitter words and
strong—
Who withholdeth from me his favour, I deem not he doth me
wrong;
If perchance, in the days hereafter, fame and honour my lot shall
be

Then according to those my dealings, I pray ye to deal with me; 910
But now must I haste far from ye—An oath have ye sworn me
here
While I stood in the strength of mine honour; of that oath do I
hold ye clear
Till the day I have won me payment for my fresh joy waxed wan
and pale;
And my heart shall be home of sorrow, nor tears to mine eyes
shall fail,

For the day that at far Monsalväsch my labour I left undone, 915
And myself from all joy I severed, and woe for my guerdon won.
Ah God! they were fair, those maidens! and ne'er was there
wonder tale
That men told, but as naught its marvels to those of the
wondrous Grail!

Yet torment so sore, and sighing, are the lot of Its king, alas!
Small good hath my coming done thee, thou hapless Anfortas!' 920

Nor longer the knight might linger, but part they must alway,
So turned he unto King Arthur, and leave he fain would pray
Of him, his knights, and ladies, with their favour would he depart,
And none, I ween, but sorrowed that he rode hence sad at heart.

Hand in hand King Arthur sware him, if henceforth his land
should bear 925
Such woe as Klamidé brought him, then the shame he with him
would share,
And he spake that full sore it grieved him that crowns and
kingdoms twain,
With the riches that were their portion, Lähelein from the knight
had ta'en.
And service both true and faithful many sware unto him that day,
Ere yet from the court of King Arthur, sorrow-driven, he passed
away. 930

Then the fair maid Kunnewaaré, she took the hero bold,
And hence by the hand she led him, and in this wise the tale is
told,
Sir Gawain he turned and kissed him, and he spake out in manly
wise
To the hero strong and gallant: 'Now thou ridest in warlike guise,
And thy feet shall be swift to battle—God guide thee upon thy
way,
And give me such strength to serve thee as my heart shall be fain
always.'

935

But Parzival cried, 'Woe is me! Who is He, this mighty God?
Had He power, then methinks our portion had ne'er been this
shame abhorred!
Small power shall be His! I served Him from the day I first knew
His grace,
Henceforth I renounce His service; doth He hate me, His hate I'll
face!
And, friend, in thine hour of peril, as thy shield may a *wife's* love
stand,
Dost thou know her for pure and holy, then the thought of her
guide thine hand,
And her love from all evil guard thee,—as I wish, may it be to
thee,
For little I wot of the future, if thy face I again may see!'

940

And their parting it brought them sorrow, for comrades in ill were
they.
With the maiden Kunnewaaré, to her tent must he take his way.
And she bade them bring his harness; with her hands so soft and
white,
She bound the armour on him who had served her as faithful
knight.
And she spake, "Tis my right to do this, since it is thro' thy deed
alone
That Brandigan's gallant monarch now claimeth me as his own.
For otherwise thy valour but bringeth me grief and pain,
Art thou not against sorrow armèd, then thy loss shall outweigh
my gain!'

945

For battle decked was his charger, and his sorrow must wake to
life,
And fair was the knight to look on; and the harness he bare for
strife
Knew never a flaw, but was costly, and as sunshine 'twas white
and fair,
And radiant with gold and jewels the corslet and coat he ware,
But the helmet alone was lacking—ere he bound it upon his
head,
In the self-same hour he kissed her, Kunnewaaré, the gracious
maid.

955

And this of the twain was told me, that the parting was sore to
 see
 'Twixt those two who loved each other in all honour and loyalty. 960
 So hence let him ride, our hero, and what ventures a man may tell
 He shall measure them not with the ventures that to Gamuret's
 son befell.
 Yet hear ye awhile of his doings, where he journeyed and whence
 would ride—
 He who loveth not deeds of knighthood, if counsel he take of
 pride
 For awhile will forget his doings—On thee, Kondwiramur, 965
 On thy fair face and lovely body, thy lover thought evermore.
 What ventures he dared in thy service as knightly the Grail he
 sought!
 Nor tarried he in the seeking but onward his way he fought,
 The child of fair Herzeleide, and knew not that he was heir
 To the glories that he rode seeking, to the Grail and Its palace fair! 970
 Then forth went full many a vassal on a toilsome and weary way,
 To gaze on the wondrous castle where in magic fetters lay
 Four hundred gracious maidens, and four queens, right fair to
 see.
 Château Merveil was the castle; and no hate shall they earn from
 me,
 I grudge them naught they may win there! No woman rewardeth
 me, 975
 For she to whom I do service, from payment hath set me free!
 Then out spake the Greek, Sir Klias, 'Yea, there was I overthrown!
 (And thus in the ears of all men did he frankly the truth make
 known)
 'For the Turkowit he thrust me from my charger unto my shame;
 And four queens who there lie captive the knight unto me did
 name; 980
 And old are the twain, and the others as yet they shall children
 be,
 And the first maid is called Itonjè, and the second shall be
 Kondrie,
 And the third she is named Arnivè, and Sangivè the fourth is
 hight!
 Then fain to behold the wonders of that castle was many a
 knight,
 Yet their journey brought little profit, for sorrow o'ertook them
 there. 985
 Yet I mourn not o'ermuch for their sorrow; for he who would
 labour bear,
 And strife, for the sake of a woman, for guerdon shall gladness
 know,
 Tho' grief shall be mixed with his gladness, and his joy shall be
 crossed with woe.

And I know not the which shall be stronger, or if sorrow shall joy
 outweigh,
 But so runneth the world for ever, where Frau Minne she holdeth
 sway! 990
 Now Gawain he must make him ready, and he girded his armour
 on,
 For the strife that afar should wait him, in the kingdom of
 Askalon.
 And sad was many a Breton, and ladies and maidens fair
 Of a true heart did they bemoan them that Gawain must to
 conflict fare.
 And orphaned and reft of glory henceforth was the Table Round. 995
 Then Sir Gawain he well bethought him, since victor he would be
 found,
 And he bade the merchants bring him good shields both hard
 and light,
 And little he recked their colour so they served his need in fight.
 On laden mules they brought them, and methinks that they sold
 them dear;
 And three did he take as his portion—and the hero he chose him
 here 1000
 Seven chargers well fit for battle, and he chose him as friends so
 good
 Twelve spears of sharp steel of Angram, and the hilts were of
 hollow wood.
 They were reeds grown in heathen marshlands, Oraste Gentesein
 their name.
 Then Gawain he prayed leave, and rode forth, dauntless, to seek
 him fame,
 And with royal hand, for his journey, King Arthur he gave the
 knight 1005
 Red gold, and rich store of silver, and jewels gleaming bright,
 And heavy the weight of his treasure—Then the hero rode swift
 away,
 And I ween 'twas towards sore peril that his pathway must lead
 that day.
 Then she sailed to her distant kingdom, the young Queen Ekuba,
 I speak of the heathen princess; and they scattered to lands afar 1010
 The folk who awhile abode there, on the fair plain of Plimizöl;
 And King Arthur and all his courtiers they gat them to Karidöl.
 Yet first they prayed leave, Klamidé and Kunnewaaré of fair
 Lalande,
 And Duke Orilus and his lady, Jeschuté of Karnant.
 Yet till the third day with Klamidé in the plain did the twain abide, 1015
 And the marriage-feast was holden ere yet from the place they
 ride.
 Yet small was the pomp; in his kingdom, I ween, should it greater
 be.
 And free was his hand and knightly, and he dealt right
 courteously,

For many a knight at his bidding henceforth must his man
 remain,
 And many a wandering minstrel did he gather within his train, 1020
 And he led them into his kingdom, and in honour, rich gifts, and
 land
 He gave unto them, nor churlish would any refuse his hand.

Now Duke Orilus and Jeschuté, to Brandigan the twain would fare
 For the love that unto Klamidé and Kunnewaaré they bare.
 For they thought them that fitting honour to their sister they
 scarce had done 1025
 Till as queen they had seen her crownèd, and set on the royal
 throne.

Now I know well if wise the woman, and true of heart she be,
 Who seeth this story written, of a sooth will she own to me
 That better I speak of women than I spake of *one* erewhile;
 For true was fair Belakané, and free from all thought of guile, 1030
 For dead was her love, yet lifeless he still o'er her heart did reign.
 And a dream filled fair Herzeleide with torment of fear and pain.
 And Queen Guinevere bewailed her full sorely for Ither's death,
 (And little I grudge her mourning, for no truer knight e'er drew
 breath).

And I wot when King Lac's fair daughter rode forth such a
 shameful ride 1035
 Then sorely I mourned the sorrow that, guiltless, she must abide.
 Sore smitten was Kunnewaaré, and torn was her golden hair;
 Now the twain they are well avengèd, and glory for shame they
 bear!

And he who doth tell this story, he weaveth his ventures fair,
 And he knoweth right well to rhyme them, in lines that break and
 pair. 1040
 And fain were I more to tell ye, an she give to my words good
 heed
 Who treadeth with feet far smaller than the feet that shall spur
 my steed!

BOOK VII

OBILOT

ARGUMENT

The poet will now for a while recount the adventures of Gawain; whom many have held to be as valiant a knight as Parzival.

Book VII. tells how Gawain fell in with the army of King Meljanz of Lys, who would fain avenge himself on Duke Lippaut, whose daughter had scorned his love. How Gawain came to the beleaguered city of Beausrosch; how Obie scorned him; and how Obilot besought him to be her knight. How the heroes fought before the walls of Beausrosch, and of the valiant deeds of Gawain and the Red Knight. How Gawain took Meljanz of Lys captive; how Obilot made peace betwixt Obie and Meljanz, and how Gawain rode forth from Beausrosch.

BOOK VII

OBILOT



Aw-hile shall this venture follow the knight, who to fly was fain
From shame, nor with guile had dealings, that hero bold,
Gawain.

Of many a one hath held him for as brave, yea, for braver
knight

Than Parzival, who the hero of this wonder-tale is hight.

Yet he who his friend would ever with his words to the heavens
upraise

5

Is slow to speak well of another, or to yield him his meed of
praise;

But him shall the people follow whose praises with truth are
wrought,

Else whatever he speak, or hath spoken, shall ne'er under roof be
brought.

Who shall shelter the word of wisdom if wise men their aid
withhold?

But a song that is woven of falsehood is best left in the outer
cold,

10

Homeless, upon the snowdrift, that the mouth may wax chill and
sore

That hath spread for truth the story—such rewarding hath God in
store

As all true folk must wish him whose guerdon in toil is told—

Who is swift to such deeds, I wot me, but blame for reward shall
hold,

And if good men and true shall praise him, then folly doth rule
their mind;

15

He will flee such who true shame knoweth, and in knighthood his
rule would find.

And true of heart was Sir Gawain, for courage as sentinel
 Had guarded his fame, nor shadow of cowardice across it fell.
 But his heart in the field of battle was strong as a mighty tower,
 Steadfast in sharpest conflict, yet foremost in danger's hour. 20
 And friend and foe bare witness to the fame of his battle-cry;
 Fain was Kingrimursel to rob him of his glory thus waxen high—
 Now far from the court of King Arthur for many a weary day,
 I know not their tale to tell ye, did the valiant Gawain stray;
 So rode he, the gallant hero, from out of a woodland shade, 25
 And his folk they were close behind him as he wended adown the
 glade,
 And there on a hill before him he was 'ware of a goodly sight
 That would teach him fear, yet fresh courage it brought to the
 gallant knight.

For the hero he saw full clearly how a host on their way would
 fare
 With pomp of warlike pageant, and banners borne high in air. 30
 Then he thought, 'I too far have journeyed this host in the wood
 to wait'—
 And he bade them prepare the charger that was Orilus' gift of
 late,
 And red were its ears, and Gringuljet, I think me, they called its
 name,
 Without a prayer he won it—The steed from Monsalväsche came,
 Lähelein, in a joust he took it, when lifeless its rider fell 35
 By the Lake of Brimbane—Hereafter Trevrezent would the story
 tell.

Thought Gawain, 'He who cowardly flieth ere the foe on his track
 shall be
 Flieth all too soon for his honour—this host would I nearer see
 Whatever may then befall me; they have seen me ere this I trow,
 And, for aught that may chance unto me, wit shall counsel me
 well enow.' 40
 Then down he sprang from his charger as one who his goal hath
 found.
 Countless I ween the army that in troops was toward him bound,
 And he saw many robes fair fashioned, and shields with their
 blazon bright,
 But he knew them not, nor the banners that danced on the
 breezes light.

'Strange shall I be to this army,' quoth Gawain, 'strange are they
 to me, 45
 If they count this to me for evil then a joust shall they surely see,
 And a spear will I break with these heroes ere yet on my way I
 ride!'
 Gringuljet too was ready when his master would strife abide,
 In many an hour of peril he the hero to joust had borne,

As Gawain had well bethought him when the steed he would ride
that morn. 50

There Gawain saw many a helmet, costly and decked full fair,
And new spears white, unsplintered, in sheaves to their goal they
bare;
To the pages hands were given those blazoned with colours clear,
And the badge might ye read on the pennons that floated from
every spear.

And the son of King Lot, Sir Gawain, he saw there a crowded
throng, 55
There were mules with harness laden; heavy wagons with horses
strong,
And they hasted them, fain for shelter; and behind them a
wondrous store
Of goods, borne by travelling merchants as was ever the way of
yore.
And women were there in plenty, and of knightly girdle bright
The twelfth might some wear, the payment and pledge of love
holden light. 60
Not *queens* were they hight, I think me, *Vivandierès* was their
name—
And young and old behind them a rabble onward came,
And they ran till their limbs were weary; and a rope had fit
guerdon been
For many who swelled this army, and dishonoured true folk I
ween!

So they rode, and they ran, that army, and Gawain stood beside
the way, 65
So it chanced they who saw the hero deemed him part of their
host that day.
And never this side of the water, or in lands that beyond it lie,
So gallant a host had journeyed, great their strength and their
courage high.

And close on their track there followed, spurring his steed amain,
A squire of noble bearing, with a led horse beside his rein; 70
And a fair new shield he carried, and ever his spurs he plied,
Nor thought to spare his charger, but swift to the strife would
ride,
And his raiment was fairly fashioned—Then Gawain his pathway
crossed,
And, greeting, he asked him tidings, who was lord of this goodly
host?

Quoth the squire, 'Sir Knight thou mockest, were I lacking in
courtesy, 75
And have chastisement earned, then I pray thee that my penance
shall other be

That shall wound not so sore mine honour—For God's sake lay
 thine hate aside,
 Methinks thou right well shalt know them, these knights that
 before us ride,
 Why askest thou me? Of a surety to each other shall ye be known
 As well, nay, a thousand times better, than I unto thee had
 shown!' 80

Then many an oath he sware him, he knew not the race or name
 Of the folk who went there before him, 'My journey hath won but
 shame,
 Since in truth must I make confession that never before to-day
 Mine eyes have beheld these heroes, tho' mine aid men right oft
 would pray!
 Then the squire he quoth unto Gawain, 'Sir Knight, *mine* the
 wrong hath been, 85
 Thy question I should have answered, here my wisdom hath failed
 I ween!
 Now pass judgment on me, I pray thee, of thy friendly heart and
 true,
 Hereafter I'll gladly tell thee, first must I my folly rue.'
 'Then, lad, by thy words of repentance, sure token of courtesy,
 The name of this gallant army I prithe thee to tell to me!' 90

'Sir Knight, he who rides before us, and no man his way doth bar,
 Is King Poidikonjonz; and beside him Duke Astor he rides to war,
 Of Lanveronz is he ruler—and there rideth beside the twain
 One whose roughness and ways discourteous Love's payment
 have sought in vain.
 He beareth the brand unknowingly, Meljanz that prince is hight, 95
 He woeth nor wife nor maiden, but their love will he take with
 might,
 And, methinks, men for that should slay him—Poidikonjonz' son
 is he,
 And here will he fight with his army, and he fighteth right
 valiantly,
 And dauntless his heart; but such manhood it profiteth naught, I
 trow—
 An ye threaten, perchance, her sucklings, she fighteth, the mother
 sow! 100
 And never a voice shall praise him whose strength lacketh
 knighthood fair,
 And methinks to the truth of my speaking many men will their
 witness bear.'

'Now hearken to greater marvels, and mark thou the words I say,
 One with a mighty army doth follow upon our way
 Whom folly doth drive to battle—The young King Meljanz of Lys,
 Scorned love wrought in him fierce anger, and pride vexed him
 needlessly,' 105

And courteous he spake to Sir Gawain. 'What I saw, I Sir Knight
 will say:
 The sire of the young King Meljanz, as he on his death-bed lay,
 He bade them draw near unto him, the princes from out his land,
 For his gallant life lay forfeit, a pledge in stern Death's cold hand, 110
 And to Death he needs must yield him—In grief o'er his coming
 end
 To the faith of the princes round him his son would the king
 commend,
 And he chose out one from among them, the chief of his vassals
 true,
 And his faith was proved and steadfast, and from false ways afar
 he flew.
 And he gave the lad to his keeping, and he quoth, 'Now, with
 hand and heart, 115
 True service henceforward show him, bid him aye act a kingly part
 To vassal alike and stranger; bid him list to the poor man's prayer,
 And freely give of his substance.' Thus he left him unto his care.'

'And Prince Lippaut did as his monarch, dying, of him did pray,
 Nor failed in aught, but true service he did to his lord alway. 120
 And he took the lad to his castle, and the prince had two children
 fair,
 He loved them well, and I think me, e'en to-day they his love shall
 share.
 One maiden in naught was lacking, save in age, that a knight
 might crave
 Her love for his love's rewarding; Obie was the name they gave
 To this maid; Obilot, her sister; and the elder maid, I ween, 125
 Hath wrought ill, for she, and none other, the cause of this strife
 hath been.'

'It so fell that one day the young king for his service reward
 would pray,
 'Twas an ill thought, she quoth, and she asked him why his wits
 he had cast away?
 And she spake unto him, 'I think me, e'en if thou so old shouldst
 be,
 That 'neath shield thou the hours hadst counted that in worthy
 strife might flee; 130
 With helmet on head hadst mingled in knightly venture bold,
 Till the tale of thy days, if reckoned, full five years more had told;
 If there thou hadst won thee honour, and hither hadst come
 again,
 And bowed thyself to my bidding, if a yea I to speak were fain
 To that which thou now desirest, all too soon should I grant thy
 prayer— 135
 Thou art dear, I will ne'er deny it, as Galoes to Annora fair;
 For death did she seek, and I think me that her seeking was not in
 vain,

When she lost him, her well beloved, and her knight in a joust
was slain.'

'Now sore doth it grieve me, Lady, that love worketh so in thee,
That thine anger with words of scorning thus venteth itself on me.
For true service,' quoth he, 'winneth favour, an love thus be well
approved; 140

O'er-weening thy pride thus to taunt me that madness my speech
had moved!

Small wisdom in this thou showest, 'twere better thou hadst
bethought,
How thy father is but my vassal, and save of my grace hath
naught!'

'For that which he holds can he serve thee,' she spake, 'higher is
my aim, 145

For fief will I hold of no man, none shall me as vassal claim!
And so high do I prize my freedom that no crown it shall be too
high,

That an earthly head e'er weareth!' Then he spake out wrathfully,
'Methinks thou hast been well tutored, that thy pride shall have
waxed so great,

An thy father such counsel gave thee, then penance on wrong
shall wait— 150

'Tis meet that for this I arm me, some wounded shall be, some
slain,

An they call it or war, or Tourney, many spears shall they break in
twain!'

'Thus in anger he left the maiden, and all did his wrath bemoan,
Yea, full sore it grieved the lady—Her father must well atone,
Tho' he sware as his lord reproached him, guiltless of wrong was
he, 155

(Or straight were his ways or crooked, his peers should his judges
be,

All the princes in court assembled)—that he to this strait was
brought

Thro' no sin of his own—And eager the prince from his lord
besought

His favour and love as of old time, but in vain he for peace might
pray,

For anger it ruled the monarch, and his gladness was reft away.' 160

'Tho' hasty the prince they counselled a prisoner to make his lord,
His host had he been, and such treason of a true knight were aye
abhorred.

Farewell, the king ne'er bade him, but he rode forth in wrath and
pride,

And his pages, the sons of princes, aloud in their sorrow cried.

Long time with the king they dwelt there, and goodwill they to
Lippaut bare, 165

For in truth did he aye entreat them, nor failed them in
 knighthood fair.
 'Tis my master alone who is wrathful, tho' he, too, Lippaut's care
 might claim,
 A Frenchman, the lord of Beauvais, Lisavander they call his name.
 And the one alike and the other, ere a knight's shield they
 thought to bear,
 Must renounce the prince's service, and war against Lippaut
 swear; 170
 And some shall be prince's children, and some not so highly born,
 Whom the king to the ranks of knighthood hath lifted, I ween,
 this morn.'

'And one who in strife is skilful and bold doth the vanguard lead,
 Poidikonjonz of Gros, and with him hath he many an armed
 steed.
 And Meljanz is son to his brother; and haughty of heart the twain,
 The young as the old, I think me discourtesy here doth reign!' 175

'Thus these two kings, moved by anger, will forth unto Beausoch
 ride,
 Where with toil he would win the favour that the maid to his love
 denied.
 And there with thrust and onslaught shall be broken many a
 spear;
 Yet so well is Beausoch guarded that, tho' twenty hosts were
 here, 180
 Each one than our army greater, it ne'er to our force would yield!
 The rear-guard knoweth naught of my journey, from the others I
 stole this shield,
 Lest perchance my lord should find here a joust, and with
 onslaught fierce
 And clash of the meeting chargers the spear thro' his shield
 might pierce.'

Then the squire he looked behind him, and his lord on his track
 did ride, 185
 Three steeds and twelve spears unsplintered sped onward his rein
 beside.
 And I ween that his haste betrayed him, he would fain in the
 foremost flight
 The first joust for his own have challenged, so read I the tale
 aright.

Then the squire he spake unto Gawain, 'Thy leave I, Sir Knight,
 would pray,'
 And he turned him again to his master—What should Gawain do
 alway 190
 Save see how this venture ended? Yet awhile he doubted sore,
 And he thought, 'If I look on conflict, and fight not as aye of yore,
 Then methinks shall my fame be tarnished; and yet if I here delay,
 E'en tho' it may be for battle, then in sooth is it reft away,

My meed of worldly honour—To fight not, methinks, were best, 195
 First must I fulfil my challenge.' But afresh doubt vexed his breast,
 For he deemed that his warlike errand but little might brook
 delay,
 Yet how could he take his journey thro' this army that barred his
 way?
 And he quoth, 'Now God give me counsel, and strengthen my
 manhood's might,'
 And on to the town of Beaurorsch rode Gawain as gallant knight. 200

So before him lay Burg and city; fairer dwelling no man might
 know;
 Already it shone before him with its turrets in goodly row,
 The crown of all other castles—Before it the army lay
 On the plain 'neath the walls of the city; thro' the lines must he
 take his way,
 And right well he marked, Sir Gawain, many tents in a goodly 205
 ring,
 And strange banners waved beside them, which strange folk to
 the fight would bring;
 And doubt in his heart found dwelling, by eagerness cleft in twain
 —

Then straight thro' the host encamped there rode the gallant
 knight Gawain.

One tent-rope it touched the other, tho' the camp it was long and
 wide,
 And he saw how they lay, and he noted the task which each one 210
 there plied.
 Quoth they, '*Soit bien venu*' then '*Gramercy*' the knight for an
 answer gave—
 And troops from Semblidag lay there, hired soldiers both strong
 and brave;
 And closely they camped beside them, the archers from Kahetei
 —

And strangers are oft unfriendly; As King Lot's son he passed
 them by
 No man of them all bade him tarry, so he rode o'er the grassy
 plain, 215
 And toward the beleaguered city Sir Gawain he turned his rein.

Then he thought, 'Must I e'en as a smuggler, in hiding-place
 bestow
 My goods, then the town is safer, methinks, than the plain below,
 Nor on gain shall my thoughts be turnèd, for this be my care
 alone,
 An Fate will so far befriend me, to guard that which is mine own!' 220
 To the city gate he rode thus, and he found that which worked
 him woe,
 None too costly the Burgers deemed it, but their portals against
 the foe

Had they walled up; well armed the watch-towers, and he saw on
 each rampart high
 Archers, with cross-bow bended that their bolts 'gainst the foe
 might fly.
 For defence and defiance ready on the battlements they stood. 225
 Up the hillside toward the castle he turned him, that hero good.

Tho' little he knew the pathway to the Burg came the gallant
 knight,
 And straightway his eyes beheld them, full many a lady bright,
 For the prince's wife had come there, from the hall abroad to
 gaze,
 And daughters twain stood by her, bright as the sunlight's rays. 230

Then they spake in such wise as Gawain right well their words
 might hear—
 'Now, who is this,' quoth the mother, 'who doth to our aid draw
 near?
 Where goes he with pack-horse laden?' Spake the elder daughter
 fair,
 'Nay, mother, 'tis but a merchant!' 'Yet he many a shield doth
 bear.'
 'Such shall oft be the wont of merchants!' Then the younger sister
 spake, 235
 'Thou sayest the thing that is not, and shame to thyself shouldst
 take,
 For surely he is no merchant! My knight shall he be straightway,
 If his service here craveth guerdon, such debt I were fain to pay!'

Now the squires they saw how a linden and olive-trees stood fair
 Beneath the walls, and they thought them how a welcome shade
 were there. 240
 What would ye more? Then King Lot's son he straight to the
 ground did spring
 Where the shade was best, and his servants, they swift to their
 lord would bring
 A cushion fair and a mattress, and the proud knight he sat
 thereon;
 From on high gazed a crowd of ladies—Then, as he his rest had
 won,
 They lift adown from the pack-steeds the chests, and the harness
 bright, 245
 And beneath the trees they laid them who rode here with the
 gallant knight.

Spake the elder duchess, 'Daughter, what merchant think thou
 would fare
 In such royal guise? Thou wrongest his rank who now sitteth
 there!'
 Then out quoth the younger sister, 'Discourteous she aye shall be,
 With pride and scorn did she treat him, our king, Meljanz of Lys, 250

When her love he besought—unseemly such words and ways I
 trow!
 Then spake Obie, for anger moved her, 'I see naught in that man
 below!
 There sitteth, methinks, a merchant, and he driveth a goodly
 trade;
 He would that they well were guarded, the chests that his steeds
 do lade,
 And like to a brooding dragon, O foolish sister mine, 255
 O'er his treasure-chest he watcheth, this gallant *knight* of thine!'

And each word that they spake, the maidens, fell clear on
 Gawain's ear—
 Leave we their speech, of the city and its peril ye now must hear.

A water that ships had sailed on 'neath a bridge of stone flowed
 past,
 And the land here was clear of foemen, nor its flood held their
 armies fast. 260
 A marshal came swiftly riding 'fore the bridge on the plain so
 wide,
 And a goodly camp had he marked out ere his lord to the field
 should ride.
 And he came e'en as they were ready, and with him came many
 more—
 I will tell ye their names who, for truth's sake, and the love they to
 Lippaut bore,
 Here rode to his aid—His brother, men called him Duke
 Marangliess, 265
 And two swift knights came with him from the land of Brevigariez;
 King Schirniel, the gallant monarch who ware crown in Lirivoin,
 And with him there rode his brother, the monarch of Avendroin.

Now when the Burgers saw well that help drew anigh their wall
 They deemed that an evil counsel which aforetime seemed good
 to all— 270
 Then out spake their lord, Duke Lippaut, 'Alas! for the woeful
 hour
 That Beaurosch must seal its portals against the foeman's power!
 Yet if I against my master in open field had fought,
 Then mine honour, methinks, were smitten, and my courtesy
 brought to naught.
 His grace would beseem me better, and gladden me more, I
 ween, 275
 Than the hatred which now he showeth, of such hate have I
 guiltless been.

A joust that his hand had smitten but little would grace *my* shield.
 Or if *his* of the sword bare token that I 'gainst my king would
 wield.
 Methinketh, tho' wise the woman, she were shamed an she
 praised such deed—

Yea, say that my king were captive in my tower, I my lord had
 freed, 280
 And myself had become his prisoner—what had pleased him best
 to do
 Of evil, I'd gladly bear it, as befitted a vassal true,
 And I thank my God of a true heart that I here, a free man, stand,
 Tho' spurred by love and anger my king doth invade my land!
 Then he quoth again to the Burgers, 'Now may wisdom with ye
 be found 285
 To counsel me in the perils that compass my path around.'

Then many a wise man answered, 'Thou hast wrought in no wise
 amiss,
 Might innocence win its guerdon, then thou never hadst come to
 this.'
 Then all with one voice they counselled that the gates be opened
 wide, 290
 And that he should bid their bravest forthwith unto jousting ride.
 And they quoth, 'So to fight were better than thus our ramparts
 high
 To defend 'gainst our king, and the armies twofold that around us
 lie,
 For the most part they are but children who ride with their king
 to-day,
 And 'twere easy to take a hostage, so wrath oft is turned away.
 And the king he shall be so minded, that if here knightly deeds be
 done, 295
 He shall free us perchance from our peril, and the ending of
 wrath be won.
 Far better in field to seek them than forth from our walls be
 brought
 As their captives—Nay, e'en to their tent-ropes, methinks, we
 with ease had fought
 Were it not for the King Poidikonjonz, 'neath his banner the
 bravest fight; 300
 And there is our greatest peril, the captive Breton knights,
 Duke Astor it is who leads them, and foremost in strife are they;
 And the king's son is there, Meljakanz; higher his fame to-day
 Had Gurnemanz been his teacher! Yet never he feareth fight;
 But help have we found against them,'—Now their rede have ye
 heard aright.

Then the prince he did as they counselled, the portals he open
 brake, 305
 And the Burgers who ne'er lacked courage their way to the field
 would take.
 Here one jouted, and there another; and the armies they made
 their way
 With high courage towards the city, right good was their vesper-
 play.

On both sides the troops were countless; manifold was their
 battle-cry,
 And Scotch and Welsh might ye hearken, for in sooth here I tell
 no lie. 310
 And stern were their deeds of knighthood as fitting so stern a
 fight,
 And bravely those heroes battled, till weary each gallant knight.
 And they were little more than children who with the king's army
 came,
 And they took them as pledge in a corn-field, who thought there
 to win them fame,
 And he who had ne'er won token of love from a lady fair, 315
 Might never more costly raiment on his youthful body bear;
 Of Meljanz the venture telleth that in harness bright he rode,
 On high flamed his youthful courage—A charger the king
 bestrode
 That Meljakanz won when in jousting his foe from his steed he
 swung,
 'Twas Kay, and so high he smote him that aloft from a bough he
 hung; 320
 There Meljakanz won the charger that Meljanz would ride that
 day,
 And foremost of all the heroes he strove in the knightly fray.
 And Obie beheld his jousting, and watched him with eager eye,
 As she stood there among her maidens, and gazed from the
 palace high.

So quoth she unto her sister, 'See, sister mine, thy knight 325
 And *mine*, unlike do they bear them, for thine hath no will to
 fight,
 He thinketh for sure this city and castle we needs must lose.
 An here we would seek defenders, other champion we needs
 must choose!
 And the younger must bear her mocking—then she spake, 'Yet I
 trust my knight,
 He hath time yet to show his courage, and thy mockery put to
 flight. 330
 For here shall he do me service, and his gladness shall be my
 care,
 An thou holdest him for a merchant, with me shall he trade full
 fair!'

As with words they strove, the maidens, he hearkened, the Knight
 Gawain,
 Yet he made as tho' he heard not as he sat on the grassy plain.
 And if knightly soul should hearken, nor feel in the hearing
 shame, 335
 'Twould but be that death had freed him from burden of praise or
 blame.

Now still lay the mighty army that Poidikonjonz had led,

Save one gallant youth with his vassals, who swift to the combat
sped,
And Lanveronz was his dukedom—Here came Poidikonjonz the
king,
And the old man wise one and other again to the camp would
bring, 340
For the vesper-play was ended—In sooth had they fought right
well,
And for love of many a maiden full many a deed befell.

Then out spake the King Poidikonjonz to Lanveronz' gallant
knight,
"Twere fitting to wait for thy leader, an thou lusted for fame to
fight.
Dost think thou hast borne thee bravely? See the brave Knight
Lahduman, 345
And here is my son Meljakanz,—Came these two in the van,
And I myself, then, I think me, that a fair fight thou sure shouldst
see
Wert thou learnèd enow in combat to know what a fight should
be!
I come not again from this city till of strife we have had our fill,
Or man and woman yield them as prisoners to my will!" 350

Quoth Duke Astor, 'The king, thy nephew, O sire fought before
the gate
With his army of Lys—Should thine army here slumber o'er-long
and late
The while these others battled? Say when didst thou teach such
lore?
Must I slumber while others battle then I'll slumber as ne'er of
yore!
Yet believe me, had I not been there then the Burgers had won
them fame, 355
And a fair prize their hand had taken—I have guarded thee here
from shame;
In God's Name be no longer wrathful! Such valour thy folk have
shown,
They won more than they lost,—I think me fair Obie the same will
own!

Yet Poidikonjonz was wrathful with his nephew, Meljanz the king,
Tho' of many a joust the token the young knight from the field
must bring, 360
And youthful fame ne'er mourneth such pledge of strife, I ween—
Now hear ye again of the maiden who the cause of this strife had
been.

Hate enow did she bear to Gawain who was guiltless of ill intent,
And shame would she bring upon him—A servant the maiden
sent
Below, to Gawain as he sat there, 'Now ask thou, without delay, 365

If his steeds be for sale—In his coffers, perchance, he doth bear
 alway
 Goodly raiment that we may purchase; say thou if it so shall be,
 Then we ladies above in the castle will buy of him readily.'

So the serving man went, and his greeting was wrath, for Sir
 Gawain's eye
 Taught fear to his heart, and in terror the lad from his face would
 fly, 370
 And he asked not, nor gave the message his lady had bid him
 bear.
 Nor Gawain held his peace, 'Thou rascal, from hence shalt thou
 swiftly fare,
 For many a blow will I give thee if again thou dost dare draw
 near!'

Then the lad hied him back to his lady; what she did shall ye
 straightway hear:

For she bade one speak to the Burg-grave, Scherules they called
 his name, 375
 Saying, 'This shall he do at my bidding for the sake of his manly
 fame;
 'Neath the olive-trees by the Burg-moat stand seven steeds, I
 trow,
 In them shall he find his guerdon, and riches beside enow.
 A merchant will here deal falsely—I pray he prevent such deed.
 I trust in his hand; none shall blame him, if the goods he doth
 hold for meed.' 380

The squire went below as she bade him, and his lady's plaint he
 bare;
 'From knavery must we guard us,' quoth Scherules, 'I forth will
 fare.'
 So he rode where Gawain was seated whose courage might never
 fail,
 And he found there all weakness lacking, high heart that for
 naught would quail,
 And a face so fair to look on—Scherules he saw him well, 385
 And his arms and hands so skilful that a knightly tale might tell.
 And he spake, 'Thou art here a stranger, Sir Knight, sure good wit
 we need
 Since here thou hast found no lodging; as sin shalt thou count
 such deed.

I will now myself be marshal, folk and goods, all I call mine own
 That freely shall do thee service; nor host to his guest hath shown 390
 Such favour as I would show thee.' 'Thy favour,' quoth Knight
 Gawain,
 'As yet shall be undeservèd, yet to follow thee am I fain.'

Then Scherules, of honour worthy, he spake of a true heart free,
 'Since the office hath fallen to me, thy guardian 'gainst loss I'll be,

If the outer host would rob thee, thou shalt call to thine aid mine
 hand,' 395
 Then, smiling, he spake to the servants whom he saw round their
 master stand,
 'Now load ye again your harness that never a piece shall fail,
 For hence must we ride, and shelter shall ye find in the lower
 vale.'

With the Burg-grave he rode, Sir Gawain, nor Obie her wrong
 would own,
 But she sent a minstrel maiden whom her father right well had
 known, 400
 And she bade her bear the tidings, a false coiner had passed that
 way,
 'And goodly and rich is his lading; by his knighthood my father
 pray,
 Since many a hireling serves him for steed, and garb, and gold,
 That he here let them take their payment, 'twere enow, were they
 sevenfold.'

To the prince did she tell, the minstrel, all that his daughter said— 405
 Now to win so rich a booty that his hirelings may be well paid,
 The need right well he knoweth who hath ridden forth to war,
 And Lippaut, the prince so faithful, by his soldiers was pressed full
 sore—
 Then he thought, 'I must win this treasure or by love or by force
 to-day.'

And swiftly he rode; but Scherules, he met him upon his way, 410
 'Now whither dost ride so swiftly?' 'A knave would I here pursue,
 A false coiner is he, I think me, if the tale I have heard be true!
 Now guiltless in sooth was Gawain, 'twas but thro' his steeds and
 gold
 That suspicion on him had lighted—Then loud laughed the Burg-
 grave bold,
 And he quoth, 'Nay, sire, they misled thee, they lied who thus told
 the tale 415
 Were it wife, or man, or maiden—Nor knighthood my guest shall
 fail,
 Far otherwise shalt thou judge him, no die he methinks shall hold;
 Ne'er bare he the purse of the changer, if the tale shall aright be
 told.
 Look thou on his mien, and hearken his word, in my house is he,
 An knighthood aright thou readest then thou knighthood in him
 shalt see, 420
 And ne'er was he bold in falsehood—Whoever hath done him
 wrong,
 An my child it were, or my father; whose wrath waxeth fierce and
 strong,
 An my kinsman it be, or my brother, then the rudder of strife shall
 turn

'Gainst myself, for I will defend him from the wrong that he ne'er
 did earn,
 If I with thy will may do so. The knight's garb would I gladly
 change 425
 For the hermit's robe of sackcloth, and afar thro' the wide world
 range
 In a land where none may know me, than here thou shouldst reap
 thee shame!
 Methinks it would better fit thee to welcome such guests as
 came,
 Who have heard the tale of thy sorrow, than to rob them of
 goods and gold;
 'Twould better beseem my master as treason such deed to hold!' 430
 The prince spake, 'I fain would see him.' 'Methinks 'twill not harm
 my guest.'
 So he rode where he looked on Gawain, and two eyes and a heart
 confessed
 (The eyes and the heart of Lippaut) that the stranger was fair to
 see,
 And knighthood and manly virtue the mate to his mien should
 be.
 Whosoe'er, by true love constrainèd, hath felt of true love the
 pain, 435
 Then his heart, as right well ye know it, doth forfeit to Love
 remain,
 And so doth she change and rule it that no mouth can the
 wonder speak,
 Be it heart of man or of maiden on which she her will would
 wreak,
 And the wise doth she bend to folly. Now the twain they were
 lovers true,
 King Meljanz and maiden Obie—His anger ye needs must rue, 440
 Since in wrath he had ridden from her; of sorrow such load she
 bare
 That her spirit was moved to anger unfitting a maiden fair.
 And, guiltless, must Gawain suffer, and others must feel her pain;
 She had womanly ways forsaken when she gave to her wrath the
 rein.
 Whene'er she beheld the hero as a thorn was he to her sight, 445
 For her heart was fain that Meljanz be held for the bravest knight,
 And she thought, 'Doth he bring me sorrow, then sorrow I'll
 gladly bear,
 O'er all the world do I love him, my hero, so young and fair,
 And my heart for his love aye yearneth.' Oft anger from love doth
 grow,
 Nor blame ye o'er-much the maiden if her love she by wrath
 would show. 450

Now list how he spake, her father, as he looked on the Knight
 Gawain
 And bade him a kindly welcome—In this wise he spake again,
 'Sir Knight, it may be that thy coming the dawn of our bliss hath
 been;
 Thro' many a land have I journeyed, but no face have I ever seen
 So fair to mine eyes as thy face. In this our day of grief 455
 Thy coming shall bring us comfort, thro' thee may we find relief.'
 Then he prayed him take part in the conflict—'If harness shall lack
 to thee
 All thou needest will I prepare thee, so here thou wilt fight for
 me.'

Then out quoth the gallant Gawain, 'That would I of right
 goodwill,
 I am strong, and well armed for battle, yet from strife must I hold
 me still, 460
 Nor fight till the hour appointed; or else would I gladly fare
 As thou farest, the fate of battle with thee were I fain to share.
 But now must I needs forego it, for 'tis fitting I first should fight
 With the foeman to whom I pledged me on mine honour as
 faithful knight.
 By the favour I claim from all true knights my fame must I there
 defend 465
 Or die on the field—To this conflict, Sir Knight, I my way would
 wend!'

Then a grief were his words to Lippaut, and he quoth, 'By thy
 knightly fame,
 And thy courtesy, do thou hear me, for free shall I be from blame.
 Two daughters have I, and I love them, and dear to my heart are
 they,
 In the joy God in them hath given would I live to my dying day. 470
 Yea, well is me for my children, tho' sorrow thro' them I win,
 And the one of my two fair daughters methinks hath her share
 therein,
 And unlike, tho' alike, we share it—for thro' Love doth my lord
 and king
 Work sorrow to her, and thro' Hatred his forces 'gainst me would
 bring.
 And thus do I read the riddle, my lord worketh ill to me, 475
 Since a *son* I lack, but I wot well that my *daughters* shall dearer be.
 What, then, if for them I suffer? Then my woe do I count for weal
 —

Who hath never an heir save his daughter, tho' the sword ne'er
 her grip may feel,
 Yet other defence may she bring him, she may win him a son and
 heir;
 And such is my hope!—Quoth Gawain, 'God grant thee this
 favour fair!' 480

Then Lippaut he sorely pressed him, 'In God's name give thy
 pleading o'er,'
 Spake the son of King Lot, 'I pray thee, of thy courtesy ask no
 more,
 Nor let me betray mine honour—Yet this will I do, Sir Knight,
 I will think the thing o'er, and my answer shalt thou have ere it
 draw to night.'

Then he thanked him, the prince, and he rode forth; in the
 courtyard he found alway 485
 His child with the Burg-grave's daughter; with rings did the
 maidens play.
 'Now, daughter mine, whence camest thou?' thus to Obilot he
 spake,
 'Father, I came from the castle, to the strange knight my way I'd
 take,
 I would pray him as knight to serve me, methinks he will hear my
 prayer,
 And do for my sake such service as winneth rewarding fair!' 490
 'Nay, I fear me, my little daughter, for he saith me nor yea, nor
 nay,
 But plead thou as I have pleaded.' To the guest did she run
 straightway.

So came she to Gawain's chamber, he greeted her courteously,
 At her fairy feet he sat him, and thanked her that, maidenly,
 She spake for him to her sister; and he quoth, 'Now if ever a
 knight 495
 Had fought for so small a maiden, I were ready for thee to fight!'

Then the little maiden tender spake out so frank and free,
 'Sir Knight, as God is witness, the first man thou aye shalt be
 With whom I have held free converse; if in this my maiden shame
 And my courtesy I wrong not, then joy as reward I claim! 500
 For ever my mistress taught me how speech is the crown of
 thought,
 And I pray thee, Sir Knight, to help us—Thro' sorrow thine aid I
 sought;
 An thou wilt, all our need I'll tell thee, nor do thou be wroth with
 me,
 For I do as befits a maiden, and my prayer to *myself* shall be.
 For altho' our name be diverse, yet methinks that *thou* art *I*, 505
 Take thou my name, and maiden and knight art thou verily.
 This grace from us both do I pray here, and if I from hence must
 go
 Ashamed, and my prayer unanswered, then, Sir Knight, I would
 have thee know
 That thy knightly fame must answer to thy knightly courtesy,
 Since my maidenhood sought for shelter in vain in thy chivalry. 510
 But if thou indeed wilt hearken, and do me this thing I ask,

With a true heart true love I'll give thee as rewarding for knightly task.'

'And art thou true man and courteous, then surely thou'lt do my will,
For see, wilt thou serve a maiden, I am worthy thy service still. 515
'Tis true that my father kinsman and cousin for help hath prayed,
But for that shalt thou not refuse us, for my love shalt thou give thine aid!'

Then he quoth, 'Thy lips, sweet maiden, would bid me my word forswear,
Wouldst have me my pledge to forfeit? On my knightly honour fair
I pledged my word—An I fail me, 'twere better methinks to die. 590
Yet, e'en an I did thee service for thy love, still long years must fly
Ere yet thou shalt be a woman, and my service might well approve.'

Then he thought how Parzival trusted less in God than in woman's love,
And the words he spake bare the message of the maid unto Gawain's heart;
And he vowed to the little lady to bear arms on her father's part,
And, laughing, he spake, 'My sword-blade thy little hand must 525
guide,
If my foeman a fair joust seeketh, then thou must against him ride;
And for me shalt thou strive in conflict, for tho' men think they see *me* fight
Yet *thou* in my stead shalt have battled,—so keep I my pledge aright.'

Then she spake, 'That will I, right gladly, thy shelter and shield I'll be,
Thine heart, and thine heart's best comfort, since from grief thou hast set me free. 530
Thy friend will I be and comrade, and whatever chance betide,
A roof 'gainst misfortune's stormcloud, safe dwelling wherein to hide.
True peace this my love shall give thee, Good Fortune to thee I'll bring;
That-thy strength may by naught be vanquished, I'll guard thee 'gainst host and king.
Host am I alike and hostess—To combat I'll ride with thee, 535
An thou keepest my words in remembrance strength and bliss shall thy portion be.'

Then out quoth the gallant Gawain, 'Yea, maiden, the twain I'll share,
Since my life I vow to thy service, thy love and thy comfort fair.'
And the hand of the little maiden the while in his strong clasp lay

Then she quoth, 'To fulfil mine office I must hence to the Burg
 away,
 Wouldst thou fare forth without my aiding, and without my token
 fight?
 Nay, for that all too dear I hold thee—My part will I play aright,
 And my token I will prepare thee, and if thou my pledge shalt
 bear
 Then I wot well that o'er all others thy glory shall blossom fair.'

Then they went forth, the little maidens, and Gawain, the stranger
 guest,
 They thanked with sweet words and kindly, and thus he his
 speech address,
 'When older ye twain shall be waxen, were they spears, every
 woodland bough,
 And the forest bare naught but spear-shafts, then too poor were
 the crop, I trow!
 If your childhood shall thus be powerful, what then of your
 maidenhood?
 For your favour brave knights shall shatter both strong shield and
 spear-shaft good!'

Then forth sped the little maidens, and their hearts they were
 glad and gay;
 And she spake, the Burg-grave's daughter, 'Lady, I prithee say
 What wilt give to thy knight for a token, since naught but our
 dolls have we?
 An mine were but somewhat fairer I would give it right willingly
 Nor be wroth with thee for the taking, we should strive not o'er
 that I ween!'

Then Lippaut the prince o'ertook them half-way on the hillside
 green,
 And he saw Obilot and Clauditté, as up towards the Burg they
 sped,
 And he bade them stand still, and await him, and his daughter
 towards him fled.

'Father, I never needed thy help as I do to-day,
 Now give me I pray thy counsel, for the knight he hath said me
 yea.'

'Whate'er be thy will, little daughter, an I may, I will give it thee,
 For happy the day whose dawning brought thee, a fair gift to me,
 Then Good Fortune smiled sweetly on me.' 'I will tell thee, my
 father dear,
 But the thing that so sore doth vex me thou must it in secret hear,
 So hearken, and do as I pray thee!' Then he bade them to lift the
 maid

On his charger, 'But what of my playmate?' Many knights round
 their leader stayed,
 And they strove which of them should take her, for each one well
 pleased would be,

Then one as his prize he claimed her, for Clauditté was fair to see.
 Then riding, he spake, her father, 'Now Obilot tell to me
 How dost thou need my counsel? What is it that vexeth thee?' 570
 'I have promised my knight a token, and my wits were I ween
 astray,
 If nothing I find to give him then worthless my life to-day;
 Since he vowed unto me his service then in sooth must I blush for
 shame,
 If I give him naught—Never hero truer love from a maid might
 claim!'

Then he quoth, 'Trust to me, little daughter, and thy token I will
 prepare, 575
 If service from him thou winnest thou shalt give him his payment
 fair,
 If thy mother she too be willing—God grant he may bring us aid,
 That gallant knight and worthy; what trust I on him have laid!
 Tho' never a word to the hero had I spoken before to-day,
 Yet last night in a dream I saw him, as asleep on my couch I lay.' 580

Then Lippaut he sought the Duchess, and with him he led the
 maid,
 And he quoth, 'Now lady, help us, for we twain sorely need thine
 aid;
 And my heart would shout for gladness that God gave me this
 maiden fair,
 And parted me from the sorrow that I all guiltless bare.'
 Then out spake the Duchess, 'Tell me, what wilt thou of my
 grace?' 585
 'Lady, since thou wilt hearken, this maid craves a better dress,
 And she deems she of right may ask it, since a knight will her
 token bear,
 And he asketh her love, and he offers to do for her service fair.'
 Then out spake the maiden's mother, 'Ah, good and gallant
 knight!
 Of the stranger I ween thou speakest, as May-tide his glance of
 light.' 590

Then samite of Ethnisé the wise mistress she bade them bear
 And rich stuffs as yet unsevered, and silk of Tabronit fair
 From far Tribalibot's kingdom—Red the gold on Caucasus' strand,
 And fair is I ween the raiment which the heathen, with cunning
 hand,
 Wrought from silk, with the gold inwoven—And Lippaut, the
 prince, he bade 595
 That therefrom for his little daughter fitting garments should
 straight be made.
 Nor the best would he grudge to the maiden, and they shaped
 her a garment fair,
 Of silk that with gold was heavy; but one white arm they left yet
 bare,

And a sleeve that the arm had covered from the vesture they cut
 away,
 This should Gawain win for his token and badge in the coming
 fray. 600
 So this was the gift that she gave him, a rich silk of Orient bright,
 That was brought from the land of the paynim, and had covered
 her arm so white.
 But they sewed it not to the garment, nor wrought it at all with
 thread,
 And Clauditté to Gawain bare it, when home from the Burg she
 sped.

And free from all care was the hero; and three were his shields so
 bright, 605
 And on one straightway he bound it, and glad was the gallant
 knight;
 And fairest thanks he gave her, and oft would he praise the road
 On which the maid had trodden when she sought him in his
 abode,
 And so gently bade him welcome, and with sweet words and
 maiden wile
 Had made him rich in gladness, and made joy on his path to
 smile. 610

Now the daylight had waned, and the night fell,—many valiant
 knights and good,
 A mighty force, lay on each side,—the besiegers were e'en a
 flood.
 Were they less, for the folk of the city their army enow should be.
 And now by the light of the moonbeams they would fain to their
 outworks see;
 Nor terror nor cowardice moved them, they were ready ere break
 of day, 615
 Twelve breast-works wide, and a deep moat before every earth-
 work lay.
 Thus they shielded them well from onslaught, and to every earth-
 work wide
 Were barbicans three, that the army might forth to the conflict
 ride.

And at four of the gates the Marshal, Kardefabet of Jamore,
 With his army bravely battled, as men well at the dawning saw. 620
 And the rich Duke fought full knightly; he was brother to
 Lippaut's wife,
 And stronger in heart than others who yet bear them well in
 strife,
 And for men of war are reckoned—In conflict he grief would bear
 —
 With nightfall his host drew nearer, from far land would he hither
 fare,
 For but seldom from stress of battle or conflict he turned aside, 625

And four of their gates he guarded right well in his warlike pride.
 The force from beyond the river passed o'er it ere morning light,
 And entered the walls of Beaurorsch, as Lippaut should deem it
 right.
 But they of Jamore had ridden o'er the bridge before the gate,
 And every door was guarded, and warlike their foes they wait, 630
 Ere ever the day had dawnèd—Scherules one door would ward,
 Which he and the brave Knight Gawain would let not from out
 their guard.
 And there had ye heard lamentation from the lips of many a
 knight,
 And the best they were who mourned thus, they had failed here
 to see the fight,
 For the vesper-play was ended ere yet they a joust might share. 635
 Yet needless their lamentation, for countless they proffered there
 To all who had lust for battle, and to joust in the field would ride.
 In the streets saw ye many a hoof-track, and there drew in on
 every side
 Full many a tossing banner by the light of the moonbeam's ray.
 And many a costly helmet would they wear in the joust that day, 640
 And spears with bright colours blazoned—A Regensburg silk, I
 ween,
 Had been held of little value 'fore Beaurorsch on the meadow
 green.
 For many a coat emblazoned had ye looked upon that day,
 Whose goal had methinks been higher in the cost that its lord
 would pay.
 And the night, as of old her custom, had yielded her place to day,
 Nor by song of the lark might they know it, for they hearkened 645
 far other lay,
 Whose voice was the voice of warfare with the crash of the
 splintered spear,
 As a cloud that is cleft and riven when the thunderbolt falleth
 near.
 And the King of Lys' young army sought the host of Lirivoin,
 And there, with his warriors, battled the monarch of Avendroin; 650
 And many a joust rang loudly, e'en as when one is wont to throw
 Chestnuts within the furnace that burst in the fiery glow.
 Ah, me! how they strove together that morn on the grassy plain,
 How the knights spurred their steeds to jousting, and the Burgers
 they fought amain.
 Now Gawain, and his host the Burg-grave, since it health to their
 souls might bring, 655
 And yield them a meed of blessing, bade a priest a Mass to sing;
 And he sang unto God and the heroes—And the prize of their
 fame waxed fair,
 For this was their pious bidding—Then they would to their post
 repair,

But their rampart ere this was guarded by many a gallant knight,
The followers they of Scherules, and well would those heroes
fight. 660

And what should I tell ye further? Poidikonjonz was proud I ween,
And he came with such host, if in Schwarzwald each bough had a
spearshaft been
I had looked on no greater forest than here on this field ye saw.
And six banners they bare, and early to battle would nearer draw,
With ringing blasts of trumpet e'en as thunder that wakeneth
fear, 665
And drums strove amain with the trumpets, and smote on the
listening ear.
If a grass blade were left untrampled by the conflict I knew it not
—
E'en now shall the Erfurt vineyards show such tokens of strife, I
wot!

Then hither he came, Duke Astor, and he fought with the men of
Jamore,
And for sharp joust the spears they whetted, and many a knight
they bore 670
From his saddle down on the meadow, and for combat they aye
were fain;
And clear rang the stranger war-cries—And masterless o'er the
plain
Sped many a gallant charger, and afoot went the fallen knight,
For I ween he had learnt the lesson how one oft is o'erthrown in
fight.

Then he saw, the gallant Gawain, how out on the plain afar 675
The host of both friend and foeman were mingled in deadly war;
And he spurred him swift towards them; nor 'twas light in his
steps to tread,
Tho' little they spared their chargers, those knights who behind
him sped,
Scherules and his vassals—Gawain gave them pain, I trow,
Ah, me! for the spears he shivered and the knights that he laid
alow. 680

Had God given him not such valour, this knight of the Table
Round,
Then in sooth had one made petition for the fame that he there
had found.
'Twas all as one, both armies, 'gainst the twain did he set his
hand,
That of Gros as of Lys—Many chargers did he win from each
knightly band,
And straightway the hero brought them where his host's banner
waved on high, 685
And he asked who was there who should need them? And many
swift reply;

Then he gave them e'en as they answered, and rich were they all,
I trow,
Thro' this brother-in-arms whose friendship they here for a space
should know.

Then there came a knight fast spurring, nor spears did he think to
spare
The Lord of Beauvais and Gawain they rode 'gainst each other
there, 690
And the young knight, Lisavander, midst the flowers of the field
he lay,
From his saddle behind his charger did Gawain thrust the prince
that day.
For the sake of his squire shall this grieve me, who yestreen so
courteous spake,
And told to Gawain the tidings, and whence all this woe did wake.
He dismounted, and bent o'er his master, and Gawain he knew
his face, 695
And he gave him the steed he had won there, and the squire
thanked his hand of grace.

Now see ye how Kardefablet himself on the ground doth stand
From a joust that was ridden against him, and aimed by young
Meljanz' hand;
From the ground his warriors lift him, and loud rings the battle-
cry
'Jamore!' and the clashing sword-blades to the challenge make
swift reply. 700
And closer the fight draws round him, onslaught on onslaught
pressed,
And the blows ring loud and deafening that fall on each knightly
crest.
Then Gawain called his men around him, and swift to his aid he
sped,
And he covered the knight with the banner of his host that flew
high o'erhead,
And many brave knights had been felled there—Tho' witness I
never knew, 705
Yet in sooth ye may well believe me for the venture it telleth true!

Then the Count of Montane rode 'gainst Gawain, and a goodly
joust they ran,
And behind his horse, on the meadow, lay the brave Knight
Lahduman,
And the hero, proud and gallant, his pledge unto Gawain gave.
And nearest of all to the ramparts fought Duke Astor with heroes
brave, 710
And many a joust was ridden, and many a spear was crossed;
'Nantes! Nantes!' came the war-cry pealing, the cry of King
Arthur's host,

Firm they stood, and no whit they yielded, the captive Breton
 knights,
 And hirelings from Erec's kingdom and men spake of their deeds
 of might—

The Duke of Lanveronz led them—So well did they fight that day 715
 That Poidikonjonz well might free them, since his captives they
 were alway;
 At the mountain Cluse from King Arthur, in the days that were
 long gone by,
 As his prisoners did he win them, when they stormed him right
 valiantly.
 And here, as was aye their custom, where'er they might chance to
 fight,
 They shouted 'Nantes' as their war-cry, 'twas the way of these
 men of might; 720
 And many had waxed grey-bearded, and on every Breton breast
 Or high on their helmet gleaming stood a Gampilon for their
 crest.
 For as Ilinot's arms they bare it, who was Arthur's gallant son—
 And Gawain he sighed as he saw it (small fame he 'gainst these
 had won).
 And his heart awoke to sorrow for the blazon right well he knew, 725
 And it filled him again with anguish for the death of his kinsman
 true.
 And his eyes ran o'er with tear-drops, and he passed them upon
 the field,
 Nor with them would he fight—Thus to friendship a hero full oft
 shall yield!

Then he rode on to Meljanz' army, whom the Burgers with might
 withstood,
 And their rightful meed of honour they won from the warriors
 good; 730
 Tho' perforce 'gainst o'ermastering numbers they had failed to
 hold the field,
 And backward within their trenches awhile to the foe must yield.
 And he who the Burgers challenged his harness glowed red as
 flame,
 'The Nameless Knight' they called him for none knew from
 whence he came;
 And I tell it to ye as I heard it, to Meljanz he rode, this knight, 735
 But three days back, and the Burgers must mourn it in coming
 fight
 That he swore his aid to their foeman—Twelve squires unto him
 he gave,
 To serve him as meet in the jousting, and to follow to onslaught
 brave.
 And the spears their hand might proffer those spears he right
 swiftly brake,

And clear rang his joust o'er the tumult, when he did as his
 captives take 740
 King Schirniel and his brother; nor he would from his pledge
 release
 The knight whom he here had vanquished, the Duke of
 Marangliess.
 And bravely they fought mid the foremost, and he vanquished
 them as they stood,
 Yet their folk still held them valiant tho' reft of their leaders good.

And there fought the young King Meljanz, and all were they
 friend or foe, 745
 They owned greater deeds of valour a young knight might
 seldom show;
 By his hand were the strong shields cloven—Ah! the spears that
 he brake in twain
 As the forces together mingling dashed swift o'er the battle-plain.
 And his young heart for conflict lusted, and none gave him of
 strife his fill.
 And it vexed him sore, till Gawain would joust with him at his will. 750

Then Gawain took a spear of Angram, that he won him at
 Plimizöl,
 And twelve were those spears—The war-cry of Meljanz was
 'Barbigöl!'
 Of his kingdom of Lys 'twas chief city—Gawain aimed his joust so
 true,
 And Oraste Gentesein taught sorrow to the king since it pierced
 him thro'
 That strong shaft of reed; his shield piercing, it brake in his arm of
 might— 755
 And a fair joust again was ridden, and Gawain smote the King in
 flight;
 And the hinder bow of the saddle it brake, and those heroes
 twain
 They stood on their feet, and valiant, they battled with swords
 amain.
 'Twere more than enough such labour for two churls on the
 threshing-floor,
 And each one bare the sheaf of the other, and each smote the
 other sore. 760

And a spear must Meljanz carry that had smitten him thro' the
 arm,
 And thro' conflict fierce the hero in blood and sweat waxed warm.
 Then Gawain by force he drave him within a portal wide,
 And he bade him his pledge to swear him, nor the young king his
 will defied;
 Were he not so sorely wounded then so swiftly he ne'er were
 known, 765
 To yield himself to a foeman, but his prowess had longer shown.

Then Lippaut the prince, the land's host, his valour might not
 restrain
 With the monarch of Gros he battled; and alike must they suffer
 pain,
 Both man and steed from the bow-shots, for their skill they were
 fain to show,
 They of Semblidag, and Kahetines, for they fled as they bent the
 bow. 770
 And the Burgers must well bethink them the foe from their lines
 to hold,
 But foot-soldiers had they, and sheltered by their ramparts they
 battled bold.
 And he who of life was forfeit for the wrath of a maid must pay,
 For her folly and scorn on her people brought sorrow enow that
 day.
 But what part therein had Lippaut? I think me his lord of old, 775
 King Schaut, ne'er had thus beset him! Now faint waxed those
 heroes bold.

But Meljakanz still fought bravely—Do ye think it was whole, his
 shield?
 Not a hand's-breadth wide was the fragment—Then he bare him
 across the field
 Duke Kardefablet, and I think me the Tourney it came to stand
 On the meadow fair and flowery, for fast locked was either band. 780
 Then Gawain he rode swiftly to them, and he pressed Meljakanz
 so sore,
 E'en Launcelot, gallant hero, ne'er wrought him such grief afore
 When the sword bridge he crossed to battle—Her captivity
 pleased him ill,
 The Queen Guinevere, and he thought him by the sword-blade to
 free her still.

King Lot's son he rode full gallop—Meljakanz, what could he do 785
 But spur his steed towards him? And many that joust must view.
 Who lay there behind his charger? He whom the gallant knight
 Of Norroway had smitten to earth with his spear of might.
 And many a knight and lady they looked on this joust so fair,
 And they spake in praise of Gawain, and his fame would aloud
 declare. 790
 And the maidens right well might see it as they looked from the
 hall on high.
 Underfoot was Meljakanz trampled; many steeds did o'er him fly,
 And tare with their hoofs his surcoat, who fodder might taste no
 more,
 And they covered the prostrate hero with rain of sweat and gore.
 'Twas a day of doom for the chargers, but the vultures at will
 might feast; 795
 And Duke Astor he came to the rescue, and from them of Jamore
 released
 Meljakanz, or else was he captive, and he raised him from off the
 ground—

And the Tourney was o'er, and the combat methinks had its
ending found.

Now who had as knight best ridden, or best for a maiden fought?
Nay, I know not, an I would name them small leisure such task
had brought.

800

For Maid Obilot's sake with the townfolk a knight valiant deeds
had dared;

Without, a Red Knight fought bravely, and the fame 'twixt those
two was shared.

When the guest of the outer army had learnt he no thanks might
win

From the king he had served, since Meljanz was captive the town
within,

He rode where his squires were waiting, and thus to his prisoners
spake,

805

'Sir Knights, ye your word have pledged me; ill-chance doth me
here o'ertake,

For King Meljanz of Lys is captive—Now if ye such grace can find
With his captors, that for *your* freedom *his* fetters they will
unbind,

Such service I'd gladly do him!' To the King of Avendroin
He spake, and to Duke Marangliess, and King Schirniel of Lirivoin.

810

And this oath must they swear unto him, ere they rode the walls
within,

To loose Meljanz, or if they failed here, to help him the Grail to
win.

But never a word could they tell him of where It was hid, the Grail,
Save 'twas guarded by King Anfortas, but further, their lore must
fail.

When thus they spake, quoth the Red Knight, 'Then if it shall still
betide

That my wish find not here fulfilment, ye to Pelrapär shall ride,
And unto the fair queen yielding say, "He who in days of yore
Faced Kingron for her and Klamidé, for the Grail now sorroweth
sore,

As he yearneth for her, his lady, and after the twain in thought
And deed is he ever striving." To her be this message brought
And ye heroes bear it truly, and as on your way ye ride
God have ye in His safe keeping, for the world and its ways are
wide.'

820

Then they prayed his leave, and they rode hence—And the knight
to his squires he spake,

'Here is booty none may gainsay us, of these steeds ye at will may
take;

But leave me one for my riding, since sore wounded mine own
shall be.'

825

Spake the Squires, 'Sir Knight, we must thank thee for the grace
thou hast shown us free,

For our lifetime hast thou enriched us.' Then he chose in his
charger's stead,
With the close-cropped ears, Ingliart, the same that from Gawain
fled,
When Meljanz he made his captive, and the twain they must fall
in field,
And the Red Knight's hand had caught it, when hewn was many a
shield. 830

Then Farewell the hero bade them—Full fifteen steeds they tell,
To the squires he left, unwounded, in sooth might they thank him
well.
And they prayed him to linger with them, and abide with them
yet a space,
But far hence lay the goal he was seeking, and the road he was
fain to trace.
So he turned him about, the hero, to where ease should be
bought full dear 835
For naught but strife was he seeking—In the days that ye read of
here
No knight e'en as he had battled—Then the outer host would
ride
To where they might find a lodging, and in peace for a space
abide.

And within, Lippaut spake, and asked them how matters had
gone that day?
That Meljanz was taken captive, that tale did he know alway. 840
And all was as he would have it, and comfort the hour would bear
—

And Gawain loosed the sleeve full gently from his shield, lest
perchance it tear,
For he deemed it o'er good for tearing, and Clauditté she held it
fast,
And 'twas slashed in the sides and the centre with the spears that
had thro' it passed;
And he bade her to Obilot bear it, and glad was the little maid, 845
On her bare white arm soft-rounded the tattered sleeve she laid,
And spake, 'Who hath done this for me?' when'er she her sister
saw,
And wrathful her elder sister her maiden mischief bore.

Then, as weariness it bade them, the knights they craved for rest
—
Then Scherules took Count Lahduman, and Gawain his gallant
guest 850
And many a knight whom he found there, whom Gawain with
valiant hand
Had o'erthrown on the field of battle tho' strife they might well
withstand.
And the Burg-grave rich he bade them to sit them in order fair,

And he and his wearied vassals would stand 'fore their monarch
 there
 Till Meljanz his fill had eaten—And they treated him courteously, 855
 But Gawain, o'er-much he deemed it, and he spake out, frank and
 free,
 'Methinks an the king allow thee, Sir Host, thou shouldst take a
 seat.'
 Thus spake Gawain in his wisdom, as his courtesy found it meet.
 But the host gave his prayer denial, 'The king's man is that gallant
 knight
 My master, this were his office if the king had but deemed it right 860
 To take, as of old, his service—My lord thro' his courtesy
 Will not see the face of his monarch while exiled from grace is he.
 An it pleaseth God of friendship to sow here the seed once more,
 Then joyful we'll do his bidding with one will, as in days of yore.'
 Then spake the youthful Meljanz, 'Yea, courteous knights and true
 Were ye, when I dwelt among ye, nor your rede did I ever rue. 865
 An I now had thy counsel followed, this even had seen me glad;
 Now give me thine aid Count Scherules, for the trust that I ever
 had
 In thy faith, with this knight my captor, and with him my second
 sire
 Duke Lippaut—for well I think me they will do as thou shalt
 require— 870
 Yea, pray them to show me favour, for friends had we been to-
 day
 Had not Obie such jest played on me as no maiden I ween should
 play!'
 Then out spake the gallant Gawain, 'Afresh shall be knit a band
 That naught but death can sever'—Then they came whom the
 Red Knight's hand
 Without had taken captive, on the height would they seek their
 king, 875
 And they told him all that befell them; and Gawain must list the
 thing,
 And they told of the arms of the hero, how their strength before
 his must fail,
 And how he their pledge had taken, and had bidden them seek
 the Grail;
 And he thought how the knight of this venture was none other
 than Parzival,
 And his thanks uprose to high Heaven that no evil did there
 befall, 880
 But that God apart had held them, and they met not in strife that
 day.
 And courteous I ween were those heroes that they tore not the
 veil away,

But both of them there were nameless, and none knew from
whence they came,
Yet I wot well the world around them rang fair with their warlike
fame.

To Meljanz he spake, Scherules, 'Now, Sire, wilt thou list to me? 885
Look thou again on my master, and such rede as is given to thee
By friends on both sides shalt thou hearken, and thine anger shalt
thou recall;'

And all deemed it good, the counsel, so they rode to the royal
hall,
The inner force of the city, as the Marshal was fain to pray.
Then Gawain took the Count Lahduman, and the captives he 890
made that day,

And he gathered them all around him, and the pledge that to him
they gave

When he erst on the field o'erthrew them, must they yield to the
Burg-grave brave,
And gladly they did his bidding—To the palace the heroes fare,
And rich garments as fit for a monarch did the wife of the Burg-
grave bear;

And a veil did she give unto Meljanz that should serve him for a
sling 895

For the arm that Gawain had wounded, when his spear smote the
youthful king.

And Gawain by the mouth of Scherules, Obilot his lady prayed;
Fain would the hero see her, his life in her hand he laid,
And would crave from her lips dismissal—and further the hero
spake,

'I leave the king here, her captive, and I pray her such thought to
take 900

That she may in such wise entreat him, that her honour shall wax
apace!'

And Meljanz spake, 'Well I know this, Obilot is of maiden grace
And maiden worth the glory; and joyful am I at heart

If her captive I be, for in gladness methinks shall I have my part,'
Then out quoth the gallant Gawain, 'Her prisoner art thou alone, 905
'Tis *she* who hath captive made thee, and *my* glory is here her
own.'

Before them rode Scherules—As was fitting for royal court,
Nor man was there nor maiden but had robed them in such sort
That one, in poor guise and scanty, might scarce have been seen
that day—

They who swear their pledge to the Red Knight with Meljanz must
take their way. 910

And there in the hall of the castle they sat in their order four,
Lippaut, his wife, and his daughters, as the guests passed within
the door.

Up sprang the host and hastened his lord and king to greet,

And close pressed the crowd around them as friend with foe did
 meet;
 By Gawain's side stood Meljanz. 'Now, an it were here thy will, 915
 Thy friend of old, the Duchess, with kiss would she greet thee
 still.'
 And Meljanz to his host made answer, 'Two ladies I think to see
 From whom I'll take kiss and greeting—but the *third* naught shall
 win from me.'

And the parents wept; but the maiden, Obilot, was glad and gay,
 And they greeted their king with kisses; and two beardless kings
 that day 920
 They kissed, with the Duke of Marangliess, and the gallant Knight
 Gawain.
 And they brought him his little lady, and the fair child he clasped
 again,
 And e'en as a doll he held her so close to his manly breast,
 As joy and delight constrained him, and to Meljanz his speech
 address:
 'Thine hand hath surety pledged me, of that shall thou now be
 free, 925
 In my right arm I hold my lady, *her* captive thou now shalt be.'

Then Meljanz he stept him nearer, and she held fast to Gawain's
 hand,
 And she took the pledge of her monarch mid the knights who did
 round them stand.
 'Sir King, 'twas ill-done I think me, if a *merchant* he be my knight
 As my sister hath said, to yield thee as his captive on field of
 might! 930
 Thus spake Obilot, the maiden; then to Meljanz she gave
 command,
 He should yield his pledge to her sister, and swear it hand
 clasped in hand;
 'Thou shalt have her for Love, for thy knighthood, as her Love and
 her Lord art thou
 Henceforward, of true heart gladly, and ye twain to my will shall
 bow!'

God spake by the lips of the maiden, her will it was done
 straightway, 935
 And Frau Minne with power and wisdom again o'er their hearts
 held sway,
 And knit afresh the meshes, and fettered the twain anew;
 From the folds of her flowing mantle her small hand Obie drew,
 And she touched the arm of her lover, and weeping, her lips so
 red
 Kissed the wound he had won in jousting, since it was for her
 sake he bled. 940
 And his arm was bathed in the tear-drops that flowed from her
 eyes so bright—

How waxed she thus bold 'fore the people? 'Twas Love bade her
claim her right;
And fulfilled was the wish of Lippaut, and naught of his bliss
should fail,
Since God had willed that his daughter henceforth as his queen
he hail!

How the wedding feast was holden, ask them who took their
share 945

Of wedding gifts, or wandering, to Beausoch had thought to
fare.

If they fought, or were fain to rest them, of that I no word may
tell,

But they say in the hall of the palace Sir Gawain would bid
farewell

To her for whose leave he came there, and sore wept the little
maid

And spake, 'Now take me with thee,' but Gawain her wish
gainsaid, 950

And scarce might her mother tear her from the knight—leave he
prayed them there,

And Lippaut he proffered service for the good-will he towards
him bare.

And his gallant host, Scherules, with his folk he would not delay

To ride awhile with the hero; and he wended a woodland way,

And they gave him guides for his journey, and food lest he ill
should fare, 955

And he bade them farewell, and sorrow Gawain for the parting
bare.

BOOK VIII ANTIKONIE

ARGUMENT

Book VIII. tells how Gawain came to Schamfanzon, and how King Vergulacht committed him to the care of his sister Antikonie. How Gawain wooed the maiden, and of the wrath of her people. Of the adventure of the chess-board, and how Kingrimursel came to the help of Gawain. How Antikonie reproached King Vergulacht, and how the nobles counselled their monarch. Of the oath Gawain sware to the King, and how he rode forth to seek the Grail.

BOOK VIII ANTIKONIE



Whosoe'er at Beausoch had battled, methinks that Gawain had
won

The highest fame in both armies, save but for one knight alone;
And none knew his red harness glowing, and none knew from
whence he came,

But high as a banner waveth, so high did it rise, his fame.

Yet of honour alike and good fortune had Gawain in full his
share—

5

Now hence must he ride, for the moment of strife which he
sought drew near,

And far and wide stretched the woodland thro' which he must
wend his way—

No conflict he shunned, tho' all guiltless of the sin men on him
would lay.

But, alas! his charger failed him, Ingliart, with the close-cropped
ear,

In the land of the Moors at Tabronit no better the steeds they
rear.

10

And diverse the wood around him, here a bush and there a field,
And so narrow at whiles, that pathway, it scarcely a space might
yield

For tent, or for knight's pavilion. Then fair dwellings met his eye,
'Twas Askalon, and he prayed them if Schamfanzon at hand did
lie?

But many a marsh and moorland and many a steep hillside
Must he traverse, ere fair before him in the setting sun he spied
A fortress stand so stately, it gleamed in the sunlight's rays,
And he turned his steed towards it who rode here on unknown
ways.

15

Now list ye awhile the venture, and mourn ye awhile with me
The sorrow that fell on Gawain—And if old ye shall chance to be

20

Or young, yet of this your friendship I pray you his grief to weep;
 Alas! were it best to tell ye, or silence a space to keep?
 Nay, better to tell the story, how he whom Good Luck did call
 Her friend, was by her forsaken, and how grief to his lot must fall.

So proudly uprose the fortress that never did Carthage seem 25
 So fair to the eyes of Æneas, when Dido, as failed her dream
 Of love, turned to death and, seeking, found rest in his cold
 embrace.
 Would ye know what countless turrets those stately halls did
 grace?
 Scarce more had Akration boasted, that city whose walls so wide,
 An man may believe the heathen, with Babylon only vied; 30
 So high rose the circling ramparts, and where to the sea they fell
 No storm might they fear, but defiance could they bid to their
 foes right well.

'Fore the city a plain outstretching lay fair for a mile or more.
 As Sir Gawain rode across it, five hundred knights he saw,
 Yet one, o'er all the others, gallant and fair to sight; 35
 Gaily they rode towards him all clad in raiment bright,
 For so the venture telleth—With their falcons soaring high
 Would they chase the crane, or other fair game that should
 wingèd fly.

A tall steed from Spain's far kingdom, King Vergulacht bestrode,
 And his glance was as day in the night-time—Aforetime his race 40
 abode
 Where Mazadan reigned as monarch, by Fay Morgan's mystic
 mount,
 And amid the roll of his fathers he many a fay might count—
 And even as in the spring-tide the May blossom bloometh fair
 So rode the king in his beauty, and Gawain he bethought him
 there,

As he saw him ride so stately, 'twas another Parzival, 45
 Or Gamuret, as he came to Kanvoleis, as this venture erewhile did
 tell.

Now into a pond so marshy a heron had taken flight
 As it fled from before the falcon, and the king, as beseemed a
 knight,
 Sought not for the ford but followed as he saw his falcon's need,
 And wet he won in the aiding, and lost was his gallant steed, 50
 And lost too his royal raiment, tho' safe was I ween the bird.
 The falconers took his garments, for this, so the tale I've heard,
 Was their right, and they needs must have them, and no man
 might say them nay.

Another horse they brought him, for lost was his own for aye,
 And fresh garments they put upon him, since such was the
 chance of fate 55
 That his falconers won the vesture that had decked their king of
 late.

Then Sir Gawain, he rode towards them, and knightly and
 worshipful
 The greeting they gave unto him, not such as in Karidöl
 Once fell to the lot of Erec, when after his well-fought fight
 He had fain drawn near to King Arthur, and with him his lady
 bright, 60
 Fair Enid, who graced his coming—But the dwarf Maliklisier
 With a scourge full hardly smote him, 'neath the eyes of Queen
 Guinevere.
 At Tulmein he took his vengeance, where, within the ring so wide
 To win the hawk, the heroes in deeds of valour vied.
 'Twas Idêr, the son of Noit, a hero true and bold 65
 Whom he else had slain, whom Erec did there in surety hold.

 But leave we all other venture, and hearken awhile to me,
 For in sooth never fairer welcome shall it fall to your lot to see.
 Yet, alas! for ill it wrought him, Gawain, King Lot's brave son—
 An ye will I will cease my story ere the tale to its end be run, 70
 And for pity's sake keep silence—Yet perchance it were best to
 tell
 The ill that thro' others' treason on a gallant spirit fell.
 And if I yet further pray ye this story strange to heed
 Then in sooth, e'en as I, right truly will ye mourn for its hero's
 need.

 Quoth the king, 'Sir Knight, thus I think me, thou shalt to the
 castle ride, 75
 Thine *host* will I be right gladly, tho' scarce may I be thy *guide*;
 Yet if this on my part shall vex thee the chase will I gladly leave!'
 Quoth Gawain, 'As it best may please thee, that do, nor for my
 sake grieve,
 Whate'er thou shalt do shall be well done—No grudge do I bear
 thee, Sire,
 But of right good-will I gladly will do as thou shalt require.' 80

 Quoth the king of Askalon further, 'Schamfanzon thou well mayst
 see
 Sir Knight, there my sister dwelleth, who as yet but a maid shall
 be;
 And she hath in fullest measure such beauty as poets sing—
 An thou as a grace shalt hold it, my knights unto her shall bring
 Such word she shall well entreat thee in my stead, till I come
 again. 85
 And whenever I come, I think me, 'twill be sooner than thou art
 fain
 To look on my face, for gladly wilt thou spare me when thou shalt
 see
 My sweet sister, nor e'er bemoan thee, tho' my coming o'er late
 shall be!

 'Nay, gladly again I'll see thee, and gladly thy sister greet,

Tho' as host never queen has done me such service as host finds
 meet' 90
 Thus spake the gallant Gawain—Then a knight bare the king's
 behest
 To his sister, that she, as fitting, should so care for the stranger
 guest
 That however long his absence the hours should as minutes fly—
 (An ye will, I will cease my story that now runneth but
 mournfully!)

Nay, further I'll tell the venture,—Steed and pathway the hero
 bore 95
 Where as one were both Burg and palace, and he held him before
 the door.
 And he who shall e'er have builded a house, he shall better know
 To tell of this mighty castle, and the strength of its walls to show.
 Yea, indeed 'twas a Burg, none better might this earth on its
 bosom bear
 And around it, far outstretching, the ramparts towered high in air. 100

Leave we the praise of the castle, and speak of the castle's queen,
 A maiden fair, for of women I shall better speak I ween,
 And as fitting I'll sing her praises—Was she fair to the eye? 'Twas
 well;
 Was she true of heart? Then gladly will men of her praises tell.
 And so both in mind and manner might she vie with that lady
 true, 105

The Margravine, who from Heitstein afar o'er her marches threw
 A light,—Well for him who dwelleth as friend in her presence fair,
 Such pastime as there his portion he findeth not other-where!
 For I praise but a woman's virtue, as I see, and shall surely know,
 True and pure must she be, the maiden, on whom I shall praise
 bestow. 110

And he whom this venture singeth is a gallant man and true,
 For no dealing have I with falsehood, or with one who his deeds
 shall rue,
 As repentance, slowly piercing, but turneth his bliss to bale,
 And his soul knoweth wrath and sorrow, or ever his life-days fail.

To the castle court rode Gawain, and the goodly company 115
 To whom the king had sent him, who shamed for his sake should
 be.
 Then the knight to his lady led him, as she sat in her beauty's
 glow,
 Queen Antikonie—Could the merchants a woman's fame bestow,
 Of such goods had she made rich purchase; 'gainst falsehood she
 set her face,
 And hers was the crown of honour, and a maiden's maiden grace.
 Ah! woe's me for him of Veldeck, that death thus cut short his
 days, 120

None is there of all men living who so well could have sung her
praise.

Then Gawain, he looked on the maiden, and the messenger spake
the word

E'en as the king had bade him, and the queen his message heard.
Then gently she spake to the hero, 'Come thou near unto me, Sir
Knight,

125

Thyself shalt be my master in courtesy, as is right;

And gladly I'll do thy bidding—If well it shall please thee here,

'Twill be even as thou shalt order—Yea, since my brother dear

Hath bid me well entreat thee, I'll kiss thee, if so I may.

I'll do, or leave it undone, e'en as thou the word shalt say!

130

Courteous she stood before him, quoth Gawain, 'Thy lips so red
In sooth were made for kissing, be kiss and greeting sped!'

So full and warm and rosy were the lips that Gawain pressed,

No stranger sure had kissed her as kissed this stranger guest.

Unchecked he sat him by her, and sweet words passed between,

Soft spake they to each other; and oft renewed, I ween,

His prayers and her denials, yea, sorely grieved was he,

And fain to win her favour—Then she spake as I tell to ye:

135

'Bethink thee, Sir Knight, thou art wise else, with this I enough
have done,

For I ween at my brother's bidding mine uncle Gamuret won

Less welcome from Queen Anflisé than the welcome I gave to
thee,

An our tending were weighed together methinks hers would
lighter be.

Nor know I, Sir Knight, whence thou comest, nor e'en what shall
be thy name,

That, after such short approving, thou shouldst to my love lay
claim!

140

Then out spake the gallant Gawain, 'Then know here assuredly

O! queen, of my father's sister the brother's son am I;

Wilt thou give me sweet love's rewarding, for my birth shalt thou
not delay,

Hand in hand, and to equal measure, it paceth with thine alway!'

The maiden who filled the wine-cup she had passed from out the
hall,

And the women who sat beside them must now to their mind
recall

The task that elsewhere did wait them; nor longer the knight
stood there

Who erst to the queen had brought him—As Gawain was now
aware

That no man was here beside them, he thought how a mighty
bird

Is oft trapped by a little falcon—nor further he spake a word,

But he passed his arm around her beneath her mantle's fold,

145

150

155

And love laid such stress upon them, the maid and the hero bold,
That belike a thing had chanced there, an no eye had been there
to see,

Of one mind were the twain—yet heart-sorrow drew near to
them speedily.

For straight stepped within the doorway an old and grey-haired
knight,

And loudly he called on Gawain, and shouted a shout of might, 160

For well did he know the hero, and fiercely his cry did ring,
'Alas! alas! woe upon us, since the hand that hath slain our king
Is fain now to force his daughter!' At the sound of his battle-cry
The folk that within the castle abode to the hall did hie,
So it fell out—Then quoth Sir Gawain to the queen, 'Now, Lady
mine,

165

Say thou how we best may ward us 'gainst this wrathful folk of
thine,

For sure they will come against us—An I had but my sword at
hand!

Then out spake the gentle maiden, 'Their might shall we best
withstand

An we to yon tower betake us that riseth my bower beside,
Perchance they will then bethink them, and the storm shall we
override.'

170

Here a knight, and there a merchant, already the maid must hear,
With the cry of the angry townfolk, as the twain to the tower
drew near;

And sore was her friend beset there, tho' she prayed them from
strife to cease,

So loud rose the angry tumult none hearkened her words of
peace.

'Gainst the portal the foe pressed onward, Gawain stood within
the door,

175

And held off the angry rabble; an iron bolt he tore
From its fastenings wherewith to arm him, and before his strong
right hand

Full oft fled his evil neighbours, they durst not his blows
withstand.

While the queen, with flying footsteps, hither and thither sought
To find, perchance, some weapon 'gainst the foe that so fiercely
fought.

180

At length did she chance on some chess-men, and a chess-board,
wide and fair,

That hung by a ring of iron; to Gawain she brought it there,
As a shield four-square it served him; yea, many a game was
played

On that board ere 'twas hewn in battle—Now hear of the royal
maid;

Were it king, or queen, or castle, she hurled them against the foe, 185

Heavy and large the chess-men, and in sooth I would have ye
 know
 They who by her shaft were stricken must ever a fall abide.
 Right bravely the queen so gracious now fought by her hero's
 side,
 And she bare herself so knightly, that never the Burger maids
 Of Tollenstein at Shrove-tide such dauntless skill displayed. 190
 And yet they but fight for folly, and weary themselves for naught
 —
 An a woman bear trace of battle, on her womanhood shame is
 brought,
 (For I know what befits a woman,) unless love shall have bid her
 fight
 To prove her faith—Now faithful and true was that lady bright,
 As Schamfanzon might bear witness—Yet, tho' high of heart was
 she, 195
 Many tears that conflict cost her; for in sooth shall it ever be
 That Love is brave as steadfast, yet tender and true of heart—
 Would ye know how in such fierce conflict Sir Gawain would bear
 his part?
 When the strife but leisure gave him to gaze on the maid aright,
 Her lips so red and glowing, her eyes so soft and bright— 200
 More slender was she and shapely than ever a lowland hare
 That ye truss on the spit, so graceful her limbs, and her form so
 fair;
 Full well might her charms awaken desire in the heart of man.
 And smaller, I ween, the maiden, where her golden girdle ran
 Around her waist, than ants are, and their slender shape ye know
 — 205
 The sight wrought in Gawain courage his foemen to overthrow,
 For she shared his need; his chastising none other than death
 should be,
 And help was there none—Then his anger flamed high and wroth
 was he
 As he looked on that gentle maiden, and no fear was his but hate,
 And sorely his foemen rued it who met at his hand their fate. 210
 Came King Vergulacht, and he saw well how his folk 'gainst
 Gawain did fight;
 Nor do I in this deceive ye, nor can I account him right
 That not as a host he bare him, when he saw his gallant guest
 Thus stand, as one man against many—But straight thro' the
 throng he pressed,
 In such wise, I must mourn for Gandein, the monarch of Anjou
 fair, 215
 That his daughter, so true a lady, so faithless a son must bear.
 From the strife his folk he called not, short space must they stay
 their hand
 While the king would don his armour, he lusted to lead the band.

Too mighty the force for Gawain, nor I ween shall ye count it
 shame
 That he closed the door upon them—Then in wrath and haste
 there came 220
 The knight who to battle bade him 'fore Arthur at Plimizöl
 But short time back—They called him the Landgrave
 Kingrimursel,
 And sore did Gawain's need vex him, he wrung his hands amain,
 For in sooth had he pledged his honour his foe should in peace
 remain
 Till *one* man alone o'ercame him—Old and young from the tower
 he drave, 225
 Yet the portal would they force open, as their king commandment
 gave.

Then the Landgrave he cried on Gawain, 'Sir Knight, I would in to
 thee
 As a friend, that this bitter conflict I may share, if it so must be,
 For then must my monarch slay me, or leave thee in life to-day.'
 Peace Gawain would swear unto him, and he made to the tower
 his way— 230
 Then doubtful, the foemen thronging, their hand for a space must
 hold,
 For their Burg-grave he was, and his bidding had they hearkened
 both young and old.
 Then, as ceased the noise of battle, thro' the doorway he sprang,
 Gawain,
 And the Landgrave, he stood beside him, swift and bold were
 those heroes twain.

Quoth King Vergulacht, 'Why tarry? Why stand we here as on
 guard, 235
 When of foemen but *two* shall dare us, and none other the tower
 gates ward?
 Much my cousin doth take upon him, when he dareth to shield
 my foe,
 Yea, *himself* should wreak vengeance on him, if his faith he were
 fain to show!'

Of true heart then they chose a true man, and unto the king he
 spake,
 'Now, Sire, upon our Landgrave no vengeance we think to take, 240
 Nor shall harm at *our* hand befall him—May God so turn thy
 mind
 That, instead of shaming, honour thou shalt from this venture
 find.
 For shame shall it bring upon thee, and an ending to thy fair
 fame,
 If he who as host doth hail thee shall here at thine hand be slain.
 And thy kinsman is he, this other who hath brought him into this
 land; 245

So, lest cursing and shame be thy portion, we pray thee to stay
thine hand,
And grant thou a truce thro' the daylight, and the fleeting hours
of night,
Then bethink thee for shame or honour, and do as shall seem
thee right!

'And our queen who hath ne'er known falsehood, thy sister,
Antikonie,
See there as she standeth by him and weepeth full bitterly. 250
Canst thou see such sight without rueing, since one mother bare
ye both?

And bethink thee, sire, thou art wise else, thou didst send him,
nothing loth,
Alone to this gentle maiden, nor further a guardian gave;
For *her* sake it were well to spare him! Then the king bade those
warriors brave
To call a truce—He'd bethink him how vengeance he best might
take 255
For his father's death—Yet all guiltless Gawain, for another's sake,
Must he bear the shame; with a lance-thrust by Eknât was he
slain

As to Barbigól Prince Iofreit, a prisoner, he would have ta'en,
Who had ridden erewhile with Gawain—In such wise the chance
befell
That they deemed that *Gawain* had slain him—So men do the
venture tell. 260

And scarce was the truce bespoken ere of men was the field
bereft,
Each betook him unto his lodging, nor one on the ground was
left.
Then the queen threw her arms around him, and with many a kiss
so sweet
She gave to her gallant cousin such rewarding as seemed her
meet,
Since so bravely he stood by Gawain, and sheltered the twain
from wrong, 265
And she spake, 'Now art thou my cousin, nor unfaith shall to thee
belong.'

Now hearken and I will read ye that word which I spake of late,
How a true heart sore was darkened—I ween 'twas an evil fate
That led Vergulacht to Schamfanzon; such deed he ne'er did learn
From sire or aye from mother, with shame did the young knight
burn, 270
And torment sore and suffering his better self must know
As his sister 'gan upbraid him, small mercy the maid would show.

And thus spake the noble maiden, 'Now had it but been God's
will,
That I, a man born, might sword bear, and knightly tasks fulfil,

To strive with me hadst thou come here, methinks thou hadst
 come too late,— 275
 But now am I all defenceless, a maiden, and no man's mate.
 And yet a shield I carry, and fair its device shall be,
 And honoured of all—Its blazon would I read here, Sir King, to
 thee,
 That thou henceforth mayst know it—Pure heart and upright
 mind,
 That true man beneath its cover a shelter may ever find. 280
 And that, o'er the gallant hero whom thou sentest unto my care,
 Did I hold, and 'gainst thee, his foeman, I did, as beseemed me,
 bear,
 For none other armour had I—And if thou repent the ill
 Thou hast done to thy guest, me, thy sister, hast thou wronged
 more deeply still;
 For this is the right of woman, so ever 'twas told to me, 285
 That if ever unto the shelter of a maiden a knight shall flee,
 Then they who as foemen follow shall straightway leave their
 chase—
 In such wise they ever bear them who would not their shield
 disgrace—
 Now, Sir Vergulacht, that thy guest fled to *me* as his hope of life,
 Hath loaded with shame thine honour, since thou aided, nor
 checked, thestrife! 290

Then Kingrimursel quoth sternly, 'Yea, Sire, 'twas at *thy* command,
 That on Plimizöl's plain I bade him, Sir Gawain, to seek this land.
 On thy royal word safe conduct I sware him, that should he ride
 Hither we twain were pledged him no evil should here betide,
 Save but from *one* foeman only—Now, Sire, thou hast here done
 ill 295
 In that, spite of thine oath so knightly, thy word thou didst not
 fulfil.
 And here shall my fellows hearing give judgment betwixt us
 twain,
 If thus thou wrongest *princes*, what as *king* mayst thou hope to
 gain
 From us of faith and honour?—If honoured thou fain wouldst be,
 Then, courteous, make confession that near of kin are we; 300
 True cousin am I, no bastard, and e'en if such chance had been,
 Even then, in this thy dealing, thou hadst done me a wrong, I
 ween!
 A knight am I in whom no man hath found a taint of shame,
 And I think me that free from falsehood, yea, to death will I guard
 my fame,
 For in God have I ever trusted, and, methinks, He holds not in
 store 305
 Such fate for the days of the future as I knew not in days of yore.
 Yet they who shall hear the story, how the nephew of Arthur rode
 To Schamfanzon 'neath my safe-conduct, where'er shall be his
 abode—

An he come from the land of the Breton, or from France, or from
 Provence fair,
 Burgundian he, or Gallician, or the arms of Punturtois bear— 310
 When he hear of the grief of Gawain then *my* fame shall be
 swiftly sped,
 And shame be my meed for the danger that threatened that
 knightly head.
 At the tale of this strife shall my glory wax narrow, and blame
 grow wide;
 And, as joy in the past dwelt with me, so henceforward shall
 shame abide.'

As he made an end of speaking stood a vassal the king before, 315
 And, as Kiot himself hath told us, Liddamus was the name he
 bore.
 And I speak here of Kiot the singer, and so sweet was I ween his
 song
 That none wax of the hearing weary, tho' the days of their life be
 long.
 And I rede ye to wit that Kiot of old was a Provençal,
 Who found writ in a book of the heathen this story of Parzival. 320
 And in French again he sang it, and I, if no wit shall fail,
 Would fain in his footsteps follow, and in German would tell the
 tale.

Quoth the Prince Liddamus in his anger, 'Now say, what doth he
 do here
 In the house of my lord, who his father hath slain, and hath
 brought anear
 The brand of shame? My king's courage is known thro' many a
 land, 325
 'Twould better beseem his honour to avenge him with his own
 hand;
 One death for the other payeth—and the need waxeth here as
 there.'
 And Gawain he stood in sore peril, and fear for his life must bear.

Quoth Kingrimursel, 'Who to threaten is swift, he as swift should
 be
 To mingle in strife, yet but lightly thy foeman he holdeth thee! 330
 An wide were the field or narrow, yet Sir Liddamus, I know well
 This man were safe from thine onslaught e'en tho' shame at his
 hand befell,
 For ne'er wouldst thou dare to avenge it, who yet dost so loudly
 boast—
 And swifter were we to hearken if ever in battle host
 We had seen thee ride the foremost! But strife ever wrought thee
 pain, 335
 And afar from the field of battle to linger thou aye wast fain.
 Yea, *more* hast thou learnt—The beginning of strife didst thou
 ever see,

Then hence wouldst thou fly as swiftly as a maiden is wont to flee.
 And the prince who thy counsel hearkens, and doeth as thou
 shalt say,
 Shall find that the crown he weareth but loosely shall sit away!' 340

'And fain, in a joust so knightly, were I to have faced Gawain,
 Nor feared me aught, for such combat had we sworn fast betwixt
 us twain.
 And here had we fought, as fitting, 'neath the eye of the king my
 lord,
 And wroth am I now, for dearer, methought, had he held his
 word!
 Now swear thou to me, Sir Gawain, when a year from this day be
 past, 345
 To meet me again in combat—If thou 'scape my lord's wrath at
 last,
 And thy life for a prey he leave thee, yet we twain must fight our
 fight.
 At Plimizöl first I bade thee; at Barbigöl, if it seem thee right,
 Before Meljanz, the youthful monarch, the strife shall methinks be
 fought;
 And around my heart till the day come shall sorrow's wreath be
 wrought, 350
 And gladly I'll hail that dawning, and face thee, thou hero bold,
 Tho' the guerdon be but of sorrow, that shall there by thine hand
 be told.'

So there, as the Landgrave bade him, the hero Gawain swore,
 And his oath, and his pledge so knightly, he plighted as erst of
 yore.
 But Duke Liddamus, he bethought him of words that he fain
 would say, 355
 And with cunning skill and wisdom his speech did he weave that
 day.

Thus he spake for all men to hear him, for the time of speech was
 come,
 'Now if strife ever call upon me, if the battle be lost or won,
 If I fight as beseems a hero, or fly as a coward flies,
 If the meed of my warlike bearing be honour in all men's eyes, 360
 Then reward me I pray, Sir Landgrave, with rewarding as I shall
 win;
 But if honour or praise be withholden I count it not me for sin!'

Nor here did his speech find ending. 'If *Turnus* thou fain wouldst
 be,
 Then good, thou shalt find me *Tranzes*; thou mayst well wreak thy
 will on me,
 If so be thou hast aught against me, but 'tis *thou* who dost boast
 too loud, 365
 Yea, e'en an thou wert the highest of my peers, these princes
 proud;

For Prince am I too, and Landgrave, and I have in Galicia's land
 Many Burgs so fair and stately that e'en far as Vedrun stand.
 And tho' thou and this Breton stranger were minded to work me
 ill,
 Yet not even a fowl for thy threatening would fly, but abide thee
 still!' 370

'He came from the land of the Breton whom thou hither for strife
 didst hale.
 Take *thou* vengeance for king and kinsman, if such vengeance
 may aught avail;
 With *him*, not with *me*, thy quarrel, avenge thou thine uncle's life
 On him who of life hath robbed him, it toucheth me not, this
 strife,
 For I wot well in naught I wronged him, and none for such wrong
 makes moan. 375

What need to bewail thine uncle? His son sitteth on his throne,
 And I ask for no higher ruler, since Fleurdamur, the queen,
 Was his mother, his sire Kingrisein, and his grandsire Gandein
 hath been.
 And still in my mind it dwelleth how Galoes and Gamuret,
 Those heroes twain, were his uncles, nor lie I, nor truth forget. 380
 And I think me that in all honour my castles and lands so wide
 I may take from his hand, with their banners, and serve him
 whate'er betide!'

'Let him fight who hath lust for fighting, for weary of strife am I,
 Tho' I know well who fame in battle doth win, for his victory
 Hath reward from the lips of women, yet for never a maiden's
 sake 385

Will I evil entreat this body, or bid it such ill-road take.
 Nay, why should I be a Wolfhart? Since barred is the battle way,
 And no lust of strife hath beguiled me that I know not the thing I
 say.
 If thou shouldst for aye despise me, yet Rumolt I'll take as guide,
 Who gave counsel unto King Gunther, ere yet to the Huns he
 hied. 390

For he bade him in Worms abide still, where was plenty and e'en
 to spare,
 And content his soul with the flesh-pots and the riches of
 Rhineland fare!'

But ready of wit was the Landgrave, and he spake, 'Yea, the tale
 be told
 E'en to day, and no man shall marvel, for we know well thy ways
 of old.
 Thou wouldst urge me to strife, yet thy counsel is e'en what a
 cook once gave 395

To the Nibelung lord, little recked he such counsel, the hero
 brave.
 For he and his, little doubting, went boldly to meet their fate,

And avenged was the death of Siegfried, and sated was
 Kriemhild's hate!
 And Sir Gawain, I ween, must give me my death, or himself must
 feel
 The weight of my bitter vengeance as we battle for woe or weal!' 400

'Thou dost well,' Liddamus made answer, 'yet I think me of
 treasure fair,
 All that Arthur might hold, or India, if one such to my feet should
 bear,
 And say 'twas mine own, he might have it ere I fought e'en for
 such a prize.
 An thou wilt, win thee fame and honour, I, I think me, am all too
 wise.
 God knoweth, no Segramor am I, whom men must with fetters
 bind 405

So keenly for strife he lusted, far other was aye my mind.
 Yet mine be my monarch's favour, for Sibeck ne'er drew a sword,
 But ever he fled with the flying, yet men hearkened well his word;
 And many for counsel prayed him, and great gifts and lands
 enow
 The hand of Ermenrich gave him, tho' no helmet e'er felt his blow.
 And Sir Kingrimursel, I rede thee, thou shalt mark me with never a
 scar!' 410

Then out spake King Vergulacht sternly, as he ended their wordy
 war:
 'Peace, peace, nor so loudly wrangle, Sir Knights, all too bold are
 ye,
 For too near is your monarch's presence, and of speech are ye
 both too free;
 And that thus ye should strive before me, tho' your strife be of
word, not *deed*, 415

Ill beseemeth both king and vassal, so hearken my word, and
 heed.'
 This befell in the hall of the palace, 'neath the eyes of his sister
 fair,
 And Gawain stood beside the maiden, and heroes and knights
 were there.
 Quoth the king to his gentle sister, 'Now take thou with thee thy
 guest
 And the Landgrave, while I bethink me the word that shall 'seem
 me best. 420

And all ye who wish well unto me, shall follow and give me rede.'
 Quoth the maid, 'Of good faith seek counsel, for better 'twill
 serve thy need!'
 Gat the king to his council-chamber; the king's daughter had
 comrades three,
 Cousin, and guest, and beside them black care bare them
 company.

Gawain, as right well beseemed her, by the hand to her bower
 she led. 425
 And she quoth, 'Now shall all lands rue it if here thou shalt be ill-
 sped!'

And the son of King Lot, Sir Gawain, with the maiden went hand
 in hand,
 And none thought them shame, for so gracious was the custom
 of that fair land.

So passed they unto her chamber, the queen and those heroes
 twain,
 And that none 'gainst her will should enter was the care of her
 chamberlain. 430

Only her bower maidens as befitted them there might be,
 And the queen, in all love and honour, her guest tended royally.
 And the Landgrave in naught gainsaid her, for belike did he bear
 a part
 In the fear for her guest's well-doing that lay dark on the
 maiden's heart.

So the twain with the queen abode there till the strife of the day
 was o'er, 435
 And the night and the hour of feasting had come in their course
 once more.

Then the slender maidens bare them sweet drinks, and the wine
 so red,
 And with fish and fowl in plenty, I ween, was the table spread.
 Fair and white was the bread to look on, and the Landgrave and
 Knight Gawain,
 Who had passed thro' such deadly peril, to taste of the food were
 fain. 440

And each as the queen might bid him ate that which should
 please him best,
 And no lack did they find, for right queenly the maid did entreat
 her guest,
 And vainly the heroes prayed her to cease from her kindly care.
 Of the many who knelt before them no maid but was young and
 fair;

Yea, fair with the opening beauty of the rose that is yet unblown, 445
 And soft lay their locks as the feathers of a falcon the knight hath
 flown.

Now list, ere they close the council, to the rede they would rede
 the king
 And wise were the men who, wisely, good counsel in need should
 bring;
 And each spake as his mind should bid him, and that which his
 heart deemed best,
 And they turned the thing hither and thither, till the king thus his
 speech address: 450

And he spake, 'One of late fought with me, as on venture bent I
 rode
 In the wood Læhtamreis—too proudly, perchance, I my steed
 bestrode,
 For a knight, who o'er great my fame deemed, in joust smote me
 such a blow
 That, behind my gallant charger, on the greensward he laid me
 low.
 And this oath must I swear unto him, in search of the Grail to ride, 455
 And my knightly pledge I gave him, were it other, I there had
 died.
 Now give me, I pray, your counsel, for 'gainst death was no other
 shield
 But to swear as my victor bade me, and, as knight, to a knight to
 yield!'

'Yea, mighty and strong that hero,—nor sware I that oath alone,
 But he bade me, as true man truly, when a year should have come
 and gone, 460
 And the Grail I still were seeking, to ride unto Pelrapär
 To the queen who the crown there weareth, the child of King
 Tampentäre.
 And there, as I looked upon her, I should yield me unto her grace;
 And from him should I bear this message in the day that I sought
 her face.
 He would say, "An she thought upon him 'twas his joy and his
 labour's meed, 465
 His hand from the King Klamidé aforetime her land had freed."

Then the speech to the end they hearkened; and Liddamus spake
 this word,
 'Give me leave to speak, ye shall follow, Sir Knights, when my rede
 is heard,
 For the oath that perforce thou swarest, its fulfiller shall be
 Gawain,
 And he, captive, his wings shall flutter in the snare wherein *thou*
 wast ta'en. 470
 For here, where we stand to hearken, shall he swear us the Grail
 to win,
 And then of free will let him ride hence; for I deem men would
 count it sin
 Were he slain in thine house—Nay, me-seemeth 'twere better to
 let him live,
 For but ill would it please thy sister an thou didst not her knight
 forgive!
 Sore stress at our hands hath he suffered, and he now to his
 death shall ride; 475
 For far as the far sea's water shall circle the earth so wide
 There standeth no Burg so mighty as Monsalväsich, its towers
 shall fear
 No foeman, and strait the pathway that wendeth its walls anear,

And sore dangers that road encompass—Let him slumber in
 peace this night,
 And the word that we deem the wisest shall be told him with
 morning light!' 480
 Right well did the counsel please them, and ended, I ween, the
 strife,
 And Gawain, so the venture telleth, thus won at their hands his
 life.

So they tended the dauntless hero right well thro' the hours of
 night;
 From the Mass came the folk on the morrow when the noontide
 hour waxed bright,
 And the hall was thronged and crowded with townsfolk and
 warriors good, 485
 When before the king, as they counselled, his foeman, Sir Gawain,
 stood.
 To naught other would he compel him than to that which ye late
 did hear.

Now see ye the gentle maiden as she drew with her knight anear,
 And her uncle's son came with her, and many a hero brave
 Of the king's men were fain to follow, and thus fair escort gave. 490
 Then the queen led Gawain to her brother with slender hand and
 white,
 And a chaplet of fair flowers woven she bare on her locks of light,
 Fair the flowers, yet the maid was fairer, and no blossom around
 her head
 But waxed pale and dim, if 'twas mated with her lips of glowing
 red.

And he whom of true heart gently she kissed, as beseemed a
 maid, 495
 Such lances for her had broken as had wasted a woodland shade.

Now hearken to me and heed me, as with gracious words I'd
 greet
 Antikonie, free from falsehood, a maiden pure and sweet.
 In such wise did she ever bear her that never a doubting word,
 Were one fain to sing her praises, from the lips of men was heard;
 For no heart but wished her gladness, and no mouth but spake 500
 her free
 From all thought of guile—Far-reaching, as a falcon's eye can see,
 Shone the light of her gracious presence, as the light of a balsam
 rare
 That burneth, and sheddeth perfume, and sweeteneth the
 scented air.

And her will was ever gracious, as the will of a maid should be, 505
 And she spake to her royal brother of a true heart right maidenly:
 'I bring here to thee, my brother, the guest thou didst bid me
 tend,

And I would thou shouldst well entreat him, as befitting my
knight and friend—
For better shall that become thee, to bear thee as brother true,
Than to feel the world's hate, or to teach me to hate thee, who
hate ne'er knew.' 510

Quoth the king, 'Nay then, my sister, an I may, so stands my will,
Thou shalt give me here thy counsel, for I think me I did but ill,
And stained thereby mine honour, and dimmed my knightly
fame;
And I deem me but little worthy that thou shouldst me as brother
claim.
E'en if all lands should do my bidding at thy prayer would I yield
them all, 515
Lest that sorrow of sorrows greatest, thine hatred, on me should
fall!

And honour and joy were ended an I said to thy pleading, Nay—
Sir Gawain, I here entreat thee, since for fame thou didst ride this
way,
An thou knightly fame wouldst honour, so help me, that I may
win
Anew from my sister favour, and forgiveness for this my sin. 520
Far liefer were I to pardon the wrong thou hast done to me
Than to lose her, my sweetest sister—Now list what thy task shall
be,
Do thou swear to me here that truly thou wilt strive, as I erst was
fain
To strive, for the Grail's fair kingdom, and the honour thou there
shalt gain.'

In such wise the strife was ended, Sir Gawain far hence must ride, 525
And with sword and spear do battle, and woe for the Grail abide.
And the Landgrave forgave his monarch the wrong that he did his
word
When he brake his pledge unto Gawain—and no prince of the
land but heard.

Then their swords they ungirt, and they hung them in their place
on the castle wall—
And the squires of Gawain came swiftly, and, joyful, he hailed
them all, 530
For not one in strife was wounded—for a man of the Burger folk,
Ere the battle waxed hot, had claimed them, and wise were the
words he spoke,
And their peace he prayed from the foemen, and he held them
awhile in ward,
Were they French, or from land of the Breton, till again to their
rightful lord
He might send them in peace—Some were children, and some
were lads strong and young— 535

And glad were their hearts when they saw him, and awhile on his
neck they hung,
And weeping they kissed Sir Gawain, yet no sorrow I ween was
there,
But from joy sprang the crystal tear-drops that ran o'er their faces
fair.

And one came from the land of Cornwall, Count Laiz he, and
Tinal's son;
And a noble lad was with him whose father his death had won 540
At Schoie-de-la-Kurt, Gandelus, the son, and Gurgzrei, the sire—
(Thro' that venture full many a maiden must weep for her heart's
desire)

And his aunt was the maid Liassé, and fair was the lad of face
And of feature, for Love had touched them, and had wrought
them with hand of grace,
And fain were all men to see him—Six were there those twain 545
beside,
Eight lads, all of noble bearing and birth, with Gawain did ride.
And as kinsmen right well they loved him, and they served him
for payment fair;
What payment gave he? Meed of honour their guerdon, and
tender care!

Then Gawain quoth unto the children, 'Tis well, for I now have
seen,
Fair kinsmen, that ye had mourned me, if slain I perchance had
been, 550
(And well might he see their sorrow, for as yet they mourned full
sore,)

Where were ye in hour of battle? Much sorrow for ye I bore.'
Then they answered, and none spake falsely, 'As thou sat'st in the
high hall place
A hawk flew astray, and we ran thence, and joined for awhile the
chase.'

Then all they who sat or stood there, nor ceased for awhile their
gaze, 555
Saw well that Gawain was a true knight, and a man whom all men
might praise;
Then the king gave the leave he prayed for, and he spake unto all
farewell,
Save the queen alone, and the Landgrave, he whom men called
Kingrimursel.

For the queen took the twain, and the children who followed as
Gawain's squires,
And she led them where gentle maidens should serve as she 560
should require,
And in peace, as became fair maidens, each maid did her lady's
will,
And fair were the hands and gracious that did gracious tasks fulfil.

Straightway when the meal was ended Gawain from the feast
 uprose,
 Thus Kiot hath told the story—and as blossom from root up-
 grows,
 So afresh from a true heart's true faith did sorrow spring forth
 amain— 565

Quoth the hero unto the maiden, 'Now, Lady, an God be fain
 To leave to me life and wisdom, wherever my way I take
 True service, true knight befitting, will I do for thy gentle sake.
 The rede did I hear and hearken that spake thee of falsehood
 free,
 And thy fame o'er the fame of all maidens shall high as the
 heavens be. 570

And Heaven Itself shall bless thee, and thy gifts all be gifts of
 God!
 Now, Lady, thy leave I crave here, since 'tis time on my way I rode.
 Give me leave, then, and let me ride hence, for I ween for the
 future days
 Shalt thou be thine own best defender, and thy virtue shall crown
 thy praise!'

Then sorrow of heart was her portion that the knight thus her
 side must leave, 575
 Sore she wept, and her gentle maidens awhile with her grief must
 grieve.
 And the queen she spake out freely, 'An more I had done for
 thee,
 Then my joy had o'ercome my sorrow, yet better it might not be;
 Little peace for thee here might blossom—but, believe me, be ill
 thy share,
 Or should deeds of knighthood lead thee where sorrow thou
 needs must bear, 580

Then, Sir Gawain, my heart findeth portion in thy lot, be it loss or
 gain!
 On his mouth, with her red lips glowing, the maiden she kissed
 Gawain.
 Then joy fled afar from the hero, and sorrow hath pierced his
 heart,
 Too early the twain they deemed it, from each other for aye to
 part.

Meantime had his squires bethought them, and his steed to the
 palace brought, 585
 Where the boughs of a mighty linden might shadow the outer
 court;
 And the Landgrave's folk they sought him, and together they
 took their way
 Without the walls; ere they parted this grace would Sir Gawain
 pray,
 Since his squires might no more fare with him, that the Landgrave
 with them in ward

Should ride forthwith unto Beaurisch, 'There Scherules the Burg
doth guard, 590
Thou shalt pray him that these fair children to Dianadron he
bring
Where many a Breton dwelleth, and shall yield them unto the
king
Or to Guinevere, his Lady'—So sware him Kingrimursel,
And, with kindly words and courteous, to Sir Gawain he bade
'Farewell.'
Short the space ere both steed and rider were clad in their mail of
might, 595
Kinsmen and squires, he kissed them, and alone rode that gallant
knight,
For, as this his oath had bade him, to the Grail must his pathway
wend,
And many a pain and peril must he know ere his task should end.

BOOK IX TREVREZENT

ARGUMENT

Book IX. In the opening the spirit of adventure craves admission to the heart of the poet, who would fain learn from her tidings of Parzival. The venture telleth how the hero had ridden long in doubt and despair, and knew not the days of his wanderings. How he met again with Siguné and came to the forest of Monsalväsich, where he fought with a Knight of the Grail. How, on Good Friday, Parzival met with a pilgrim knight who reproached him for bearing arms at that Holy Tide, and bade him seek the hermit Trevrezent.

How Parzival came to the hermit's cell, and spake of his wrath against God, of his sorrow for his wife, and of his search for the Grail. How Trevrezent told him wherein he had sinned, and showed him the way of salvation.

How the hermit farther revealed to him the mysteries of the Grail, of the Bleeding Lance, and the knives of silver; how he told him of the wound of Anfortas, of the race of the Grail Kings, and how Parzival himself was nephew to Anfortas and Trevrezent. How Parzival confessed that it was he who came to the Grail Castle and failed to ask the question; how Trevrezent spake to him words of comfort and counsel, and absolved him from his sin; and how the two parted in sorrow.

BOOK IX TREVREZENT



'Ope the portal!' 'To whom? Who art thou?' 'In thine heart would I find a place!'

'Nay! if such be thy prayer, methinketh, too narrow shall be the space!'

'What of that? If it do but hold me, none too close shall my presence be,

Nor shalt thou bewail my coming, such marvels I'll tell to thee!'

Is it thou, then, O Dame Adventure? Ah! tell me of Parzival, 5

What doeth he now my hero? whom Kondrie, to find the Grail Hath driven, with words sharp-pointed, and sore wept the maidens fair

That the path of his far wayfarings the knight from their side must bear.

So he passed from the court of King Arthur, where shall he abide to-day?

Ah! hasten the tale to tell us, where now shall his footsteps stray? 10

Say, if fame to himself he winneth, or be ever of joy bereft, Shall his honour as fair and spotless as of old so to-day be left?

His renown is it broad as aforetime, or waxeth it small and thin?

Ah! tell us, nor stay the story, of the deeds that his hand shall win.

Hath he seen once again Monsalväsich, and Anfortas, the
mournful king, 15
Whose heart was with sorrow laden? Of thy pity swift comfort
bring,
And say if his woe be ended—Speak, speak for we tidings pray
Of him whom alike we serve here, dwells Parzival there to-day?
Declare unto me his doings, how fares it with Gamuret's son,
And the child of fair Herzeleide, is the tale of his wanderings
done? 20
Since he rode from the court of King Arthur has joy been his lot,
or woe?
He hath striven, but rides he ever thro' the wide world nor rest
doth know?
Or loveth he now, outwearied, to linger o'er-long at ease?
I were fain to know all his doings, so speak thou, as thou shalt
please! 25
And this hath the venture told me—He hath ridden many a land,
And hath sailèd many a water; and ever, before his hand,
Were he man of the land or kinsman who would joust with him,
he fell,
Nor abode his mighty onslaught, and all men of his praises tell.
And ever when in the balance the fame of his foe must lie,
'Twas outweighed by his fame, and his glory uprose to the stars
on high, 30
And all others paled before it—In many a mighty strife
With sword and lance was he victor, and guarded full well his life.
And they who would fame win from him, for such thinking they
paid full dear—
The sword that Anfortas gave him, as ye once in this tale did hear,
Sprang asunder onewhile, yet 'twas welded afresh in the mystic
spring 35
By Karnant, and much fame and honour the blade to its lord did
bring!

Who believeth me not, he sinneth, for now doth the venture tell
How adown a woodland pathway, on his way rode Sir Parzival,
(But the hour of his riding I wot not, if in waxing or waning light,) 40
When a hermitage, newly builded, uprose to his wondering sight,
And a stream flowed swift beneath it, for 'twas built o'er the
brooklet's wave
Then in search of some worthy venture to its door rode the hero
brave,
Nor knew that of grace 'twas the portal, and his footsteps of God
were led.
But the dweller therein was a maiden, and the days of her joy
were sped,
For the love of God had she offered her youth, and the joys of
earth, 45
And the root of her old-time sorrow brought ever fresh grief to
birth.

For he found here Schionatulander, and Siguné, his faithful love,
 Dead and buried he lay, the hero, and the maid wept his tomb
 above.
 Tho' but seldom Siguné the Duchess might hearken the Holy
 Mass,
 All her life was a prayer, in God's service her nights as her days
 she'd pass. 50
 And her lips, erst so red and glowing, had faded as life-joys fade,
 And alone would she mourn such sorrow as never had mourned a
 maid.

Thus denial of love's fulfilling made Love, with her love, to die,
 And dead, as she living loved him, did she cherish him tenderly.
 And in sooth had she once his wife been, then ne'er had Lunete
 braved 55
 Her wrath, and had given such counsel, as she once to her lady
 gave.
 And today may we look upon women, who never a willing ear
 Had turned to Lunete, and such wisdom but little had brooked to
 hear.

For this do I know, that a woman who, for love of her lord alone,
 And thro' virtue of gentle breeding, doth never strange service
 own, 60
 But aye, while her husband liveth, shall be to him wife as true,
 Heaven giveth in her such blessing as bloometh for ever new!
 And never shall prayer or fasting robe her with a robe as fair!
 And I, if the time were fitting, this word naught but truth would
 swear.

Be he dead, she may do as best please her, but if faithful she still
 abide, 65
 Then far fairer such faith than the circlet she beareth at feasting
 tide!

Shall I joy compare with the sorrow that her faith to Siguné
 brought?
 Nay, 'twere better I speak not of it—O'er rough stones, and a
 road unwrought
 Rode Parzival to the window (he deemed well he rode too near).
 He would ask of the woodland pathway, and the goal of its
 windings hear. 70
 And he thought him, perchance, the hermit might tell of the
 unknown way,
 'Doth one dwell here?' the voice of a maiden it was that made
 answer, 'Yea!'

As he knew 'twas the voice of a woman, swift turned he his steed
 aside
 On the greensward beside the pathway, for he deemed he too
 near did ride,
 And sooner had he dismounted had he known that a maiden
 dwelt 75
 Within such a lowly dwelling, and shame, as was meet, he felt.

Then his horse and his shield, all splintered, he bound to a fallen
 tree,
 And he loosed his sword from beside him, for a courteous knight
 was he.
 Then he stepped him unto the window, and asked of the place
 and road,
 And the cell of all joy was empty, and bare, as 'seemed grief's
 abode. 80
 He spake, would she come to the window? and the maiden from
 prayer arose,
 She was tall as a virgin lily, and pale as a faded rose,
 And he deemed not as yet that he knew her—A shirt woven
 rough of hair,
 Next her skin, 'neath a flowing garment of grey, did the maiden
 wear,
 And sorrow was her heart's treasure, and fallen her courage high, 85
 And the guerdon she won for her service must be paid her in
 many a sigh!

Then the maiden she stepped to the window and the knight did
 she courteous greet,
 In her hand did she hold her psalter, and her voice it was low and
 sweet.
 And Parzival saw on her white hand the gleam of a ring of gold,
 For truly she bare the token she won from true love of old. 90
 And the stone set within the cirlet was a garnet, whose
 slumbering light
 Flashed red mid the dusky shadows, as mid ashes the sparks glow
 bright.
 And the band that her head encircled was black as a mourning
 band—
 Then she spake, 'Sir Knight, 'neath the window a bench shalt thou
 see to stand,
 Thou canst sit there, an it so please thee, and thy journey will
 brook delay, 95
 God reward thee for this thy greeting Who hath led thee to me
 this day!'

Then the hero did as she bade him, and he sat 'neath the window
 small,
 And he prayed her, 'Sit thou within there!' 'Nay! ne'er did such
 chance befall
 That here by a man I sat me!' Then he asked her, what did she
 here?
 That, so far from the home of men-folk, thou dost dwell in this
 desert drear 100
 Seemeth me all too great a wonder, say, Lady, how shalt thou live,
 Since no man abideth by thee who succour or food can give?'

Then she quoth, 'Tis the Grail that doth feed me, and it feedeth
 me well I ween,

From Its marvels the sorceress Kondrie, (of her own will the task
 hath been,)

Doth bring me each Sabbath vigil what serveth me for the week.' 105
 A little space she kept silence, then further the maid did speak:
 'An it otherwise were with me as I would, I need little care
 For the food, since the Grail doth feed me I never too ill shall
 fare!'

But he deemed that she lied unto him, and with false words
 would speak him
 fair, And, mocking, he spake, 'Now, who gave thee that ring which
 I see thee wear?' 110

For ever 'twas told unto me that hermit, or man, or maid,
 Must forswear all love!'—'Now I think me, if in truth thou these
 words hast said,
 For false maiden thou sure dost hold me! Yet if falsehood I ever
 learn,
 And thou shalt be near to witness, 'twere time *then* with wrath to
 burn!

God knoweth, ill ways I hated, and falsehood I never knew; 115
 This troth plight that here thou seest I had from a lover true,
 Tho' never was love's fulfilment our portion while he might live,
 'Twas the heart of maiden bade me the love of a maiden give.
 And he lieth in death beside me, and his token I ever wear
 Since the day that Duke Orilus slew him—and grief for his sake I
 bear—' 120

'And true love will I truly give him, thro' my sorrow-laden days,
 Such love as I swear unto him, when he, whom, all knights must
 praise,
 With sword, and shield, and helmet, and prowess of knightly deed
 Sought my love, and in true love's service won death for his
 glory's meed!

Yet tho' ever a spotless maiden, my husband he, in God's sight, 125
 Shall be, and if thoughts God counteth as deeds then is woven
 aright
 The bond that shall ever bind us, true husband and wife as true,
 For his death wrought my life such sorrow as waxeth for ever
 new.
 And this ring shall, I ween, be my witness when I stand in the
 sight of God
 Of a marriage vow and the tear-drops that bedew it are tears of
 blood.' 130

'Yea, 'tis I indeed, and none other, and the hero who here doth lie
 Is my knight, Schionatulander, and the maid of his love am I!
 Then he knew 'twas the maid Siguné, and her sorrow it wrought
 him pain,
 And he lifted his helmet's visor ere he spake to the maid again.
 And she saw his head uncovered, and she saw his face gleam
 white 135

Thro' the rust of the iron harness, and she spake to the gallant knight:
 'Is it thou, Parzival, my kinsman? Dost thou seek for the Grail to-day?
 Or its mighty power hast thou proven? Say, whither dost wend thy way?'

Then he spake to the noble maiden, 'Alas! for my joy is fled,
 And the Grail hath but wrought me sorrow, and mischance in fair fortune's stead. 140
 For the land that as king had crowned me must I leave, and yet more, I ween,
 The fairest of wives, and the sweetest, that ever a man hath seen.
 For no lovelier form I think me on earth of mankind was born,
 And I yearn for her tender greeting, and full sore for her love I mourn!
 And yet know I a deeper sorrow and I strive for a higher prize, 145
 For the day when the Burg of Monsalväsich, and the Grail shall rejoice my eyes!
 Now, Siguné, dear my cousin, thou wast all too wroth with me,
 For heavy indeed my sorrow, yet thou fain wouldst my foeman be!'

And she quoth, 'From henceforth, my cousin, mine anger will I forswear,
 For too much of thy joy lieth forfeit since the question thou didst forbear! 150
 And I would not too sorely grieve thee—Alas I that thou didst withhold
 The word that had brought thee honour, and the tale of his griefs had told
 Who sat there as thine host beside thee—nor thine host alone was he,
 Anfortas, for joy and blessing his presence had brought to thee!
 And thy question great bliss had brought thee, and thy silence had wrought thee woe, 155
 And thy spirit shall fail, and heart-sorrow as thy comrade thou well shalt know.
 And yet had it been far from thee, nor, a stranger, had sought thy side,
 Hadst thou asked of that Burg the marvels, and what ill did its host betide!'

'Yea, I did there as one who wrongeth himself; yet my cousin dear I prithee here give me counsel, since in sooth are we kinsmen near. 160
 And tell me, how fares it with thee? I would sorrow for this thy woe
 Were my sorrow not all too heavy! Greater grief man may never know!'

Then she quoth, 'May His Mercy help thee, Who knoweth of all
 men's woe,
 Perchance it may yet befall thee that His finger a way shall show
 That shall lead thee once more to Monsalväsch, and thine heart's
 bliss afresh shall spring. 165
 'Tis but short space since Kondrie left me, and I would I could
 tidings bring
 Of whither she went, but I asked not if she rode to the Burg
 again,
 Or passed elsewhere; but when she cometh by that streamlet she
 draweth rein,
 Where, from cleft in the high rock riven, the waters flow fresh and
 clear.
 It may be, if thou follow swiftly, that she rideth as yet anear, 170
 And, perchance, thou shalt overtake her.' Then the knight he
 made no delay
 But farewell did he bid to the maiden; and he followed the
 woodland way,
 And fresh were the tracks before him, but such pathway the mule
 must choose
 Thro' the depths of the dusky thicket that its traces he soon must
 lose.
 As the Grail he had lost of aforetime, so he lost It again to-day, 175
 And joy and delight fled with It—Yea, had he but found the way,
 And reached once again Monsalväsch, for better than erst of old
 Had he known how to ask the question—thus in sooth is the
 venture told.

So now let him ride, but whither? Lo, a knight with uncovered
 head,
 And blazoned coat o'er his shining harness, full swiftly towards
 him sped! 180
 And to Parzival thus quoth he, 'Sir Knight, I must deem it ill
 That thus thro' the woods of my monarch thou takest thy way at
 will!
 Begone! or receive such token thou shalt wish thyself far from
 here!
 Monsalväsch doth never brook it that men ride thus its walls
 anear,
 And here must thou strive in battle, and win here a victor's fame, 185
 Or such penance be thine, as without there, in the open, men
Death shall name!
 And he bare in his hand a helmet, and its bands were of silken
 sheen,
 Sharp-pointed his spear, and the spear-shaft was of wood new
 and strong I ween!
 And wrathful he bound his helmet on his head, not in vain should
 be
 His threat, for his blows should enforce it! Now ready for joust
 was he; 190
 But many a spear as goodly had splintered 'fore Parzival,

And he thought, 'Now, it well had chanced me, that death to my
 lot should fall
 If I rode thro' the corn upstanding—*then* reason had he for wrath,
 But *now* hath he none, since I ride here on naught but a
 woodland path,
 And I tread here but fern and heather! An mine hand shall not
 lose its skill 195
 I will leave him such pledge for my journey as, I think me, shall
 please him ill!'

Then they rode at full speed their chargers, and they urged them
 with spur and rein,
 As the bolt from the bow of the archer so swift flew those heroes
 twain,
 And the first joust they rode unwounded; but many a knightly
 fray
 Unscathed had Parzival ridden, and e'en so should it chance to-
 day. 200
 (Unto skill and the lust of battle must his father's son be heir.)
 His lance-point upon the fastening of his foeman's helm struck
 fair,
 And it smote him where men in jousting their shield are wont to
 hold,
 And down from his gallant charger did he bear him, the Templar
 bold.
 And the knight of the Grail fell headlong down the side of a rocky
 dell, 205
 Tho' couch he had found, I think me, he slumbered not over well.

But the victor's steed sped onward, and in vain would he check its
 flight
 Ere it fell, and well-nigh in falling had borne to his death the
 knight.
 A cedar o'erhung the chasm, its bough Parzival gripped fast,
 (Nor think ye scorn of my hero, that, as chanceth a thief at last, 210
 He hung, for none spake his judgment, he hung there by his own
 hand)
 His feet, for a foothold seeking, on the rock found at last their
 stand:
 Far out of his reach, beneath him, his gallant steed lay dead,
 Up the further side of the valley the Templar for safety fled.
 Think ye that he much might pride him on his token from
 Parzival? 215
 Far better at home in Monsalväsich had he fared with the
 wondrous Grail!
 To the plain once more climbed our hero, there the steed of the
 Templar stood,
 For down to the ground hung the bridle and fettered the war-
 horse good.
 As the knight in his flight forgot it so it stood where its master
 fell,

Swift Parzival sprang to the saddle, such booty might please him
 well. 220
 Of a truth his spear had he shattered, yet more than he lost he
 won—
 Nor Lähelein, nor Kingrisein a better joust e'er had run!
 Nor King Gramoflanz nor Count Laskoit (the son he of
 Gurnemanz).
 Onward he rode, yet wandering, nor further befell mischance,
 Nor strife, from the knights of Monsalväsich, yet one grief must
 vex his soul, 235
 He found not the Grail—Ever further he rode, further fled the
 goal!

Now he who my song will hearken, he shall hear that which yet
 befell,
 Tho' the tale of the weeks I know not, that had flown since Sir
 Parzival
 Had met with the maid, and had ridden on venture as aye before
 —

One morning the ground was snow-clad, and tho' thin was the
 cloak it bore 230
 Yet so thick it was that men, seeing, had deemed it the time of
 frost;
 As he rode thro' the depths of a woodland by a knight was his
 pathway crossed,
 And old was the knight, and grey bearded, yet his face it was
 bright and fair,
 And his lady who walked beside him like mien to her lord did
 bear.
 And each on their naked body wore a garment of horse-hair grey,
 For penance and pilgrimage minded they wended afoot their 235
 way.
 And their children, two gentle maidens, such as men's eyes are
 fain to see,
 In like garments they followed barefoot, e'en as pilgrims are wont
 to be.

Then our hero the old knight greeted as he passed on his lowly
 way,
 And good was the rede, and holy, that he heard from his lips that
 day. 240
 And a prince of the land he seemed him—By each maiden a
 brachet ran,
 And with humble mien and reverent paced master alike and man.
 For both knight and squire they followed on this holy pilgrimage,
 And some, they were young and beardless, and some were bent
 low with age.

But Parzival, our hero, he was clad in far other wise, 245
 In fair raiment, rich and costly, he rode in right knightly guise,

And proudly he ware his harness, and unlike were the twain I
 ween,
 The old man in his robe of penance and the knight in his
 armour's sheen!
 Then swiftly he turned his bridle and held by the pathway side,
 For fain would he know of their journey, and friendly the knight
 replied. 250
 But a sorrow the old man deemed it that one to this Holy Tide
 Should have failèd to give due honour, but in warlike gear should
 ride.
 For better would it befit him unarmèd this day to greet,
 Or like them to walk barefooted, and in garb for a sinner meet!

 Quoth Parzival, 'Nay, I know not what the time of the year may
 be, 255
 Or how men the tale may reckon of the weeks as they swiftly flee,
 How the days shall be named I know not, long have I forgot such
 lore!
 Of old time I served a master, and *God* was the name He bore.
 But He bare unto me no favour, and for guerdon He mocking
 gave,
 Tho' ne'er had my heart turned from Him—Men said, 'If from God
 ye crave 260
 For succour, He sure will give it;' but I deem well they spake a lie,
 For He who they said would help me, did help unto me deny!'

Quoth the grey-haired knight, 'Dost thou mean Him who was
 once of a Maiden born?
 Dost believe that a Man for men's sake He died on the cross this
 morn,
 And this day for His sake we hallow? Then such garb becomes
 thee ill! 265
 For to-day all men call Good Friday, and the world it rejoiceth still
 O'er the day that her chains were riven; tho' she mourneth her
 Saviour's pain.
 Speak, knowest thou of faith more faithful than the faith God
 hath kept with men,
 Since He hung on the cross for men's sake? Such woe as He bare
 for thee,
 Sir Knight, sure must work thee sorrow, since baptized thou shalt
 surely be! 270
 For *our* sin His life was forfeit, or else had mankind been lost,
 And Hell as his prey had held us, and Hell's torments had paid
 sin's cost.
 Sir Knight, if thou be not heathen, thou shalt honour this Holy
 Day—
 So do thou as here I counsel, ride thou on this woodland way,
 For near here a hermit dwelleth, as thy speech, so his rede shall
 be, 275
 And if ruth for ill deed thou showest of thy sin will he speak thee
 free!'

Then out quoth the old man's daughter, 'Nay, father, but speak
 not so,
 For too chill and cold is the morning, thou shalt bid him no
 further go.
 Far better to bid him warm him his steel-clad limbs, for strong
 And fair shall he be to look on, and the way is both cold and long. 280
 Methinks were he thrice as mighty he would freeze ere his goal
 he reach,
 And here hast thou tent for shelter, and viands for all and each.
 Came King Arthur and all his vassals thou wouldst still have
 enough I trow,
 So do thou as host so kindly, and good-will to this young knight
 show!'

Quoth the grey-haired sire, 'My daughters, Sir Knight, here give
 counsel good, 285
 Each year, with tent of pilgrim, I wend thro' this lonely wood.
 If warm or cold be the season I care not, as year by year
 The time of our dear Lord's Passion draweth once more anear,
 He rewardeth His servant's service—Sir Knight, what I, for His
 sake,
 Brought here, as my guest, right willing, I pray thee from me to
 take!' 290

And kindly they spake, the maidens, and they bade the knight to
 stay,
 And with gracious mien they prayed naught might drive him from
 them away.
 And tho' cold was the frost and bitter, and it wrought not as
 summer's heat,
 Yet Parzival saw their lips glow so red, and soft, and sweet.
 (Tho' they wept for the death of the Saviour, such sorrow became
 them well.) 295
 And here, had I cause for vengeance, an such happy chance
 befell,
 I never would speak them guiltless, but a kiss should their
 penance be,
 Nor against their will would I take it, of good-will should they
 give it me!
 For women shall aye be women, and tho' brave be the knight,
 and strong,
 Yet I ween is he oft the vanquished, nor the strife it endureth
 long! 300

With sweet words, and ways so gentle, they ever the knight would
 pray,
 Children alike and parents, and fain would they have him stay:
 Yet he thought, 'It were best I leave them, for e'en if I turn aside
 All too fair methinks are these maidens, 'twere unfitting that I
 should ride
 While *they* by my side walk barefoot—And 'tis better that we
 should part, 305

Since ever I bear Him hatred Whom they worship with lowly
 heart,
 And they look for His aid, Who ever hath turnèd His face from
 me,
 Nor from sorrow hath He withheld me, but hath wrought with me
 heavily!
 'Knight and Lady,' he quoth, 'I think me 'twere better I leave
 should pray,
 May good fortune be yours, and blessing, and fulness of joy
 alway, 310
 And may you, ye gentle maidens, find reward in your courtesy,
 Since so well ye had thought to serve me, fair leave would I pray
 from ye!
 He greeted them, low they bowed them, and greeted the knight
 again,
 Nor might they withhold their sorrow, for parting aye bringeth
 pain!

So the son of Herzeleide rode onward, well taught was he 315
 In all manly skill and courage, in mercy and purity;
 And his mother had aye bequeathed him her faithful heart and
 true—
 Yet ever his soul waxed sadder, and there sprang up thoughts
 anew
 Of the might of the Maker of all things, Who hath made this earth
 of naught,
 How He dealeth with all creation, and still on His power he
 thought 320
 'How might it yet be if God sent me that which brought to an end
 my woe?
 If ever a knight He favoured, if ever a knight might know
 His payment for service done Him—if He thinketh His aid they
 earn
 Who dauntless shall wield their weapons, and ne'er from a
 foeman turn,
 Let Him aid me, who bear unstainèd shield and sword as befits a
 man, 325
 If to-day be His Day of Redemption, let Him help me, if help He
 can.'

Backward he turned his bridle on the road he had ridden before,
 And the knight and his children stood there, and mourned for the
 parting sore.
 And the maidens, true and gentle, gazed after the passing knight,
 And his heart spake, he fain had seen them once more those
 maidens bright. 330

Then he spake, 'Is God's power so mighty that He guideth upon
 their way
 The steed alike and the rider, then His hand may I praise to-day!
 If God sendeth help from heaven, then let Him my charger show

The goal which shall bless my journey, so shall I the token know.
Now, go thou as God shall lead thee!' and bridle and bit he laid 335
Free on the neck of his charger and spurred it adown the glade.

Towards Fontaine-Sauvage the road led, and the chapel where
once he sware
The oath that should clear Jeschuté—A holy man dwelt there,
And Trevezent men called him, and ever on Monday morn
Poor was his fare, and no richer it waxed as the week wore on. 340
Nor wine nor bread he tasted, nor food that with blood was red,
Fish nor flesh, but his life so holy on the herb of the ground was
fed.

And ever his thoughts, God-guided, were turning to Heaven's
land,
And by fasting the wiles of the Devil he deemed he might best
withstand.

And to Parzival the mystery of the Grail should he now reveal— 345
And he, who of this hath asked me, and since silence my lips must
seal

Was wroth with me as his foeman, his anger might naught avail,
Since I did but as Kiot bade me, for he would I should hide the
tale,
And tell unto none the secret, till the venture so far were sped
That the hidden should be made open, and the marvel of men be
read. 350

For Kiot of old, the master whom men spake of in days of yore,
Far off in Toledo's city, found in Arabic writ the lore
By men cast aside and forgotten, the tale of the wondrous Grail;
But first must he learn the letters, nor black art might there avail. 355
By the grace of baptismal waters, by the light of our Holy Faith,
He read the tale, else 'twere hidden; for never, the story saith,
Might heathen skill have shown us the virtue that hidden lies
In this mighty Grail, or Its marvels have opened to Christian eyes.

'Twas a heathen, Flegetanis, who had won for his wisdom fame,
And saw many a wondrous vision, (from Israel's race he came, 360
And the blood of the kings of old-time, of Solomon did he share,)
He wrote in the days long vanished, ere we as a shield might bear
The cross of our Holy Baptism 'gainst the craft and the wiles of
Hell,

And he was the first of earth's children the lore of the Grail to tell.
By his father's side a heathen, a calf he for God did hold, 365
How wrought the devil such folly, on a folk so wise, of old?
And the Highest Who knoweth all wonders, why stretched He not
forth His Hand
To the light of His truth to turn them? For who may His power
withstand!

And the heathen, Flegetanis, could read in the heavens high
How the stars roll on their courses, how they circle the silent sky, 370

And the time when their wandering endeth—and the life and the
 lot of men
 He read in the stars, and strange secrets he saw, and he spake
 again
 Low, with bated breath and fearful, of the thing that is called the
 Grail,
 In a cluster of stars was it written, the name, nor their lore shall
 fail.
 And he quoth thus, 'A host of angels this marvel to earth once
 bore, 375
 But too pure for earth's sin and sorrow the heaven they sought
 once more,
 And the sons of baptized men hold It, and guard It with humble
 heart,
 And the best of mankind shall those knights be who have in such
 service part'

Then Kiot my master read this, the tale Flegetanis told,
 And he sought for the name of the people, in Latin books of old, 380
 Who of God were accounted worthy for this wondrous Grail to
 care,
 Who were true and pure in their dealings and a lowly heart might
 bear.
 And in Britain, and France, and Ireland thro' the chronicles he
 sought
 Till at length, in the land of Anjou, the story to light was brought.
 There, in true and faithful record, was it written of Mazadan, 385
 And the heroes, the sons of his body, and further the story ran,
 How Titurel, the grandsire, left his kingdom to Frimutel,
 And at length to his son, Anfortas, the Grail and Its heirdom fell:
 That his sister was Herzeleide, and with Gamuret she wed
 And bare him for son the hero whose wanderings ye now have
 read. 390
 For he rideth upon a journey that shall lead him a road unknown,
 Tho' the grey knight but now had wended his way from the
 fountain lone.

And he knew again the meadow, tho' now the snow lay white
 On the ground that erst was blooming with flowers of springtide
 bright.
 'Twas before the rocky hillside where his hand must wipe away 395
 The stain from Jeschuté's honour, and her husband's wrath allay.
 Yet still the road led onward, to Fontaine-Sauvage, the name
 Of the goal that should end his journey and his hermit host he
 came.

Then out spake the holy hermit, 'Alas, why doest thou so,
 Sir Knight? at this Holy Season 'tis ill thus armed to go. 400
 Dost thou bear perchance this harness thro' strife and danger
 dared?

Or hast thou unharmèd ridden, and in peace on thy way hast
 fared?
 Other robe had beseemed thee better! List not to the voice of
 pride,
 But draw thy rein here beside me, and with me for a space abide.
 Not all too ill shalt thou fare here, thou canst warm thee beside
 my fire. 405
 Dost thou seek here for knightly venture, and dost guerdon of
 love desire,
 If the power of true Love constrain thee, then love Him who Love
 may claim!
 As this day to His Love beareth witness, be His service to-day
 thine aim,
 And serve for the love of fair women, if it please thee, another
 day;
 But now get thee from off thy charger, and awhile from thy
 wanderings stay.' 410

Then Parzival, e'en as he bade him, sprang lightly unto the
 ground;
 Humbly he stood before him, as he told how he folk had found
 Who had told of the hermit's dwelling, and the counsel he wisely
 gave,
 And he spake, 'I am one who hath sinnèd, and rede at thy lips I
 crave!' 415
 As he spake the hermit answered, 'Right gladly I'll counsel thee,
 But, say, what folk hast thou met with? Who showed thee thy way
 to me?
 'In the wood I met with an old man grey-headed, and fair he
 spake,
 And kindly, I ween, were his people, he bade me this road to take,
 On his track my steed came hither.' Then answered the hermit
 old, 420
 "'Twas Kahenis, and his praises shall ever by men be told.
 A prince of the land of Punturtois, and his sister Kareis' king
 Hath taken to wife—Fairer maidens no mother to earth did bring
 Than those maidens twain, his daughters, who met thee upon thy
 road,
 Of a royal house, yet yearly he seeketh this poor abode!'

Then Parzival spake to the hermit, 'Now say, when thou saw'st me
 here, 425
 Didst thou shrink from my warlike coming, didst thou feel no
 touch of fear?'
 Quoth the hermit, 'Sir Knight, believe me, far oftener for stag or
 bear
 Have I feared than I feared a man's face, in sooth shalt thou be
 aware
 I fear me for no man living! Both cunning and skill have I,
 And tho' I were loath to vaunt me, yet I ne'er to this life did fly 430
 For fear, as beseems a maiden! For never my heart did quail

When I faced as a knight my foeman, and ne'er did my courage
 fail,
 In the days when such things became me, in the days when I too
 might fight,
 I was armèd as thou art armèd, like thee did I ride, a knight!
 And I strove for high love's rewarding, and many an evil thought 435
 With the pure mind within me battled, and ever my way I
 wrought
 To win from a woman favour! All that was in time of yore,
 And my body, by fasting wasted, remembereth those days no
 more.'

'Now give to mine hand the bridle, for there 'neath the rocky wall
 Thy steed shall abide in safety, and we, ere the night shall fall, 440
 Will gather of bough and herbage, since no better food may be,
 Yet I trust that both thou and thy charger fare not all too ill with
 me!'

But Parzival deemed that surely 'twas unfitting a hermit old
 Should thus lead his steed, and the bridle he would fain from his
 hand withhold,
 'Now courtesy sure forbids thee to strive 'gainst thine host's
 good-will, 445
 Let not haste from the right path lead thee, but follow my counsel
 still.'

In this wise spake the old man kindly, as he bade him, so did the
 knight,
 And the charger he led 'neath the hillside where but seldom did
 sun-rays light.
 In sooth 'twas a wondrous stable where the hermit the steed
 would stall,
 And thro' it, from heights o'erhanging, foamed ever a water-fall. 450

The snow lay beneath our hero, no weakling was he, I ween,
 Else the frost and the cold of his harness o'er-much for his
 strength had been.
 To a cavern the hermit led him where no breath of wind might
 blow,
 And a fire of coals had warmed it, and burned with a ruddy glow.
 And here might the guest refresh him by the fire and a taper's
 light, 455
 (Well strewn was the ground with fuel,) then swiftly the gallant
 knight
 Laid from off him his heavy armour, and warmed his limbs so
 cold,
 And his skin in the light glowed ruddy, and his face might the
 host behold.
 He might well be of wandering weary, for never a trodden way
 Nor a roof save the stars of heaven had he known for many a day.
 In the daylight the wood had he ridden, and his couch, it had 460
 been the ground:
 'Twas well that he here a shelter, and a kindly host had found!

Then his host cast a robe around him, and he took him by his
 right hand,
 And he led him into a cavern where his Missal did open stand.
 And as fitted the Holy Season the Altar was stripped and bare; 465
 And the shrine—Parzival must know it, 'twas the spot where he
 once did swear
 With true hand, true oath and faithful, that ended Jeschuté's woe,
 And turnèd her tears to laughter, and taught her fresh joy to
 know!

Quoth Parzival, 'Well I know it this chapel and shrine! Of yore,
 As hither my wanderings led me, an oath on that shrine I swore; 470
 And a spear, with fair colours blazoned, that did here by the altar
 stand
 I bare hence, and in sooth, I think me, right well did it serve my
 hand!
 Men say it much honour brought me, yet I wot not if it be so,
 For in thoughts of my wife had I lost me, and naught of the thing
 I know.
 Yet, unwitting, two jousts had I ridden, and two foemen I
 overthrew, 475
 In those days all men gave me honour, nor sorrow nor shame I
 knew.
 Now, alas! is my sorrow greater than ever to man befell!
 Say, when did I bear the spear hence? The days of my wanderings
 tell!'

'It was Taurian,' quoth the hermit, 'who his spear in my care did
 leave,
 And much did he mourn its losing, and I with the knight must
 grieve. 480
 And four years and a half and three days shall have passed since
 we lost the spear,
 Sir Knight, an my word thou doubttest, behold! it is written here!
 Then he showed unto him in the Psalter how the time it had
 come and gone,
 And the weeks and the years he read him that silent and swift had
 flown.
 And he spake, 'Now first do I learn them, the days that I aimless
 stray, 485
 And the weeks and the years that have vanished, since my joy
 hath been reft away.'
 And he spake, 'Now indeed me-seemeth that my bliss it was but
 a dream,
 For heavy the load of sorrow that so long hath my portion been!'

'And, Sir Host, I yet more would tell thee, where cloister or church
 shall be
 And men unto God give honour, there no eye hath looked on me,
 And naught but strife have I sought me, tho' the time as thou 490
 sayst be long,

For I against God bear hatred, and my wrath ever waxeth strong.
 For my sorrow and shame hath He cherished, and He watched
 them greater grow
 Till too high they waxed, and my gladness, yet living, He buried
 low!
 And I think were God fain to help me other anchor my joy had
 found 495
 Than this, which so deep hath sunk it, and with sorrow hath
 closed it round.
 A man's heart is mine, and sore wounded, it acheth, and acheth
 still,
 Yet once was it glad and joyous, and free from all thought of ill!
 Ere sorrow her crown of sorrow, thorn-woven, with stern hand
 pressed
 On the honour my hand had won me o'er many a foeman's crest! 500
 And I do well to lay it on Him, the burden of this my shame,
 Who can help if He will, nor withholdeth the aid that men fain
 would claim,
 But me alone, hath He helped not, whate'er men of Him may
 speak,
 But ever He turneth from me, and His wrath on my head doth
 wreak!'

Then the hermit beheld him sighing, 'Sir Knight, thou shalt put
 away 505
 Such madness, and trust God better, for His help will He never
 stay.
 And His aid to us here be given, yea, alike unto me and thee.
 But' twere best thou shouldst sit beside me, and tell here thy tale
 to me,
 And make to me free confession—How first did this woe begin?
 What foe shall have worked such folly that God should thine
 hatred win? 510
 Yet first would I pray thee, courteous, to hearken the word I say,
 For fain would I speak Him guiltless, ere yet thou thy plaint shall
 lay
 'Gainst Him, Who denieth never unto sinful man His aid,
 But ever hath answered truly, who truly to Him hath prayed.'

'Tho' a layman I was yet ever in books might I read and learn 515
 How men, for His help so faithful, should ne'er from His service
 turn.
 Since aid He begrudged us never, lest our soul unto Hell should
 fall,
 And as God Himself shall be faithful, be *thou* faithful whate'er
 befall;
 For false ways He ever hateth—and thankful we aye should be
 When we think of the deed, so gracious, once wrought of His love
 so free! 520
 For *our* sake the Lord of Heaven in the likeness of man was made,

And Truth is His name, and His nature, nor from Truth shall He
 e'er have strayed.
 And this shalt thou know most surely, God breaketh His faith with
none.
 Teach thy thoughts ne'er from Him to waver, since Himself and
 His ways are One!

'Wouldst thou force thy God with thine anger? He who heareth
 that thou hast sworn 525
 Hatred against thy Maker, he shall hold thee of wit forlorn!
 Of Lucifer now bethink thee, and of those who must share his fall,
 Bethink thee, the angel nature was free from all taint of gall,
 Say, whence sprang that root of evil which spurred them to
 endless strife,
 And won its reward in Hell's torments, and the death of an
 outcast life? 530
 Ashtaroth, Belcimon, and Belat, Rhadamant, yea, and many more!
 Pride and anger the host of Heaven with Hell's colours have
 painted o'er!

'When Lucifer and his angels thus sped on their downward way,
 To fill their place, a wonder God wrought from the earth and clay:
 The son of His hands was Adam, and from flesh of Adam, Eve 535
 He brought, and for Eve's transgression, I ween, all the world doth
 grieve.
 For she hearkened not her Creator, and she robbed us of our
 bliss.
 And two sons sprang forth from her body, and the elder he
 wrought amiss,
 Since envy so worked upon him that from wrath there sprang
 disgrace,
 And of maidenhood did he rob her who was mother of all his
 race! 540
 Here many a one doth question, an the tale be to him unknown,
 How might such a thing have chanced? It came but by sin alone!

Quoth Parzival, 'Now, I think me that never such thing might be,
 And 'twere better thou shouldst keep silence, than tell such a tale
 to me!
 For who should have borne the father, whose son, as thou sayest,
 reft 545
 Maidenhood from his father's mother? Such riddle were better
 left!
 But the hermit again made answer, 'Now thy doubt will I put
 away,
 O'er my falsehood thou canst bemoan thee if the thing be not
 truth I say,
 For the *Earth* was Adam's mother, of the *Earth* was Adam fed,
 And I ween, tho' a man she bare here, yet still was the Earth a
 maid. 550

And here will I read the riddle, he who robbed her of
 maidenhood
 Was Cain the son of Adam, who in wrath shed his brother's blood:
 For as on the Earth, so stainless, the blood of the guiltless fell,
 Her maidenhood fled for ever! And true is the tale I tell.
 For wrath of man and envy, thro' Cain did they wake to life, 555
 And ever from that day forward thro' his sin there ariseth strife.'

'Nor on earth shall aught be purer than a maiden undefiled,
 Think how pure must be a maiden, since God was a Maiden's
 Child!
 Two men have been born of maidens, and God hath the likeness
 ta'en
 Of the son of the first Earth-Maiden, since to help us He aye was
 fain. 560
 Thus grief alike and gladness from the seed of Adam spring,
 Since He willed to be Son of Adam, Whose praises the angels
 sing.
 And yet have we sin as our birthright, and sin's pain must we ever
 bear,
 Nor its power may we flee! Yet pity He feeleth for our despair,
 Whose Strength is aye linked with Mercy, and with Mercy goes
 hand in hand, 565
 And for man, as a Man, He suffered, and did falsehood by truth
 withstand.'

'No longer be wroth with thy Maker! If thou wouldst not thy soul
 were lost—
 And here for thy sin do penance, nor longer thus rashly boast,
 For he who, with words untamèd, is fain to avenge his wrong,
 His own mouth shall, I ween, speak his judgment ere ever the
 time be long. 570
 Learn faith from the men of old-time, whose rede ever waxeth
 new,
 For Plato alike and the Sibyls in their day spake words so true,
 And long years ere the time had ripened His coming they did
 foretell
 Who made for our sin's Atonement, and drew us from depths of
 Hell.
 God's Hand from those torments took us, and God's Love lifted
 us on high, 575
 But they who His love disdainèd, they yet in Hell's clutches lie!'

'From the lips of the whole world's Lover came a message of love
 and peace,
 (For He is a Light all-lightening, and never His faith doth cease.)
 And he to whom love He showeth, findeth aye in that Love his
 bliss,
 Yet twofold I ween is the message, and His token some read
 amiss; 580

For the world may buy, as it pleaseth, God's Wrath or His Love so
 great.
 Say, which of the twain wilt thou choose here, shall thy guerdon
 be Love or Hate?
 For the sinner without repentance, he flieth God's faith and Face,
 But he who his sin confesseth, doth find in His presence grace!'

'From the shrine of his heart, who shall keep Him? Tho' hidden
 the thought within, 585
 And secret, and thro' its darkness no sunbeam its way may win,
 (For thought is a secret chamber, fast locked, tho' no lock it bear,)
 Yet, tho' against man it be closed, God's light ever shineth there.
 He pierceth the wall of darkness, and silent and swift His spring,
 As no sound betrayed His coming, as no footstep was heard to
 ring, 590
 So silent His way He goeth—And swift as our thoughts have
 flown,
 Ere God passed of our heart the threshold, our thoughts unto
 Him were known!
 And the pure in heart He chooseth; he who doth an ill deed
 begin,
 Since God knoweth the thoughts of all men, full sorely shall rue
 his sin.
 And the man who by deeds God's favour doth forfeit, what shall
 he gain? 595
 Tho' the world count him honour-worthy, his soul seeketh rest in
 vain.
 And where wilt thou seek for shelter if *God* as thy foeman stand,
 Who of wrath or of love giveth payment, as men serve Him, with
 equal hand?
 Thou art lost if thy God be against thee—If thou wouldst His
 favour earn,
 Then away from thy wrath and thy folly thy thoughts to His
 goodness turn! 600

Quoth Parzival, 'Here I thank thee, from my heart, that such
 faithful rede
 Thou hast given of him who withholdeth from no man his rightful
 meed,
 But evil, as good, requiteth—Yet my youth hath been full of care,
 And my faith hath but brought me sorrow, and ill to this day I
 fare!'

Then the hermit he looked on the Waleis, 'If a secret be not thy
 grief, 605
 Right willing thy woe I'll hearken, I may bring thee perchance
 relief;
 Of some counsel may I bethink me such as yet to thyself dost
 fail!'
 Quoth Parzival, 'Of my sorrows the chiefest is for the Grail,

And then for my wife—none fairer e'er hung on a mother's
 breast,
 For the twain is my heart yet yearning, with desire that ne'er
 findeth rest.' 610
 Quoth his host, 'Well, Sir Knight, thou speakest, such sorrow is
 good to bear;
 If thus for the wife of thy bosom thy heart knoweth grief and
 care,
 And Death find thee a faithful husband, tho' Hell vex thee with
 torments dire
 Yet thy pains shall be swiftly ended, God will draw thee from out
 Hell-fire.
 But if for the *Grail* thou grieveest, then much must I mourn thy
 woe, 615
 O! foolish man, since fruitless thy labours, for thou shalt know
 That none win the *Grail* save those only whose names are in
 Heaven known,
 They who to the *Grail* do service, they are chosen of God alone;
 And mine eyes have surely seen this, and sooth is the word I say!
 Quoth Parzival, 'Thou hast been there?' 'Sir Knight,' quoth the
 hermit, 'Yea!' 620
 But never a word spake our hero of the marvels himself had seen,
 But he asked of his host the story, and what men by 'The *Grail*'
 should mean?
 Spake the hermit, 'Full well do I know this, that many a knightly
 hand
 Serveth the *Grail* at Monsalväsch, and from thence, throughout all
 the land,
 On many a distant journey these gallant Templars fare, 625
 Whether sorrow or joy befall them, for their sins they this
 penance bear!'

'And this brotherhood so gallant, dost thou know what to them
 shall give
 Their life, and their strength and their valour—then know, by a
 stone they live,
 And that stone is both pure and precious—Its name hast thou
 never heard?
 Men call it *Lapis Exilis*—by its magic the wondrous bird, 630
 The Phoenix, becometh ashes, and yet doth such virtue flow
 From the stone, that afresh it riseth renewed from the ashes glow,
 And the plumes that erewhile it moulted spring forth yet more
 fair and bright—
 And tho' faint be the man and feeble, yet the day that his failing
 sight
 Beholdeth the stone, he dies not, nor can, till eight days be gone, 635
 Nor his countenance wax less youthful—If one daily behold that
 stone,
 (If a man it shall be, or a maiden 'tis the same,) for a hundred
 years,

If they look on its power, their hair groweth not grey, and their
 face appears
 The same as when first they saw it, nor their flesh nor their bone
 shall fail
 But young they abide for ever—And this stone all men call the
 Grail.' 640
 'And Its holiest power, and the highest shall I ween be renewed
 to-day,
 For ever upon Good Friday a messenger takes her way.
 From the height of the highest Heaven a Dove on her flight doth
 wing,
 And a Host, so white and holy, she unto the stone doth bring.
 And she layeth It down upon It; and white as the Host the Dove 645
 That, her errand done, swift wingeth her way to the Heaven
 above.
 Thus ever upon Good Friday doth it chance as I tell to thee:
 And the stone from the Host receiveth all good that on earth may
 be
 Of food or of drink, the earth beareth as the fulness of Paradise.
 All wild things in wood or in water, and all that 'neath Heaven
 flies, 650
 To that brotherhood are they given, a pledge of God's favour fair,
 For His servants He ever feedeth and the Grail for their needs
 doth care!'

'Now hearken, the Grail's elect ones, say who doth their service
 claim?
 On the Grail, in a mystic writing, appeareth each chosen name,
 If a man it shall be, or a maiden, whom God calls to this journey
 blest. 655
 And the message no man effaceth, till all know the high behest,
 But when all shall the name have read there, as it came, doth the
 writing go:
 As children the Grail doth call them, 'neath its shadow they wax
 and grow.
 And blessed shall be the mother whose child doth the summons
 hear,
 Rich and poor alike rejoiceth when the messenger draweth near, 660
 And the Grail son or daughter claimeth! They are gathered from
 every land,
 And ever from shame and sorrow are they sheltered, that holy
 band.
 In Heaven is their rewarding, if so be that they needs must die,
 Then bliss and desire's fulfilment are waiting them all on high!'

'They who took no part in the conflict, when Lucifer would fight 665
 With the Three-in-One, those angels were cast forth from
 Heaven's height.
 To the earth they came at God's bidding, and that wondrous
 stone did tend,

Nor was It less pure for their service, yet their task found at last
an end.

I know not if God forgave them, or if they yet deeper fell,
This one thing I know of a surety, what God doeth, He doeth well!
But ever since then to this service nor maiden nor knight shall fail, 670
For God calleth them all as shall please Him!—and so standeth it
with the Grail!

Quoth Parzival, 'So, since knighthood may conquer, with spear
and shield,
Both the fame of *this* life, and the blessing which Paradise shall
yield,
Since my soul ever longed for knighthood, and I fought where'er
strife might be, 675
And my right hand hath neared full often the guerdon of victory,
If God be the God of battles, if He know how a man should fight,
Let Him name me as one of His servants, of the Grail let Him
make me knight!
They shall own that I fear no danger, nor from strife would I turn
aside!'
But the hermit made answer gently, 'First must thou beware of
pride, 680
For lightly may youth mislead thee; and the grace of humility
Mayst thou lose, and the proud God doth punish, as full surely is
known to me!'
And tears filled his eyes to o'erflowing, and his sad thoughts
awhile did turn
To a story of old, and our hero he bade from its lesson learn.

And he quoth, 'Sir Knight, at Monsalväscha a king reigned in days
of yore, 685
His name all men know as Anfortas, and I weep for him evermore.
Yea, and thou too shalt mourn his sorrow, for bitter the woe, I
ween,
And the torment of heart and body that his guerdon from pride
hath been.
For his youth and his worldly riches they led him an evil road,
And he sought for Frau Minne's favour in paths where no peace
abode.' 690

'But the Grail all such ways forbiddeth, and both knight alike and
squire
Who serve the Grail must guard them from the lust of untamed
desire.
By meekness their pride must be conquered, if they look for a
heavenly prize,
And the brotherhood holdeth hidden the Grail from all stranger
eyes:
By their warlike skill and prowess the folk from the lands around, 695
They keep afar, and none knoweth where the Grail and Its Burg
are found

Save those whom the Grail shall summon within Monsalväsch'
 wall—
 Yet *one*, uncalled, rode thither and evil did then befall,
 For foolish he was, and witless, and sin-laden from thence did
 fare,
 Since he asked not his host of his sorrow and the woe that he saw
 him bear. 700
 No man would I blame, yet *this* man, I ween, for his sins must pay,
 Since he asked not the longed-for question which all sorrow had
 put away.
 (Sore laden his host with suffering, earth knoweth no greater
 pain.)
 And before him King Lähelein came there, and rode to the Lake
 Brimbane.
 Libbèals, the gallant hero, a joust there was fain to ride, 705
 And Lähelein lifeless left him, on the grass by the water-side,
 (Prienlaskors, methinks, was his birthplace) and his slayer then led
 away
 His charger, so men knew the evil thus wrought by his hand that
 day.'

'And I think me, Sir Knight, *thou* art Lähelein? For thou gavest
 unto my care
 A steed that such token showeth as the steeds of the Grail
 Knights bear! 710
 For the white dove I see on its housing, from Monsalväsch it
 surely came?
 Such arms did Anfortas give them while joy yet was his and fame.
 Their shields bare of old the token, Titurel gave it to his son
 Frimutel, and such shield bare that hero when his death in a joust
 he won.
 For his wife did he love so dearly no woman was loved so well 715
 By man, yet in truth and honour,—and the same men of thee
 shall tell
 If thou wakenest anew old customs, and thy wife from thine heart
 dost love—
 Hold thou fast to such fair example lest thy steps from the right
 path rove!
 And in sooth thou art wondrous like him who once o'er the Grail
 did reign,
 Say, what is thy race? whence art thou? and tell me I pray thy
 name!' 720

Each gazed for a space on the other, and thus quoth Parzival,
 'Son am I to a king and hero who through knightly courage fell,
 In a joust was he slain—Now I pray thee, Sir Hermit, of this thy
 grace,
 That thou, in thy prayers henceforward, wilt give to his name a
 place.
 Know, Gamuret, did they call him, and he came from fair Anjou— 725
 Sir Host I am not Lähelein; if ever such sin I knew

'Twas in my days of folly, yet in truth have I done the same,
 Here I make of my guilt confession, and my sin unto thee I name,
 For the prince who once fell a victim unto my sinful hand
 Was he whom men called 'the Red Knight,' Prince Ither of
 Cumberland. 730
 On the greensward I lifeless stretched him, and as at my feet he
 lay,
 Harness, and horse, and weapons, as my booty I bare away!

Spake the host as his words were ended, (the tale he ill pleased
 must hear,)
 'Ah! world, wherefore deal thus with us? since sorrow and grief
 and fear
 Far more than delight dost thou give us! Say, is this thy reward
 alone? 735
 For ever the song that thou singest doth end in a mournful tone!
 And he spake, 'O thou son of my sister, what rede may I give to
 thee?
 Since the knight thou hast slain in thy folly, thy flesh and thy
 blood was he!
 If thou, blood-guiltiness bearing, shalt dare before God to stand,
 For one blood were ye twain, to God's justice thy life shall repay
 thine hand. 740
 Say, for Ither of Gaheviss fallen, what payment dost think to
 give?
 The crown he of knightly honour! God gave him, while he might
 live.
 All that decketh man's life; for all evil his true heart did truly
 mourn,
 True balsam was he of the faithful, to honour and glory born.
 And shame fled before his coming, and truth in his heart did
 dwell, 745
 And for love of his lovely body many women shall hate thee well!
 For well did they love his coming, and to serve them he aye was
 fain,
 But their eyes that shone fair for his fairness he ne'er shall rejoice
 again!
 Now, may God show His mercy to thee whose hand hath such evil
 wrought,
 Herzeleide the queen, thy mother, thou too to her death hast
 brought—' 750
 'Nay! Nay! not so, holy father! What sayest thou?' quoth Parzival,
 'Of what dost thou here accuse me? Were I king o'er the
 wondrous Grail
 Not all its countless riches would repay me if this be sooth,
 These words that thy lips have spoken! And yet if I, in very truth,
 Be son unto thy sister, then show that thou mean'st me well, 755
 And say, without fear or falsehood, are these things true that
 thou dost tell?'

Then the hermit he spake in answer, 'Ne'er learnt I to deceive,

Thy mother she died of sorrow in the day thou her side didst
 leave,
 Such rewarding her love won for her! *Thou* wast the beast that
 hung
 On her breast, the wingèd dragon that forth from her body
 sprung, 760
 That spread its wings and left her: in a dream was it all foretold
 Ere yet the sorrowing mother the babe to her breast did hold!

'And two other sisters had I, Schoisianè she was one;
 She bare a child—Woe is me, her death thro' this birth she won!
 Duke Kiot of Katelangen was her husband, and since that day 765
 All wordly joy and honour he putteth from him away.
 Siguné, their little daughter, was left to thy mother's care:
 And sorrow for Schoisianè in my heart do I ever bear!
 So true was her heart and faithful, an ark 'gainst the flood of sin.
 A maiden, my other sister, her pure life doth honour win, 770
 For the Grail she ever tendeth—Repanse de Schoie, her name,
 Tho' none from Its place may move It whose heart showeth taint
 of shame,
 In *her* hands is It light as a feather—And brother unto us twain
 Is Anfortas, by right of heirship he king o'er the Grail doth reign;
 And he knoweth not joy, but sorrow, yet one hope I ween is his, 775
 That his pain shall at last be turnèd to delight and to endless
 bliss.
 And wondrous the tale of his sorrow, as, nephew, I'll tell to thee,
 And if true be thine heart and faithful his grief shall thy sorrow
 be!

'When he died, Frimutel, our father, they chose them his eldest
 son
 As Lord of the Grail and Its knighthood, thus Anfortas his
 kingdom won, 780
 And of riches and crown was he worthy, and we were but children
 still—
 When he came to the years of manhood, when love joyeth to
 work her will
 On the heart, and his lips were fringèd with the down of early
 youth,
 Frau Minne laid stress upon him who for torment hath little ruth.
 But if love the Grail King seeketh other than he find writ, 785
 'Tis a sin, and in sorrow and sighing full sore shall he pay for it!

'And my lord and brother chose him a lady for service fair,
 Noble and true he deemed her, I say not what name she bare;
 Well he fought in that lady's honour, and cowardice from him
 fled,
 And his hand many a shield-rim shattered, by love's fire was he
 venture led. 790
 So high stood his fame that no hero in knightly lands afar

Could he brook to be thought his equal, so mighty his deeds of
 war,
 And his battle-cry was "Amor," yet it seemeth unto me
 Not all too well such cry suiteth with a life of humility.'

'One day as the king rode lonely, in search of some venture high 795
 (Sore trouble it brought upon us,) with love's payment for victory,
 For love's burden lay heavy on him, in a joust was he wounded
 sore
 With a poisoned spear, so that healing may be wrought on him
 nevermore.

For thine uncle, the King Anfortas, he was smitten thro' the thigh 800
 By a heathen who with him battled, for he jousted right skilfully.
 He came from the land of Ethnisé, where forth from fair Paradise
 Flow the streams of the River Tigris, and he thought him, that
 heathen wise,
 He should win the Grail, and should hold It—On his spear had he
 graven his name,
 From afar sought he deeds of knighthood, over sea and land he
 came.

The fame of the Grail drew him thither, and evil for us his strife, 805
 His hand joy hath driven from us and clouded with grief our life!'

'But thine uncle had battled bravely and men praised his name
 that day—
 With the spear-shaft yet fast in his body he wended his
 homeward way.
 And weeping arose and wailing as he came once again to his
 own,
 And dead on the field lay his foeman, nor did we for his death
 make moan!' 810

'When the king came, all pale and bloodless, and feeble of
 strength and limb,
 Then a leech stretched his hand to the spear-wound, and the iron
 he found fast within,
 With the hilt, wrought of reed, and hollow, and the twain from
 the wound he drew.
 Then I fell on my knees, and I vowed me to God, with a heart so
 true,
 That henceforward the pride of knighthood, and its fame, would I
 know no more, 815
 If but God would behold my brother and would succour his need
 so sore.

Then flesh, wine, and bread I forswore there, and all food that by
 blood might live,
 That lust might no longer move me my life I to God would give,
 And I tell thee, O son of my sister, that the wailing arose anew
 When my weapons I put from off me and ungirded my sword so
 true, 820

And they spake, 'Who shall guard our mysteries? who shall watch
o'er the wondrous Grail?'

And tears fell from the eyes of the maidens, but their weeping
might naught avail!

'To the Grail, then, they bare Anfortas, if Its virtue might bring
relief;

But, alas! when his eyes beheld It yet heavier waxed his grief
As the life sprang afresh within him, and he knew that he might
not die;

825

And he liveth, while here I hide me in this life of humility,
And the power of the Grail, and Its glory, with their monarch have
waxen weak.

For the venom, his wound that poisoned, tho' the leeches their
books did seek

Yet found they nor help nor healing—Yea, all that their skill might
learn

'Gainst the poison of Aspis, Elkontius, of Liseis, and Ecidemon,
All spells 'gainst the worm empoisoned, 'gainst Jecis or Meàtris;
Or all that a wise man knoweth of roots or of herbs; I wis
Naught was there in all might help him; nor rede I a longer tale
Since *God* willeth not his healing what man's skill may aught
avail?'

830

'Then we sent to the mystic waters, in a far-off land they rise,
Pison, Gihon, Tigris, Euphrates, the rivers of Paradise,
And so near they flow that the perfumes which breathe from its
scented air

835

Shall yet to their streams be wafted—If their waters perchance
might bear

Some plant from the wondrous garden that might succour us in
our woe,

But vain thought, and fruitless labour, fresh sorrow our heart did
know!'

840

'Nor here did we end our labour, for again for the bough we
sought

Which the Sibyl unto Æneas as a shield 'gainst Hell's dangers
brought.

'Gainst the smoke and the fire of Phlegethon, and the rivers that
flow in Hell

Would it guard, and for long we sought it, for we thought, if such
chance befell

That the spear in Hell-fire was welded, and the poison from Hell
did spring

845

That thus of our joy had robbed us, then this bough might
salvation bring!'

'But Hell, it knew naught of the poison! There liveth a wondrous
bird

Who loveth too well her fledglings—Of the Pelican's love we
heard,

How she teareth her breast and feedeth her young with the
 quickening food
 Of her own life-blood, and then dieth—So we took of that bird
 the blood, 850
 Since we thought that her love might help us, and we laid it upon
 the sore
 As best we could—Yet, I wot well, no virtue for us it bore!
 'A strange beast, the Unicorn, liveth, and it doth in such honour
 keep
 The heart of a spotless maiden that it oft at her knee will sleep.
 And the heart of that beast we took us, and we took us the red-
 fire stone 855
 That lies 'neath its horn, if the king's wound might its healing
 virtue own.
 And we laid on the wound the carbuncle, and we put it the
 wound within,
 Yet still was the sore poisoned nor aid from the stone might
 win!
 'And sore with the king we sorrowed—Then a magic herb we
 found,
 (Men say, from the blood of a dragon it springeth from out the
 ground,) 860
 With the stars, and the wind, and the heaven, close-bound, doth
 it win its power,
 Lest perchance, by the flight of the dragon, when the stars bring
 the circling hour,
 And the moon draweth near to her changing, (for sorer then
 grows the pain,)
 The herb might our grief have aided—Yet its magic we sought in
 vain!
 'Then the knights of the Grail knelt lowly, and for help to the Grail
 they prayed, 865
 And, behold! the mystic writing, and a promise it brought of aid,
 For a knight should come to the castle, and so soon as he asked
 the king
 Of the woe that so sorely pained him his question should healing
 bring.
 But let them beware, man or maiden, or child, should they warn
 the knight
 Of his task, he no healing bringeth, greater waxeth the sorrow's
 might. 870
 And the writing it ran, 'Ye shall mark this, forewarning shall bring
 but ill,
 And in the first night of his coming must the healer his task fulfil,
 Or the question shall lose its virtue; but if at the chosen hour
 He shall speak, *his* shall be the kingdom, and the evil hath lost its
 power.
 So the hand of the Highest sendeth to Anfortas the end of woe, 875

Yet *King* shall he be no longer tho' healing and bliss he know.'
 'Thus we read in the Grail that our sorrow should come to an end
 that day
 That the knight should come who the meaning of the grief that
 he saw should pray—
 Then salve of Nard we took us, and Teriak, and the wound we
 dressed,
 And we burnt wood of Lignum Aloe for so might the king find
 rest. 880
 Yet ever he suffereth sorely—Then fled I unto this place,
 And my life little gladness knoweth till my brother hath gotten
 grace.
 And the knight, he hath come, and hath left us, and ill for us all
 that day,
 (But now did I speak of his coming,) sorrow-laden he rode away,
 For he saw his host's woe and asked not, 'What aileth thee here,
 mine host?' 885
 Since his folly such words forbade him great bliss shall he there
 have lost!'

Then awhile did they mourn together till the mid-day hour drew
 near,
 And the host spake, 'We must be seeking for food, and thine
 horse, I fear,
 As yet shall be lacking fodder; nor know I how we shall feed
 If not God in His goodness show us the herbs that shall serve our
 need, 890
 My kitchen but seldom smoketh! Forgive thou the lack to-day,
 And abide here, so long as shall please thee, if thy journey shall
 brook delay.
 Of plants and of herbs would I teach thee much lore, if so be the
 grass
 Were not hidden by snow—God grant us that this cold may be
 soon o'erpast—
 Now break we yew-boughs for thy charger, far better its fare hath
 been 895
 Erewhile 'neath the roof of Monsalväsich than shall here be its lot I
 ween!
 Yet never a host shall ye meet with who rider alike and steed
 Would as gladly bid share of his substance as I, had I all ye need!
 Then the twain they went forth on their errand—Parzival for his
 steed had care,
 While the hermit for roots was seeking since no better might be
 their fare; 900
 And the host his rule forgat not, he ate naught, whate'er he
 found,
 Till the ninth hour, but ever hung them, as he drew them from
 out the ground,
 On the nearest shrub, and there left them; many days he but ill
 might fare

For God's honour, since oft he lost them, the shrubs which his
 roots did bear.

Nor grudged they aught of their labour: then they knelt by the
 streamlet's flow, 905
 And the roots and the herbs they washed there, and no laughter
 their lips might know.
 Then their hands they washed, and the yew-boughs Parzival
 together bound
 And bare them unto his charger ere the cavern again he found;
 Then the twain by the fireside sat them, nor further might food be
 brought,
 Nor on roast nor on boiled they fed them, nor found in their
 kitchen aught. 910
 Yet so true was the love and the honour Parzival to the hermit
 bare
 That he deemed he enough had eaten, and no better had been
 his fare
 With Gurnemanz of Graharz, or e'en in Monsalväscher hall,
 When the maidens passed fair before him and the Grail fed them
 each and all.

Then his kindly host quoth, 'Nephew, despise not this food, for
 know 915
 Lightly thou shalt not find one who shall favour and kindness
 show,
 Of true heart, without fear of evil, as fain would I show to thee.'
 And Parzival quoth, 'May God's favour henceforward ne'er light
 on me
 If food ever better pleased me, or I ate with a better will
 What a host ever set before me, such fare doth content me still.' 920

Their hands they need not wash them for such food as before
 them lay,
 'Twas no fish, that their eyes had harmed as men oft are wont to
 say.
 And were I or hawk or falcon I had lent me to the chase,
 Nor stooped to the lure unwilling, nor fled from my master's face,
 But an they no better fed me than at noontide they fed, these
 twain, 925
 I had spread my wings right swiftly, nor come to their call again!
 Why mock at this folk so faithful? 'Twas ever my way of old—
 Yet ye know why, forsaking riches, they chose to them want and
 cold,
 And the lack of all things joyful, such sorrow and grief of heart
 They bare of true heart, God-fearing, nor had they in falsehood
 part;
 And thus from the hand of the Highest they won payment for
 grief and woe, 930
 And alike should the twain God's favour, as of old, so hereafter
 know.

Then up stood they again, and they gat them, Parzival and the
 holy man,
 To the steed in its rocky stable, and full sadly the host began
 As he spake to the noble charger, 'Woe is me for thy scanty fare, 935
 For the sake of the saddle upon thee and the token I see thee
 bear!'

When their care for the horse was ended, then sorrow sprang
 forth anew,
 Quoth Parzival, 'Host and uncle, my folly I needs must rue,
 And fain would I tell the story if for shame I the word may speak;
 Forgive me, I pray, of thy kindness, since in thee do I comfort
 seek, 940
 For sorely, I ween, have I sinnèd; if thou canst no comfort find
 No peace may be mine, but for ever the chains of remorse shall
 bind.
 Of true heart shalt thou mourn my folly—He who to Monsalväschr
 rode,
 He who saw Anfortas' sorrow, he who spake not the healing
 word,
 'Twas I, child and heir of misfortune, 'twas I, Parzival, alone, 945
 Ill have I wrought, and I know not how I may for such ill atone!'

Spake the hermit, 'Alas! my nephew, thou speakest the words of
 woe,
 Vanished our joy, and sorrow henceforth must we grasp and
 know,
 Since folly of bliss betrayed thee: senses five did God give to thee,
 And methinks, in the hour of thy testing, their counsel should
 better be. 950
 Why guarded they not thine honour, and thy love as a man to
 men,
 In the hour that thou satst by Anfortas? Of a truth hadst thou
 spoken then!'

'Nor would I deny thee counsel; mourn not for thy fault too sore,
 Thou shalt, in a fitting measure, bewail thee, and grief give o'er.
 For strange are the ways, and fitful, of mankind, oft is youth too
 wise 955
 And old age turneth back to folly, and darkened are wisdom's
 eyes,
 And the fruit of a life lieth forfeit, while green youth doth wax old
 and fade—
 Not in this wise true worth shall be rooted, and payment in praise
 be paid.
 Thine youth would I see fresh blooming, and thine heart waxing
 strong and bold,
 While thou winnest anew thine honour, nor dost homage from
 God withhold. 960
 For thus might it chance unto thee to win for thyself such fame

As shall make amends for thy sorrow, and God thee, as His
knight, shall claim!

'Thro' my mouth would God teach thee wisdom; now say, didst
thou see the spear,
In that wondrous Burg of Monsalväsch? As ever the time draws
near
When Saturn his journey endeth—(that time by the wound we
know, 965
And yet by another token, by the fall of the summer snow)
Then sorely the frost doth pain him, thy king and uncle dear,
And deep in the wound empoisoned once more do they plunge
the spear,
One woe shall help the other, the spear cure the frost's sharp
pain,
And crimson it grows with his life-blood ere men draw it forth
again!' 970

'When the stars return in their orbit, then the wailing it waxeth
sore,
When they stand in opposition, or each to the other draw.
And the moon, in its waxing and waning, it causeth him bitter
pain—
In the time that I erst have told thee then the king little rest may
gain;
His flesh thro' the frost it groweth colder than e'en the snow, 975
But men know that the spear sharp-pointed doth with fiery
venom glow,
And upon the wound they lay it, and the frost from his flesh so
cold
It draweth, and lo! as crystals of glass to the spear doth hold,
And as ice to the iron it clingeth, and none looseth it from the
blade.
Then Trebuchet the smith bethought him, in his wisdom two
knives he made, 980
Of silver fair he wrought them, and sharp was the edge and keen
—
(A spell on the king's sword written had taught him such skill I
ween,)
Tho' no flame on earth can kindle Asbestos, as men do tell,
And never a fire may harm it, if these crystals upon it fell
Then the flame would leap and kindle and burn with a fiery glow 985
Till th' Asbestos lay in ashes, such power doth this poison know!

'The king, he rideth never, nor yet may he walk, or lie,
And he sitteth not, but, reclining, in tears his sad days pass by.
And the moon's changes work him evil—To a lake they call
Brimbane
They bear him full oft for fishing that the breezes may soothe his
pain. 990

This he calleth his day for hunting, tho' what booty shall be his
 share,
 And he vex himself to gain it, for his host 'twould be meagre fare!
 And from this there sprang the story that he should but a Fisher
 be,
 Tho little he recked the fable, no merchant I ween was he
 Of salmon or aye of lamprey, he had chosen far other game 995
 Were he freed from the load of sorrow and the burden of bitter
 pain.'

Quoth Parzival, 'So I found him; the king's skiff at anchor lay,
 And for pastime, e'en as a fisher, the even he wore away;
 And many a mile had I ridden that day, since from Pelrapär
 When the sun stood high in the heaven, at noontide I forth must
 fare; 1000
 And at even I much bethought me where my shelter that night
 might be,
 Then my uncle did fair entreat me, and my host for a space was
 he.'

'A perilous way didst thou ride there,' spake the host, 'one that
 well they guard
 Those Templars, nor strength nor cunning brings a traveller thro'
 their ward,
 For danger full oft besets him, and oft he his life shall lose,
 Life against life is their penance, all quarter these knights refuse.' 1005

'Yet scatheless I passed that woodland in the day that I found the
 king
 By the lake,' quoth the knight, 'and at even his palace with grief
 did ring,
 And sure, as they mourned, I think me, no folk ever mourned
 before!
 In the hall rose the voice of wailing as a squire sprang within the
 door, 1010
 And a spear in his hand he carried, and to each of the walls he
 stept,
 Red with blood was the spear, as they saw it, the people they
 mourned and wept.'

Then answered the host, 'Far sorer than before was the monarch's
 pain,
 In this wise did he learn the tidings that Saturn drew near again,
 And the star with a sharp frost cometh, and it helpeth no whit to
 lay 1015
 The spear on the sore as aforetime, in the wound must it plunge
 away!
 When that star standeth high in heaven the wound shall its
 coming know
 Afore, tho' the earth shall heed not, nor token of frost shall show.
 But the cold it came, and the snow-flakes fell thick in the
 following night

Tho' the season was spring, and the winter was vanquished by
 summer's might. 1020
 As the frost to the king brought sorrow and pain, so his people
 true
 Were of joy bereft, as the moment of his anguish thus nearer
 drew.'

And Trevezent quoth, 'In sorrow that folk hath both lot and part,
 When the spear thro' the king's wound pierceth, it pierceth each
 faithful heart.
 And their love to their lord, and their sorrow, such tears from
 their eyelids drew 1025
 That, methinks, in those bitter waters had they been baptized
 anew.'

Spake Parzival unto the hermit, 'Five-and-twenty they were, the
 maids
 I saw stand before the monarch, and courteous their part they
 played.'
 And the host spake, 'By God's high counsel such maidens alone
 avail
 For the care of this wondrous mystery, and do service before the
 Grail. 1030
 And the Grail, It chooseth strictly, and Its knights must be chaste
 and pure,—
 When the star standeth high in the heaven then grief must that
 folk endure,
 And the young they mourn as the aged, and God's wrath it lasts
 for aye,
 And ne'er to their supplication doth He hearken and answer
 "Yea."

'And, nephew, this thing would I tell thee, and my word shalt thou
 well believe, 1035
 They who to the Grail do service, they take, and again they give.
 For they take to them tittle children, noble of birth and race—
 If a land be without a ruler, and its people shall seek God's Face
 And crave of His Hand a monarch, then He hearkeneth to their
 prayer,
 And a knight, from the Grail host chosen, as king to that land
 doth fare. 1040
 And well shall he rule that people, and happy shall be that land,
 For the blessing of God goeth with him and God's wisdom doth
 guide his hand.'

'God sendeth the *men* in secret, but the *maidens* in light of day
 Are given unto their husbands; thus none spake to his wooing,
 Nay,
 When King Kastis wooed Herzeleide, but joyful our sister gave, 1045
 Yet ne'er might her love rejoice him for Death dug at his feet a
 grave.
 But in life had he given thy mother both Norgals and fair Walesis,

Those kingdoms twain and their cities, Kingrivals and Kanvoleis.
 'Twas a fair gift, and known of all men—Then they rode on their
 homeward way,
 But Death met them upon their journey, and he made of the king
 his prey, 1050
 And over both Waleis and Norgals Herzeleide, as queen, did
 reign,
 Till Gamuret's right hand valiant won the maid, and her kingdoms
 twain.'

'Thus the Grail Its maidens giveth, in the day, and the sight of
 men,
 But It sendeth Its knights in the silence and their children It claims
 again,—
 To the host of the Grail are they counted, Grail servants they all
 shall be, 1055
 So the will of God standeth written on the Grail for all men to
 see.'

'He who would to the Grail do service, he shall women's love
 forswear:
 A wife shall none have save the Grail king, and his wife a pure
 heart must bear,
 And those others whom God's Hand sendeth, as king, to a
 kingless land—
 But little I recked such counsel, to love's service I vowed my hand,
 As the pride of my youth constrained me, and the beauty of
 woman's eyes, 1060
 And I rode full oft in her service, and I battled for knighthood's
 prize.
 Fain was I for wild adventure, on jousting no more I thought,
 So fair shone the love-light on me ever fiercer the strife I sought.
 And thro' far-off lands and distant, in the service of love I fared, 1065
 And to win sweet love's rewarding right valiant the deeds I dared.
 If heathen my foe or Christian, what mattered it unto me?
 The fiercer the strife that beset me, the fairer my prize should be!'

'And thus, for the love of woman, in three parts of the earth I
 fought,
 In Europe, and far-off Asia, and in Afric' I honour sought. 1070
 If for gallant jousting I lusted I fought before Gaurivon;
 By the mystic Mount of Fay-Morgan I many a joust have run.
 And I fought by the Mount Agremontin, where are fiery men and
 fierce,
 Yet the other side they burn not tho' their spears thro' the shield
 can pierce.
 In Rohas I sought for ventures, and Slavs were my foemen then, 1075
 With lances they came against me and I trow they were gallant
 men!'

'From Seville I took my journey, and I sailed o'er the tideless sea
 Unto Sicily, since thro' Friant and Aquilea should my journey be.

Alas! alas! woe is me, for I met with thy father there,
 I found him, and looked upon him, ere I from Seville must fare. 1080
 For e'en as I came to the city he there for a space abode,
 And my heart shall be sore for his journey, since thence to
 Bagdad he rode,
 And there, as thyself hast spoken, in a knightly joust he fell,
 And for ever my heart must mourn him, and my tongue of his
 praises tell!
 'A rich man shall be my brother, nor silver nor gold would spare 1085
 When in secret I forth from Monsalväsch at his will and his word
 did fare;
 For I took me his royal signet, and to Karkobra I came,
 Where Plimizöl to the wide sea floweth, and the land, Barbigöl,
 they name.
 And the Burg-grave he knew the token, ere I rode from the town
 again
 Of horses and squires, as failed me, he raised me a gallant train, 1090
 And we rode thence to wild adventures, and to many a knightly
 deed,
 For nothing had he begrudged me of aught that might serve my
 need.
 Alone came I unto the city, and there at my journey's end
 Did I leave those who had fared thence with me, and alone to
 Monsalväsch wend.'

 'Now hearken to me, my nephew, when thy father first saw my
 face 1095
 Of old in Seville's fair city, there did he such likeness trace
 To his wife, fair Herzeleide, that he would me as brother claim,
 Tho' never before had he seen me, and secret I held my name.
 And in sooth was I fair to look on, as ever a man might be,
 And my face by no beard was hidden; and sweetly he spake to
 me, 1100
 When he sought me within my dwelling—Yet many an oath I
 swore
 And many a word of denial, yet ever he pressed me more
 Till in secret at last I told him, his kinsman was I in truth,
 And greatly did he rejoice him when he knew that his words were
 sooth!'

'A jewel he gave unto me, and I gave to him at his will; 1105
 Thou sawest my shrine, green shall grass be, yet that shineth
 greener still,
 'Twas wrought from the stone he gave me—and a better gift he
 gave,
 For his nephew as squire he left me, Prince Ither, the true and
 brave.
 His heart such lore had taught him that falsehood his face did
 flee,
 The King of Cumberland was he, who, thou sayest, was slain by
 thee. 1110

Then no longer might we delay us, but we parted, alas! for aye.
He rode to the land of Baruch, unto Rohas I took my way.

'In Celli three weeks I battled, and I deemed 'twas enough for
fame,
From Rohas I took my journey and unto Gandein I came,
('Twas that town from which first thy grandsire, his name of
Gandein did take.) 1115

And many a deed did Ither, and men of his prowess spake.
And the town lieth near the river, where Graien and Drave they
meet,
And the waters I ween are golden,—there Ither found guerdon
sweet,
For thine aunt, Lamire, she loved him, she was queen of that fair
land,
Gandein of Anjou, her father, he gave it unto her hand. 1120
And Lamire was her name, but her country shall be Styria to this
day—
And many a land must he traverse who seeketh for knightly fray.'

'It grieveth me sore for my red squire, men honoured me for his
sake,
And Ither was thy near kinsman tho' of *that* thou small heed didst
take!
Yet God *He* hath not forgotten, and thy deed shall He count for
sin, 1125
And I wot thou shalt first do penance ere thou to His peace shalt
win.

And, weeping, this truth I tell thee, two mortal sins shall lie
On thine heart, thou hast slain thy kinsman, and thy mother, thro'
thee, must die.
And in sooth shalt thou sore bewail her; in the day thou didst
leave her side,
So great was her love, and faithful, that for grief at thy loss she
died. 1130
Now do thou as here I rede thee, repent thee and pay sin's cost,
That thy conflict on earth well ended thy soul be not ever lost.'

Then the host he quoth full kindly, 'Nephew, now say the word,
Whence hast thou yon gallant charger? Not yet I the tale have
heard!
'In a joust, Sir Host, did I win it, when I rode from Siguné's cell 1135
In a gallop I smote the rider and he from the saddle fell,
And the steed was mine, I rode hence,—from Monsalväsche he
came, the knight.'

Quoth the host, 'Is the man yet living who thus with thee did
fight?'
'Yea, I saw him fly before me, and beside me stood his steed.'
'Nay, if thou in such wise dost bear thee thou art scant of wit
indeed! 1140

The Grail-knights dost thou rob, and thinkest their friendship
thereby to win?'
'Nay, my uncle, in strife I won it, and he who shall count it sin
Let him ask how the thing hath chanced thus, 'twas a fair fight we
fought, we twain,
Nor was it for naught that I took it, for first had my steed been
slain!'

Quoth Parzival, 'Who was the maiden who the Grail in her hands
did bear, 1145
Her mantle, that eve, she lent me?'—Quoth the hermit, 'That lady
fair
Is thine aunt, if her robe she lent thee of the loan shalt thou not
be vain,
For surely she deemed that hereafter thou shouldst there as
monarch reign.
And the Grail, and herself, yea and I too, should honour thee as
our lord:
And a gift didst thou take from thine uncle, for he gave thee, I
ween, a sword, 1150
And sin hast thou won in the wearing, since thy lips, which to
speak are fain,
There spake not the mystic question which had loosened his
sorrow's chain,
And that sin shalt thou count to the other, for 'tis time that we lay
us down.
Nor couches nor cushions had they, but they laid them upon the
ground,
And for bedding the rushes served them—too humble, I ween,
such bed 1155
For men of a race so noble, yet they deemed they were not ill-
sped.

Then twice seven days he abode there, with the hermit his lot did
share,
And the herb of the ground was his portion—yet he sought not
for better fare,
Right gladly he bare such hardness that should bring to him food
so sweet,
For as priest did his host absolve him, and as knight gave him
counsel meet! 1160

Quoth Parzival to the hermit, 'Say who shall he be, who lay
Before the Grail? grey was he, yet his face it was as the day!'
Spake the host, 'Titurel thou sawest, and he shall grandsire be
To thy mother, first king and ruler of the Grail and its knights was
he.
But a sickness hath fallen on him, and he lieth, nor findeth cure, 1165
Yet his face on the Grail yet looketh, by its power shall his life
endure!

Nor his countenance changeth colour, and his counsel shall aye
be wise—

In his youth he rode far and jousted, and won to him valour's
prize.'

'An thou wouldst that thy life be adornèd with true worth as thy
crown of fame,

Then ne'er mayst thou hate a woman, but shall honour, as knight,
her name, 1170

For women and priests, thou knowest, unarmèd shall be their
hand,

Yet the blessing of God watcheth o'er them, and as shield round
the priest doth stand;

For the priest, he careth for thee, that thine end may be free from
ill,

So treat thou no priest as a foeman, but serve him with right
good will.

For naught on the earth thou seest that is like to his office high,
For he speaketh that word unto us which our peace and our life 1175

did buy;
And his hand hath been blest for the holding of the pledge on
the altar laid,

To assure us of sin's forgiveness, and the price for our pardon
paid.

And a priest who from sin doth guard him, and who to his Lord
shall give

Pure heart and pure hand for His service, say, what man shall
holier live?' 1180

Now this day was their day of parting—Trevrezent to our hero
spake,

'Leave thou here thy sins behind thee, God shall me for thy surety
take,

And do thou as I have shown thee, be steadfast and true of
heart!'

Think ye with what grief and sorrow the twain did asunder part.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE ANGEVIN ALLUSIONS OF THE 'PARZIVAL'

One of the most striking peculiarities of this version of the Perceval legend consists in the fact that the writer closely connects his hero with a contemporary princely house, and exercises considerable ingenuity in constructing a genealogy which shall establish a relationship alike with the legendary British race of Pendragon, and with the hereditary House of Anjou. Now, that Parzival should be represented as connected with Arthur is not surprising, taking into consideration the great popularity of the Arthurian legends; the English 'Sir Percyvella' makes the relationship even closer; there, Percyvella is Arthur's nephew, his sister's son; but it is far more difficult to account for the Angevin connection. It has been suggested that the writer of Wolfram's French source was Walter Mapes, to whom another of the Grail romances the *Queste* is generally ascribed; and who, as is well known, was closely attached to the Court of Henry Fitz-Empress, Count of Anjou, and King of England. Setting on one side the great difference, in style and treatment, between the *Parzival* and the *Queste*, which render it impossible to believe that the same man could have treated the same legend from two such practically opposite points of view, a close examination of the Angevin allusions found in the *Parzival* reveals a correspondence between the characters and incidents of the poem, and the facts, real and traditional, of Angevin history, which seems to point to a familiarity with the subject scarcely likely to be possessed by a foreigner.

The following parallels will show that this Angevin element, though strongest in the first two books (those peculiar to Wolfram's version), is to be clearly traced even in the presentment of what we know to be traditional features of the story.

THE ORIGIN OF THE HOUSE OF ANJOU

WOLFRAM

In Book I. the origin of the Angevin family is traced to the marriage of Mazadan with the fairy Terre-de-laschoie. The fairy origin of the race is referred to again in Books II. and VIII., the later allusion being in connection with Vergulacht, son of Gamuret's sister, and cousin to hero.

GAMURET

Younger son of the King of Anjou; brought up at the court of French queen; goes to the East where he marries a Moorish queen, and becomes king of an Eastern kingdom.

ANGEVIN TRADITION

Ascribes their origin to the marriage of one of the early Counts with a lady of surpassing beauty, whose *demon* origin was discovered by her inability to remain in church during Mass. It was to the influence of this ancestress that the uncontrollable temper of the Angevin princes was ascribed. Richard Cur-de-lion is reported to have frequently said, 'We came from the Devil, and we go back to the Devil.' (In each instance it will be noted that the supernatural element is introduced by the wife.)

FULK V. OF ANJOU

Son of Fulk IV. (*Rechin*), and Bertalda de Montfort. His mother eloped with, and married, Philip, king of France. She remained on good terms with her former husband, and, Fulk, having already an heir by a previous wife, was allowed to bring up her son at her own court. The elder brother

Gamuret's first recorded deed of valour is the conquest, in single combat, of Heuteger, the Scotchman, who appears every morning before the gates of Patelamunt, to challenge the besieged knights.

HERZELEIDE

Widow, queen of two kingdoms, and marries Prince of Anjou.

Her son is subsequently deprived of these kingdoms by the action of *one knight*, Book III. p. 73, two *brothers*, *Ibid.* p. 80. This loss of two kingdoms by the action of Lâhelein is insisted on throughout the poem, and the reader should note the manner in which Lâhelein, though only appearing in the Second Book, is constantly referred to; which seems to indicate that the writer attached a special importance to this character, cf. Book III. pp. 86 and 87; V. pp. 150, 154; VI. pp. 171, 188; VII. p. 196; IX. p. 272. (It may be noted that in no other version of the legend is a previous marriage of the hero's mother recorded.)

THE RED KNIGHT

The Red Knight as represented in the poem, mounted before the gates of Nantes, in red armour, with red hair.

dying, Fulk became his father's heir, and finally succeeded him. In 1129, after the marriage of his son, Geoffrey, with the Empress Maud, Fulk was invited by Baldwin, king of Jerusalem, to become his son-in-law and successor. Accordingly he resigned Anjou to Geoffrey, went to Jerusalem, where he married Melesinda, daughter and heiress to Baldwin, and, after the death of the latter, succeeded him as king, and reigned till his death in 1142. (Here again we note that, in each instance, the Eastern kingdom is won through the wife.)

A similar incident is recorded of Geoffrey I. (*Grisegonelle*) who, during the siege of Paris by the Danes in 978, overthrew a gigantic Northman named Ethelwulf, who daily challenged the besieged in the manner recounted in the poem. Later historians cast doubts on the truth of this story, but it appears in all the old chronicles, and was undoubtedly firmly believed in by the writers of the twelfth century.

THE EMPRESS MAUDE

Widow, Empress, Lady of two Lands, England and Normandy, marries Count of Anjou.

Her son is deprived of these two kingdoms by the action of two brothers Theobald and Stephen of Blois. Though Stephen was the principal aggressor, it must not be forgotten that Theobald, the elder brother, was invited by the Normans to become their Duke on the death of Henry I.; but on arriving in Normandy, and finding that Stephen had already seized the crown of England, Theobald resigned his claim to the Duchy and threw in his lot with that of Stephen. An *English* writer (such as Mapes) would probably have overlooked the part played by Theobald. An *Angevin*, knowing the Counts of Blois to be the hereditary foes of the House of Anjou, would hardly fail to record the fact that both brothers were concerned in the usurpation of the rights of Henry Fitz-Empress.

THE RED KNIGHT

This character is of course traditional, but the special presentment of it in the *Parzival* seems to be owing to Angevin influence. In 1048 William of Normandy, being at war with Geoffrey II. of Anjou and besieging Domfront, sent him the following curious challenge: 'If the Count of Anjou attempts to bring victuals into Domfront he will find me awaiting him without the gates armed and mounted, bearing a red shield, and having a pennon on my spear wherewith to wipe his face.'

Red hair was a distinguishing

characteristic of the Angevin Counts. Fulk I. derived his name of Rufus from this peculiarity, which was inherited by many of his descendants, among them Fulk V., his son Geoffrey Plantagenet, and his grandson Henry Fitz-Empress. The writer of the *Parzival* strongly insists on Ither's red hair.

NANTES

Nantes, throughout the poem, is always treated as Arthur's chief city. Karidöl is scarcely referred to, the Round Table is kept at Nantes, and in Book X. we are told that Arthur's palace was there. This is not the case in other versions of the story.

Book IX. relates that Kiot sought for records of the Grail race in the chronicles of Britain, France, and Ireland, and found the history at last in the chronicle of Anjou.

NANTES

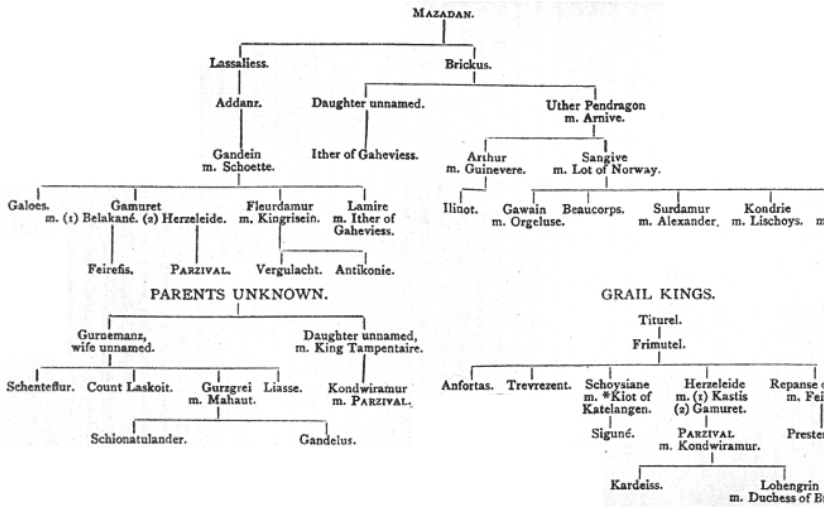
The possession of the city of Nantes was a constant source of quarrel between the Counts of Anjou and their neighbours of Brittany. Time after time the former claimed the over-lordship of Nantes, which stood just beyond their frontier, and more than once they succeeded in making themselves masters of the coveted territory. To represent Nantes as Arthur's chief city, and Ither as claiming it, would be an alteration of the legend most natural in an Angevin writer.

Britain, France, and Ireland were all brought into close connection under Henry Fitz-Empress, Count of Anjou, Duke of Normandy, and King of England, the husband of Eleanor of Provence and Aquitaine, who conquered Ireland in 1172.

The peculiar presentment of the Knights of the Grail as Templars (Templeisen), having their residence in a castle surrounded by a forest, recalls the fact that a close connection between the Order of Templars and the House of Anjou had existed for some time previous to the date of this poem, a tax for the benefit of the Order having been imposed on all his dominions by Fulk V. on his return from his first pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1120. A community of Knights Templars was founded by Henry Fitz-Empress fifty years later at Vaubourg, in the forest of Roumare which became very famous. (The location of Monsalväsch in the Pyrenees hardly seems to accord with the indications of the poem, which make it only thirty-six hours' ride from Nantes.)

Finally, the name of the poet claimed by Wolfram as his authority, Kiot=Guiot=Guy, is distinctly Angevin, the hereditary Angevin princely names being Fulk, Geoffrey, and Guy.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE.



MAZADAN.

Lassalies.

Addanz.

Gandein m. Schoetté.

Galoés.

Gamuret m. (1) Belakané.

Feirefis.

Gamuret m. (2) Herzeleide.

PARZIVAL.

Fleurdamur m. Kingrisein.

Vergulacht.

Antikonie.

Lamire m. Ither of Gaheviess.

Brickus.

Daughter unnamed.

Ither of Gaheviess.

Uther Pendragon m. Arnivé.

Arthur m. Guinevere.

Ilinot.

Sangivé m. Lot of Norway.

Gawain m. Orgeluse.

Beaucorps.

Surdamour m. Alexander.

Kondrie m. Lischois.

Itonjé m. Gramoflanz.

PARENTS UNKNOWN.

Gurnemanz, wife unnamed.

Schenteflur.

Count Laskoit.

Gurgrei m. Mahaut.

Schionatulanter.

Gandelus.

Liassé.

Daughter unnamed, m. King Tampentaire.

Kondwiramur m. PARZIVAL.

Titirel.
 Frimutel.
 Anfortas.
 Trevezent.
 Schoysiane m. [A]Kiot of Katelangen.
 Siguné.
 Herzeleide m. (1) Kastis.
 Herzeleide m. (2) Gamuret.
 PARZIVAL m. Kondwiramur.
 Kardeiss.
 Lohengrîn m. Duchess of Brabant.
 Repanse de Schoie m. Feirefis.
 Prester John.

[A] Kiot is brother to King Tampentaire, cf. Book IV. p. 107, therefore Siguné is cousin to Kondwiramur as well as to Parzival.

APPENDIX B THE PROPER NAMES IN 'PARZIVAL'

One of the marked peculiarities of Wolfram's poem is the number of proper names with which it abounds, there being scarcely a character, however insignificant the rôle assigned, that is left unnamed. In the other versions of the Perceval legend this is not the case, consequently there are a vast number of names occurring in the *Parzival* to which no parallel can be found elsewhere, and which are no unimportant factor in determining the problem of the source from which Wolfram drew his poem. It would be impossible in a short Appendix to discuss the question in all its bearings, but the following classification, based on Herr Bartsch's article on *Die Eigen-namen in Wolfram's Parzival*, will give some idea of the wide ground they cover:—

I. Names belonging to the original legend, and met with, with but little variation, in all versions. To this class belong the names of Pendragon, Arthur, Guinivere, Perceval, Gawain, Kay, Segramor; and the names of such places as Karidöl=Carduel=Carlisle, Cumberland, Wales, Norgals, Dianadron.

II. Names derived from a French version of the story, which may be divided into two classes:

(a) Names of which we find an equivalent in existing French sources, notably Chrétien, whose poem offers so close a parallel to the *Parzival*; examples of this class are Gurnemanz=French, *Gornemant*; Peirapär=*Beau-repaire*; Klamidé=*Clamadex*; Kingron=*Aguigrenon*; Trebuchet; Meljanz de Lys; Lippaut=*Tiebaut*; Gramoflanz=*Guiromelans* or *Guiremelanz*.

(b) Names formed by a misunderstanding of a French original: such are Soltane, from forest *soutaine*=solitary; Orilus de Lalande, from *Li orgueilleuse de la lande*; and similarly, Orgeluse of Logrois, from *La orgueilleuse de Logres*; Gringuljet, the name of Gawain's horse, from *Li gringalet*, which is explained as meaning *cheval maigre et alerte*. Ligweiz-prelljus, is *Li guez perellous*, the Ford Perilous; and a notable instance of this class is the curious name Schionatulander, which is either '*Li joenet de la lande*,' 'The youth

of the meadow,' or '*Li joenet à l'alant*,' 'The youth with the dog,' in allusion to the cause of the knight's death. Whence Wolfram took this name is unknown.

III. Names borrowed or quoted from other romances of the time, of those to which Wolfram alludes most frequently we know the *Erec* and *Iwein* of Hartmann von Aue; Eilhart's *Tristan*; Heinrich von Veldeck's *Æneid*, Chrétien de Troye's *Cligès*, and *Le Chevalier de la Charrette*; and the *Nibelungenlied* and *Dietrich Sage*. He also refers to other romances which have not come down to us, such are the allusions to adventures connected with Gawain in Book VI.; and to the death of Ilinot, son of King Arthur, of whom we know nothing. (The names derived from these romances are all noted, and their source given as they occur in the text.) Book I. contains some distinctly German names, such as Eisenhart, Hernant, and Herlindè, Friedebrand of Scotland and Heuteger, the source of these is doubtful, some occur in the Gudrun cycle, but it seems probable that in both instances they were derived from a common source, and, belonging as they do to a North Sea cycle, they may have reached the poem either through a French or a German medium.

IV. Names of places and people connected with Wolfram himself, such as Abenberg, Wildberg, Erfurt, the Count of Wertheim, Herman of Thuringia, etc. These were, of course, introduced by Wolfram, and could not have existed in his French source.

V. Classical and mythological names such as Antikonie=Antigone, Ekuba, Secundilla, Plato and the Sibyls, Pythagoras, etc., Jupiter, Juno, Venus, Amor, Cupid, Lucifer, Ashtaroth, and other of the fallen angels.

VI. Oriental names. In Book IV. we have the Arabic names of the seven planets, a curious coincidence, in view of the alleged Arabic source of the Grail-myth as given in Books VIII. and IX. Names of cities such as Alexandria, Bagdad, Askalon. This latter is of course equivalent to *Escavalon* in the French versions, and the real name is doubtless Avalon, but it is by no means improbable that the change was made not by a misunderstanding, but by one who knew the Eastern city, and it falls in with the various other indications of crusading influence to be traced throughout the poem. We may add to these the names of Oriental materials such as Pfellel and Sendal. But when all these have been classified, there still remains a vast number of names undoubtedly French in origin, yet which cannot be referred to any known source, and many of which bear distinct traces of Romance or Provençal influence. Such names are Anfortas, French, *enfertez*=the sick man, with Prov. ending *as*; Trevezent, Prov. *Treu*=peace, *rezems*=redeemed. Schoysiane, Prov. *Jauziana*, her husband is Kiot of Katelangen, *Guiot*=*Guy* of *Catalonia*. The son of Gurnemanz, Schenteflur, is Prov. *gente-flors*, fair flower. The name of Parzival's wife, Kondwiramur, Bartsch derives from *Coin de voire amour*, Ideal of true love; an interpretation which admirably expresses the union between the two. Itonjè, Gawain's sister, is the French *Idonie*, in Chrétien she is Clarissant. The knight slain by Lähelein at Brimbane is Libbèals of Prienlaskors, Libbèals being simply the old French *Li-beals*—*le bel*, and probably no more a proper name than Orilus, whilst his country seems derived from Prov. *priendre las cortz*, to seek the court. The long lists of conquered kings given in Book XV. contain many names of Greek or Latin origin, which have passed through a French source, and many others of distinctly Romance form. It is impossible to suppose that a German poet *invented* these names, and the only reasonable explanation seems to be that Wolfram drew

largely, if not exclusively, from a French poem now lost, and that the language in which that poem was written partook strongly of a Provençal character, the term Provençal being applied, as Bartsch points out, not only to Provençal proper, but to the varying forms of the Langue-d'oc.

NOTES

NOTES

(A few Notes signed A. N. are due to Mr. Alfred Nutt.)

BOOK I

Introduction, lines 1-66. This introduction, which is confessedly obscure, both in style and thought, appears to have been written *after* the completion of the poem, and to have been intended by the writer to serve both as a key to the meaning of the poem, and as a defence of his method of treatment. That Wolfram was blamed by his contemporaries, notably by Gottfried von Strassbourg, for his lack of a polished style, and obscurity of thought, we know; and in *Willehalm* he speaks, in the following words, of the varying judgment passed upon his *Parzival*:

'Swaz ich von Parzivâl gesprach,
des sîn aventiur mich wîste,
etzlich man daz prîste:
ir was ouch vil, diez smœthen
Und baz ir rede wæhten.

and it is evidently to these critics that the first part of the Introduction is addressed.

Lines 1-8 give the key to the whole poem: the contrast between doubt or unsteadfastness, and steadfast faith and truth, as imaged in the contrast between darkness and light, black and white. This idea runs throughout the poem, is worked out symbolically in the character and experiences of the hero, and is shown in a concrete form in the person of his brother Feirefis. The poet notes that many readers have failed, through lack of intelligence, to grasp the meaning of this parable, which is too swift and subtle for their comprehension. A parallel passage will be found in Book V. pp. 137, 138, where the figure employed is different.

The curious lines 15, 16 are explained by Bötticher as allusions to *personal* assaults made on the poet, which, by reason of the folly of the assailants, missed their mark, and are therefore to be treated with contempt.

Lines 29, 30 contain one of the quaint and homely similes which abound throughout the poem, and refer to the faithless man, *valsch geselleclîcher muot*, whose honour and steadfastness are not sufficiently strong to meet the demands made upon them.

There are three distinct divisions of the Introduction: the first, lines 1-30, is addressed to *men* only, and draws the contrast between the false and true knight; 31-49 does the same for *women*; while from 49 onwards the poet shows how the tale he is about to tell affects both sexes alike, and gives a slight sketch of the character of the hero. For the rightful understanding of this the lines 61, 62 are of great importance: 'a brave man, yet slowly wise Is he whom I hail my hero' (*er*

küene, trätliche wîs, den helt ich alsus grüene), and should be borne in mind by the student of the poem.

A full and minute discussion of this discussion of this Introduction will be found in Dr. Bötticher's *Das Hohelied von Rittertum*.

Page 5, line 67—'*Now they do to-day as of old-time.*' The word employed here *wälsch* simply means 'foreign,' but it is evident from the context that France is the country referred to. The *fact* was probably in the French source, the remarks upon it due to the German poet.

Page 5, line 80—'*Gamuret.*' The origin of this name is doubtful; in Chrétien we find a King Ban de Gamuret mentioned, and Wolfram may have derived the name from a French source, Heinmel suggests that it comes from Gamor, the son of Anguis, a Saracen prince ruling in Denmark, according to 'Arthur and Merlin;' and that the fact of his being of the race of Anguis suggested to Kiot the possibility of making him an Angevin. In the absence of any definite knowledge as to Wolfram's source it is not possible to do more than *suggest* possible derivations.

Page 7, lines 136, 137—'*Gylstram and Rankulat.*' With regard to the first-named place, Simrock says it has been identified with 'Gustrate' in the *Gudrun*, and, according to Grimm, this latter is to be coupled with Gailate, 'where the sun hath its setting.' *i.e.* the West. In Book XI. the patriarch of Rankulat is referred to, in company with the Baruch of Bagdad and the Emperor of Constantinople, and in all probability Armenia is meant. The king's speech therefore implies, 'Didst thou come from the furthest bounds of the earth, East or West.'

Page 8, line 154—'*King Gandein's son.*' Cf. Book IX. p. 285, where the origin of the name Gandein is given.

Page 8, lines 159, 160.—'*Then the tale it hath told a lie.*' Cf. Book IX. p. 259.

Page 8, lines 169, 170—'*Rich silk of Orient.*' Eastern materials are referred to frequently throughout the poem; the principal seem to have been, Samite, Sendal, Achmardi, Pfellel, Plialt, and Saranhasme. Of these, some were of silk only, others, notably Saranhasme of silk inwoven with gold, Achmardi, in this poem, is always *green*. Samite and Sendal are the two generally named in our English romances.

Page 9, line 209—'*Two brothers of Babylon.*' This is Babylon in Egypt, now Cairo, as is evident from its close connection with Alexandria, cf. p. 12, line 277, and Book II. p. 57, line 684, and p. 59, line 754. Though, from the passage on p. 57, it seems as if the poet confused it with Babylon in Assyria; it is possible that he was unaware of the fact that there were *two* cities of the name.

Page 15, line 384—'*Friedebrand.*' The introduction of names of distinctly northern origin such as Friedebrand, Hernant, and Herlindè, Heuteger, and Eisenhart, has been already noted in Appendix B as one of the problems of the *Parzival*. Two solutions have been suggested, either that they were introduced by Wolfram, or that they reached the *French* source through the medium of Normandy. The form in which the names occur in the *Gudrun* cycle seems to indicate quotation from a source known also to the writer of the *Parzival*, but they are not derived directly from the North Sea saga in its present form.

Page 16, line 403—'*Wouldst thou know?*' *etc.* It may be interesting to note here that beyond the *colour*, which the poet insists on, he apparently recognises no difference between the heathen and Christian knights and ladies. Both acknowledge the same chivalrous ideals; both are equally familiar with the

eccentricities of 'Minne-dienst' (cf. line 423); and the speeches put into the mouth of Belakané, or of Rassalig, would be quite as suitable if spoken by Orgeluse, or by one of King Arthur's knights. This incident of a Christian knight marrying a Moorish princess is of frequent occurrence in Mediæval romance.

Page 16, lines 423, 424—'*That which like to a hall doth stand.*' The tents of the Mediæval period were constructed of far more costly fabrics than is usual now, cf. Book III. p. 74. and Book XI., and their size was very great, this special tent we find, from Book II. p. 36, was 'thirty pack-steeds' burden.' San Marte quotes the description of a tent captured by the Crusaders at Antioch which was adorned with walls, towers, and ramparts, contained halls and galleries, and could lodge as many as 2000 men.

Page 22, line 620—'*The chiming of sweet bells.*' Bells were at one time freely used not only as ornaments to the trappings of the horses but also on the armour of the knights, cf. Book III. p. 70, and Book VI. p. 163. Gradually they disappeared from use, and the bells on the Fool's dress are the last trace left of the practice, which from this poem was evidently very general at the beginning of the thirteenth century.

Page 23, line 623—'*Brave Beaucorps.*' This brother of Gawain appears in Book VI. p. 183, he is the only one of Gawain's brothers mentioned in this poem. In Malory, we find *Gareth* called 'Beau-mains,' and it is possible that the two are identical. Beaucorps is evidently much younger than Gawain, and Gareth was the youngest of King Lot's sons.

Page 24, line 679—'*Lahfilirost.*' This seems to be a misunderstanding for '*Le fils du Rost,*' and may be classed with the misinterpretations of a French source.

Page 25, line 700—'*Frau Minne.*' The word *Minne* is etymologically derivable from a root 'man,' and is connected with the Latin *mens*, English 'mind' (cf. 'to have a mind to.'). The original signification was that of tender care, or thought for; in Old High German it has already taken the meaning of love in its passionate aspects; finally, in Middle High German (the original language of the *Parzival*), it has become the standing expression for love betwixt man and woman. We have it in various forms as a verb, *Minnen*; as an adjective, *Minniglich*. The personification of the passion of Love as 'Frau Minne' is the work of the courtly poets of the twelfth century, and seems rather to have been derived from classical analogy than to be due to a reminiscence of an early German goddess of Love. Also, with Wolfram and his contemporaries, 'Frau Minne' must be regarded less as the personification of Love in the abstract than as the embodiment of the special love-ideal of the day. This new ideal had its rise, and assumed definite shape in twelfth century France, from whence it spread throughout the knightly society of Christendom, finding its fullest literary expression in the Arthurian romances. The historic causes which led to what was at the time an entirely novel mode of considering the relations between the sexes, and the true nature and ethical import of the chivalric conception of that relation will be briefly discussed in an Appendix to vol. II. The significance of the term is fully apparent from such passages as the present, also cf. Book VI. pp. 161, 163, 165, 171; VII. 208, 224; XII. etc.—[A. N.]

Page 27, line 768.—'*Morhold,*' also in Book II. p. 39. This is, of course, the well-known hero in *Tristan*. The allusion may have been in the original French source, or introduced by Wolfram, who would know Morhold from the *Tristan* of Eilhart

von Oberge, composed before 1180. The most famous German poem on the subject, the *Tristan* of Gottfried von Strassbourg, was somewhat later in date.

Page [31](#), lines 886, 887—Cf. Book VIII. p. 230 and note.

Page [31](#), line 904—'*Feirefis*.' Bartsch interprets the name as *vair fils*, 'parti-coloured son.' Other critics have suggested 'Fairy's son.' The name distinctly indicates a French origin.

Page [31](#), line 905—'*A woodland-waster*,' 'wald-verschwender,' a hyperbolic term constantly employed throughout this poem to denote one who shatters many spears in fight.

BOOK II

Page [35](#), line 16, and page [57](#), line 705—'*Waleis and Norgals*.' These, the two kingdoms of Queen Herzeleide, are located by Wolfram in Spain, but they are undoubtedly Wales and North Wales (the North galis of Malory), the Northern border-land. Parzival's title throughout the poem is *der Waleis*, in French versions *le Gallois*, an evident indication of the Celtic origin of the story.

Page [39](#), lines 117-160. Of the heroes taking part in the Tourney, Uther Pendragon has been mentioned, in Book I. p. 31, in the genealogy of Gamuret. The poet carefully connects his hero with the traditional royal race of Briton as well as with the princely House of Anjou. Arthur's mother, Arnivè (not Igraine as in most versions), plays a somewhat important rôle in the later part of the poem, her imprisonment in the castle of the Magician Klingsor is fully treated of, cf. from Book XI. onwards. King Lot of Norway (not of Orkney as in the English legend) is frequently alluded to as Gawain's father, but both he and Uther Pendragon are dead before the real action of the poem commences. This is the first appearance of Gawain, who, from Book VI. onward, plays a part in the poem scarcely inferior to that of the hero, Parzival. The Kings of Arragon and Gascony do not appear again, nor are they alluded to, but Brandelidelein of Punturtois we meet with in Book XV. as the uncle of King Gramoflanz. The King of Askalon must not be confused with Vergulacht, in Book VIII., this is evidently one of his predecessors. Eidegast of Logrois is frequently alluded to later on, his murder by Gramoflanz and the desire of his lady-love, Orgeluse, to avenge him, form the *motif* of the later Gawain episodes. This is the only occasion on which Lâhelein appears personally in the poem, but he is constantly alluded to throughout the course of the story (some remarks on the manner in which he is introduced will be found in Appendix A, p. [293](#)). Morhold, cf. note to Book I. Lambekein, cf. Book V. p. 152. Gurnemanz of Graharz plays an important rôle in the Parzival legend, he is here introduced for the first time, cf. Book III.

The Tourney. In this poem we find knightly skill in horsemanship and the use of arms displayed under three distinct forms: the Buhurd, Books XII. and XV., The Tourney, Book II., and serious Warfare as in the siege of Pelrapär, Book IV., and Beausrosch, Book VII. The two first were simply intended as displays of knightly skill, and took their rise in the knightly sports of the ninth century. The Buhurd seems to have been the original German form, and at first was of a somewhat rough and uncivilised character, the knights riding in bodies at full gallop against each other, and the whole being a display of force rather than of skill.

The Tourney, or Tournament, took its rise in France, and here we find the knights, in full armour, singly displaying their prowess. Gradually the Buhurd changed its character, and throughout this poem we find Wolfram treating it as a formal display of skill in horsemanship, generally to do honour to some favoured guest, as in the reception of Gawain and Orgeluse by the knights of the Château Merveil, Book XII.; in honour of Feirefis, Book XV. Still the idea of force was not entirely eliminated, and we find Gawain, in Book VII. when he promises the child Obilot that he will fight for her father, telling her that *she* must ride the Buhurd for him, and, as noted above, the fighting here is in earnest. In the later form of Buhurd the knights wear no armour, and it is thus distinguished from the Tourney, where they were always fully armed.

The Tourney was much more complicated in its rules, and is not always easy to distinguish from the real warfare into which it not unfrequently passed. Feirefis, in Book XV., mentions *five* modes of attack which seem to have answered to the regular stages of a Tourney. Niedner explains them as follows: (1) An attack by one troop on another, with lance in rest; (2) An attack from the side, also with lance; (3) The onslaught of *one* rider on a troop of horsemen, in which the aim was to strike the one selected opponent while avoiding the blows of the others; (4) The joust proper, or single combat; (5) The *Damenstick*, a stroke for the honour of the knight's chosen lady, which followed on the joust, and was specially challenged by knights of exceptional valour. In the Tourney at Kanvoleis (the only Tourney proper in the poem), it is the two first stages in which Gamuret takes no part, he only mingles in the fray when the time arrives to display the valour of the single champions. The joust, or single combat, was a feature of earnest, as of mimic warfare, and it is not always easy to distinguish between the two.

In each case the great point was the display of skill in horsemanship, and the use of the lance or spear. The knights rode at full speed towards each other, and the aim of each was to strike his opponent in the centre of the shield, 'The four nails,' Book III. p. 98, or at the fastening of the helmet, Book IX. p. 257, and Book XII. In either event if the blow was well aimed, and delivered with sufficient force, the knight was thrown backward off his steed. It might happen that both knights were struck, and succeeded in keeping their seat, while their spears were shivered, then a second joust must be ridden. If either knight were thrown from his saddle, or his steed fell with him, then he was held to be vanquished, but if, as not unfrequently happened, the girth of the saddle broke, and the rider were thrown, *then* the joust was held to be undecided, and, in the case of real warfare, the issue was fought out with swords on foot. Cf. the combat between Parzival and Klamidé, Book IV. pp. 119, 120. In Book V. we find Parzival and Orilus fighting with swords on horseback: this is unusual. In real warfare the knights would fight till one was slain, or till the issue was indisputably decided by one being felled to the ground. We occasionally find the combat decided by sheer strength of arm, one knight claspng the other and throwing him to the ground; so Parzival conquers Orilus, Book V. p. 149, and Gawain, Lischois, Book X. Both in Tourney and real warfare the fight was generally closed by the vanquished giving his pledge or surety to the victor, who not unfrequently sent him to yield himself prisoner to some favoured lady, so Parzival sends Kingron, Klamidé, and Orilus to Kunnewaaré. If the vanquished knight refused to yield he would be slain, but this did not often happen. The death of Ither of Gaheviess is due to a mischance. Armour and horse were the prize of the victor, though in the case of the foe being slain it seems to have been thought an unknighly deed to take them, such 'robbery of the dead'

was termed *rêroup*, and Trevrezent, Book IX. p. 273, strongly blames both Lâhelein and Parzival for such action.

The Tourney would often be held simply for honour, the prize being something comparatively trifling, such as a hawk, cf. Tourney at Kanedig, alluded to in Book III. p. 77, and again in Book V. p. 155, but occasionally the guerdon was far higher, as at Kanvoleis where the band and kingdoms of Queen Herzeleide were the prize of the victor. Any disputes would be referred to a court of judges from whose verdict there was no appeal. In such Tourneys it was customary not to retain the horse and armour, but to accept a ransom fixed by the *owner*. This is evidently alluded to in Book II. 45, where we find these rules disregarded in the heat of conflict.

Opposed to this Tourney 'for honour' was the Tourney 'for booty,' when the aim of the knights was to capture as many steeds and make as many prisoners as possible, the ransom being fixed by the *captor*. Wolfram does not mention such a Tourney, but with the decay of knighthood such conflicts appear to have almost entirely displaced the nobler strife. It will be understood, of course, that though a joust or single combat might either be settled beforehand, as in the case of Kingrimursel's and Gramoflanz' challenge to Gawain, or be brought about by a chance meeting, as when Vergulacht and the knight of Monsalvâsch fight with Parzival, a Tourney was carefully arranged beforehand, and the knights summoned by invitation. The knights generally assembled on the Saturday, and the Tourney would be held on the Monday, the interval being employed in careful inquiry as to the claim of those present to take a part in such knightly sport. The knights were divided into two bodies of equal strength, headed by the most experienced warriors present, and single champions would not unfrequently try their skill against each other on the eve of the Tourney proper. Not unfrequently the passions of the knights were roused to such a pitch that this *Vesper-spiel* became a serious encounter, and the combatants were so exhausted that the Tourney could not be held, as was the case at Kanvoleis. From the abuses connected with these meetings, which not unfrequently lapsed into serious warfare, and caused wanton loss of life, they were looked upon with disfavour by the Church, and in some cases were positively forbidden.

Page [42](#), line 236—'*Rivalein*,' according to Eilhart, the father of Tristan.

Page [44](#), line 279—'*I have named unto ye a lady*.' This is the queen of France, Anflisê, whose connection with Gamuret is alluded to in Book I. p. 9. This episode was probably suggested by facts in Angevin history, cf. Appendix. A reference to their connection will be found in Book VIII. p. 233.

Page [46](#), lines 351-60. Galoes the king of Anjou has not been named before. The name occurs in Hartmann's *Erec*, and may have been borrowed from there. The name of his lady-love is given in Book VII. p. 199. The slayer of Galoes was Orilus, Book III. p. 77.

Page [48](#), line 406—'*No wife was she but a maiden*.' Book IX. p. 283, where a full account of Herzeleide's marriage will be found, '*Herzeleide*.' The modern German rendering of this name carries with it its own interpretation in the play of words familiar through Wagner's *Parsifal*, '*Ihr brach das Leid das Herz und Herzeleide starb*.' But the original form, Herzelayde, indicates, in Bartsch's opinion, a Southern French modification, *loyde* being a variant of *hildis*, *oildis*. The name Rischoydê, we know in its form of Richilda, and Herzelayde seems to come from

the same root. Professor Rhys (*Arthurian Romance*, p. 180) has suggested derivation from the Welsh *argelwythes* = 'the lady,' but the suggestion has not won general acceptance.

Page 54, line 614—'*The maid and her lands he won.*' Readers will doubtless remark the fact that though we meet with numerous allusions to marriages and marriage festivities throughout the poem, yet in no single instance is the marriage attended by a religious ceremony. This is an indication of the original date of the story, which testifies to a very early stage of social development. The original idea of marriage was that of a contract made by mutual consent publicly before witnesses, as we find here in the marriages of Gamuret with Belakané and Herzeleide, or later on in Book IV., the marriage of Parzival and Kondwiramur. The mutual promise being given and witnessed, the contract was complete, and the marriage might be consummated at once. The office of the Church seems at first to have been confined to conferring a benediction on a union already completed, and therefore we find that, even so late as the thirteenth century, the religious ceremony followed, and did not precede, the marriage night. San Marte, in his note on the subject, quotes more than one romance of this date where this is the case, and it was not till the idea of marriage as a sacrament had displaced that of marriage as a civil contract that the religious ceremony became essential to a valid union. The fact that Wolfram, with his high ideas of the binding nature of the marriage-vow, never once mentions the religious ceremony is a strong argument in favour of the presumption that the subject-matter of the *Parzival* is considerably older than his treatment of it. Marriage between a Christian and a heathen was held to be null and void, and, according to the ideas of the age, Herzeleide was fully within her rights in claiming Gamuret as her husband and in regarding his previous marriage as non-existent. The costly presents made by the bridegroom, as for instance the gift of Waleis and Norgals to Herzeleide by her first husband, seem to have been a survival of the idea that the woman was property, to be bought by the intending husband. The bride, on her part, gave equally rich gifts, so we find Kondwiramur bestowing castles and lands on Parzival, and the mutual interchange of these gifts was an essential part of the marriage contract.

Page 56, line 674—'*The panther.*' The badge of the House of Anjou was a leopard.

Page 59, lines 744, 745. The idea that a diamond might be softened by the application of a he-goat's blood is very old. San Marte says it is mentioned by Pliny. Hartmann refers to it in his *Erec*, and it seems to have been a general belief in the Middle Ages.

BOOK III

The first two books of this poem are peculiar to Wolfram. Among the different versions of the Perceval legend which we possess there is a curious diversity of statement as to the parentage of the hero; though, as a rule, they agree in the main facts of the death of his father, either before, or shortly after, Perceval's birth, and his being brought up in the desert by his widowed mother.

With the Third Book we find ourselves on ground common to most transcribers of the legend; and in this and the following books a table of the traditional events contained in the book, with the other versions of the story in which they occur,

will be given. The following are the Romances of the Grail-cycle which deal more particularly with the Perceval legend.—

Li Conte del Graal, poem by Chrétien de Troyes; left unfinished at Chrétien's death; it was continued by three other writers; the poem as we have it, is the work of at least four different hands.

Peredur: Welsh tale found in the Red Book of Hergest.

Perceval: A French prose romance, ascribed by many critics to Robert de Borron.

Sir Percyvelle of Galles: English metrical romance—author unknown.

Perceval li Gallois: French prose romance, also by an unknown writer.

TRADITIONAL EVENTS

The son of a widowed mother; Brought up in the desert; Meeting with knights and departure for Arthur's court.	Chrétien: Peredur, Sir Percyvelle.
Meeting with Jeschuté. 'The Lady of the Tent.'	<i>Ibid.</i>
Meeting with Siguné.	In this place only in <i>Perceval</i> , later meeting in the other versions.
Arrives at Arthur's court and demands knighthood.	All the versions. Chrétien: Peredur, and Sir Percyvelle closely agree as to the meeting. All agree as to the wearing of the red armour. In <i>Perceval</i> , alone, hero does not kill the knight who originally owns it.
Meeting with the Red Knight; slays him; and takes his armour.	Chrétien: maiden and fool; Peredur; dwarf and companion.
Laughter of Kunnewaaré; speech of Antanor and their smiting by Kay.	Chrétien: maiden and fool; Peredur; dwarf and companion.
Arrival at castle of old knight, who counsels hero.	Chrétien: Sir Percyvelle.

(It will be found that, from Books III. to XIII. inclusive, there is a very close parallelism between Wolfram's poem and Chrétien's share of *Li Conte del Graal*.)

Introduction, lines 1-45. This introduction, like that to Book I., appears to have been written *after* the completion of the poem, and to have been intended by the poet as a defence of his attitude towards women; certainly the lines 12-15 presuppose certain statements which had aroused the wrath of the lady hearers of the poet. The whole passage is interesting on account of its strongly personal character. In Book VI. Wolfram refers more than once to the lady who has wronged him (pp. 163, 166, 191), and in terms that show, as here, that he bitterly resented her treatment. The line 'Born was I unto the bearing of knightly shield and spear,' is the only definite statement as to the poet's rank in life which we possess, and in the light of his lasting fame as a poet it is curious to find him holding his gift of song as of less account than his knightly deeds, which do not seem to have been more remarkable than those of his fellows.

From Book IV. p. 122, we learn that Wolfram was married, and, from the concluding lines of Books VI. and XVI., it is clear that the *Parzival* was composed with a view to winning, or retaining, the favour of a lady, but the only direct personal allusion throughout the entire poem is that to the Margravine of Heitstein in Book VIII. p. 232, and the passage is too vague to allow of our

identifying the lady named either with Wolfram's faithless love, or with her for whose sake he composed his poem; certainly the Margravine was not his wife.

Page 67, line 61—'*Soltanè's strand.*' This is one of the many instances in the poem in which an adjective has been taken as a proper name. In the French source it was undoubtedly an adjective meaning 'solitary,' 'waste.' In Chrétien we find *la gaste forest soltaine*; other versions speak of the woods, or the desert, none but this gives a proper name.

Page 69, line 158—'*Ulterleg's Count.*' *Oultre-lac*, 'beyond the lake,' cf. Louis D'outremer. This is again an instance of a qualifying term used as a proper name.

Page 72, line 220—'*Meljakanz.*' This exploit is quite in keeping with the character of the knight, cf. Book VII. p. 198. In Malory we meet with the same character, as Sir Meliagraunce; and the story of his abduction of Guinevere, and her rescue by Launcelot is there given in full.

Page 72, line 240—'*For some cunning wile of woman.*' It is curious to note that nothing comes of these elaborate precautions on the part of Herzeleide. Parzival's fool's dress seems to excite very little attention, nothing is said of it on his appearance at Arthur's court, nor do we hear of any one mocking him for it. The effect produced by his personal beauty is much more strongly insisted upon. There is also a decided discrepancy between the mother's anxiety to keep her son from danger and her suggestions to him to avenge the wrong Lâhelein has done him.

Page 73, line 267—'*Lâhelein.*' Cf. Appendix A, and remarks on this character. Heinzel suggests that Lâhelein=Llewellwyn, a prince of South Wales who conquered North Wales in 1015. But if a parallel between the boyhood of Parzival and that of Henry Fitz-Empress be intended, as seems probable, the Welsh connection is of too early a date. The remarks in Heinzel's pamphlet, '*Ueber Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival,*' as to Lâhelein being undoubtedly an historical personage, are worthy of note. It is remarkable that we find no equivalent to this character in other versions of the story.

Page 74, line 287—'*Briziljan's wood.*' Most probably Broceliande, where so many of the adventures of King Arthur and his knights take place. Undoubtedly this wood was in Brittany, but the localities in the poem are much confused.

Page 74, line 297—'*Duke Orilus of Lalande.*' This name is again a misconception of a French original, '*Li Orgueilleux de-la-lande,*' which Wolfram has taken as a proper name. In other versions the lady is unnamed. (It may be noted that Wolfram almost invariably names his characters; and often goes to some trouble to connect them with each other, and the main thread of his story. This tendency to account for everything, *sum motiviren*, is a marked feature in Wolfram's writings.)

Page 76, line 365—'*Thy brother, King Lac's son Erec.*' An allusion to the Erec of Hartmann von Aue (founded upon Chrétien's Erec and dealing with the same subject as found in the Welsh tale of *Geraint* and the late Laureate's *Enid*) where the tournament at Prurein is described.

Page 77, line 374—'*Proud Galoes.*' The slaying alike of Parzival's uncle Galoes, and of his kinsman Schionatulander (p. 80) by Orilus, Lâhelein's brother, is also peculiar to Wolfram, but it is curious that the *Rache-motif* thus introduced is not followed up, and when Parzival overthrows Orilus it is to avenge the shaming of Jeschuté,

nor, though Orilus mentions his brother as having won *two* kingdoms, Book V. p. 150, does Parzival connect the mention with the loss of his own heritage. This seems to indicate that the special rôle assigned in this poem to the two brothers was not a part of the original story, and has not been perfectly fitted into the framework.

The name of Orilus' wife, Jeschuté, is supposed to be derived from a misunderstanding, Wolfram having interpreted the verb *gisoit*, lay, as a proper name.

Page [77](#), line 375—'*The knight Plihopleheri.*' A knight of the Round Table mentioned in Hartmann's *Iwein* (founded on Chrétien's *Chevalier au Lyon*, the subject-matter of which is the same as that of the Welsh *Lady of the Fountain*).

Page [78](#), line 409—This shaming of Jeschuté will strongly recall to English readers the story of *Enid and Geraint*.

Page [79](#), line 437—'*Siguné and Schionatulander.*' The loves of these two are related in Wolfram's unfinished poem of *Titurel*, where the full account of Schionatulander's fatal chase of the hound, or brachet, is given. The adventure with the weeping damsel occurs in other versions of the Perceval legend, but in none does she play so important a part as in the *Parzival*, *vide* Book V. p. 141; Book IX. p. 252; and Book XVI. Her parentage is given in Book IX. p. 274.

Page [79](#), line 466—'*Thou art Parzival.*' The interpretation here given of the hero's name betrays clearly its French origin, *Perce-val*. In the *Krône* of Heinrich von Türlin the writer explains *Val* as *Thal*=valley, or *Furch*=furrow. Wolfram seems to have understood it in this second sense, and has given the name a symbolic meaning peculiar to himself. In Chrétien's poem no derivation or interpretation of the name is given, and the hero himself guesses his name; nor do the special terms of endearment, evidently quoted by Wolfram from a French source, occur in Chrétien's version of the story.

Page [80](#), line 497—'*'Twas a churl.*' Wolfram's aristocratic contempt for peasants may be noted in other passages, cf. Book II. p. 43, and VII. p. 219.

Page [81](#), line 517—'*Herr Hartmann von Aue.*' Hartmann von Aue was a famous German poet of the twelfth century. If not absolutely the first to introduce the Arthurian legends into Germany (Eilhart's *Tristan* is earlier than Hartmann's works), he was the writer who first rendered them popular in that country. His principal poems are *Erec*, written about 1191; and *Iwein* 1202, both of which are frequently referred to by Wolfram. They were founded on two poems by Chrétien de Troyes, *Erec* and *Le Chevalier au Lyon*, but Hartmann was not a mere translator; he handled his materials with considerable skill, and with an insight into the characters and motives of his *dramatis personæ* which is distinctly a feature of the German presentment of these legends. Enid and her mother Karnafite are characters in the *Erec*. The story of another of Hartmann's poems, *Der arme Heinrich*, is well known to English readers through Longfellow's version of it in *The Golden Legend*.

Page [82](#), line 534—'*No Kurwenal was his teacher.*' Kurwenal is the friend and tutor of Tristan. In Malory we find the name 'Gouvernail,' and it seems probable that here again we have a term denoting an office converted into a proper name.

Page [82](#), line 549—'*Ither of Gaheviess.*' Ither = Welsh *Idêr*, Gaheviess = *gas-vies*, old wood. Chrétien calls him '*de la forêt de Kinkerloï.*'

Page [82](#), line 544—'*The Red Knight*.' This character is evidently one of the traditional features of the story; though the circumstances of the meeting differ, there is no version without its 'Red Knight.' In those romances of the Grail-cycle in which Perceval has been deposed from his original position as hero in favour of Galahad, we find the latter wearing the armour, and bearing the title, of the Red Knight. Here again Wolfram is the only writer who names him, but it is somewhat startling to find the king of *Cumberland* claiming *Brittany*. From Book IX. pp. 273 and 285, we learn that he was Parzival's kinsman. It may be interesting here, and may help to the better understanding of the poem, if we describe the armour of a knight at the end of the twelfth century. The principal piece of defensive armour was the *Hauberk* (*Halsberg*), a coat formed of rings of steel which reached to the knee, and had sleeves ending in iron gauntlets. Attached to this, and forming one piece with the *Halsberg*, was the *Härsenier*, a cap of chain mail which was drawn over the head below the helmet. The upper part of the face was protected by the '*Nasen-band*,' a band of iron provided with eye-holes; and the lower part by the '*Fintäle*,' a part of the '*Härsenier*' which passed round and over the chin; above this the helmet was fastened. (The use of the word '*visor*' in the translation is an anachronism, as the visor proper was not introduced till later, but there was no other word which would express what was meant with equal brevity and clearness.) Foot and leg were clad in hose of iron, and the knee and elbow were specially protected by plates of iron or *schinnelier*. Over this harness many knights wore the *Waffen-rock*, a long sleeveless garment of silk on which the badge of the knight was embroidered in gold and jewels. The sword was girt above this garment. The knight would also bear his distinguishing badge on helmet, shield, and the truncheon of his spear. The shield was of wood, strengthened with bands of metal, and often decorated with precious stones, cf. the description of Feirefis' shield in Book XV. The shield was long-shaped, three-cornered, and was held in the left hand close to the body, the spear was carried in the right, so that the horse was guided by the *knee*, not by the *hand*, of the rider. The spear was a blade of steel, set into a long heft of wood, or reed, *Röhr*, probably Bamboo, sometimes even the rough trunk of a young tree, as in Book IV. p. 519. Shield and spear were alike painted in the same colours as the robe of the knight, and the horse had a like covering of silk beneath the saddle and over the coat of mail with which it was protected. The description given by Wolfram of the arms and accoutrement of the Red Knight of Parzival, Book IV. p. 19, and Orilus, Book V. pp. 147-148, *seq.*, will give a very clear idea of the appearance of a knight in full battle-array.

Page [83](#), line 570—'*To the Table Round I came*.' Here we find an allusion to two methods of laying claim to a property. There seems a difference of opinion as to the first; Simrock holds that the pouring out of the wine constituted the claim; Bartsch, that the point of the action lay in carrying off some part of the property claimed. This seems the more probable interpretation, the pouring out of the wine then, as well as the sprinkling the queen, would be accidental. In Chrétien the indignation of king and queen at the insult is far more strongly emphasised. The burning of a wisp of straw, as a declaration of rights claimed, is mentioned by Grimm in his *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer*.

Page [83](#), line 586—'*Iwanet*.' The diminutive of Iwein, the well-known hero of Hartmann's poem (the Owain, son of Urien of Rheged, of Welsh tradition).

Page [83](#)—'*Parzival at the court of King Arthur*.' There are some distinctive features in Wolfram's version of this incident. Parzival's behaviour towards the King, though unconventional, is far less discourteous than that ascribed to him either by

Chrétien or by the English 'Sir Percyvelle.' In Chrétien's poem, Perceval rides into the hall, where he finds the king and courtiers plunged in grief at the insult offered to them by the Red Knight. The king does not reply to Perceval's greeting, and the lad rides so close to him that his horse's head knocks off the king's cap. A reason for the failure of the Knights of the Round Table to avenge the insult offered by the Red Knight is suggested in the fact that they are already wounded in battle. [The student of Irish heroic saga cannot fail to recall the strange disability under which the knights of Conchobor's court suffered at times and which completely prostrated them. The province of Ulster would have lain defenceless were it not that the Cuchulainn alone was free from the disability, and single-handed defied the men of the rest of Ireland. There are many points of contrast between the *enfances* of Cuchulainn and those of Perceval—A.N.] The kindly feeling shown both by Arthur and Guinevere towards Ither is not paralleled in Chrétien, where the Red Knight is represented as Arthur's deadliest foe, and Guinevere is like to die of shame and wrath at the insult offered to her. Chrétien also places Perceval's refusal to dismount here, whereas Wolfram places it on his arrival at Gurnemanz' castle. In Chrétien the hero tells the Red Knight of his intention to demand his armour from Arthur, and there is no trace of the courteous and poetical greeting which Ither here addresses to Parzival. The confusion of the Red Knight with the hero's own personal foe is of course due to the introduction of the Lâhelein episode which is peculiar to Wolfram; but Chrétien has a most curious passage connected with Perceval's inability to disarm his dead antagonist:

'Ains auroie par carbonées
Trestout escarbelliè le mort,
Que nule des armes enport;'

which as it stands is decidedly difficult of interpretation; while in the English Sir Percyvelle we find the hero saying:

'My moder bad me,
Whenne my dart solde brokene be
Owte of the irene brenne the tree;'

which evidently indicates the source of Chrétien's curious remark. An examination of the different versions seems to show that, while the German is the fuller and more poetical, the French is here closer to the original form of the story.

Pages [85](#) and [86](#), lines 635, 658—'Kay the Seneschal.' The character of Kay is one of the problems of the Arthurian legends. In all the tales he is represented as filling the office of Seneschal, and in all he is represented as a man of rough manners, violent temper, and bitter tongue. The Seneschal (*Senes-schalh*), the oldest servant, was master of the ceremonies, one of the chief personages of a royal household, and not unfrequently the trusted confidant of the king; but such a chastisement as Kay here, and in other versions, inflicts upon Kunnewaaré, was distinctly *outside* his office, and, taking into consideration the standing of Kunnewaaré and Antanor, quite inconceivable. Here, as in other instances, we have traces of an original tradition dating from a time when a far rougher code of manners and customs obtained. Wolfram, while adhering closely to his source, and to the traditional representation of Kay's character, was evidently extremely puzzled by the undignified and discourteous part allotted to him, and in Book VI.

(p. 169) he diverges from the story in order to explain what he feels to be a difficulty, and to defend Kay at some length. The Northern French poets apparently felt the same, and as Kay is generally represented as Arthur's foster-brother they invented the fable that the unknighly traits in his character were due to his having been committed to the care of a peasant nurse when his mother took charge of the infant Arthur.

Page 85, line 652—'*The maiden Kunnewaaré.*' The 'laughing damsel' seems to be an archaic and misunderstood element in the Grail romances. A common incident of folk-tales is for the hero, fool, lout, or tatterdemalion, to win to wife a princess who has not laughed or spoken for years by inducing her to do either of these things. Some such incident has apparently been woven into an heroic romance, the main outlines of which were already fixed, so that the actual conclusion, marriage of the hero with the laughing damsel, has been disturbed. Note, however, the homage paid by Parzival to Kunnewaaré, and her evident affection for him (Book VI. pp. 181-185). Her name too is suggestive, it has been derived from *la pucele a la gonne vaire* (the maiden with the coloured robe), but in its present form it is suspiciously like Kondwiramur, and it should be noted that it is the rejected lover of this queen whom Kunnewaaré eventually marries. Is it possible that the Perceval romance from which both Chrétien and 'Kiot' drew contained doublets of this personage? In the one case in her original, in the other in a modified form. An instructive parallel may be adduced from the saga of Cuchulainn. He is the hero of an Andromeda episode and should by rights wed the delivered heroine, but the story being already fixed before the episode was assimilated, the heroine is passed on to a companion of the hero.—[A. N.]

Page 89, line 766—'*Maestricht, or e'en Cologne.*' German art, in the early Middle Ages, reached its highest level in the Rhenish provinces, especially at Cologne.

Page 91, line 828—'*Gurnemanz of Graharz.*' The old knight who instructs the hero in knightly duties is a traditional part of the story, and belongs to most of the versions. In Peredur, he is identified with the Fisher King, Perceval's uncle. In Chrétien his name is given as Gonemans of Gelbort; in Gerbert, Chrétien's continuator, he is, *Gornemant* (one of several points of contact between Gerbert and Wolfram's source).

Page 91, line 847—'*He bade them lead the guest in.*' This is one of the many passages which afford an interesting glimpse of the manners and customs of a bygone age. It may be well to summarise here what we know of the reception and treatment of a guest in the Middle Ages. If a strange knight rode into the courtyard of a castle he was received by squires and pages, who held his bridle and assisted him to dismount. The guest was then conducted to a chamber where he was disarmed and provided with suitable robes. In every important household there was a *Kleider-kammer*, or wardrobe, presided over by a chamberlain, whose office it was to see that all guests were provided with garments fitted to their station. The preparation of these dresses was the work of the women of the household, and it can have been no light task, as even if a whole company arrived they would all expect to be provided with the requisite dress. The guest, being robed, was then conducted to the great Hall, which was in the upper story of the castle. Half-way on the staircase leading to it, he would be met, and welcomed with the kiss of greeting, by both host and hostess (cf. Book IV. p. 107), and led by them into the Hall where he would receive the greeting of the assembled company. When all were seated the guest would say who he was, and whence he

came, but, if he kept silence on this point, it was not etiquette to ask him till the next morning (cf. Book III. p. 95). The evening meal then followed, after which, on occasions of great festivity, such as that recounted in Book XIII. (marriage feast of Gawain and Orgeluse) there would be dancing, otherwise the time seems to have been spent in conversation till the appearance of the wine-cup, *Nacht Trunk*, gave the signal for separation. Then knights conducted the guest to his chamber, where pages disrobed him, and apparently waited with lighted tapers till he fell asleep. The account given here of Parzival's visit to Gurnemanz gives a very good idea of how the following day would be spent, indeed Wolfram's love for detailed description, and accuracy of statement render this poem peculiarly valuable to a student of the manners and customs of the Middle Ages.

From various hints in the Gawain episodes, notably Books X. and XI., it seems as if the privilege extended to a guest might on occasion be construed with a freedom decidedly repellent to modern ideas.

Page [96](#), lines 984, 985—'*Full five shall thy senses be.*' Cf. Book IX. p. 200.

Page [98](#), line 1055—'*The prince bade his daughter hither.*' The introduction of Gurnemanz' daughter, and her incipient love affair with Parzival is peculiar to this version. There is a curious discrepancy to be noted between the apparent susceptibility of the hero here and in Book IX. pp. 260, 261, and his indifference to feminine charms displayed elsewhere, notably in his rejection of Orgeluse's advances and neglect of the Château Merveil adventure. The latter presentment seems most in accordance with Parzival's character; is the susceptibility to be ascribed to the poet?

Page [99](#), line 1080—'*I lose once more a son.*' The sons of the old knight are mentioned in other versions, but Wolfram alone names them. The circumstances of Schenteflur's death are recounted in Book IV. p. 121; the account given of the other two sons is largely borrowed from Hartmann's *Erec*, where the strife for the hawk at Kanedig, and the venture, Schoie-de-la-kurt (which is not a person, but an expedition), is fully recounted. Brandigan is Klamidé's kingdom, cf. Book IV.; Mabonagrein, his cousin, Book IV. p. 123. Mahaut is another form of the name Matilda. From *Tituel* we learn that Gurgzrei and Mahaut were the parents of Schionatulander, Siguné's lover, cf. also Book VIII. p. 245 and note.

BOOK IV TRADITIONAL EVENTS

Arrival at besieged city; maiden of the castle beseeches the hero's aid; overthrow of her enemies and final marriage with maiden.	Chrétien and his continuator Gerbert; Peredur; Sir Percyvelle.
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Name of the maiden; Chrétien, Blanche-fleur; Sir Percyvelle Lufamour; Peredur unnamed.

Page [103](#), line 17—'*Who rideth astray, etc.*' According to Simrock this passage in the original contains a play upon words which cannot be reproduced in translation: Slegel—schlegel, the word employed for *axe* here, signifying, in some parts of Germany, 'a fallen tree.'

Page [104](#), line 26—'*The city of Pelrapär.*' In Chrétien the name of the city is 'Beu-repaire,' of which this is evidently the German rendering. The substitution of *p* for

b is still a distinguishing mark of German pronunciation of French. In *Sir Percyvella* it is 'the maiden land.'

Page [104](#), line 38—'*The King Klamidé.*' This character is named by Wolfram and Chrétien only; in *Peredur* he is the Earl; in *Sir Percyvella*, 'Sowdane.' Chrétien calls him 'Clamadex,' and it is worthy of note that in *Perceval li Gallois* the son of the Red Knight slain by Perceval is called 'Clamadas,' evidently a variant of the same name.

Page [105](#), line 78—'*My lord the Count of Wertheim.*' Wertheim is in Lower Franconia. Bartsch thinks either Poppo I. or his son Poppo II. is referred to here. From the expression used, 'my lord,' it seems as if Wolfram had at one time been in his service.

Page [106](#), line 89—'*Trühending.*' There are three places of this name in the neighbourhood of Eschenbach: Hohen, Alten, and Wasser-Trühending. The latter is still famous for its *krapfen*, a kind of pancake.

Page [107](#), line 119—'*Kiot of Katelangen (i.e. Catalonia) and Manfilot.*' Kiot is the father of Siguné, and appears again in Book XVI. The account of his marriage with Schoisianè, her death, and his subsequent adoption of the life of a hermit will be found in Book IX. p. 274. From Wolfram's unfinished poem of *Titarel* we learn that Manfilot was his companion.

Page [107](#), line 133—'*The twain Isoldé.*' An allusion to Isoldé la Belle, the wife of King Mark of Cornwall, and mistress of Sir Tristan; and Isoldé of the white hand, Tristan's wife.

Page [109](#), line 208, seq.—'*Till the cry of heart-sorrow woke him.*' This nocturnal visit of the Lady of the castle to the hero's chamber seems to be part of the original tradition, and it is evident by the apologetic manner in which Wolfram tells the story that he is somewhat puzzled by Kondwiramur's conduct. From the Introduction to Book VII., and also from the blame he bestows on Chrétien for having done a wrong to the story, *Diese Märe unrecht gethan*, we gather that Wolfram set a high value on fidelity to his source, and these and similar apologetic passages must be explained by the unwillingness of the poet to depart from the traditional form of the legend, while, at the same time, the story, representing as it did the manners and customs of an earlier and ruder period, was somewhat distasteful to him.

Page [110](#), line 243—'*Kingron the Seneschal.*' This character is Aguigrenons in Chrétien, elsewhere he is unnamed. Mr. York Powell points out that Wolfram's form presupposes an Aguigrenons, which would either indicate that the existing MSS. of Chrétien, or Chrétien himself, misread *u* for *n*, or that Wolfram did *not* get his version by ear as he maintains (or that Wolfram was following a source other than Chrétien).

Page [114](#), line 365, seq.—'*The marriage night.*' A similar account is given by Gerbert, one of the continuators of Chrétien. (Chrétien himself does not record the marriage, which takes place on a later visit of the hero to Beau-repaire.) In Gerbert's version we have an indication of later influence, as the motive-power is the recognition by both Perceval and his bride of the superiority of virginity to the married state. Wolfram's version seems far more in accordance with the character of the hero, and is probably closer to the original form of the story.

Page [116](#), line 420—'*Galogandres, Duke of Gippones*.' This character and Count Narant only appear here. Uckerland is probably a corruption of Oultreland, as noted in Book III.

Page [118](#), line 505—'*Gringorz*.' The French *Gringoire*—Gregory. All this account of Klamidé's arms, charger, etc., is peculiar to Wolfram; whose fondness for minute and descriptive detail is a noticeable characteristic.

Page [121](#), line 598—'*Dianasdron*.' Dinaderon en Gales in Chrétien, who does not mention Karminöl. In the roll of King Arthur's knights we find such names as Sir Dinas, Sir Dinant, Sir Dinadan; all of which seem to come from the same root. The name is probably Keltic, and belongs to the original version of the story.

Page [123](#), line 660—'*Mabonagrein*.' Cf. Book III. p. 108 and note.

BOOK V TRADITIONAL EVENTS

Hero meets with the Fisher King; visits the Grail Castle, sees the Grail, lance, etc., but asks no question, and is therefore reproached by maiden with dead knight.	Chrétien and continuators: Peredur; Perceval; Perceval li Gallois. (Sir Percyvella omits everything connected with the Grail.)
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(The reader will find all this part of the legend, the varying forms of the visit to the Grail Castle, the Fisher King, the Grail, etc., fully discussed in Mr. Alfred Nutt's *Studies on the Legend of the Holy Grail*.)

Page [131](#), line 58—'*Abenberg's field*.' Castle and town of Abenberg, in the neighbourhood of Eschenbach.

Page [131](#), line 75—'*Repanse de Schoie*.' This name appears to signify 'Thought of joy.' The Grail maidens are not named in other versions.

Page [132](#), line 87—'*Then one to the host would call him*.' This was evidently the Court Jester, always a privileged person.

Page [132](#), lines 109, 110—'*Lignum Aloe*.' Bartsch holds this to be a mistake of the poet, who has misunderstood the old French word *Aloer*. Chrétien has simply *seces boises*. 'Wildberg' was the home of the poet, who is here making allusion to his poverty, as in Book IV. p. 106.

Page [132](#), line 111—'*And the host had bid them lay him*.' 'The Maimed King' invariably figures in the Grail Romances, whether they deal only with the Quest, as here, or with the early history of the Grail. He is generally wounded through the thighs, either with a lance, or with a sword, but the circumstances under which he receives the wound vary greatly. In most of the versions he is met with while engaged in fishing, and is known as the Fisher King, or the 'Rich Fisher.'

Page [132](#), line 125—'*The bleeding lance*.' This is a feature in most of the Grail Romances, and seems to have been an original feature of the story, though it had not the close connection with the *Grail*, which the fully developed Christian legend has given to it. In the earlier versions of the story it is the weapon with which the Maimed King was wounded; finally, it became the spear with which our Lord's side was pierced on the cross. Wolfram, who never appears to connect the Grail with the Passion, gives it the first meaning. The visit to the Grail Castle is told in varying forms, but the King, the Grail, Sword, and Lance almost invariably

appear, and the hero is either Perceval or his companion Gawain, but Perceval is, undoubtedly, the original hero of the Quest.

Page [133](#), line 137 and *seq.*—'*The Grail Procession.*' In Chrétien this is much more simply treated. There are two squires bearing candlesticks, and two maidens, one of whom carries the Grail, the other a silver dish, *tailleur*. Wolfram has evidently seized the opportunity to give play to his love of detailed description, and his account of the Grail Feast and the Grail Maidens is far more elaborate than any given elsewhere.

Page [136](#), line 223—'*The food-supplying powers of the Grail.*' In other romances of the cycle we find similar powers attributed to the Grail. Malory, who borrowed largely from the *Queste* and *Grand S. Graal*, gives a like account. There is evidently a connection between this feature of the Grail, and the food-supplying talismans which figure largely in the legendary lore of most countries.

Page [137](#), line 247—'*A squire who a sword did bear.*' Cf. p. [144](#), lines 472 and *seq.* This incident also occurs in Chrétien, and in varying form in most of the versions. In this poem the meaning and use of the sword are somewhat inexplicable. In Chrétien that sword will break in *one* peril, known only to its maker, and then can be made whole by dipping it in a *lake*. Wolfram's account seems to be based on a misunderstanding of a French original. In some of the other versions the sword is already broken, and can only be made whole by the achiever of the Quest. In Wolfram the sword is a very puzzling feature of the story, with which indeed it seems to have little or no connection. The sword, which breaks in Parzival's deadly combat with his unknown brother, is not *this* sword, but the one taken from Ither of Gaheviess.

Page [137](#), line 267—'*The fairest of old men ancient.*' Titurel, cf. Book IX. p. 287.

Page [137](#), line 273—'*'Tis a symbol good, the bowstring.*' Introduction to Book I., line 9, and note.

Page [139](#), line 325—'*The garden of Paradise.*' This is one of the allusions which seem to connect the Grail in Wolfram's version with an Oriental source, cf. p. [135](#).

Page [141](#), line 371—'*A hidden hand drew the rope taut.*' Chrétien has the incident of the drawbridge rising, but in no other version are the reproaches addressed to the hero immediately on his leaving the castle, they are invariably put into the mouth of the maiden with the dead knight. In the *Perceval* the maiden's words, 'The Lord hates thee,' recall Wolfram's *Ihr sult varen der sunnen has*, which Bartsch says is an ancient formula of declaring a person accurst, and unworthy of the light of day.

Page [141](#), line 381—'*Doubled the throw of sorrow.*' Cf. Book III. p. 100; Book II. p. 47. Similes borrowed from games of chance are not unusual in this poem.

Page [141](#), line 397—'*A woman's voice make moan.*' This meeting with the maiden *after* the visit to the Grail Castle is in most versions the only one. In Chrétien she now tells the hero his name which he learns or guesses for the first time. It was not improbably this incident which led either Wolfram, or his source, to place a first meeting earlier in the story while still retaining one in the original position. Wolfram, with characteristic love for detail, follows up the history of Siguné far more fully than other writers of the cycle.

Page [142](#), line 427—'*Monsalväsich.*' Probably 'Mont Sauvage,' in allusion to its wild and lonely position. A full account of the Grail and its keepers is given in Book IX.

pp. 270, 271.

Page [143](#), line 463—'*Lunete*.' A character in Hartmann's *Iwein*, from which the episode is quoted. Cf. Book IX. p. 252, and opening of Book XII.

Page [144](#), line 475—'*Trebuchet*.' This name is also given in Chrétien; he is alluded to again p. [147](#), and in Book IX. p. 281, in connection with the knives of silver mentioned in line 498 of this book.

Page [147](#), line 595—'*Tenabroc*.' Also p. [133](#), line 146. This name is borrowed from Hartmann's Erec. Chrétien has '*Danebroc*.'

Page [147](#), line 601—'*Beälzenan*.' According to Bartsch this name is combined from Provençal, *beal*, fair; *enan*, height='the fair height,' which would suit very well with the position of Angers, the capital of Anjou.

Page [152](#), line 760—'*Wild Taurian, Dodine's brother*.' Cf. Book IX. p. 265. Taurian does not seem to have been identified, but *Dodine* appears, in many of the Arthurian romances, always with the title of '*Le Sauvage*.' So we find him named in Malory. Wolfram seemed to have transferred the characteristic from one brother to the other.

Page [155](#), line 849—'*Iofreit the son of Idöl*.' This is the French name Geoffrey. Mentioned again in Book VI. line 168. Most critics identify this character with Chrétien's *Giflès li feus Do*.

BOOK VI TRADITIONAL EVENTS

Blood drops on the snow and love-trance of hero.	Chrétien: Peredur.
Overthrows Kay and Segramor.	(Perceval Li Gallois relates a similar incident of Gawain.)
Hero is cursed by Grail messenger for his failure to ask the question.	Chrétien: Peredur. (In Perceval there is a cursing by Merlin.)

Page [159](#), line 2—'*From Karidöl and his kingdom*.' Karidöl=Carduel or Cardoile, the Anglo-Norman form of Carlisle. This is undoubtedly Arthur's original capital, but throughout this poem Nantes seems to be regarded as the royal city. Curiously enough we find the two names combined in Gautier de Douzens, one of the continuators of *Li Conte del Graal*, who introduces, as one of his *dramatis personæ*, Carduel of Nantes.

Page [160](#), line 29—'*Whitsuntide*.' An examination of the Romances will show this statement to be correct; Pentecost and Christmas seem to have been the two feasts held in especial honour at King Arthur's court.

Page [160](#), line 49—'*Blood-drops on the snow*.' Both Wolfram and Chrétien insist only on the *two* colours, red and white, and the fact that they are puzzled by, and think it necessary to explain, the presence of snow at Whitsuntide shows that they are taking over the incident from an older source. As a matter of fact it is to be found in tales unconnected with the Arthurian cycle, and of varying nationality. In Peredur (Welsh) a raven has settled upon the body of a wild goose killed by a falcon, and the hero thinks of *three* colours (black, for hair; white, for skin; red, for cheeks); in the *Fate of the Sons of Usnech*, an Irish tale written down before the middle of the twelfth century, and probably centuries older, these three colours

are likewise present, but it is a calf instead of a wild goose that is slain, and it is the heroine, not the hero, who is fascinated by the colours. The incident has always been a favourite one with Celtic story-tellers (cf. *Argyll Tales*, M'Innes and Nutt, pp. 431-34), and curiously it is the slain-bird, instead of the slain-calf version which predominates, although the *Fate of the Sons of Usnech* is probably the most famous of all Irish stories, and no traceable literary influence of the Welsh tale upon Irish romance is known. Those familiar with Grimm's fairy tales will remember a similar incident in the story of *Snowdrop*, where the queen pricks her finger, and wishes for a daughter with hair as black as the ebony window-frame, skin as white as the snow, and cheeks as red as the blood; but here, of course, the 'fascination' element is absent. I have attempted to show ('the *lai* of Eliduc and the *mürchen* of Schneewittchen,' *Folk Lore*. iii. I), that the Gaelic version of the Schneewittchen type of story represents the earliest attainable form of the story. —[A. N.]

Page 162, line 87—'*Segramor*,' or Saigremors. This knight is a familiar figure in the Arthurian Romances, and the episode is quite in accordance with his general character. Chrétien calls him 'Le Desreë' (uncurbed, impetuous). In Malory he is 'Le Desirous.' Cf. also Book VIII. p. 241.

Page 163, line 121—'*To seek for the magic pheasant*.' Simrock thinks this an allusion to a popular folk-tale, in which a magician, condemned to death, contrives to escape by setting his judges and executioner to seek for the fallen bird, by the irresistible strains of his magic pipe.

Page 166, line 235—'*Heinrich of Veldeck*.' A German poet who lived towards the end of the twelfth century. His translation of the *Æneid*, founded on a French version of the poem, was extremely popular, and Wolfram frequently refers to it in his *Parzival*.

Page 169, line 321—'*Herman of Thuringia*.' This Landgrave of Thuringia is well known to history as a generous patron of the literature of his day. His court at the Wartburg was the resort of all the leading poets, and it filled a place in the literary life of the twelfth century only comparable to that taken by the neighbouring court of Weimar six hundred years later. The terms in which Wolfram speaks of the guests at the Wartburg is quite in keeping with what is known of the Landgrave's lavish hospitality.

Simrock renders a passage from Walther von der Vogelweide which describes the tumultuous life of the court as follows:

'Wer in den Ohren siech ist oder krank im Haupt,
Der meide ja Thuringen's Hof, wenn er mir glaubt.
Käm er dahin, er würde ganz bethöret;
Ich drang so lange zu, dass ich nicht mehr vermag,
Ein Zug fährt ein, ein andrer aus, so Nacht als Tag,
Ein wunder ists, dass da noch Jemand höret.'

The *Wartburg-krieg*, a poem of the end of the thirteenth century, in which the principal poets of the age are represented as competing in song before the Landgrave, supposes this contest to take place in 1207, and is doubtless an echo of what was no unusual incident at that date. Wolfram's poem of *Willehalm* was composed at the wish of the Landgrave, and in it he speaks of the death of his patron. Herman died in 1216, and the brilliant life at the Wartburg came to an

end; his successor Ludwig, the husband of S. Elizabeth, having little taste for literature.

Page [169](#), line 325—'*And so Knight Walter singeth.*' Walther von der Vogelweide, one of the most famous of German lyric poets, was of knightly birth but small means; he seems to have supported himself by his art, leading a wandering life at the principal courts of his day. Of his connection with Wolfram nothing is known, save the fact of their being together at the court of the Landgrave Herman in the early years of the thirteenth century. The line here quoted does not occur in any of Walther's extant poems.

Page [169](#), line 328—'*Heinrich of Rispatch.*' Nothing seems to be known of the character here referred to. From the fact that there is a Rispatch in the neighbourhood of Eschenbach, Bartsch conjectures that it was some one personally known to Wolfram.

Page [171](#), line 385—'*The time when the knife's sharp blade.*' Wolfram is here quoting from an unknown source. No such adventures are recorded in any Romance that has come down to us; but they are quite in keeping with Gawain's character.

Page [176](#), line 529—'*The right of the Round Table.*' This custom is alluded to in other Arthurian Romances, and we meet with it again in Book XIII. Here Wolfram seems to imply merely that the king did not eat in public with his knights, *i.e.* at the Round Table, before they had heard of some knightly venture; in Book XIII. he speaks as if no meal might be partaken of by any of the courtiers till this came to pass. The first rendering seems to be the correct one. [The whole incident is thoroughly in keeping with the conventions of early Irish romance, in which the personages are invariably subject to strict rules and obligations, *geasa*, to use the Irish word.—A.N.]

Page [177](#), line 585—'*The Grail Messenger.*' This incident occurs in both Chrétien and Peredur, but the messenger is unnamed, or simply termed 'The Loathly Damsel.' Such a damsel is met with in the *Perceval*, but when she reaches King Arthur's Court she is transformed into a maiden of surpassing beauty. It will be noted that one of the queens imprisoned in Château Merveil also bears the name of Kondrie (p. [189](#)). Mr. Nutt, in his *Studies on the Legend of the Holy Grail*, suggests this was originally the Loathly Damsel released from the transforming spell. (It may be noted that Wagner has kept this idea, and in the first act his Kundrie is the Loathly Messenger; in the second, 'Kondrie la Belle.') Chrétien's description of Kondrie's appearance is even more repulsive than Wolfram's. In Book X. we have a curious account of the origin of these strange people.

[The 'Loathly Damsel' is one of those personages that most clearly testify to the reliance of the romance-writers upon a traditional popular basis, and also in this instance to the specific Celtic origin of that popular basis. A commonplace of folk-tales of the 'task' class is that the hero is helped by a personage having private ends of his or her own to serve, as, until the hero achieves the Quest (which he never does unaided), the helper cannot be released from a spell, generally of transformation into an animal, but sometimes into a shape of surpassingly hideous ugliness. The oldest European variant of this latter type with which I am acquainted is to be found in an Irish folk-tale imbedded in the so-called Cormac's Glossary, a compilation of the tenth century. I have given this in full (*Argyllshire Tales*, M'Innes and Nutt, pp. 467, 468). In its *outré* horror the description of the

bespelled king's son strikingly recalls that of Kundrie. Such a task story, in which the hero is helped by a transformed personage, who cannot be delivered until the Quest is achieved, is one of the main staples of the Perceval cycle, but it is only in the Welsh tale of *Peredur* that the incident appears in a straightforward and intelligible form. The sudden transformation from foulness to radiant beauty is met with in another connection earlier in Ireland than elsewhere in Europe: the incident of the Perilous Kiss, in which the embrace of a courteous knight frees a bespelled damsel from loathly disguise, an incident frequently associated with Gawain, is, as I have shown (*Academy*, April 30, 1892), of early occurrence in Ireland. Another element which goes to the complex individuality of Kundrie can be paralleled from early Irish romance. As the female messenger of the fairy dynasty of Mazadan, she corresponds to Leborcham, the female messenger of the semi-mythic King Conchobor, the head and centre of the oldest Irish cycle of heroic romance. Like Kundrie, Leborcham was of startling and unnatural hideousness, and she is brought into special connection with Cuchulainn the chief hero of the Ulster cycle, as Kundrie is with Perceval the chief hero of one group of the Arthur romances.—A.N.]

Page [181](#), line 697—'*Château Merveil*.' The adventure of this magic castle, achieved by Gawain, is related at length in Book XI.

Page [184](#), line 806—'*Kingrimursel*.' The name of this character in Chrétien is Guigambresil, of which this is evidently the German rendering. Here, again, Wolfram either heard or read Gingambresil.

Page [185](#), line 839—'*Tribalibot*.' This is India.

Page [186](#), line 859—'*The heathen queen of lanfus*.' The name of this queen, we find from line 1009, was Ekuba; one of the few classical names we find in this poem.

Page [189](#), line 977—'*The Greek, Sir Klias*.' This is Cligès, the hero of Chrétien's poem of that name, son of the Greek Emperor Alexander and Surdamour, sister to Gawain, cf. Book XII. Malory has Sir Clegis, probably the same name.

Page [190](#), line 1002—'*Twelve spears of Angram*.' Angram was probably in India, and noted for its steel. Oraste-Gentesein seems to be the name of the country from which the reed, or bamboo, was brought. Cf. Book VII. pp. 218, 219.

BOOK VII TRADITIONAL EVENTS

Meeting with army of Meljanz of Lys; Gawain takes part in the tournament, and overthrows Meljanz.	Chrétien: Perceval relates the same incident, with the difference that Perceval overcomes both Gawain and Melians.
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Introduction, line 1-16—This passage is somewhat obscure, but the meaning appears to be that the poet thinks he may possibly be blamed for leaving the history of Parzival, his chief hero, to follow the fortunes of Gawain; and would excuse himself for so doing by the plea of fidelity to his source. Very few of the romances of this date can be considered *original* works in the sense in which we would now employ that term; they were mostly a re-statement, or re-combining of traditional material, and it was a point of honour to adhere closely, in the march of incident, to the original form, though the poet was free to do as Wolfram has done, and introduce personal and contemporary allusions, or give his own

interpretation of the meaning of the tale. The fact that Wolfram here so strongly blames those who depart from the traditional form of the story, and at the end of his poem specially accuses Chrétien of having sinned in this way, seems a strong argument against the theory that Chrétien, and Chrétien alone, was Wolfram's source of information.

Page [195](#), line 2—'*Gawain*.' *Gauvain* (French), *Gwchmai* (Welsh). In all the earlier versions of the Grail story this knight plays a part only secondary to that of the chief hero Perceval. Certain episodes of which he is sole hero, in Chrétien as in Wolfram, break the course of the Perceval story, though Wolfram, with considerable skill, has brought them into close connection with the main thread of the legend. With Chrétien's continuators, too, Gawain is an important character, he also visits the Grail Castle and fails to ask the question; and a German version of the Grail legend, *Diu Krône*, by Heinrich von Türlin, makes him the chief hero, it is he who achieves the Quest and heals Anfortas. It is noticeable that none of the earlier versions know anything of either Lancelot or Galahad as Grail-seekers; Wolfram does mention the former, but only incidentally, and throughout his poem he evidently looks upon Gawain as the typical Arthurian knight, the pride and glory of the Round Table. It is curious that, though he feels himself compelled to apologise for some of the characters, to make an elaborate defence for Kay, and find excuses for Kondwiramur, Wolfram never has a word of blame for Gawain, and strong as the contrast is between his morality and that of Parzival, he certainly never draws a comparison to the disadvantage of the former; as husband of Orgeluse and lord of the Château Merveil, Gawain's lot in life is brilliant enough to awaken the envy of Kay who is jealous for King Arthur's honour. The whole presentment of Gawain in the poem is an eloquent commentary on the moral teaching of the original Arthurian legend, of which he is the oldest representative. Later compilers seem to have felt this, and as the legend gradually became ecclesiasticised, and assumed the form of a religious romance, so the original heroes of the story were gradually supplanted by others, whose characters, in the opinion of monkish compilers lent themselves more to purposes of moral edification. Thus Perceval the married man was forced to yield to Galahad the celibate, and, though he was never driven out of the story, was relegated to a secondary position; and Gawain, whose character in the early romances defied any attempt at converting him into a moral example, became merely a foil to the superior virtue of his companions, while the adventures originally ascribed to him were passed over to the repentant sinner Lancelot. The order of Grail heroes seems to have been as follows: Perceval, Gawain; Perceval, Gawain, Lancelot; Galahad, Perceval, and Lancelot. It is in this last order that they have come down to us through Malory's redaction of the legends.

Page [196](#), line 34—'*The steed from Monsalväsich came*.' Cf. Book IX. p. 273, where Parzival's possession of a Grail-steed leads to his being mistaken for Lâhelein.

Page [198](#), line 96—'*Meljakanz*.' Cf. Book III. p. 72 and note.

Page [198](#), line 105—'*Meljanz of Lys*.' It will be seen, from the list of traditional events given above, that this character appears in other versions of the Perceval legends. Though the context is different, the name with but little variation appears in other of the Grail romances, Malory has Melias de Lile, in every instance the name indicates a French origin.

Page [198](#), line 119—'*Lippaut*.' The name of this character in Chrétien is Tiebaut of Tintaguel, the German is evidently a rendering of this French name. Tintaguel

seems to point to a Keltic original.

Page [199](#), line 124—'*Obie and Obilot*.' Bartsch considers that both these names are derived from a French source, Obie, from the verb *obier*, signifying excitable, passionate; Obilot, from the French *belot*, a fair child. In Chrétien the sisters are unnamed, but the younger is called *La pucière as mances petites*.

Page [199](#), line 136—'*Galoës and Annora*.' Here we learn, for the first time, the name of Galoës' love, cf. Book II. p. 46 and note. Annora is the same name as Eleanor.

Page [200](#), line 168—'*Lisavander*.' The French has several variations of this name, Teudaves, Travezdates, Trahedavet.

Page [205](#), line 318, and p. [219](#), line 781—'*A charger the king bestrode*.' This is an allusion to the captivity of Queen Guinevere and her rescue by Lancelot. Kay was among her would-be liberators, and was smitten by Meljakanz: 'enbor ûs dem satele hin, daz in ein ast der helm gevienc, und bi der gurgelen hienc.' This incident is related in Hartmann's *Iwein*; but the subsequent freeing of the queen by Lancelot, referred to on p. 219, is taken from Chrétien's *Chevalier de la Charrette*. The adventure is again alluded to in Book XII.

Page [210](#), line 493—'*Gawain and Obilot*.' Though Chrétien and Wolfram agree here in the main outline of the story, yet the details differ completely, and the episode as related by the German poet is far more graceful and poetical in treatment. In Chrétien the elder sister strikes the younger in the face, and it is in order to avenge this insult that the child begs Gawain to fight for her. It is the father, and not the child herself, who suggests presenting the knight with a token; he bids Gawain at first pay no attention to her request, and there is no trace of the pride and affection with which Lippaut evidently regards both his daughters, or of the confidence between father and child which is so charming a feature in Wolfram's poem. Gawain, according to Chrétien, does not present his little lady with the captured monarch, but only with his steed, a compliment she shares too with his hostess and her daughters. In the French poet we have nothing of the amusing assumption of maiden dignity by the child Obilot, or of the graceful courtesy, half serious, half laughing, with which Gawain falls in with her whim, and sustains his part in the pretty play. Critics have bestowed much praise on this book, and on the character of the child Obilot, and some have thought that, in the picture of father and child, and in the words put into Lippaut's mouth, we have a glimpse of the home life of the poet, and an expression of personal feeling. In *Willehalm*, Wolfram refers to his daughter's dolls, and throughout his poems he frequently alludes to children, their ways, and their amusements. However that may be, nowhere else in the poem does *Gawain* appear to so much advantage as in this episode.

Page [211](#), line 522—'*Parzival*.' Cf. Book VI. p. 188, line 941.

Page [216](#), line 668—'*Even now shall the Erfurt vineyards*.' etc. An allusion to the siege of Erfurt by the Landgrave Herman in 1203. As the poet speaks of the traces of strife as being yet visible, this book of the *Parzival* must have been written not long after that date.

Page [217](#), line 715, and *seq.*—'*The captive Breton knights*.' It is doubtful to what romance Wolfram here makes allusion. Chrétien, in his *Chevalier la Charrette*, relates the capture of some of Arthur's knights by King Bagdemagus-Poidikonjonz, when Meljakanz carried off Guinevere, but they were released by

Lancelot. Wolfram seems to have known another version of the story, as he evidently did know a romance dealing with the fate of Arthur's son, Ilinot, of whom we know nothing. He refers to this at length in Book XII. Cluse seems to betoken an enclosed space, a ravine, Chrétien calls it *Le passage des pierres*—The Gampilon was a fabulous beast of the dragon type, also mentioned in the *Gudrun*.

Page [218](#), line 733—'*The Red Knight*.' It is worth noticing that, throughout the Gawain episodes, Wolfram never loses sight of his principal hero; if Parzival does not appear personally, as he does in this book, he is always alluded to in direct connection with the development of the story, e.g., Book VIII. pp. 242, 243. This is not the case in Chrétien, where the Gawain episodes are entirely independent. Some critics have evolved an elaborate theory to account for the importance assigned to Gawain in this and following books, and maintain that Wolfram felt that while Parzival was a prey to spiritual doubt and despair, it was more artistic to keep him in the background than to make him the hero of a series of chivalrous adventures. The more probable solution seems to be exactly the opposite, viz., that the Gawain episodes were already introduced into the legend, that Wolfram, or his source, felt it a flaw that they should have so little connection with the main thread of the story, and therefore conceived the idea of introducing the principal hero, and, by keeping him always more or less *en évidence*, making it possible to weave the Gawain adventures into the fabric of the legend, instead of leaving them an excrescence on its surface—a conception which was finally perfected by the connection of Orgeluse, Gawain's lady-love, with both Parzival and Anfortas, thereby bringing all the different elements of the tale into touch each with the other.

BOOK VIII TRADITIONAL EVENTS

Arrival of Gawain at castle; committed to care of lady to whom he makes love; is attacked by her people and defends himself with a chess-board.	Chrétien: Peredur.
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The *Perceval* gives an account of an adventure with a lady and a chess-board of which Perceval is the hero, but the circumstances differ entirely, being similar to those of an episode found in *Gautier de Douvens* and also in *Peredur*.

Page [229](#), line 14—'*Askalon*.' The name of this city in Chrétien is Escavalon, apparently a variant of Avalon. The name in Wolfram may be either a misunderstanding of the French original, or it is not impossible that Askalon, being well known to the Crusaders of that time, was purposely substituted for a similar sounding-title.

Page [230](#), line 26—'*Æneas and Dido*.' An allusion to the *Æneid* of Heinrich von Veldeck, to which Wolfram often refers. We learn from line 121 that the writer was already dead. Cf. note, Book VI.

Page [230](#), line 41—'*Where Mazadan reigned as Monarch*.' Cf. Book I. p. 31, and Book IX. p. 263. There is evidently a confusion here between the fairy and her kingdom. Fay-Morgan is, of course, the fairy-queen, and the name seems later to have been transferred to Arthur's sister, who is called Morgan le Fay in Malory. Terre-de-la-schoie, given in Book I. as the name of the lady, is her kingdom; the confusion probably arises from a misunderstanding of the French source. We find, on p. [240](#), that the mother of King Vergulacht, Fleurdamur, was sister to Gamuret,

consequently Parzival and Vergulacht are first cousins, and we are meant to understand that Gawain, who, as a lad, had seen Gamuret at Kanvoleis (Book II. p. 39), was struck by the king's likeness to his uncle and cousin, though he evidently knows nothing of the relationship; cf. Appendix A for notes on the supposed origin of the Angevin race.

Page [231](#), line 58—'*Not such as in Karidöl.*' This is the longest of the many allusions to the *Erec* of Hartmann von Aue, and refers to the same incident as Book III. p. 81, cf. note on passage.

Page [232](#), line 106—'*The Margravine of Heitstein.*' This name varies greatly in the MSS., but both Lachmann and Bartsch give the reading in the text. The Margravine mentioned is identified with the wife of Berchtold von Chamm and Vohburg, who died in 1204.

Page [233](#), line 146—'*Of my father's sister,*' etc. This line is curious as giving a very early instance of a play upon words familiar to us in modern puzzles. Gawain, of course, simply states that he is 'his father's son,' and gives the queen no information whatever as to his birth.

Page [234](#), line 181, and *seq.*—'*At length did she chance on some chess-men,*' etc. It should be noted that chess-men, in the Middle Ages, were often of a very large size, and would form no despicable weapons. In Chrétien's version of the incident he specially speaks of these as ten times larger than other chess-men, and of very hard ivory. Adventures in which a chess-board plays a part are of not infrequent occurrence in the Grail romances.

Page [234](#), line 190—'*The Burger maids of Tollenstein.*' Tollenstein is a town in the neighbourhood of Eschenbach; the allusion is evidently to some kind of Carnival sports held there. Mock Tournaments, in which women took part, are often alluded to in old French and German poems. The point of the allusion evidently is that they fought for mere sport, while Antikonie fought in defence of her guest, and her action is therefore held the more praiseworthy.

Page [235](#), line 221—'*The knight who to battle bade him.*' Cf. Book VI. p. 184 and note.

Page [236](#), line 257—'*With a lance-thrust by Ekunât.*' Ekunât has been already named in Book III. p. 99. It seems doubtful whence Wolfram derived this incident.

Page [238](#), line 316—'*As Kiot himself hath told us.*' This is the first time Wolfram names the source whence he drew his poem. It has already been noted in the Introduction that the existence of this Kiot is a matter of debate, as no poem of his has come down to us, and apparently no other writer mentions his name. This passage should be compared with Book IX. p. 262, where the nature of the MS. in which Kiot found the story of Parzival and the Grail is stated. It certainly seems clear that Wolfram *had* a source of information other than the poem of Chrétien de Troyes; his other statements as to contemporary events and contemporary literature are perfectly accurate, and we do not find him inventing feigned names for other writers of the day; it therefore seems somewhat unreasonable to conclude, simply because we know nothing of Kiot's work, that Wolfram here, and in other passages, is, to put it mildly, inventing an elaborate fiction. The fact of the great popularity obtained by Chrétien's version of the Grail legend is quite enough to account for the disappearance of a version which, for some reason or other (very probably its curious account of the Grail), had failed to attract the popular fancy.

Page [240](#), line 363—'If Turnus thou fain wouldst be.' An allusion to the *Æneid* of Heinrich von Veldeke, where Turnus reproaches Tranzas for cowardice, and is answered in much the same strain as Liddamus answers Kingrimursel.

Page [240](#), line 387—'Nay, why should I be a Wolfhart?' This passage to line 398 is an allusion to the great German epic, the *Nibelungenlied*, the various lays composing which seem to have been brought into order and welded into a literary whole about this time. Wolfram's version of the cook's appeal to Gunther varies slightly from the received text and probably represents an older form.

Page [241](#), line 407—'Sibech ne'er drew a sword.' This is an allusion to the story of Dietrich von Berne, parts of which were incorporated in the *Nibelungenlied*, where, however, this special incident is not to be found. Ermenrich was uncle to Dietrich and Emperor of Rome; Sibech, who seems to have been as faithless as he was cowardly, to avenge a personal injury, counselled the Emperor to a course which brought about the ruin of himself and his people.

Page [242](#), line 452—'The wood *Læhtamreis*.' Tamreis, as we find from Book XII., is the name of a tree, this proper name seems to be combined from *Læh*, old French *les* = near, and *tamreis* (tamarisk?). The knight is, of course, Parzival. Chrétien has not this incident; which is a proof of Wolfram's superior skill in controlling the thread of his story.

Page [245](#), line 541—'At *Schoie-de-la-Kurt*.' Cf. note to Book III., where we find the account of this venture, and of the death of Gurgzei, son of Gurnemanz. Gandelus is the brother of Schionatulander, Siguné's love.

Page [247](#), line 597—'To the Grail must his pathway wend.' It is a very curious feature, both in this poem and in that of Chrétien, that the Grail Quest, undertaken by Gawain, is allowed to drop into oblivion. Wolfram only makes one more allusion to it, Book XI., and Chrétien apparently ignores it altogether. In other versions of the story, and notably in Chrétien's continuators, the achievement of the Grail Quest by Gawain is an important feature. It is true that Chrétien's portion of the *Conte* breaks off short before the end of the Gawain episode, and that those who maintain that Wolfram had no other source than Chrétien point to this as a proof of their theory, urging that had Chrétien finished the poem he would undoubtedly have brought Gawain to Monsalväsich, and that Wolfram, deserted by his source at this point, carried the Gawain Quest no further. But it must be noted that Wolfram, who, according to this theory, has hitherto followed Chrétien with remarkable fidelity, shows no embarrassment at the loss of his guide, but, by bringing Gawain promptly into touch with Parzival, finishes his poem in a thoroughly coherent and harmonious manner, his conclusion agreeing, in certain peculiar features, with his Introduction, which, also, is unknown to Chrétien. The simplest solution appears to be that *both* Chrétien and Wolfram were in possession of a common source, wherein the Gawain episodes were presented in an incomplete and abbreviated form. Mr. Nutt points out that the Gawain Quest, as related by Chrétien's continuators, not only fails to agree with Chrétien's commencement, but also presents features more archaic than those of the Perceval Quest.

BOOK IX TRADITIONAL EVENTS

Hero meets with pilgrims who | Chrétien: Peredur: Perceval

reproach him for bearing arms on
Good Friday, and direct him to a
hermit, who points out his sins and
gives him absolution.

Introduction to line 25. This spirited opening, with its invocation of the embodied 'Frau Aventure,' is peculiar to Wolfram. The entire episode is much more briefly treated by Chrétien, who brings his hero at once in contact with the pilgrims, and has neither the meeting with Siguné nor the combat with the Grail knight.

Page [251](#), line 5—'*Frau Aventure*.' This is a personification of the 'story' and of the spirit of romantic story-telling. Grimm (*Kl. Sr.* i. 83-112) claims that we have here a survival of the personifying instinct which led the northern poets to make 'Saga' a daughter of Odin. The word itself is simply taken over from French romance where *or dist l'Aventure* is a standing initial formula, in which *Aventure* exactly renders the *maere* of the opening quatrain of the *Niebelungenlied*.—[A. N.]

Page [251](#), line 6—'*Whom Kondrie, to find the Grail*.' Cf. Book VI. p. 187.

Page [252](#), line 34—'*The sword that Anfortas gave him*.' Cf. Book V. pp. 137 and 144, and note.

Page [252](#), line 47—'*Schionatulander and Siguné*.' This is Parzival's third interview with his cousin, who has a much more important rôle assigned to her in this poem than in the other romances. The hero meets her at every important crisis in his life; on his first entrance into the world, Book III. p. 79; after his visit to the Grail Castle, Book V. p. 141; now, previous to his interview with the hermit; and finally, in Book XVI. after he has won the Grail kingdom and been reunited to his wife, he finds her dead, and buries her with her lover. Siguné's parentage is fully given on p. [274](#) of this book.

Page [257](#), line 204—'*The Templar bold*.' This identification of the knights of the Grail with the Templars (Templeisen) is a marked peculiarity of Wolfram's poem. Nothing at all answering to the Grail kingdom and its organisation, as described in the *Parzival*, is to be found elsewhere. The introduction of this spiritual knighthood, chosen by Heaven, and, with special exceptions, vowed to celibacy, seems intended as a contrast with, and protest against, the ideal of worldly chivalry and lax morality portrayed in Arthur's court. Are we to attribute this feature of the poem to Wolfram himself or to his source? Judging from the value Wolfram placed upon fidelity to tradition it seems scarcely probable that he would have departed so far from his model as to introduce such an entirely new and striking element into the story; nor have we any trace of the poet-knight's connection with the order of Templars; but if the writer of the admitted French source was an Angevin, who had been in the East during the Angevin rule in Jerusalem, the connection is easily explained. Certainly, to judge from the freedom with which the introduction to the story has been handled, 'Kiot' does not seem to have been hampered with an undue respect for the traditional form of the legend.

Page [258](#), line 223—'*Nor Lähelein, nor Kingrisein, etc.*' Kingrisein is the father of Vergulacht, supposed to have been slain by Gawain, cf. Book VIII. p. 240. King Gramoflanz plays an important part in the poem from Book XII. onward. Count Laskoit, cf. Book III. p. 99.

Page [258](#), line 230, and *seq.*—'*One turning the ground was snow-clad*.' Cf. reference to spring snow in Book VI. p. 160. The pilgrim train met by Parzival differs in the versions. The Montpellier MS. of Chrétien has three knights and ten

ladies; other MSS. one knight and twenty ladies. Wolfram's account is more natural and more poetical.

Page [259](#), line 263—'*Dost thou mean Him, etc.*' The address of the knight in Chrétien is longer and conceived in quite a different spirit. It contains one remarkable passage; speaking of the Crucifixion the knight says: '*Li fol Juis—c'on devoit tuer comme ciens,*' a speech entirely out of keeping with the spirit of love and charity characterising Wolfram's Old Knight, and Hermit. The German poem is, throughout, remarkable for the wide spirit of tolerance displayed towards those outside the Christian pale; note, *e.g.*, Book I. and especially the character of Feirefis as depicted in the two closing books of the work. The religious teaching in this ninth book is not only fuller than in Chrétien, but seems based on a much clearer realisation of the position of the *individual* soul towards its Creator. The elementary truths of Christianity are much more fully stated, and display a familiarity with the theological speculations of the day which renders them peculiarly interesting. There is no parallel, either, in Chrétien to the fine speeches which Wolfram puts into the mouth of his hero. The whole episode in the French poem lacks the dignity and impressiveness which stamp it in the German version; it is in this book, and in the account of Parzival's boyhood, that Wolfram's poetical genius touches its highest point, and his superiority to Chrétien is most clearly seen.

Page [261](#), line 337—'*Towards Fontaine Sauvage,*' *etc.* Cf. Book V. p. 151.

Page [261](#), line 348—'*Kiot.*' Cf. note to Book VIII. It is noticeable that there is no corresponding passage to this in Chrétien; the explanation of the Grail mystery given in the *Conte du Graal* is due to Chrétien's continuators, and occurs in the later part of the poem.

Page [262](#), line 359—'*Flegetanis.*' A curious contradiction will be noted here. A few lines above we read that no heathen skill could have revealed the mysteries of the Grail, and yet apparently it was a heathen who first wrote of them. The whole account of the Grail reads like a not-too-successful attempt to Christianise a purely pagan legend.

Page [263](#), line 383—'*And in Britain, France, and Ireland, etc.*' Cf. Appendix A and note on Mazadan, Book VIII. Nevertheless, the connection of the Grail race with the House of Anjou, save through Herzeleide's marriage with Gamuret, is nowhere stated, nor how Titurel was descended from Mazadan, the ancestor alike of Arthur and of Gamuret.

Page [265](#), line 465—'*The altar and shrine.*' Wolfram appears to be absolutely correct here; during the Middle Ages, a shrine, or reliquary, was generally placed on the altar, the use of a cross was of comparatively late date. It is curious that Chrétien, otherwise more ecclesiastical in his details than Wolfram, has missed the characteristic feature of the stripped altar; on the other hand, he notes that Perceval spends *Easter* with the Hermit, and receives the Sacrament, while Wolfram passes Easter over without mention. (It is rather odd to find Chrétien's Hermit saying *Mass* on Good Friday!)

Page [267](#), line 531—'*Ashtaroth.*' Bartsch says that these names are derived from Talmudic tradition; Belcimon being Baal-Schemen, a god of the Syrians; Belat, the Baal of the Chaldeans. Rhadamant is, of course, the Greek ruler of the underworld.

Page [267](#), line 533, and *seq.*—'*When Lucifer and his angels.*' The belief that the creation of man was directly connected with the fall of the rebel angels was very widespread, though the relation of the two as cause and effect was sometimes the reverse of that stated here. None of the editions of the Parzival give a direct reference to the source of the curious 'riddling' passage which follows, but the theory of the maidenhood of the earth was a favourite one with Mediæval writers.

Page [268](#), line 572—'*Plato and the Sibyls.*' A curious proof of the belief of the Mediæval Church in the Christian nature of the Sibylline prophecies is found in the first line of the *Dies Iræ*:

'Dies Iræ, Dies Illa,
Solvat sæclum in favilla
Teste David cum Sibylla.'

Page [270](#), line 615, and *seq.*—'*The Grail.*' The account of the Grail given by Wolfram is most startling, differing as it does from every other account which has come down to us. Wolfram evidently knows nothing whatever of the traditional 'vessel of the Last Supper,' though the fact that the virtue of the stone is renewed every *Good Friday* by a *Host* brought from Heaven seems to indicate that he had some idea of a connection between the Grail and the Passion of our Lord. Various theories have been suggested to account for the choice of a precious stone as the sacred talisman; Birch Hirschfeld maintains that it arose entirely from a misunderstanding of Chrétien's text, the French poet describing the Grail as follows:

'De fin or esmeree estoit;
Pieres pressieuses avoit
El graal, de maintes manieres,
Des plus rices et des plus cieres
Qui el mont u en tiere soient.'

But how Wolfram, who, in other instances appears to have understood his French source correctly, here came to represent an object of gold, adorned with *many* precious stones, as *a* precious stone, does not appear. And it must be noted that this importance assigned to a jewel is not out of keeping with the rest of the poem. From the jewel of Anflisé, the ruby crown of Belakané, and the diamond helmet of Eisenhart in the first book, to the long list of precious stones adorning the couch of Anfortas in the last, the constant mention of jewels is a distinct feature of Wolfram's version, and cannot be paralleled by anything in Chrétien. Moreover, in two other instances, viz. the armour of Feirefis in Book XV., and the couch of Anfortas already mentioned, mystical and strengthening powers are attributed to them. The MSS. vary in their spelling of the stone, giving *Lapis*, *Lapsit*, *Jaspis*, *exillis*, *exilix* or *erillis*; and it is impossible to identify the stone of the Grail with any known jewel. The fact that Wolfram alone of all the writers of this cycle gives this version of the legend, seems to point rather to a peculiarity in his source than to a genuine tradition of the origin of the Grail-myth. In any case it is most probable that the responsibility for the statement rests with the author of Wolfram's French source rather than with Wolfram himself.

Page [271](#), line 665—'*They who took no part in the conflict.*' This account of the neutral angels is partially contradicted by Trevrezent in Book XVI. during his last interview with Parzival, when he openly admits that he had spoken untruly in

order to induce Parzival to give up his Quest for the Grail. This contradiction introduces a good deal of uncertainty as to what really is the moral aim of the poem.

Page [273](#), line 711—'*The white dove I see on its housing.*' This, the badge of the Grail knights, is peculiar to the German poem. Those familiar with Wagner's *Parsifal* will not need to be reminded that the dove and the swan are represented by him as the sacred birds of the Grail. The connection with the swan will be found in Book XVI.

Page [273](#), line 737—'*O thou son of my sister.*' The relationship of uncle and nephew between the hermit and the hero of the Quest obtains in most of the versions. The relationship with the wounded king varies, sometimes he is the hero's grandfather.

Page [274](#), line 759—'*Thou wast the beast that hung,*' etc. Cf. Book II. p. 58. This incident of the mother's dream is peculiar to Wolfram.

Page [274](#), line 771—'*Repanse de Schoie.*' Cf. Book V. p. 135 and Book XVI. She finally marries Feirefis, Parzival's half-brother.

Page 375, line 785—'*But if love the Grail King seeketh.*' This explanation of the wound of Anfortas as the punishment of unlawful love is peculiar to Wolfram, and is in accordance with the superior depth and spirituality of his treatment of the legend. In the other versions the king is wounded in battle or accidentally. The various remedies tried for the wound, related on pp. [276](#), [277](#), give a curious idea of the surgical skill of the Middle Ages, and seem drawn from a mixture of Oriental and classical sources. The names in line 830 are derived from the Greek, and signify various serpents, with the exception of Ecidemon, which we learn in Book XV. was an animal greatly feared by snakes, perhaps the Ichneumon. The reference to Æneas and the Sibyl is from the *Æneid* of Heinrich von Veldeck.

The legend of the pelican is well known, and the first part of the passage referring to the unicorn, its love for a spotless maiden, was a widespread fiction of the Mediæval times, but the assertion that the carbuncle is found under the unicorn's horn seems peculiar to Wolfram, and illustrates what has been said above as to his employment of precious stones.

On p. [281](#) we find a full account of the influence of the planets upon the wound.

Page [278](#), line 867—'*A knight should come to the castle.*' This promised healing of the king by means of a question put by the hero is a marked 'folklore' feature of the tale. Mr. Nutt points out in his *Studies* that in the Grail legend we have a version of the well-known visit to a magic castle influenced by two distinct formulas familiar to folklore students, (a) where the object of the hero is to avenge the death, or wounding, of a relative—the Feud-quest; (b) to release the inhabitants of the castle from an enchantment—the un-spelling quest. The bleeding lance seems to be connected with the first (perhaps also the sword, but its employment both in Wolfram and Chrétien is so enigmatic that it is difficult to know what import to attach to it), the question with the second. The form of the question differs here; in all the other versions it is connected with the Grail: 'Whom serve they with the Grail?' Here, directly with the wounded king, 'What aileth thee, mine uncle?' Birch Hirschfeld maintains, first, that the question was a 'harmless invention' of a predecessor of Chrétien's (thus ignoring the archaic character of the incident); secondly, that Wolfram, having misunderstood Chrétien's account of the Grail, was naturally compelled to invent a fresh question.

Of the two, Wolfram's question seems distinctly the more natural, and the more likely to occur to the mind of a simple youth like Parzival; and he has also made much better use of the incident. It is Parzival's failure in the spirit of charity, in the love due 'as a man to men,' that constitutes the sin of the omitted question. Mr. Nutt well remarks that 'It is the insistence upon charity as the herald and token of spiritual perfection that makes the grandeur of Wolfram's poem.'

Page [283](#), line 1038—'*If a land be without a ruler.*' Here we have the germ of the well-known story of Lohengrin, related in Book XVI. We learn from this passage that Lohengrin's mission was no isolated instance, but a part of the office of the Grail knights. Wolfram's whole presentment of the Grail kingdom, as won by an act of love to a fellow-man, and used for the benefit of others, offers an ideal, not only curiously modern in tone, but in striking contrast to the glorification of spiritual selfishness which we find in other Grail romances. Elsewhere, the aim of the achiever of the Quest is purely to save his *own* soul, and, the task accomplished, he passes away leaving the world none the better for his work. If we look at the concluding lines of the poem, Book XVI., we shall find that Wolfram had quite a different idea of a man's duty to the world of his day.

Page [283](#), line 1045—'*King Kastis wooed Herzeleide.*' Cf. Book II. p. 48.

Page [284](#), line 1070—The account of Trevrezent's wanderings is curious, as it mixes up fabulous places such as Agremontin, the home of the Salamanders, and Fay-Morgan, with such well-known names as Seville, Sicily, and Aquilea. Rohas has been identified with a range of mountains in Styria; Celli is also in Styria. The derivation of 'Gandain' from a Styrian town is very curious. Whether the name was in Wolfram's source or not, we cannot decide, but the connection can only have been introduced by the German poet.

Page [286](#), line 1127—'*Two mortal sins.*' It is curious that in no other version of the story is the slaying of the Red Knight regarded as a sin. Here, however, it is quite in keeping with the pronounced knightly character of the poem. Ither is Parzival's near kinsman, apparently both cousin, and uncle by marriage (lines 1108 and 1119), and to fight with one connected either by the tie of blood or of friendship is regarded throughout as a breach of knightly faith, cf Books XIV. and XV. where Parzival fights, unwittingly, with Gawain and Feirefis. In Chrétien the hermit tells Perceval that it is his sin in causing the death of his mother which has sealed his lips before the Grail; Wolfram seems to regard his silence independently, and, as noted above, the sin, there, seems to be failure in charity and in recognising the bond of universal brotherhood; which failure, indeed, is at the root of the 'two mortal sins.'

Page [287](#), line 1159—'*Titirel.*' The father of the Fisher King is not named in Chrétien, and indeed is only alluded to in an obscure and enigmatical passage as being nourished by the Grail. This statement is peculiar to these two writers, and seems to indicate that they were in possession of a common source.

Page [287](#), line 1169—'*An thou wouldst that thy life be adorned.*' The passage which follows here to line 1180 should be noted, as it seems to be an interpolation; it has no connection whatever with the context, and is in quite a different tone from the knightly and unecclesiastical character of the rest of Trevrezent's teaching.

PARZIVAL

A KNIGHTLY EPIC

BY

WOLFRAM VON ESCHENBACH

TRANSLATED BY

JESSIE L. WESTON

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BOOK X ORGELUSE

ARGUMENT

Book X. relates how Gawain, after various adventures, fell in with a maiden and a wounded knight, how he succoured the knight and rode to Logrois. How he met with Orgelusé and wooed her, and how she repaid him with scorn. How the squire Malcréature mocked Sir Gawain, and how the knight Urian stole his charger. How Lischois Giwellius fought with Gawain and was conquered, and of the tribute due to the Master Boatman. How Gawain came to Terre de Merveil, and was well entreated by the Boatman and his daughter Bené.

BOOK X ORGELUSE

Now tell we of strange adventures thro' which joy shall be
waxen low,
And yet pride shall grow the greater, of the twain doth
this story show.



Now the year of truce was ended, when the strife must
needs be fought
Which the Landgrave unto King Arthur at Plimizöl had
brought.
At Schamfanzon he challenged Gawain to meet him at
Barbigöl, 5
Yet still unavenged was Kingrisein at the hand of
Kingrimursel—
In sooth, Vergulacht, he rode there, and thither had come
Gawain,
And the whole world was 'ware of their kinship nor might
strife be betwixt the twain;
For the murder, Count Eckunât did it, and Gawain must they
guiltless hold,
At rest did they lay their quarrel and friends were those
heroes bold. 10
Then they parted for both would ride thence, Vergulacht
and the knight Gawain,
Tho' both for the Grail were seeking yet apart would they
ride, those twain.

And many a joust must they ride now, for he who the Grail
would see
Sword in hand must he draw anigh it, and swift must his
seeking be!

Now all that befell to Gawain, the lot of that blameless
knight 15

Since he rode forth from fair Schamfanzon, if he oft on his
way must fight,
Ye shall ask of those who there saw him, since naught may I
tell ye here,
Yet hearken, and heed the story and the venture that
draweth near.

One morning Gawain rode gaily o'er a grassy plain and
green,
When a shield, in the sun fair shining, with lance-thrust
pierced thro' was seen, 20

And a charger stood beside it that bare women's riding-
gear,
And the bridle and aye the housing were of costly stuff and
dear—
And the charger and shield beside it were bound to a linden
tree.

Then he thought, 'Who shall be this woman? for valiant I
ween is she,
Since she beareth a shield so knightly—If she thinketh with
me to fight, 25

How, then, may I best withstand her? Were it better to here
alight?
If too long she wrestle with me perchance I were
overthrown,

If hatred or love I shall win here I will fight her on foot
alone;

Yea, e'en an she were Kamilla, who before Laurentium
fought—

Did she live still to battle with me, as awhile she for honour
sought, 30

I would face her, nor fear her prowess, if here she my foe
would be,

Tho' ne'er with a maid have I foughten and the chance
seemeth ill to me!

Battle-hewn was the shield and dinted, as Gawain right well
espied

The nearer he rode unto it, and pierced with a lance-thrust
wide.

Such token by joust is painted, little payment his skill should
know 35
Whose hand erst the shield had fashioned an he thought
him to paint it so!
By the trunk of the mighty linden sat a maid on the grass so
green,
And sore did she weep and bewail her, and joyless, I wot,
her mien.
Then around the tree rode Gawain, and lo! on her knee she
bore
A knight, and she wept above him, and grieved with a
sorrow sore. 40

Fair greeting Sir Gawain proffered, she thanked him and
bowed her low,
And hoarse was her voice thro' weeping and weakened
thro' force of woe.
Then down to the ground sprang Gawain, for the knight he
was like to choke,
Since the blood welled within his body, and unto the maid
he spoke,
And he asked if the knight were living, or should now in the
death-throe be? 45
And she spake, 'He dieth surely, yet but now alive was he,
God hath sent thee unto my succour, now help me with
word and deed,
Such wounds shalt thou oft have looked on, give counsel in
this my need!'

'Yea, gladly I'll aid thee, Lady, from death shall thy knight be
freed,
And healing I well might win him an there were but at hand
a reed. 50
Thou shalt see him, and hearken to him, nor his life shall be
waxen less,
The wound is not all too dangerous, but the blood on his
heart doth press.'
Then he stripped from a bough of the linden the bark, and
did wind it round,
(No fool he in art of healing,) and he set it unto the wound,
And he bade the maiden suck it till the blood should toward
her flow— 55
And strength came again and hearing, and the voice of the
knight they know,
And he looked on Gawain, and he thanked him, and said he
should honoured be

In that from his woe he had freed him, and he asked of him,
whence came he?
Rode he hither in search of knighthood? 'From far
Punturtois I came
In search of such knightly venture as should win for me
meed of fame, 60
Yet sorely must I bewail me for the ill that I here have won,
Sir Knight, an thy senses fail not, 'twere better this way to
shun!'

'Such evil I little looked for—'Twas Lischois Giwellius
Who hath wounded me so sorely, and down from my
charger thrust:
Fair was the joust and knightly, and he pierced me thro'
shield and side, 65
On her steed this maiden helped me, and hither hath been
my guide!
Then he prayed Gawain to abide there, but he spake, he the
place would see
Where such evil had chanced unto him, 'If Logrois thus near
shall be,
Perchance I shall yet o'ertake him, he shall answer to me, I
trow,
For the deed he hath done, and his reason for vengeance
on thee I'll know!' 70
But the wounded knight spake, 'Not so, for true are the
words I say,
And no child's play shall be this journey, great perils beset
the way.'

With the band from the maiden's tresses Gawain the wound
did bind,
And spake o'er it spells of healing, and he bade them their
comfort find
In God, since He cares for all men—With blood was their
pathway red, 75
And crimson the grass besprinkled as a stag had its life-
blood shed;
Thus he rode not astray, and in short space did Logrois
before him stand—
A fortress so fair and stately, its praise was in every land.
'Twas a stately Burg well builded, and it wound the hillside
round,
From afar as a mighty circlet the fortress the summit
crowned. 80

E'en to-day men this honour give it, its wall shall be stormed
 in vain,
 For it openeth its gates to no foeman, whose hatred soe'er
 it gain!
 And a garden lay green around it, 'twas planted with trees
 so fair,
 Olive, pomegranate, fig-tree, and the vine which its grapes
 doth bear,
 And gaily they grew and flourished—as Gawain rode that
 garden bright 85
 He saw there what wrought him sorrow, yet filled him with
 all delight!

A streamlet gushed forth from the hillside, there he saw that
 which grieved him naught,
 A lady so fair to look on that gladly her face he sought.
 The flower was she of all women, save Kondwiramur alone
 No fairer form nor feature might ever on earth be known. 90
 So sweet and so bright to look on, so courteous and royal
 of mien,
 Orgelusé, was she, of Logrois, and men say that in her was
 seen
 The charm that desire awakeneth, a balm for the eyes of
 care,
 For no heart but was drawn toward her, and no mouth but
 would speak her fair!

Gawain gave her courteous greeting, and he spake, 'If such
 grace I gain 95
 That thou wilt I should alight here and awhile at thy side
 remain,
 If I see that my presence please thee, then sorrow be far
 from me,
 And joy in its stead dwell with me, no knight e'er might
 gladder be!
 May I die if the truth I speak not, no woman e'er pleased me
 more—'
 'It is well, yet methinks I knew that,' then the knight for a
 space she saw; 100

And her sweet lips spake thus unto him, 'Now make of thy
 praise an end,
 For well might it work thee evil, and I care not that foe or
 friend,
 Whoever he be that cometh, his judgment on me shall
 speak,

For sure if all lips shall praise me my fame it but waxeth
 weak!
 If the wise praise me e'en as the foolish, the false as the
 pure and true, 105
 Then my fame shall be e'en as another's, for the many shall
 drown the few.
 But my praise do I hold, and but wisdom shall speak that
 which she doth know—
 Who thou mayst be, Sir Knight, I know not, but 'tis time
 thou thy way shouldst go!

'Yet o'er thee will I speak my verdict, if thou dwellest anear
 my heart
 Then thy dwelling is not *within* it, for *without* shalt thou
 have thy part. 110
 And say thou my love desirest, how hast thou rewarding
 won?
 From the eyes swiftly shoot the glances, yet a sling, when
 the work is done,
 Smiteth gentler than looks which linger on that which doth
 sorrow wreak,
 Thy desire is but empty folly, thou shouldst other service
 seek!

If thine hand for love's sake shall battle, if adventure hath
 bidden thee 115
 By knighthood win love's rewarding, yet thou winnest it not
 from *me*.
 Nor honour shall be thy portion, but shame shalt thou win
 alone—
 Now the truth have I spoken unto thee, 'twere best thou
 shouldst get thee gone!

Then he quoth, 'Truth thou speakest, Lady, since mine eyes
 thus mine heart have brought
 In danger, for *they* beheld thee, and thy fetters around me
 wrought. 120
 But now, since I be thy captive, I prithee entreat me well,
 Without thine own will hast thou done this, in silence I
 owned thy spell:
 Thou shalt loose me, or thou shalt bind me, for my will it
 shall be as thine,
 And gladly all woes I'd suffer if so I might call thee mine!'

Then she quoth, 'Yea! so take me with thee, if thou countest
 upon thy gain, 125
 And the love that shall be thy guerdon, thou shalt mourn it
 in shame and pain.

I would know if a man thou shalt be who bravely for me
 would fight—
 And yet, if thou prize thine honour, thou wilt flee from this
 strife, Sir Knight!
 And should I yet further rede thee, and thou shouldst to my
 word say yea,
 Then seek thou elsewhere a lady—For, if thou my love dost
 pray, 130
 Then joy and fair love's rewarding fall never unto thy share,
 But sorrow shall be thy portion if hence I with thee shall
 fare!'

Then answered Gawain, 'Without service, who thinketh true
 love to win?
 An one did so, then here I tell thee, 'twere counted to him
 for sin,
 For true love ever asketh service, yea after as aye before!' 135
 Then she quoth, 'Wilt thou do me service? shame waiteth
 for thee in store,
 Tho' thy life be a life of conflict—No coward as my knight I'll
 own;
 See thou yonder path, 'tis no highway, o'er the bridge doth
 it wend adown
 To the garden, take thou the pathway, for there shalt thou
 find my steed—
 Many folk shalt thou see and shalt hearken, but take thou of
 their words no heed, 140
 Nor stay for their dance or singing, for tambour, or harp, or
 flute,
 But go thou to my horse, and loose it, that I go not with
 thee afoot!'
 Gawain sprang from off his charger—Yet awhile he
 bethought him well
 Where his steed might abide his coming: by the waters that
 rippling fell
 Was no tree unto which to bind it, and he knew not if he
 this dame 145
 Might pray, would she hold his charger till once more with
 her own he came.
 Then she quoth, 'I see well what doth vex thee, thine horse
 shalt thou leave with me,
 I will guard it until thy coming tho' small good shall that be
 to thee!'

Then Gawain took his horse's bridle, 'Now hold this for me, I
 pray;'

'Now indeed art thou dull and foolish,' spake the lady,
 'where *thou* dost lay
 Thine hand, thinkest thou *I'll* hold it? such deed would
 beseem me ill!' 150
 Then the love-lorn knight spake gently, for fain would he do
 her will,
 'Further forward I never hold it!' Then she quoth, '*I* will hold
 it there,
 And do thou my bidding swiftly, bring my steed and with
 thee *I'll* fare;
 Then he thought this a joyful hearing, and straightway he
 left her side, 155
 And over the bridge so narrow to the garden gate he hied;
 There saw he many a maiden, and knights so brave and
 young,
 And within that goodly garden so gaily they danced and
 sung.

And Gawain he was clad so richly, with helmet and harness
 fair,
 That all must bewail his coming for naught but true folk
 dwelt there. 160
 They cared for that lovely garden, on the greensward they
 stood or lay,
 Or sat 'neath the tents whose shadow was cool 'gainst the
 sunlight's ray.
 Yet they ceased not to bemoan him, and to grieve for his
 sorrow sore,
 Yea, man alike and maiden, and in this wise their plaint they
 bore,
 'Alas! that our lady's cunning will to danger this knight
 betray! 165
 Alas! that he fain will follow, for she rideth an evil way.'

And many stepped fair towards him, and their arms around
 him threw,
 And bade him a friendly greeting—to an olive tree he drew,
 For the steed was fast beneath it, so rich was its gear, I
 ween,
 That the cost of the goodly trappings full thousand marks
 had been. 170
 And an old knight he stood beside it, well-trimmed was his
 beard and grey,
 And upon a staff he leant him, and salt tears he wept alway.
 And the tears, they were shed for Gawain, as he to the steed
 drew near,
 Yet his words of kindly greeting fell soft on the hero's ear.

Then he spake, 'Wilt thou hearken counsel? Lay not on this
 steed thine hand, 175
 And herein shalt thou show thy wisdom—tho' none here thy
 will withstand,
 Yet, indeed, it were best to leave it! Accurst be our lady
 queen,
 For of many a gallant hero, I wot, she the death hath been!
 Yet Gawain he would do her bidding—'Then, alas! for woe
 draweth near,'
 Spake the knight, and he loosed the halter, "Twere best not
 to linger here, 180
 The steed shalt thou take, and shalt leave us, and may He
 Who made salt the sea,
 In the hour of thy need, and thy peril, thy strength and thy
 counsel be:
 And see thou that our lady's beauty, it bringeth thee not to
 shame,
 She is sour in the midst of sweetness, 'mid the sunlight a
 shower of rain.'

'God grant it,' then quoth Sir Gawain, and straightway he
 took his leave 185
 Of the old knight and of his comrades and sorely the folk
 did grieve.
 And the horse went a narrow pathway, and it passed thro'
 the garden gate,
 And it crossed o'er the bridge, and he found her who there
 did his coming wait,
 The queen of his heart, and the ruler was she of that land so
 fair,
 Yet altho' his heart fled towards her yet grief thro' her deed
 it bare. 190

Her hand 'neath her chin soft-rounded had loosened the
 wimple's fold,
 And flung it aback on her head-gear,—(if a woman ye thus
 behold,
 Know ye that for strife she longeth and mischief she hath in
 mind)—
 Would ye know how else she had robbed her ye naught in
 my song shall find,
 For how might I tell her raiment and name ye her robes
 aright, 195
 When mine eyes, on her fair face gazing, saw naught but
 her beauty bright?

As Gawain drew near the lady, she hailed him with scornful
 mien,
 'Now welcome, thou goose! for of all men most foolish art
 thou, I ween,
 All too bent shalt thou be on my service, wert thou wise
 thou wouldst let it be—'
 Then he quoth, 'Yet shalt thou be gracious who now art so
 wroth with me, 200
 For so harshly thou dost chastise me thou in honour must
 make it good,
 And my hand shall be fain to serve thee till thou winnest a
 milder mood;
 Ask thou what of me thou wilt—Shall I lift thee upon thy
 steed?'
 But she quoth, 'I will no such service, for methinks all too
 great such meed
 For a hand that is yet unproven—Ask thou for a lesser
 grace!' 205
 On the flowery sward she turned her, and she looked not on
 Gawain's face,
 But she laid her hand on the bridle, and she light to the
 saddle sprung,
 And she bade him to ride before her, and she spake with a
 mocking tongue,
 'Now indeed would it be great pity did I stray from so brave
 a knight,
 By God's grace will we keep together, so ride thou within
 my sight!' 210

Now he who my rede would follow his peace shall he hold
 awhile,
 Lest he speak but the word of folly, till he know if she
 wrought of guile,
 For as yet the truth ye know not, nor the thing that was in
 her heart.
 And were it the time for vengeance, then I too might bear
 my part,
 And take from this lady payment for the wrong she hath
 done Gawain; 215
 Nor of that she shall do hereafter shall aught unavenged
 remain.

But Orgelúsé, that lovely lady, bare herself in no friendly
 wise,
 For she rode in the track of Gawain, and so wrathful, I ween,
 her guise

That were I in the stead of Gawain little comfort my soul
 might take
 That she from my care would free me, and with fair love
 atonement make. 220
 Then they rode on an open moorland, and a herb did Sir
 Gawain see
 Whose root had the power of healing, and down to the
 ground sprang he,
 And dug up the root, and swiftly he sprang on his steed
 again.
 And the lady she looked upon him, and she spake in a
 mocking vein,
 'Now in sooth if this my companion can at one-while be
 leech and knight, 225
 For starvation he need not fear him if his salve-box he bear
 aright!'

Quoth Gawain, "Neath a mighty linden a wounded knight I
 saw,
 Methinks, if again I find him, this herb shall the poison draw
 From his wounds, and new strength may give him!' She
 spake, 'Now I well were fain
 To look on thy skill, for who knoweth what knowledge I
 thence may gain!' 230

Now a squire he rode swift behind them, 'twas the lady's
 messenger,
 Fain was he to do her bidding—As the horse-hoofs they
 drew anear
 Gawain would await his coming, and his steed for a space
 he held,
 Yet he deemed him he saw a monster when first he the
 squire beheld,
 For Malcréature did they call him, and Kondrie was his sister
 fair, 235
 And e'en such a face as the sister, I ween, did the brother
 bear.
 From his mouth, as the tusks of a wild-boar, stood the teeth
 out to left and right,
 Unlike was his face to a man's face, and fearful in all men's
 sight.
 And the locks of his hair were shorter than those which from
 Kondrie hung
 Adown on her mule, stiff as bristles, and sharp, from his
 head they sprung. 240
 And beside the river Ganges, in the land of Tribalibot,
 Dwell such folk, if awhile ye hearken ye shall learn how
 befell their lot.

Now Adam, of all men father, from God did he learn such
 skill,
 All beasts, wild and tame, he knew them, and he namèd
 them at his will.
 And he knew the stars and their pathway, as they circle the
 silent sky, 245
 And the power of the seven planets, how they rule men
 from heaven high,
 And he knew of all roots the virtue, and the ill that was
 theirs of yore—
 When his children were grown to manhood, and daughters
 and sons they bore,
 From evil desires he warned them; and his daughters he oft
 did rede
 Of certain roots to beware them, that wrought ill with the
 human seed, 250
 And would change their face, and their aspect, and
 dishonoured the race should be;
 And he spake, 'Then shall we be other than erst God did
 fashion me,
 And therefore do ye, my children, give heed to the words I
 say,
 Nor be blind to your bliss, lest *your* children they wander
 too far astray.'

But the women, they did as women, in forbidden ways they
 went, 255
 And they wrought out the lust and the evil on which their
 desire was bent,
 And the shape of men was changèd, such rewarding their
 fault must win,
 And tho' firm stood the will of Adam yet sorely he mourned
 their sin—
 Now the fair Queen Sekundillé, her body, her crown, and
 land,
 Feirefis had won as his guerdon by the power of his knightly
 hand, 260
 And there, in her far-off kingdom (no lie is the tale I tell)
 Full many of this strange people since the days that are
 gone do dwell,
 And their faces are ill to look on, and the birth-marks are
 strange they bear.
 And once of the Grail men told her, and Anfortas' kingdom
 fair,
 That on earth was naught like to his riches, and a marvel she
 thought his land— 265

(And the waters within her kingdom bare jewels instead of
 sand,
 And many a golden mountain shall rear its crest on high.)
 And the queen she thought, 'How may I win speech of his
 majesty,
 Who ruleth the Grail?' she bethought her, and rich presents
 she sent the king,
 Of jewels fair, and beside them, they should to his kingdom
 bring 270
 Of this folk, so strange to look on, the twain of whom now I
 tell,
 Kondrie and the squire, her brother—and in this wise the
 chance befell
 (Much treasure beside she sent him whose cost might of
 none be told,)
 That Anfortas, the gentle monarch, who was courteous as
 he was bold,
 For the love he bare Orgelúsé sent this squire unto her
 grace, 275
 By the sin and the lust of women set apart from the human
 race!

Now this son of the herbs and the planets loud mocked at
 the gallant knight,
 Who, courteous, would wait his coming; no charger he rode
 of might,
 But a mare so feint and feeble and halting in every limb,
 And oft to the ground it stumbled 'neath its rider so harsh
 and grim. 280
 I wot well e'en Dame Jeschuté rode a better steed that day
 When Parzival's hand avenged her, and her shaming was
 put away!

The squire he looked well upon Gawain, and thus in his
 wrath he spake,
 'If thou be a *knight*, I think me, and my lady with thee wilt
 take
 Thou shalt sorely repent the journey—A fool thou in truth
 must be, 285
 And such peril shall be thy guerdon as winneth great praise
 to thee,
 If so be that thou canst withstand it—Yet, if but a *servant*
 thou,
 Of buffets and blows, I think me, full soon wilt thou have
 enow!'

Then out quoth Gawain, 'My knighthood such chastisement
 ne'er might feel,
 'Tis good but for worthless youngsters who shrink from the
 touch of steel; 290
 But / hold me free of such insults, and e'en if it so shall be
 That thou and this lovely lady your mock'ry shall pour on
 me,
 Then *one* sure shall taste my vengeance, nor think thou that
 I wax wroth
 For ill tho' thou be to look on I hold thee but light in troth!
 With that by the hair he gripped him, and he swung him
 from off his horse, 295
 The squire glared wrathful on him, and his bristles, so sharp
 and coarse,
 Took vengeance sore on Gawain, his hand did they cut and
 tear
 Till the blood dripped crimson from it—then loud laughed
 the lady fair,
 'Now in sooth this is good to look on, to see ye twain in
 wrath!
 So rode the twain, the squire's horse came halting upon
 their path. 300

So came they unto the linden where the wounded knight
 they found,
 On his side the herb of healing the hand of Gawain bound;
 Quoth the knight, 'Now, how went it with thee since first
 thou didst find me here?
 Thou ledest with thee a lady who plotteth thine ill, I fear!
 'Tis thro' her I so sore am wounded; at the Perilous Ford, I
 ween, 305
 Did she force such a joust upon me as well-nigh my death
 had been!
 So, if thou thy life now lovest, I warn thee to let her be,
 And turn thee aside, nor ride with her, but warning to take
 by me—
 And yet may my wounds be healèd, if rest for awhile I gain,
 And, Sir Knight, thereto canst thou help me!' 'That will I,'
 quoth knight Gawain. 310
 Then the wounded knight spake further, 'A spital shall stand
 near by,
 And if I but now might reach it for awhile I in peace might
 lie,
 Thou seest my lady's palfrey, it can carry, methinks, the
 twain
 If she rideth afore, I behind her, so help me its back to gain.'

From the bough of the mighty linden Sir Gawain he loosed
 the steed, 315
 And the bridle he took that the palfrey he might to the lady
 lead—
 'Away from me!' cried the sick man, 'thou treadest on me I
 trow!'

Then he led it apart, and the lady she followed so soft and
 slow,
 For she knew what her lord did purpose; as the maid to her
 horse he swung,
 Up started the knight, and swiftly on the charger of Gawain
 sprung! 320
 And, methinks, an ill deed he did there—With his lady he
 rode away,
 And I ween that with sin was tainted the prize that he won
 that day!

Then sore did Gawain bemoan him, but the lady laughed
 loud and clear;
 (And, were it a jest, he thought him such mirth were
 unfitting here.)
 As his charger was taken from him her sweet lips in this wise
 spake, 325
 'First wert thou a *knight*, then, in short space, I thee for a
 leech must take,
 Now art thou become my *footman*! yet thou shouldst in no
 wise despair,
 Such skill sure should bring thee comfort! Wouldst thou *still*
 in my favours share?'

'Yea, Lady,' then quoth Sir Gawain, 'an I might thy favor
 hold,
 The whole earth hath nothing fairer were the tale of its
 riches told; 330
 And of crownèd heads, and uncrownèd, of all who may
 joyful win
 The highest meed of glory, did they bid me to share therein,
 Yet still my heart would rede me to count all such gain as
 naught
 If thy love were but weighed against it, such bliss had thy
 favour brought!
 If thy love may not be my guerdon then a swift sad death I'll
 die, 335
 'Tis thine own this thing that thou scornest when thou
 dealest thus mockingly.
 Tho' a free man born thou shalt hold me thy vassal, if such
 thy will,

Call me knight, or slave, or servant, the *name* it shall please
me still!
Yet, I think me, thou doest not rightly—When my service
thou thus wilt shame
Thou drawest down sin upon thee, and thou shamest thine
own fair fame. 340
If my service doth bring me honour thou hast naught withal
to scorn,
And such words shall but ill beseem thee tho' they lightly by
me be borne!

Then back rode the knight, sore wounded, and he quoth, 'Is
it thou, Gawain?
For that which erewhile I owed thee here dost thou full
payment gain,
Since thine hand in bitter conflict, me, thy foeman, did
prisoner make 345
And unto thine uncle Arthur thou didst me thy captive take,
And four weeks long must I dwell there, and four weeks
long I fed
With the dogs—I shall ne'er forget it till the days of my life
be sped!

Then he quoth, 'Is it thou, O Urian? If now thou art wroth
with me,
Yet guiltless am I, the king's favour at that time I won for
thee, 350
For thy folly so far betrayed thee that men spake thee an
outcast knight,
And thy shield it was taken from thee, and forfeit thy name
and right;
Since thou ill didst entreat a maiden, and the peace of the
land didst break,
With a rope had the king repaid thee, but to him for thy life
I spake!

'Howe'er that might be, here thou standest, and the proverb
thou well mayst know, 355
"Who saveth the life of another, that other shall have for
foe."
And I do as a wise man doeth—"Tis better a child should
weep
Than a full-grown man, and bearded,—this charger mine
hand shall keep!
Then he spurred him amain, and he rode thence, as fast as
his steed might fly,

And wroth was Gawain at his dealing, and he spake out
right angrily; 360

'Now it fell out in this wise, Lady, King Arthur his court did
hold
At Dianasdron, and with him rode many a Breton bold.
Then as messenger to his kingdom a maiden must take her
way,
And this fool, for venture seeking, he crossed her path that
day,
And both to the land were strangers—He burnt with unholy
fire, 365
And fierce with the maid he wrestled till he bent her to his
desire.
As she cried for help we heard her—then the king "To arms"
did call,
In a wood the thing had chanced thus, thither rode we one
and all,
And I rode of all the foremost, and I saw the sinner's track,
And I made him performe my captive, and to Arthur I
brought him back.' 370

'And the maiden she rode beside us, and sorely did she
bemoan
That to *force* she must yield the guerdon that to *service* was
due alone.
Of her maidenhood had he robbed her—Yet but lowly his
fame shall stand
Who vaunteth himself the victor o'er a woman's unarmèd
hand—
And wrathful, I ween, was King Arthur, and he spake, 'Ye my
servants true, 375
Ye shall hold this deed for accursèd, and the day of its doing
rue.
Alas! for the woful dawning and the light that this thing
hath seen,
Alas! that I here am ruler, for the judgment is mine, I ween!'
And he spake to the weeping maiden, 'Hast thou wisdom,
thy cause then plead.'
She spake fearless, e'en as he bade her, and the knights
they must list her rede. 380

'Then Prince Urian of Punturtois stood before the Breton
king,
And against his life and his honour, her plaint did the
maiden bring,

And she spake so that all might hear her, and with weeping
 words did pray
 The king, for the sake of women, her shaming to put away.
 And she prayed by the honour of women, and by the Round
 Table's fame, 385
 And the right which as message-bearer she thought of all
 men to claim,
 If he sat there that day for judgment he should judge her
 with judgment true,
 And avenge her of this dishonour which her soul must for
 ever rue.
 And she prayed they would do her justice, those knights of
 the Table Round,
 Since in sooth she had lost a treasure which might never
 again be found, 390
 Her maidenhood fair and unstained! Then all men, with one
 accord,
 Spake him guilty, and for his judgment called loudly upon
 their lord!'

'Then an advocate spake for the captive, (Small honour was
 his I trow.)
 And he spake as he might in his favour, yet it went with him
 ill enow,
 For of life and of honour forfeit did they judge him, the
 headsman's sword 395
 Should ne'er be his death, but a halter should they twine
 him of hempen cord.
 Then loud in his woe he prayed me, since he yielded him to
 mine hand,
 For mine honour should sure be stained if wrought were the
 king's command.
 Then I prayed of the weeping maiden, since she saw how
 that I in fight
 Had avenged upon him her shaming, to pardon the traitor
 knight. 400
 For sure 'twas the spell of her beauty that had wrought
 upon him for sin,
 And the love of her form so shapely—"For aye if a knight
 doth win
 Sore peril for love of a woman, she should aid him, and hear
 his prayer,
 So I prithee to cease thine anger, and have pity on his
 despair."

'Then the king and his men I prayed them, by what service I
 e'er had done, 405

They should loose me from stain of dishonour which I by his
 death had won,
 And the knight should live, as I sware him.—Then the lady,
 his gracious queen,
 I prayed by the bond of kinship, since my friend she hath
 ever been,
 (From my childhood, King Arthur reared me and my love
 doth toward them flow,)
 That she of her kindness help me—as I asked, it was even
 so, 410
 For she drew on one side the maiden, and she spake to her
 soft and kind,
 And it was thro' the queen, I wot me, that the knight did his
 pardon find.
 Thus free from his guilt they spake him, yet his sin must he
 sorely rue,
 For the life that was granted to him stern penance he needs
 must do.
 With the hounds of the chase and the house-dogs from one
 trough he needs must eat 415
 For the space of four weeks, thus the maiden found
 avenging as it was meet!'

'For this cause is he wroth with me, Lady'—'Yet his judgment
 it went astray,
 If my love ne'er shall be thy guerdon, in such wise I'll his
 deed repay
 That ere he shall leave my kingdom he shall count it to him
 for shame!
 Since King Arthur avenged not the evil that was wrought on
 that maid's fair fame 420
 It falleth unto mine office, and judge am I o'er ye twain,
 Tho' who ye may be I know not, yet I to this task am fain!
 And well shall he be chastisèd for the wrong that he did the
 maid,
 Not for *thine*, for I ween such evil is better by blows repaid.'

To the mare now Sir Gawain turned him, and lightly he
 caught the rein, 425
 And the squire he followed after, and the lady she spake
 again,
 And in Arabic spake she to him, and she gave him to know
 her will—
 Now hearken unto my story, how Sir Gawain he fared but ill:
 Then Malcréature, he left them—and Gawain his horse
 beheld,
 Too feeble it was for battle, the squire, as his way he held 430

Down the hill, from the peasant-owner had taken the sorry
steed,
And Gawain for his charger must have it, tho' but ill it might
serve his need.

In mocking and hatred spake she, 'Wilt still ride upon thy
way?'

Quoth Gawain, 'I will take my journey e'en in such wise as
thou shalt say.'

She quoth, 'Wilt abide my counsel? It shall reach thee I
ween too late!' 435

Quoth he, 'Yet for that will I serve thee, tho' o'er-long I thy
rede shall wait!'

Quoth she, 'Then a fool I think thee, for unless thou shalt
leave this mind,

Then sorrow instead of gladness and repentance for joy
thou'lt find!'

Then he quoth, of her love desirous, 'Yet thy servant I still
abide,

If joy be my lot or sorrow, be thy love and thy will my guide.
Since thy love laid its spell upon me in thy bidding my law I
see, 440

And ahorse or afoot I'll follow, I care not where'er it be!'

So stood he beside the lady, and awhile he beheld the mare,
Who to joust with such steed had ridden his gold were o'er-
keen to spare!

For the stirrups of hemp were twisted, and ne'er had this
gallant knight 445

Such saddle, I ween, bestridden, it would serve him but ill
for fight.

For e'en as he looked upon it, he thought, 'If on *that* I ride,
The girths sure will break asunder, nor the saddle my weight
abide!'

And so weak was the steed and ill-shapen, had one dared
on its back to leap

Of a sooth would the back have broken—On foot he the
road must keep! 450

And in this guise he took his journey: the horse by the rein
he held,

And his spear and his shield he carried; and the lady his
grief beheld,

And she mocked him with ringing laughter, fain was she to
work him woe—

Then his shield on the mare he fastened, and she spake, 'In
such guise wouldst go,

And carry thy wares thro' my kingdom? A strange lot is
mine, I ween, 455
Since *footman*, and *leech*, and *merchant* in turn hath my
comrade been!
Of the toll hadst thou best beware thee, or else, as thou
goest thy way,
It may chance they who take the toll here on thy
merchandise hands may lay!

And tho' sharp, I ween, was her mocking yet her words was
he fain to hear,
Nor rued he the bitter speeches that rang sweet to his
longing ear. 460
And as ever his eyes beheld her his sorrow it fled away,
For fair was she to his thinking as blossoms in month of
May!
A delight of the eyes, and heart-sorrow, his gain and his loss
was she,
And languishing joy did she quicken—Her freeman and
captive he!

This hath many a master taught me, that Amor, and Cupid
too, 465
And Venus, of both the mother, make all men their deeds to
rue;
For with darts and with fire they kindle desire in the longing
heart,
But such love seemeth me but evil that is lighted by torch or
dart.
And the true heart it loveth ever, be its guerdon or joy or
woe,
And in honour the love is rooted which alone shall abiding
know! 470

'Gainst me have thy darts, O Cupid! I ween ever missed their
mark,
Nor Amor with spear hath smote me, nor fell on my heart a
spark
From the torch of thy mother Venus—Tho' love 'neath your
rule shall be,
If love be my lot, not from *passion* but from *faith* shall it
bloom for me!

And if I with wit and wisdom 'gainst love's spells might a
hero aid, 475
Gawain had I gladly aided, nor asked that I be repaid.

And yet no shame need he think it if love's fetters him
captive hold,
And if he of love be vanquished, for her captives are aye the
bold.
And yet so strong was he ever, and so knightly, to face the
foe,
That 'tis pity so brave a hero by a *woman* should be laid
low! 480

Now well let us gaze upon thee, thou power which true love
doth wield,
Such joy hast thou taken from us that barren and reft the
field,
And thou makest a road of sorrow across it, both long and
wide,
And if thy goal had been other than the high heart I would
not chide.
For folly methinks and lightness love all too old shall be, 485
Or shall we to childhood reckon the evil love worketh free?
For better are ways unseemly in youth, than if age forget
its wisdom—much ill love worketh, unto which shall the
blame be set?

For the mind of youth ever wavers, and changeth as
changing winds,
And if love shall be thus unsteadfast, little praise may she
hope to find. 490
Nay, better shall be my counsel, for the wise praise true love
alone;
Yea, and maiden and man shall join me, and all who love's
power have known.

When true love unto true love answereth, undarkened by
thought of guile,
And it vexeth them not that love turneth the key on their
heart awhile,
For they fear not nor think of wavering, then high as the
heaven above 495
O'er the earth, o'er the love that changeth, is such true and
steadfast love.

Yet, gladly as I would free him, to Frau Minne Gawain must
bow,
And his joy shall awhile be darkened—Small profit my
words, I trow,
And the wisdom I fain had taught him, for no man may love
withstand,

And love alone giveth wisdom, and nerveth with strength
 the hand! 500

And to Gawain she gave this penance, afoot must he wend
 his way
 While his lady she rode beside him—To a woodland they
 came alway,
 And he led the steed to a tree-trunk, and the shield that
 awhile it bare
 He hung round his neck as befitting, and lightly bestrode
 the mare,
 And scarcely the steed might bear him—Then they came to
 a builded land, 505
 And a castle so fair and stately he saw there before him
 stand,
 And his heart and his eyes bare witness no fortress was like
 this hall,
 So knightly and fair the palace, and so countless its turrets
 tall.
 And many a maiden looked forth from its casements, he
 thought to see
 Four hundred and more, o'er all others, I ween, *four* might
 fairest be. 510

Then the lady and her companion they rode a well-trodden
 road
 To a water whose waves ran swiftly, and ships sailed the
 flood so broad.
 By the landing there lay a meadow, where men jousts were
 wont to ride,
 And the towers of that stately castle rose fair on the further
 side.
 Then Gawain, that gallant hero, saw a knight who rode swift
 and near, 515
 As one who for combat lusted, and he spared not or shield
 or spear.

Quoth the lady, fair Orgelusé, and haughty her tone and
 proud,
 'In what else thou mayst gainsay me in this be my truth
 allowed,
 For other I ne'er have told thee save that shame shall thy
 portion be,
 Now here, if thou canst, defend thee, since no better is left
 to thee. 520
 Methinks he who cometh hither shall fell thee beneath his
 thrust—

If thy garments perchance be riven, and thou bitest,
 ashamed, the dust,
 Then those women above shall mourn thee, who look for
 some deed of fame,
 Seest thou how they gaze from the lattice? How, then, if
 they see thy shame?'

Then the boatman across the water he came at the lady's
 will, 525
 From the shore to the boat she stepped there, and Gawain
 it but pleased him ill;
 For, mocking, fair Orgelusé spake thus to the gallant knight,
 'Thou com'st not with me, I leave thee on this shore as a
 pledge for fight!'

Then sadly his voice rang after, 'Say, Lady, wilt leave me so?
 Shall I never again behold thee?' Then she spake, 'I would 530
 have thee know
 If victory be thy portion thou shalt look on my face again,
 Yet but small is the chance I think me.' So sailed she from
 knight Gawain.

Then up rode Lischois Giwellius, 'twere a lie if I said he *flew*,
 And yet little other did he for the earth scarce his footprints
 knew.

And for this must I praise the charger, who the greensward
 with such swift feet 535
 Had trodden—Gawain bethought him how he best might
 his foeman meet;
 He thought, 'Should I here await him afoot, or this steed
 bestride?

If his horse's speed he check not he surely o'er me will ride,
 And this fate must o'ertake his charger, to fall o'er my fallen
 steed;

But, if he for combat lusteth, afoot on this flowery mead 540
 Will I face him and give him battle, since battle he doth
 desire,
 Tho' never I win her favour who hath brought on me need
 so dire.'

Fight they must, and they fought as heroes, he who came
 and he who did wait,
 For jousting he made him ready, and the lance-point
 Gawain held straight,
 And he rested it on the saddle, (for thus did he counsel
 take,) 545
 Then e'en as the joust was ridden the spears did in splinters
 break,

And the knights, the one as the other, they fell in that
goodly fray,
For the better charger stumbled and by Gawain its rider lay.
Then the twain to their feet upspringing their swords from
the scabbard drew,
Since alike they were keen for combat, and their shields in
pieces flew, 550
For each hewed at the shield of the other till a hand's
breadth alone, I ween,
They held, for the pledge of conflict the shield it hath ever
been.

Flashed the sword-blades, fire sprang from the helmets, a
venture brave I trow
Was his who should here be victor, tho' stern conflict he first
must know.
Long space did they fight, those heroes, on the flowery
meadow wide, 555
And as smiths, who all day have laboured, as it weareth to
eventide
Grow faint with their toil and weary with the mighty blows
they smite,
So weary and faint were those heroes who here did for
honour fight.

But for this none methinks shall praise them, unwise do I
hold the twain,
No cause had they here for battle, 'twas fame that they
thought to gain; 560
And strangers unto each other, each other's life they
sought,
And yet, had they made confession, each owed to the other
naught!

Now Gawain was a gallant wrestler, and his foe to the
ground would bring
If in spite of the sword he might grip him, and let but the
mighty ring
Of his arms his foeman circle, he forced him where'er he
would. 565
Now must he with force defend him, and he fought as a
hero good,
And his courage waxed ever higher, and the youth in his
arms he caught,
And he bare him to earth beneath him tho' e'en as a man
he fought.

(’Twas armed as beseemed a warhorse, and the covering
was fair to see,
Of velvet and silk was it fashioned, what trapping might
better be?)
Since the venture such prize had brought him, who should
hinder him in his need 595
If for his own use he took it? so he vaulted upon the steed:

And he joyed in the free, swift movement, and he cried,
’Now, how shall this be?
Of a sooth it is thou, Gringuljet, that false Urian stole from
me.
He knoweth best how he took it, and shameful I count his
deed.

Now, who thus for battle armed thee, since thou art of a
truth my steed? 600
Sure ’tis God who hath sent thee to me, and this fair gift
shall end my woe.’

Then he sprang to the ground, and he sought him the token
he well might know,
On its shoulder the Grail-Dove branded—In a joust did
Lähelein slay
Its rider, the knight of Prienlaskors, and the charger he bare
away.
Then Orilus was its master, and he gave it to knight Gawain 605
On Plimizöl’s shore—greatly joyed he when the charger he
won again.

Blithe was he, and high of courage, who awhile was sad and
sore,
Yet love unto ruth constrained him, and the service so true
he bore
To the lady who yet would shame him, and his thoughts
ever toward her flew.

Then up sprang proud Lischois lightly, and his good sword
he gripped anew, 610
For it lay where Gawain had cast it when he wrested it from
his hand:
And the ladies look down on the heroes, as for combat once
more they stand.

The shields were so hacked and riven that the knights they
must cast them by,
And, shieldless, to strife betake them, and they bare them
right gallantly.
And a crowd of fair maidens o’er them from the palace
window saw 615

The strife that below was foughten: and fierce anger awoke
 once more,
 For too nobly born I wot me was each man that he might
 brook
 That his fame should be lightly yielded, and maids on his
 shaming look.
 And helmet and sword were smitten, for shields 'gainst cold
 death were they,
 He who saw the heroes strive there had mourned for their
 toil that day. 620
 Lischois Giwellius bare him, that fair youth, as knight so
 brave,
 True courage, and deeds undaunted, the counsel his high
 heart gave.
 And many a swift blow dealt he, as quick on Gawain he
 sprung,
 And lightly avoided from him, and his blade round his head
 he swung.
 But Gawain stood firm and undaunted, and he thought him,
 'Now, let me hold 625
 Thee once in mine arms, I'll repay thee thy dealings, thou
 hero bold!'

And fiery sparks might ye look on, and the flash of the
 glittering blade
 Well wielded by hand of hero—Nor one in his station
 stayed,
 For they pressed each one on the other, backward, forward,
 to either side,
 Yet this conflict so fierce, I wot me, did ne'er of revenge
 betide, 630
 And no hatred they bare to each other—Then the arms of
 Gawain at last
 He clasped round his gallant foeman, and the knight to the
 ground he cast.
 And I think, an I friendship sware here, I would shrink from
 such fond embrace,
 E'en tho' brotherhood it were sealing—Nor with ye would
 such clasp find grace!

Then Gawain he bade him yield him, yet Lischois, who
 against his will 635
 Had striven when first he felled him, was all unready still.
 And he quoth, 'Wherefore thus delay thee, 'tis needless,
 take thou my life,
 For better to die than to yield me—Since I wot well that in
 this strife

The fame that was mine aforetime hath vanished beneath
thy blow,
Of God must I be accursèd, since my glory such goal doth
know! 640
For the love of fair Orgelusé have I served her with knightly
hand,
And many a knight have I felled here, for none might my
arm withstand.
Now shalt thou be heir to my glory, for it falleth to thee of
right
If thou, who my fame hath ended, here endeth my life, Sir
Knight.'

But King Lot's son he thought in this wise, 'To this deed
have I little mind, 645
My name, it shall gain small honour if this man here his
death shall find,
If for no sin of his I slay him, who is true and valiant knight
—

'Twas *her* love that spurred him 'gainst me, for whose favour
I too would fight;
'Tis her beauty that doth constrain me, 'tis she that doth
work me woe,
Then why not, for the sake of my lady, show mercy to this
my foe? 650

If perchance for mine own I win her, if mine own such bliss
may be,
Then *he* cannot take her from me since stronger am I than
he!
And if o'er our strife she watcheth, then she must of a surety
own
That I, who for love would serve her, true service and good
have shown!'

Then out spake the gallant Gawain, 'I were loth thy life to
take, 655
But hence will I let thee, scatheless, for fair Orgelusé's sake!'

Weary were they, small wonder, then the fallen knight arose,
And down on the grassy meadow apart sat those gallant
foes.
Then the master boatman stepped forth from the water
unto the land,
And a grey and yearling falcon he carried upon his hand. 660
This right was his o'er the meadow, who jousted upon the
plain,
The charger of him who was vanquished he did as his
tribute gain.

From his hand, who was there the victor, should he take, as
 a gift, the steed,
 And bowing, thank him fairly, nor stint of his praise the
 meed.
 And such payment he oft had taken on the flowery meadow
 green, 665
 Nor otherwise had his living; save at whiles, when such
 chance had been,
 That a bird in his falcon's clutches had fluttered in grief and
 pain.
 Nor plough drave he thro' those furrows, for enough did he
 deem his gain.
 And son of a folk so knightly was he born to a knight's
 estate,
 And courteous, I ween, his bearing who there on Gawain did
 wait. 670

So came he unto the hero, and with courteous word and fair
 He prayed of his hand the tribute, and the steed that should
 be his share.
 Quoth Gawain, the gallant hero, 'No merchant methinks I be
 To pay here or toll or tribute, from such tax do I hold me
 free!'
 Then he spake out, the master boatman, 'Sir Knight, since
 full many a maid 675
 Hath seen thee stand here the victor, by *thee* be my tribute
 paid.
 My right o'er the plain must thou own here, in knightly joust
 thine hand
 Hath won for mine own this charger; nor thy fame shall the
 lower stand,
 For he, whom thine hand o'erthrew here, the world with his
 praises rung,
 And with truth, unto this day's dawning, have men of his
 glory sung; 680
 But now he of God is stricken, and his joy hath an ending
 found,
 But *thou*, in his stead, I think me, with honour and fame art
 crowned!

Quoth Gawain, 'He first o'erthrew me, and I but that deed
 repaid.
 If tribute for joust be due here, by *him* be that tribute paid!
 Look well on this mare, he won it, thou canst take it if such
 thy will. 685
 The charger that standeth by me, as mine own will I claim it
 still—

Tho' never a steed be thy portion, on *that* steed I hence will
 go,
 Thou speakest of *right*, wouldst thou take it, then first I
 would have thee know
 (Yea, thou thyself wilt own it) 'tis unfitting I take my way
 Afoot, and right sore 'twould grieve me if that charger were
 thine alway! 690
 For to-day in the early morning it was *mine* without doubt
 or fear,
 And childish thou art if thou thinkest thus lightly to win it
 here!
 'Twas Duke Orilus, the Burgundian, who gave me the steed
 of old,
 Which Urian stole this morning, and the tale thou for truth
 shalt hold.
 And the foal of a mule shalt thou win thee ere thy prize be
 this steed of mine— 695
 Yet a fair gift in sooth will I give thee, for the *steed* shall the
knight be thine,
 Thou accountest him honour-worthy—if he say thee or yea
 or nay,
 And if well or ill it doth please him I abide by my word
 alway!'

Then joyful I ween was the boatman, and with smiling lips
 he spake,
 'Now methinks that a gift so costly it hath ne'er been my lot
 to take, 700
 And I deem myself all unworthy—Yet, Sir Knight, be he mine
 indeed,
 Then the guerdon is more than I asked for and o'er my
 deserts my meed.
 For his praises they rang so clearly that five hundred steeds
 all told,
 Swift-footed and strong for battle, too low for his price I'd
 hold!
 If a rich man thou thus wilt make me, then this thing shalt
 thou do for me, 705
 To my boat shalt thou captive bring him, that I hold him as
 pledge from thee.'
 King Lot's son he spake in answer, 'Yea this will I do, and
 more,
 To thy boat first, and then from out it will I lead him within
 thy door,
 And there will I yield him captive!—'And there will I
 welcome thee!'

Spake the boatman, and low he bowed him, and thanks
 spake he fair and free. 710
 And he quoth, 'Dear my lord and master, if it please thee to
 be my guest,
 And abide in my house till the morning, then softly I'll bid
 thee rest.
 Nor won boatman e'er higher honour, and blest be the
 eventide
 That seeth a knight so gallant 'neath the shade of my roof-
 tree bide.'

Then out quoth Gawain, 'That will I, for in truth I had prayed
 this grace, 715
 For weary am I with battle, and fain would I rest a space.
 She who to this sorrow led me, her sweetness she maketh
 sour,
 And heart's joy shall be dear to purchase, and sorrow doth
 crown each hour,
 And the guerdon for this her service unlike to herself shall
 be—
 Alas! I had found a treasure, yet but loss hath it brought to
 me! 720
 And one breast thro' that loss now sinketh that awhile
 swelled so proud and high,
 When joy was from God my portion, for a heart did beneath
 it lie.
 Now I think me that heart hath vanished, and where shall I
 comfort seek?
 Shall I helpless abide that Frau Minne her wrath upon me
 shall wreak?
 Yea, had she the heart of a woman she would give me my
 joy again 725
 Who maketh her sweetness bitter, and turneth my bliss to
 pain!'

Then the boatman he heard how he wrestled with sorrow,
 by love constrained,
 And he quoth, 'So is here the custom, in the forest as on the
 plain,
 As far as Klingsor ruleth, be he coward or valiant knight,
 "Sad to day, to-morrow joyful," So it goeth for peace or
 fight. 730
 Perchance the truth thou knowst not? This land is a wonder-
 land,
 And ever by day and by night-time if good luck shall not aid
 thine hand

Little good may thy manhood do thee! See thou how the
sun sinks low,
I think me, Sir Knight, it were better that we should to my
vessel go!
Then Lischois he was led by Gawain, and never a word he
spake, 735
And the boatman he followed after and the steed by its rein
did take.

So sailed they across the water, and they came to the
further coast,
And the boatman he prayed Sir Gawain, 'Be thou in mine
house the host.'
And so rich was the house and stately, that scarce in King
Arthur's land,
E'en in Nantes that noble city, did a fairer dwelling stand. 740
And he led Lischois thro' the doorway, and he gave him
unto the care
Of the host and his folk—Then the boatman spake thus to
his daughter fair,
'Fair times and a goodly lodging be the lot of this noble
knight
Who standeth here, go thou with him, for I deem me it shall
be right,
And tend him as best shall seem thee, nor stint thou in
aught thy care, 745
For great good hath he brought unto us, and 'tis meet he
thy grace should share!'

To his son's care he gave the charger—Then the maiden
her sire's behest
Fulfilled as right well became her, for she led the noble
guest
To a chamber fair, where the flooring was hid 'neath a
carpet green
Of rushes and fresh-plucked blossoms, as the way of the
land had been. 750
There the gentle maid unarmed him—quoth Gawain, 'God
show grace to thee,
For had not thy sire thus bade thee too great were thy care
for me!'
And she quoth, 'For my father's bidding I do not this deed,
Sir Knight,
But rather that this my service may find favour before thy
sight.'

Then a squire, the host's son, must bear there soft cushions,
 a goodly store, 755
 And along the wall he laid them, and over against the door.
 And a carpet he spread before them that Gawain he might
 seat him there;
 And as one who knew well his office a cushion so rich he
 bare,
 With a covering of crimson sendal, that down on the couch
 he laid;
 And a seat like unto the other for the host he beside it
 made. 760
 Came another squire and he carried fresh linen the board to
 spread,
 (For thus gave the host commandment,) and he bare with
 the linen bread.
 And the hostess she followed after, and she looked well
 upon Gawain,
 And she gave him a heartfelt greeting, and she spake, 'Now
 such grace we gain
 From thine hand we are rich henceforward as we never have
 been before, 765
 Sir Knight, sure our good luck waketh since such fortune it
 hither bore!'

Then when they had brought him water, and the host sat
 beside his guest,
 With courteous mien Sir Gawain this prayer to his host
 address,
 'Now I pray let this maid eat with me,' 'Sir Knight, ne'er was
 she allowed
 To sit with knights, or eat with them, lest she wax of their
 grace too proud. 770
 And yet so much do we owe thee, loth were I to say thee
 nay.
 So, daughter, sit thou beside him, and as he shall speak
 obey!'

Then she blushed for shame all rosy, yet she did as her
 father bade,
 And down on the couch by Gawain sat Bené the gracious
 maid.
 (And two stalwart sons had the boatman beside that
 maiden sweet) 775
 Three game-birds, I ween, that even were slain by the falcon
 fleet,
 And all three did they bear unto Gawain, and a broth with
 herbs beside,

And the maiden she courteous served him as she sat by the
 hero's side;
 For she carved for him dainty morsels, and laid them on
 bread so white
 With her slender hands, and gently she spake to the
 stranger knight, 780
 'Wilt thou send a bird to my mother? for else hath she none,
 I ween.'
 Then gladly he told the maiden his will e'en as hers had
 been
 In this thing as in all other—to the hostess the bird they
 bare,
 And they honoured the hand of the hero, nor the boatman
 his thanks would spare.

Purslain and lettuce brought they, in vinegar steeped, I
 ween 785
 Had he sought here his strength to nourish little good
 might such food have been;
 And if one should o'er-long feed on it then the colour it
 waxeth pale,
 Such pallor as truth betrayeth, if the mouth to its speaking
 fail.
 And if with false red it be hidden, it fadeth, and bringeth
 shame,
 But she who is true and steadfast she winneth the higher
 fame. 790

If one by goodwill were nourished, then Gawain, he right
 well had fed,
 To her child naught the mother grudgeth, and as free gave
 the host his bread.
 Then they bare away the tables, and the hostess she bade
 him rest,
 And bedding I ween in plenty they brought for the gallant
 guest.
 And one was of down, and the covering above it of velvet
 green, 795
 Yet the velvet was none of the richest tho' fair had its
 fashion been.
 And a cushion must serve for cover, beneath it should
 Gawain lie;
 Nor the silk had with gold been purchased, 'twas won in far
 Araby.
 Of silk, too, the cunning stitching, and the linen was fair, and
 white

As snow that they laid above it, and a pillow they brought
the knight. 800
And a cloak of her own she lent him, for wrapping, that
maiden fair,
'Twas new, and of ermine fashioned, and such as a prince
might wear.

Then leave the host courteous prayed him ere he laid
himself down to sleep,
And men say that alone with Sir Gawain the maiden her
watch did keep,
And I think if he more had prayed her she never had said
him Nay— 805
Then he slept, for he well might slumber, God keep him till
dawn of day!

BOOK XI ARNIVE

ARGUMENT

Book XI. tells how Gawain would brave the venture of the Château Marveil, and how the boatman and his daughter strove to withhold him. How Gawain came to the Castle, and of the Lit Merveil and its perils. How Gawain slew the lion, and ended the enchantments of the castle, and how he was healed of his wounds by the Queen Arnivé.

BOOK XI ARNIVE

Weary he closed his eyelids, and he slept in a slumber
deep
Till the light of the early morning must waken him from
his sleep.
And many a window saw he within that chamber wall,
And clear glass was before each window—Thro' a
doorway the light did fall,
'Twas open, without was an orchard, thither gat him the
gallant knight 5
For the air, and the song-birds' music, and to see what
might meet his sight
And but little space had he sat there, when the castle he saw
again
As at eventide he saw it when he fought on the grassy plain.
And he saw from the hall of the palace full many a maiden
gaze,
And many were fair to look on; and he thought, with a great
amaze, 10
That a wondrous watch they must keep there, since they
weariéd not thro' the night,
And little might they have slumbered, for as yet scarce had
dawned the light.
Then he thought, 'For the sake of these ladies will I lay me
to sleep once more.'
Then again to his couch he gat him, and for covering he
drew him o'er
The mantle the maid had lent him—Did no man his slumber
break? 15

Nay, sorely the host had vexed him, if one should his guest
 awake.
 Then of true heart bethought the maiden, who soft by her
 mother lay,
 And she roused her from out her slumber, and she took to
 the guest her way,
 And again he slept so sweetly—Then she thought her, that
 gentle maid,
 That fain would she do him service, and she sat her beside
 his bed, 20
 Fair was she, and sweet to look on, and but seldom at
 eventide,
 Or in hour of the early dawning, such venture has sought
 my side!
 Short space ere Gawain awakened and beheld how she
 watched him there,
 And he looked and he laughed upon her, 'God reward thee,
 thou maiden fair,
 That thou breakest for me thy slumber, on thyself dost thou
 vengeance take, 25
 Since nor service nor joust so knightly have I ridden for thy
 sweet sake!'

And she answered, that gracious maiden, 'On thy service no
 claim have I,
 But look thou with favour on me, and thy will do I willingly,
 And all who are with my father, yea, mother alike and child,
 Do hail thee their lord and master, for love of thy dealings
 mild!' 30

Then he quoth, 'Is it long since thou camest? Had I of thy
 coming known
 Fain would I have asked a question, perchance thou the
 truth hadst shown:
 Yestreen and again this morning fair ladies have looked on
 me
 From a mighty tower, of thy goodness now tell me who may
 they be?'
 But the maiden she shrunk in terror, and she cried, 'Ask me
 not, Sir Knight, 35
 Since ne'er may I give an answer—I prithee to hear aright,
 If I knew, yet I might not tell thee, nor do thou my silence
 chide,
 But ask thou what else shall please thee and my lips naught
 from thee shall hide,
 But on this thing alone keep silence, and follow thou what I
 say!'
 But Gawain, he would ever ask her, and ever an answer pray,

What ladies were they who sat there, and looked from that 40
 stately hall?
 And the maiden she wept full sorely, and aloud in her grief
 did call.

'Twas yet in the early dawning, and her father he sought her
 side,
 Nor I deem me had he been wrathful if here did such
 chance betide
 That Gawain with the maid had striven, and had forced her
 unto his will, 45
 And the maiden, so fair and gentle, in such wise did she
 hold her still,
 For beside the couch was she seated—Then her father he
 mildly spake,
 'Now weep not so sore, my daughter, for if one a jest doth
 make
 Whereof thou at first art wrathful, yet I ween ere the time be
 long,
 Shall thy sorrow be changed to gladness, and thy wailing to
 joyful song!' 50

Quoth Gawain, 'Nay, mine host, naught hath chanced here
 save that which thine eye may see;
 This maiden I fain would question, but naught would she
 tell to me,
 For she thinketh, 'tis my undoing, and silence hath she
 implored:
 But now if it shall not vex thee let my service here find
 reward,
 And tell me, mine host, if it please thee, how it stands with
 those ladies there, 55
 For I know not the place or the country where I looked on
 such maidens fair,
 So many there are, and their raiment showeth clear to my
 wondering sight!
 Then the host wrung his hands for sorrow, and he spake,
 'Ask me not, Sir Knight,
 In the name of God, ask no question—For wherever thy foot
 shall speed,
 Or whatever thine eyes shall light on, no need shall be like
 their need!' 60

'Then soothly I'll mourn for their sorrow,' quoth Gawain, 'but
 mine host now say
 Why vex thee so sore for my question? Thine answer why
 thus delay?'

'Sir Knight, for thy manhood mourn I, if thou wilt not thy
question spare
Then strife sure shall be thy portion, and sorrow thine heart
shall bear.
And thy sorrow of joy shall rob us, myself and my children
three, 65
Who were born for thy gallant service true service to yield
to thee.'
Quoth Gawain, 'Yet for this thou shalt tell me, or if thou still
say me, Nay,
And I learn not from thee the story yet the truth will I know
always!'

Then the host he spake out truly, 'Sir Knight, I must sorely
rue,
The question thou here dost ask me—Thou goest to strife
anew, 70
Arm thee well, and a shield I'll lend thee—In "Terre Merveil"
thou art,
And the "Lit Merveil" shall be here—And ne'er hath a
knightly heart
Withstood all the many dangers that in Château Merveil
shall be!
Turn aside, ere thy death o'ertake thee, for life should be
dear to thee!
For wherever thine hand shall have striven, or what ventures
soe'er it found 75
As child's play have been thy perils to those which beset this
ground!'

Quoth Gawain, 'Yet 'twould sorely vex me, if I, but to save
me pain,
Rode hence, doing naught, and those ladies had looked for
mine aid in vain.
Long since have I heard of this castle, and since it so near
doth stand
No man from the task shall bring me; to the venture I set
my hand!' 80
Then the host he did sore bemoan him, and he spake to his
guest so true,
'Now as naught is all other peril, what perils around thee
drew,
To the peril of this adventure, to its awe, and its anguish
dire,
And naught but the truth am I speaking, for no man ever
spake me liar!

But that gallant knight, Sir Gawain, for naught would he turn
 aside, 85
 But he quoth, 'Now mine host give counsel how the strife I
 may best abide,
 If thy words be the words of wisdom, and God give me the
 strength thereto,
 Thy will and thy rede I'll follow, and knightly the deeds I'll
 do!
 Sir Host, of a sooth it were ill done, did I fail here a blow to
 strike,
 And coward should I be accounted of foeman and friend
 alike.' 90
 Then first did the host bemoan him, such sorrow he ne'er
 might know,
 And he quoth to his guest, 'If it may be that Heaven such
 grace shall show
 That death be not here thy portion, then this land unto thee
 shall fall.
 And the stake is full many a maiden fast bound in a magic
 thrall,
 No man ere this day hath freed them—And with them many
 noble knights 95
 Shall lie as yet imprisoned; and if thou with hand of might
 Shall loose them, thou winnest glory, and God showeth
 grace to thee,
 And joyful, o'er light and beauty, king and ruler thou sure
 shalt be!
 And maidens from many a country shall honour thee as
 their king.
 Nor think, if thou now dost ride hence, such deed shame on
 thee should bring, 100
 Since on this field Lischois Giwellius hath yielded him to
 thine hand,
 And left unto thee his honour; who erstwhile in every land
 Hath done gallant deeds of knighthood, of right may I
 praise his name,
 No knight showed a higher courage, or won him a fairer
 fame.
 And in no heart the root of virtue it showeth such fair
 increase 105
 In blossom and flower of God's planting, save in Ither of
 Gaheviess!
 'And he who at Nantes slew Prince Ither my ship bare but
 yesterday,
 Five steeds hath he given unto me, (God keep him in peace
 alway.)

Princes and kings once rode them, but now they afar must
 fare,
 And tidings of him who o'erthrew them must they carry to
 Pelrapär. 110
 For thus have they sworn the victor—His shield telleth many
 a tale
 Of jousting so fair and knightly—He rode hence to seek the
 Grail!

Quoth Gawain, 'Say, whence came he hither? Mine host,
 since he rode so near,
 Knew he naught of the wondrous venture? Or did he the
 marvel hear?'
 'Sir Knight, ne'er a word hath he heard here, I guarded me
 all too well, 115
 Lest unseemly my deed be reckoned if unasked I the tale
 should tell.
 And hadst thou thyself not asked me thou never from me
 hadst known
 The venture that here awaits thee, wrought of terror and
 pain alone.
 If thou wilt not forego this peril, and thy life shall the forfeit
 pay,
 Then never a greater sorrow have we known than we know
 to-day. 120
 But if thou shalt here be victor, and over this land shalt
 reign,
 Then my poverty hath an ending, and my loss shall be
 turned to gain;
 Such trust in thy free hand have I, I shall joy without sorrow
 know
 If thy glory here winneth glory, and thy body be not laid
 low!'

'Now arm thee for deadly warfare!'—unarmed was as yet
 Gawain, 125
 'Now I prithee bring here my harness!' and the host to his
 will was fain.
 And from head to foot she armed him, the maiden fair and
 tall,
 And her father he sought the charger—Now a shield hung
 upon the wall,
 And the wood it was tough and well hardened, (else Gawain
 ne'er this tale might tell.)
 And the shield and the horse were brought him—and the
 host he bethought him well; 130

And, as once more he stood before him, he spake, 'List thou
well, Sir Knight,
I will tell thee how thou shalt bear thee, and guard thee thy
life in fight:'

'My shield shalt thou carry with thee! Of war shall it bear no
trace

For but seldom I strive in battle, nor I count it me as
disgrace.

When thou comest, Sir Knight, to the castle, do this, it shall
serve thy steed:

135

At the doorway a merchant sitteth, buy of him that which
thou shalt need,

Then give him thy steed, he will hold it, nor care thou what
thou shalt buy,

As a pledge will he hold thy charger, and will give it thee
joyfully

If unhurt from the Burg thou comest!' Quoth Gawain, 'Say,
shall I not ride?'

'Nay, nay, for sore peril neareth, and the maidens their faces
hide!'

140

'Thou shalt find that fair palace lonely, deserted by great
and small,

And no token of living creature shalt thou see in that stately
hall.

And may God's grace watch o'er thy footsteps, and His
blessing go with thine hand

When thou comest into the chamber where the "Lit Merveil"
shall stand.

And the couch, and the rollers beneath it, in Morocco they
first were made

145

For the Ruler of all the Faithful; and were it in the balance
weighed

'Gainst all treasures of crown and kingdom it still would
outweigh them all.

And I wot, there shall ill o'ertake thee, and God knoweth
what shall befall,

But I pray that the end be joyful! Yet hearken, Sir Knight, to
me,

This sword and this shield that thou holdest, in thine hand
must they ever be,

150

For surely when thou shalt think thee that the peril hath
done its worst,

Then *first* mayst thou look for conflict, and *then* shall the
storm-cloudburst!'

Then mournful I ween was the maiden, as Gawain to the
 saddle sprung,
 And all they who stood around her they wept and their
 hands they wrung,
 Then he quoth to his host, 'God grant me that hereafter I
 may repay
 The care and the kindly counsel I have won from thy lips to-
 day.'
 Then leave did he pray of the maiden, and her sorrow was
 sore to see,
 He rode hence, and they whom he left here they mourned
 for him bitterly.
 And now, if ye fain would hearken what unto Gawain befell,
 The tale of his wondrous venture right gladly to ye I'll tell.

115

And in this wise I heard the story—As he came to the castle
 gate,
 A merchant with merchandise costly without did his coming
 wait.
 And so rich were his wares, and precious, that in sooth I
 were glad at heart
 If I, in so great a treasure, my portion might bear and part.
 Then, Sir Gawain, he sprang from his charger, for ne'er had
 he seen before
 Outspread in the open market such goods as were here in
 store.
 And the booth was of velvet fashioned, four-square, and
 both wide and high,
 And that which lay there for purchase no monarch might
 lightly buy.
 The Baruch of Bagdad scarcely had paid that which lay
 therein;
 Nor the Patriarch of Rankulat might think him such prize to
 win.
 Yea, and great as shall be the treasure that was found but
 awhile ago
 In the land of the Greeks yet their Emperor such riches
 might hardly know!
 And e'en if these twain had helped him the price he had
 failed to pay
 That a man must count for the treasure that here before
 Gawain lay.

165

170

Then the knight greeted well the merchant as he looked on
 the wondrous store
 Of marvels that lay before him, but he stayed not to turn it
 o'er,

175

But bade him show clasp and girdle; then he quoth to the
 hero bold,
 'For many a year have I sat here, yet no man doth my wares
 behold;
 None but ladies have looked upon them! yet if manhood
 shall nerve thine hand
 Of all here shalt thou be the master; they were brought
 from a distant land, 180
 If here thou shalt be the victor, (for in sooth hast thou come
 for fight,)
 And the venture shall well betide thee, I will deal with thee
 well, Sir Knight!
 For all that my booth containeth is thine if thou win the day!
 So trust thou in God and His mercy, and take to the Burg
 thy way.
 Plippalinot in sooth hath sent thee, and thy coming well
 praised shall be 185
 Of many a gracious maiden if thy prowess shall set her free!'

'Now wouldst thou withstand this venture leave here for
 awhile thy steed,
 If thou trust it unto my keeping, I will give to the charge
 good heed.'
 Quoth Gawain, 'Yea, I'll gladly do so, if unseemly be not the
 task,
 Too greatly I fear thy riches such grace from thine hand to
 ask, 190
 For ne'er since I rode upon it such keeper my steed hath
 known'—
 Out quoth the merchant freely, 'Sir Knight, all shall be thine
 own,
 Myself, and the wares I guard here, (nor further of them I'll
 speak,)
 They are his, who in safety faceth the danger thou here dost
 seek!'

And so bold was I ween the hero that on foot did he go
 straightway, 195
 Undaunted, to face the peril untold that before him lay.
 And, as I before have told ye, the Burg it stood high and
 wide,
 And its bulwarks so stoutly builded did guard it on either
 side.
 If for thirty years they stormed it, not a berry or leaf would
 yield,
 However the foe might threaten; in the midst was a grassy
 field, 200

(Yet the Lechfeld I ween is longer,) many turrets they
towered on high,
And the story it tells that Gawain, as the palace he did espy,
Saw the roof shine all many-coloured, as peacock's plumes
its glow,
And so bright it was that its glory was dimmed nor by rain
nor snow.

And within was it richly furnished, and decked to delight the
eye, 205
And the pillars were richly carven, and the windows were
arched on high,
And many a fair couch costly had they set there against the
wall,
Nor touched they the one to the other, and rich covers lay
over all.
And but now had the maidens sat there, but each one had
taken thought,
And no one of them all remained there, and of welcome
Gawain found naught. 210
Yet their joy came again with his coming, and the day of
their bliss was he,
And 'twere well they had looked upon him, none fairer their
eyes might see.
Yet none there might dare behold him, tho' to serve them
he aye was fain,
And yet in this thing were they guiltless—Thro' the palace
strode knight Gawain,
And he looked on this side and the other, and he sought
well the chamber o'er, 215
If to left or to right I know not, but he saw there an open
door,
And wherever that door might lead him the hero was fain to
go,
If high fame he might gain for his seeking, or die there a
death of woe!

So stepped he within the chamber, and behold! the shining
floor,
As glass it lay smooth beneath him, and the Lit-Merveil he
saw, 220
The wonder-couch; and beneath it four rollers as crystal
clear,
And fashioned of fire-red rubies: as the swift wind afar and
near
Did it speed o'er the shining pavement, no floor might fairer
be,

Chrysolite, sardius, jasper, inwrought there the eye might
 see.
 For so had Klingsor willed it, and the thought it was his
 alone, 225
 From far-off lands his magic had brought to the Burg each
 stone.

So smooth 'neath his feet the pavement, scarce might be his
 footing hold,
 Then fain would he seek the venture, but, so is the marvel
 told,
 As ever he stood before it the couch from its station fled,
 And swift as the winds of heaven o'er the glittering floor it
 sped. 230
 (And Gawain he found all too heavy the shield that his hand
 gripped fast,
 And yet did his host give counsel it should ne'er on one side
 be cast.)
 Thought Gawain, 'Now, how may I reach thee, since still
 thou dost fly from me?
 Methinks thou shalt have a lesson, it may be I may spring to
 thee!'
 Then still stood the couch before him, and straight from the
 ground he leapt 235
 And stood firm in the midst of the marvel, and again o'er
 the floor it swept,
 And hither and thither turning in the four walls its goal it
 found,
 And blow upon blow fell swiftly, till the Burg echoed back
 the sound.

And many a charge did he ride there, with crash, as of
 thunder-cloud,
 Or as trumpeters blow together when their blasts thro' the
 hall ring loud, 240
 And the one vieth with the other, and each for a fair prize
 blows.
 Less loud should have been their tumult than the tumult
 that there arose!
 And waken and watch must Sir Gawain, altho' on a bed he
 lay.
 How best might the hero guard him? The noise he was fain
 to stay,
 And his head with his shield he covered—There he lay, and
 would wait His will 245
 Who hath help in His power, and helpeth all those who
 entreat Him still,

And shutteth His ear to no man who in sorrow for aid doth
 pray.
 And the man who is wise and steadfast, as dawneth his
 sorrow's day,
 Doth call on the hand of the Highest, that shall ne'er be too
 short to reach,
 And the aid that shall meet their lacking He sendeth to all
 and each. 250
 And so was it now with Gawain—Thro' Whose grace he had
 gotten fame,
 He called on His power and His mercy to shelter him here
 from shame.

Then stilled for a space the clamour—The couch stood
 within the hall,
 And an equal space had they measured from its station to
 either wall.
 Yet now waxed his peril greater, for five hundred missiles,
 swung 255
 With craft from hands yet hidden, were against Sir Gawain
 flung.
 And they fell on the couch as he lay there; but the shield it
 was hard and new,
 And it sheltered him well, and I think me of the blows did he
 feel but few.
 And the stones were as river pebbles, so heavy, and hard,
 and round,
 And in many a place on the surface of the shield might their
 trace be found. 260

At length was the stone-shower ended, and never before he
 knew
 Such sharp and such heavy missiles as those which toward
 him flew.
 For now full five hundred cross-bows were bended, their
 bolts they sped,
 And each one was aimed at the hero as he lay on the
 Wonder-Bed.
 (And he who hath faced such peril in sooth he of darts may
 tell:) 265
 Yet their wrath was soon spent, and silence for awhile on the
 chamber fell.
 And he who would seek for comfort he ne'er on such couch
 should lie!
 Little solace or rest may he find there, but peace from his
 face shall fly!

And youth would wax grey and agèd, if such comfort should
 be its share
 As fell to the lot of Gawain, when he lay on that couch so
 fair. 270
 Yet nor weariness nor terror had weakened or hand or heart,
 Tho' the stones and the bolts of the cross-bow had done on
 his limbs their part,
 And spite of both shield and corslet, sore bruised and cut
 was he:
 And he thought that, this peril ended, the venture should
 ended be—
 But yet with his hand must he battle, and the prize of the
 victor win, 275
 For a doorway e'en now flew open, and one trode the hall
 within;
 And the man was a mighty peasant, and fearful of face, and
 grim,
 And the hide of the grey sea-otter was his covering on head
 and limb,
 And his hosen were wide, and he carried a club in his strong
 right hand,
 And 'twas thicker I ween than a pitcher that round-bellied
 doth firmly stand. 280
 So came he unto Sir Gawain, (and his coming it pleased him
 ill,)
 Yet he thought, 'He doth bear no harness, mine arms shall
 withstand him still,'
 Upright on the couch he sat him, as nor terror nor pain he
 knew,
 And the peasant, as he would flee him, a space from the
 bed withdrew,
 And he cried in a voice so wrathful, 'From *me* hast thou
 naught to fear, 285
 Yet such peril I'll loose upon thee that thy life must thou buy
 full dear;
 The devil himself doth aid thee, else wert thou not still in
 life,
 Bethink thee, for death cometh swiftly, and the ending of all
 thy strife,
 No more can the devil shield thee, that I tell thee ere hence
 I pass!'
 Then he gat him once more thro' the doorway, and Gawain
 gripped his sword-hilt fast, 290
 And the shafts did he smite asunder of the arrows that thro'
 his shield

Had passed, and had pierced his armour, nor yet to his hand
would yield.

Then a roar, as of mighty thunder, on the ear of Gawain did
fall,
As when twenty drums were sounding to dance in the castle
hall.

Then the hero, so firm and dauntless, whose courage ne'er
felt the smart 295

Of the wounds that cowardice pierceth, thought thus in his
steadfast heart:

'What evil shall now befall me? Must I yet more sorrow
know?

For sorrow enow have I seen here, yet here will I face my
foe!'

He looked toward the peasant's doorway, and a mighty lion
sprang thro',

And its size was e'en that of a warhorse, and straight on
Gawain it flew. 300

But Gawain he was loth to fly here, and his shield he held
fast before,

As best for defence should serve him, and he sprang down
upon the floor.

And the lion was hunger-ravenging, yet little should find for
food,

Tho' raging it sprang on the hero, who bravely its rush
withstood.

The shield it had near torn from him, with the first grip its
talons fierce 305

It drave thro' the wood, such hardness but seldom a beast
may pierce.

Yet Gawain did right well defend him, his sword-blade aloft
he swung,

And on three feet the beast must hold him, while the fourth
from the shield yet hung.

And the blood gushed forth on the pavement, and Gawain
he firmer stood,

And the fight raged hither and thither, as the lion, on the
hero good, 310

Sprang ever with snorting nostrils, and gleaming fangs and
white—

And if on such food they had reared it, that its meat was a
gallant knight,

I had cared not to sit beside it! Nor such custom pleased
Gawain well,

Who for life or for death must fight it—and the strife ever fiercer fell.

So sorely the beast was wounded, the chamber with blood ran o'er; 315

Fierce sprang the lion upon Gawain, and would bear him unto the floor,

But Gawain a sword-thrust dealt him, thro' the heart the swift blade sped

Till his hand smote full on the breast-bone, and the lion at his feet fell dead.

And now all the deadly peril and the conflict was over-past —

In the same hour Gawain bethought him, 'Where now shall my lot be cast? 320

Since to sit in this blood I like not, and I must of the couch beware,

For it runneth a race so frantic 'twere foolish to sit me there!'

But yet was his head so deafened with the blows that upon him fell,

And many his wounds, and the life-blood did forth from its fountains well,

And his strength waxed faint, and it left him, and he fell on the chamber floor; 325

His head lay on the lion's body, and the shield might he hold no more.

And if wisdom and power were his portion, of the twain was he reft I ween,

And tho' fair was the Burg, yet within it full rough had his handling been.

His senses forsook him wholly—no such pillow I ween was his

As that which on Mount Ribbelé Gybele gave to Kahenis; 330
Both fair and wise was the maiden—and his honour he slept away—

But here honour ran swift-footed to Gawain as he prostrate lay.

For in sooth ye shall well have hearkened, and shall know how such chance befell,

That thus lay the hero lifeless, from the first have ye heard it well.

Then in secret one looked upon him, and the chamber with blood was red, 335

And the lion alike and the hero they lay as the twain were
dead.
'Twas a fair and gracious maiden who saw thro' a loop-hole
high,
And her face it grew wan, and the colour from her lips and
her cheek must fly.
And youth was so heavy-hearted that old age sore must
mourn her tale.
Yet Arnivé was wise, and her wisdom did here o'er the woe
prevail, 340
And still for this deed must I praise her, she drew near to aid
Gawain,
And from peril of death she freed him who freedom for her
would gain.

Then herself she was fain to behold him, and they gazed
thro' the window small,
And naught might they tell, those women, of what waited
them in the hall.
Was it news of a joyful future? Or of woe that should last for
aye? 345

And the queen's heart it sore misgave her that the hero had
died that day,
(And the thought brought her grief and sorrow,) since he
sought him no better bed,
But silent he lay, and rested on the corse of the lion his
head.
And she spake, 'From my heart I mourn thee, if thy
manhood so true and brave
Hath won thee no better guerdon, and thy life thou hast
failed to save. 350

If death here hath been thy portion for our sake, who shall
strangers be,
And thy truth to such fate hath brought thee, then for ever
I'll mourn for thee.
And thy virtue I'll praise, tho' the counting of thy years I may
never know!
And she spake to the weeping women, as they looked on
the knight laid low,
'Ye maids who shall be baptized, and by water have won a
place 355
In God's kingdom, pray ye unto Him, that He show to this
hero grace!'

Then she sent below two maidens, and she bade them to
seek Gawain,
And softly draw nigh unto him, nor pass from his side again

Till they brought her full assurance how it went with the
 gallant knight,
 If perchance he should yet be living, or had found his death
 in fight. 360
 So she gave to the twain commandment—Did they weep
 those maidens fair?
 Yea, both must weep full sorely for the grief that was here
 their share,
 When they found the hero lying, for his wounds they ran
 with blood
 Till the shield in blood was swimming—then they bent o'er
 the hero good,
 And with gentle hand the helmet one loosened from off his
 head, 365
 And she saw a light foam gathered upon his lips so red,
 And she waited a space and hearkened, if perchance she
 might hear his breath,
 For but now had she thought him living, yet she deemed it
 might well be death.
 And his over-dress was of sable, and the mystic beasts it
 bore,
 Such as Ilinot the Breton as his badge with great honour
 wore. 370
 (And courage and fame were his portion from his youth till
 his dying day.)
 From the coat with her ready fingers the sable she tore
 away,
 And she held it before his nostrils, for thus might she better
 know
 If yet he should live, since his breathing would stir the hair
 to and fro.

And the breath was yet there, and straightway she bade her
 companion bring 375
 Fair water, the gentle maiden did swift on her errand spring.
 Then the maid placed her ring so golden betwixt his teeth
 closed fast,
 And deft was her hand in the doing, and between his lips
 she passed,
 Drop by drop, e'en as he might take it, the water, and little
 space
 Ere he lifted once more his eyelids, and he looked on the
 maiden's face. 380
 And he thanked them, those two sweet children, and
 offered them service meet—
 Alas! that ye here should find me, unseemly laid at your
 feet!

If ye will on this chance keep silence, for good will I count
the deed,
And courtesy shall ye honour if ye give to my words good
heed!

Quoth the maid, 'Thou hast lain, and thou liest, as one who
the prize doth hold, 385
In sooth thou art here the victor and in joy shall thy life wax
old,

To-day is thy day of triumph! But comfort us now I pray,
Is it so with thy wounds that, naught fearing, we may joy in
thy joy to-day?'

Then he quoth, 'Would ye see me living, then help shall ye
bring to me.'

And he prayed of those gracious maidens that a leech to his
wounds should see, 390

Or one who was skilled in healing, 'But if yet I must face the
strife,

Go ye hence, give me here my helmet, and gladly I'll guard
my life!

But they spake, 'Nay, the strife is over, Sir Knight, send us
not away,

Yet one shall go, and the guerdon of messenger win
straightway.

To the four queens shall she betake her, and shall say that
thou livest still, 395

And a chamber shall they prepare thee, and leechcraft with
right goodwill,

And with salves shall thy wounds be tended, and so mild
shall their working be

That thy pain shall be swiftly lessened, and healing be
brought to thee!

Then one of the maids sprang swiftly, and she ran with no
halting tread,

With the news that the knight was living straightway to the
court she sped. 400

'In sooth shall he be so living, if ever it be God's will,
Rich in joy may we be henceforward and glad without fear
of ill,

For naught but good help he needeth,' 'Dieu Merci!' then
quoth they all.

Then the old queen wise her maidens did straightway
around her call,

And she bade them a bed prepare him, and a carpet she
spread before, 405

And a fire on the hearth burnt brightly, and precious the
salves they bore.

And the queen with wisdom mixed them for the healing of
 cut or bruise.
 In that hour from among her women four maids did Arnivé
 choose,
 And she bade them disarm the hero, and his harness bear
 soft away,
 And with wisdom should they deal with him lest he feel
 himself shamed away. 410
 'A silk shall ye bear about ye, in its shadow the knight
 disarm,
 If yet he can walk he may do so, if else, bear him in your
 arms
 To where I by the bed await him, for his couch will I rightly
 care,
 If the strife in such wise hath fallen that no deadly wound he
 bear,
 Then I think me I soon may heal him, but if wounded he be
 to death 415
 Then cloven our joy—with the hero are we slain tho' we yet
 draw breath!'

And all this was done as she bade them, disarmed was the
 knight Gawain,
 Then they led him where help they gave him who well knew
 to ease his pain.
 And of wounds did they find full fifty, or perchance they
 were even more,
 But the darts had not pierced too deeply since ever his
 shield he bore. 420
 Then the queen in her wisdom took her warm wine, and a
 sendal blue,
 And Dictam, the herb of healing, and she wiped with her
 hand so true
 The blood from his wounds, and she closed them, and the
 flow of the life-blood stayed.
 And wherever his helm was indented the stones on his head
 had made
 Sore bruises, yet they must vanish 'fore the salves and their
 healing power, 425
 And the master-skill of Arnivé who tended him in that hour!

And she quoth, 'Ease I well may give thee, whiles Kondrie
 doth come to me,
 And all help that may be in leechcraft of her friendship she
 telleth free.
 Since Anfortas so sore doth suffer, and they seek aid from
 far and near,

This salve shall from death have kept him, from
 Monsalväsch 'twas brought me here.' 430
 When Gawain heard she spake of Monsalväsch, then in
 sooth was he glad at heart,
 For he deemed it was near—Then this hero, who ne'er had
 in falsehood part,
 Spake thus to the queen, 'Now, Lady, my senses that far
 were fled,
 Hast thou won back again, and mine anguish I ween hast
 thou minishèd,
 What of strength shall be mine, or of wisdom, I owe to thine
 hand alone, 435
 Thy servant am I!' But the queen spake, 'Sir Knight, thou
 such faith hast shown
 That we all must rejoice in thy welfare, and strive for it
 faithfully.
 But follow my rede, nor speak much, a root will I give to
 thee
 That shall win thee refreshing slumber, thou shalt care not
 for drink or meat
 Till the night, then such food I'll bring thee thou shalt need
 not ere morn to eat.' 440

 Then a root 'twixt his lips she laid there, and straightway he
 fell asleep,
 And throughout the day he slumbered, and in coverings
 they happed him deep.
 Rich in honour and poor in shaming, soft and warm, there in
 peace he lay,
 Yet he sneezed, and at whiles he shivered, for the salve
 wrought on him alway.
 And a company of fair women passed within and without
 the door, 445
 And fair was the light of their faces, and stately the mien
 they bore.
 And she bade them, the Queen Arnivé, that silence they all
 should keep,
 None should call, and no maiden answer, so long as the
 knight should sleep.
 And she bade them fast close the palace, nor burger, nor
 squire, nor knight,
 Should hear what had there befallen till the dawn of the
 morning light. 450

 But new sorrow drew nigh to the women—The knight slept
 till even grey,

Then Arrivé the queen in her wisdom drew the root from
 his lips away.
 And straightway he woke, and he thirsted, and they brought
 him of drink and meat,
 And he raised himself and, rejoicing, as they brought him so
 would he eat:
 And many a maid stood before him, such fair service he
 ne'er had known, 455
 So courteous their mien and bearing—then he looked at
 them one by one
 And he gazed at each and the other, yet still his desire was
 set
 On the lady Orgelúsé, for ne'er saw he woman yet,
 In all the days of his lifetime, who so near to his heart did
 lie;
 Tho' many his prayer had hearkened, and *some* did their
 love deny! 460
 Then out spake the gallant hero to Arrivé, his leech so wise,
 'Lady, 'twill ill beseem me, nor deal I in courteous guise,
 If these ladies stand here before me, I would they might
 seated be,
 Or if such be thy will it were better shouldst thou bid them
 to eat with me!
 'Nay, Sir Knight, none I ween may sit here save I, the queen,
 alone, 465
 And shamed would they surely hold them were such service
 not gladly done,
 For our joy shalt thou be; yet I think me that if this be thy
 will indeed,
 Whate'er shall be thy commandment, we will give to thy
 words good heed.'
 But nobly born were those ladies, and their courtesy did
 they show,
 For all with one voice they prayed him he would e'en let the
 thing be so, 470
 And while he should eat they would stand there; so waited
 they on the guest
 And passed hence when the meal was ended and Gawain
 was laid to rest.

BOOK XII EIDEGAST

ARGUMENT

In Book XII. the poet recounts the valiant deeds done by Gawain's kinsmen for love's sake, and how they were as naught to the perils dared by Gawain.

Of the watch-tower in the castle, and the magic pillar, and how Gawain beheld the coming of Orgelusé and her knight.

How Gawain fought with and overcame the Turkowit, and how he was urged by Orgelusé's mockery to the venture of the Perilous Ford. How he plucked a bough from a tree guarded by King Gramoflanz, and was challenged by that monarch to single combat. Of the repentance of Orgelusé, and her reconciliation with Gawain, and how both were welcomed by the dwellers in Château Merveil. How Gawain secretly sent a squire to the court of King Arthur bidding him, his knights and ladies, to loflanz to witness the combat between Gawain and Gramoflanz.

BOOK XII EIDEGAST

Now he who his rest had broken, if rest he perchance
might win,
Methinks they who hear the story had counted it him for
sin.
For e'en as the venture telleth, sore toil had the hero
known,
And in sooth did he face such peril that his fame thro' all
lands hath flown.
Lancelot on the sword-bridge battled, and Meljakanz must
sue for grace, 5
Yet as naught was I ween his danger to the woe that Gawain
must face.
And that which is told of Garel, the valiant and knightly king,
Who o'erthrew the lion 'fore the palace and made Nantes
with his daring ring—
And he sought the knife too, Garel, but he paid for his deed
full dear
In the pillar of marble—greater was the venture ye read of
here! 10
For the darts that were shot against Gawain, as his manly
courage bade,

For a mule were too great a burden if they all on its back
 were laid!
 The Perilous Ford hath its dangers; and Erec must sorrow
 know,
 When for Schoie-de-la-kurt he battled, and Mabonagrein
 would fain lay low,
 Yet ne'er had he faced such peril as fell here to knight
 Gawain. 15
 Nor lwein, the gallant hero, who water would pour amain,
 Nor feared of the stone the venture—Were these perils all
 knit in one,
 He who knoweth to measure danger saith Gawain greater
 deeds had done!

What peril is this I tell of? If ye will, I the woe will name,
 Or too early perchance the telling? Swift-foot Orgeluse
 came, 20
 And straight to the heart of the hero hath she taken her
 silent way,
 That heart that hath ne'er known trembling, that courage
 hath ruled alway.
 And how came it so stately lady might hide in so small a
 space?
 For narrow I ween was the pathway that led to her resting-
 place.
 And all sorrow he knew aforetime was as nought to this
 bitter woe, 25
 And a low wall it was that hid her when his heart did her
 presence know
 In whose service he never faltered, but was watchful as he
 was true.
 Nor find ye here food for laughter, that one who ne'er terror
 knew,
 A hero so brave in battle, should yield to a woman's hand.
 Alas! woe is me for the marvel that no man may
 understand! 30
 And Frau Minne she waxeth wrathful 'gainst him who the
 prize hath won,
 Yet dauntless and brave hath she found him, and shall find
 him, till life be done.
 Who harm on a wounded foeman shall work doth his
 honour stain,
 Yet in strength 'gainst his will did Love bind him, and it
 turned to him for gain.

Frau Minne, wouldst have men praise thee? Then this will I
 say to thee, 35

This strife shall be not to thine honour, since sore wounded
 Gawain shall be.
 And ever throughout his life-days has he lived as thou didst
 command,
 And he followed in this his father, and the men of his
 mother's land.
 For they yielded thee loyal service since the days Mazadan
 was king,
 Who Terre-de-la-Schoie from Fay-Morgan in thy service did
 gallant bring. 40
 And this do men tell of his children, no man from his fealty
 fell.
 And Ither of Gaheviess bare it, thy badge, and he served
 thee well;
 And never in woman's presence did one speak of the hero's
 name
 But their hearts yearned in love towards him, and they
 spake it, nor thought it shame,
 How then when they looked upon him? Then the tale first
 was told aright! 45
 Frau Minne, a faithful servant didst thou lose in that gallant
 knight!

Slay Gawain if thou wilt, as his cousin Ilinot by thine hand
 was slain,
 Since thy power with the bitter torment of desire did the
 knight constrain,
 Till he strove for the love of his lady all the days of his fair
 young life,
 Florie of Kanedig was she, and he served her in many a
 strife. 50
 And he fled from the land of his fathers in the days of his
 youth's unrest,
 And was reared by this queen, and Britain ne'er saw him but
 as a guest.
 And the burden of Love weighed on him, and from Florie's
 land he fled,
 Till the day that in true love's service, as I told ye, men
 found him dead.
 And often the kin of Gawain thro' love have known sorrow
 sore, 55
 And of those by Frau Minne wounded could I name to ye
 many more.
 And why did the snow and the blood-drops move Parzival's
 faithful heart?
 'Twas his *wife* wrought the spell, I think me! Yea, others have
 known thine art,

Galoes and Gamuret hast thou vanquished, and in sooth
 hast thou laid them low,
 And the twain for their true love's guerdon must the death
 of a hero know. 60
 And Itonjé, Gawain's fair sister, must love Gramoflanz the
 king,
 And grieve for her love; and sorrow, Frau Minne, thou once
 didst bring
 On fair Surdamur and her lover: since thou sufferest not
 Gawain's kin
 To seek them another service, so on him wouldst thou
 honour win!

Be mighty towards the mighty but here let Gawain go free, 65
 His wounds they so sorely pain him, and the hale should thy
 foemen be!
 But many have sung of love's working who never so knew
 love's power,
 For myself, I would hold me silent—But true lovers shall
 mourn this hour
 What chanced unto him of Norway, for the venture he faced
 right well,
 And now, without help or warning, love's tempest upon him
 fell! 70

Quoth the hero, 'Alas, for restless my resting-place shall be,
 One couch did so sorely wound me, and the other hath
 brought to me
 Sore torment of love and longing! Orgelusé must favour
 show
 Unto me her true knight and servant, or small joy shall my
 life-days know!
 As unresting he turned, and he stretched him, the bands
 from his wounds were torn, 75
 So restless he lay and wakeful awaited the coming morn.
 And at last the day shone on him, and many a battlefield
 And sword-strife more rest had brought him than the rest
 which his couch might yield.

Would one liken his woe unto Gawain's, and be e'en such a
 lover true,
 Of his love-wounds let him be healèd, and then smitten by
 darts anew, 80
 And methinks he shall find that the sorrow and torment
 shall vex him more
 Than all the sum of the sorrow he hath borne for love's sake
 before!

Nor love's torments alone vexed Gawain—Ever clearer it
 grew, the light,
 Till dark seemed the lofty tapers that erstwhile had shone so
 bright.
 Then up sprang from his couch the hero, and as blood, and
 as iron, red 85
 With wounds, and with rust, was his linen, yet beside him he
 saw outspread
 Hosen and shirt of woollen, and the change pleased our
 hero well,
 And robes lined with fur of the marten, and a garment that
 o'er them fell,
 (In Arras its stuff was woven, and from Arras 'twas hither
 sent,)
 And boots had they lain beside it, none too narrow for his
 content. 90

In these garments anew he clothed him, and forth from the
 chamber went
 Gawain, and hither and thither his steps thro' the palace
 bent,
 Till he found the hall of his venture, no riches he e'er had
 known
 To liken unto the glories within this fair castle shown.
 And there at one side of the palace a narrow dome he
 found, 95
 And it rose high above the building, and a staircase within it
 wound,
 And above stood a shining pillar; nor of wood was it shapen
 fair,
 But so large and so strong that the coffin of Kamilla it well
 might bear.
 And Klingsor, the wise, he brought it from the kingdom of
 Feirefis,
 And his cunning and skill had fashioned both the hall and
 the stair I wis! 100

No tent might so round be fashioned; did the Master
 Geometras will
 To raise such a work he had failèd, for unknown to his hand
 the skill.
 'Twas magic alone that wrought it—The venture it bids us
 know
 Of diamond, amethyst, topaz, carbuncle with red-fire glow,
 Of chrysolite, emerald, ruby, and sardius, the windows tall, 105
 That each one like to the other encircled this wondrous hall.

And rich as the window columns, and carven, the roof
o'erhead,
And herein was a greater marvel than all marvels ye yet
have read;

For, the vault below, no pillar was like to that column fair
That stood in the midst of the circle, and wondrous the
power it bare, 110

For so the venture telleth—Gawain fain would gaze around,
And alone did he climb the watch-tower, and precious the
jewels he found.

And he saw there a greater wonder, and the sight never
vexed his eye,

For he thought him upon the column all the lands of the
earth did lie.

And he saw the countries circle, and the mighty mountains'
crest 115

Meet, e'en as two hosts in battle, as one vision the other
pressed.

And folk did he see in the pillar, and on horse or afoot they
went,

They ran, and they stood: in a window he sat him on seeing
bent.

Came the agèd Queen Arnivé, with Sangivé her child, and
there

Were two maidens, the gentle daughters that Sangivé
erewhile did bear. 120

And the four queens they came unto Gawain, and he saw
them and sprang upright;

And thus quoth the Queen Arnivé, 'Methinks thou shouldst
sleep, Sir Knight,

For though rest may no longer please thee, thou art
wounded too sore, I trow,

That thou further toil and labour shouldst yet for a season
know!'

Quoth the knight, 'Lady mine and my mistress, since thy
wisdom hath brought to me 125

My wit, and my strength, all my lifetime thy servant I fain
would be!'

Quoth the queen, 'If I so may read them, the words thou
didst speak but now,

And thou ownest me as thy mistress, then Sir Knight, to my
bidding bow,

And kiss at my will these ladies, as thou mayest, without
thought of shame,

Since nor mother nor maid before thee but a kingly birth
 may claim!' 130
 Then glad was Gawain at her bidding, and he kissed those
 ladies three,
 And Sangivé was first, then Itonjé, and the third was the fair
 Kondrie.
 And the five sat them down together, and Gawain saw those
 maidens twain,
 Their face and their form so gracious, and he looked, and he
 looked again;
 Yet one woman so worked upon him, for yet in his heart she
 lay, 135
 That their beauty by Orgelusé's he deemed but a cloudy
 day.
 For he held with the Lady of Logrois none other might well
 compare,
 And his heart and his thoughts were captive to this lady so
 sweet and fair.

Now 'twas done, and Gawain had been greeted with a kiss
 by those ladies three,
 And so fair were they all that I wot well their beauty would
 fatal be 140
 To a heart that was yet unwounded—Then he spake to the
 elder queen,
 And he prayed her to tell of the pillar, and the marvels he
 there had seen.

Quoth Arnivé, 'By day and by night-time that pillar, I ween,
 doth throw
 Its light for six miles around it, so long as its power I know.
 And all that within that circuit doth chance on its face we
 see, 145
 In water, or on the meadow, and true shall the vision be.
 The bird and the beast we see here, the guest and the
 woodman true,
 He who to this land is a stranger, or its ways of aforetime
 knew.
 Yea, all may we find within it, and it shineth for six miles
 round;
 And so fast and so firm it standeth none moveth it from the
 ground, 150
 And no hammer shall ever harm it, and no smith hath, I
 ween, the skill.
 'Twas stolen from Queen Sekundillé, I think me, against her
 will!'

Now Gawain he saw at this moment on the column a
 goodly pair,
A knight with a lady riding, and he thought him the maid
 was fair,
And clearly and well he saw them—and armed were both
 steed and knight, 155
And his helmet was plumed and jewelled, and it gleamed in
 the morning light.
And they rode at a hasty gallop thro' the defile out on the
 plain:
Tho' I wot well he little knew it, yet they rode but to seek
 Gawain!

And they came by the self-same pathway that Lischois he
 rode afore,
The proud knight whom Gawain had vanquished, and in
 joust from his charger bore. 160
And the lady she held the bridle of the knight who to joust
 would ride,
And the sight to Gawain brought sorrow, and swiftly he
 turned aside,
And behold! 'twas no lying vision, for without on the grassy
 plain
By the river rode Orgelusé, and a knight at her side drew
 rein.
E'en as hellebore within the nostril pierceth sharp, and a
 man doth sneeze, 165
Thro' his eye to his heart came the Duchess, and she robbed
 him of joy and ease!

Alas! I wot well 'gainst Frau Minne all helpless shall be
 Gawain—
Then he looked on the knight who rode there, and he spake
 to the queen again,
'Lady, a knight I see there, who rideth with well-aimed
 spear,
Nor will cease from the goal he seeketh—Well! I ween he
 may find it here, 170
Since he craveth some deed of knighthood I am ready with
 him to fight,
But say, who shall be the maiden?' she quoth, 'Tis the lady
 bright
Who is Duchess and queen of Logrois,—Now 'gainst whom
 doth she bear ill-will?
For the Turkowit rideth with her, and unconquered shall he
 be still.

With his spear such fame hath he won him, as were riches
 for kingdoms three, 175
 And against a hand so valiant 'twere best not to venture
 thee;
 For strife is it all too early, and thou shalt be hurt too sore,
 And e'en wert thou whole I should rede thee to strive with
 him nevermore!
 Quoth Gawain, 'If indeed I be lord here then he who so near
 shall seek
 Deeds of knighthood, shall shame mine honour if
 vengeance I fail to wreak. 180
 Since he lusteth for strife, O Lady, thou shalt give me mine
 armour here!
 Then the ladies, the four, bewailed them with many a bitter
 tear:
 And they quoth, 'Wilt thou deck thy glory? wilt thou greater
 honour know?
 Strive not now, shouldst thou fall before him then greater
 shall wax our woe.
 But e'en if thou be the victor, if thou girdest thine harness
 on 185
 Thou must die who so sore art wounded, and with thee are
 we all undone!'

Gawain, he was sorely anguished, and the cause have ye
 heard aright,
 For he counted himself dishonoured by the coming of such
 a knight
 And his wounds, they must sorely pain him, yet love's
 torment it vexed him more,
 And the grief of these four fair ladies, and the love they
 towards him bore. 190
 Then he bade them to cease from weeping, and harness
 and sword he craved,
 And his charger; and those fair women they led forth the
 hero brave.
 And he bade them go forth before him, and adown the
 steps they wind
 To the hall where the other maidens so sweet and so fair
 they find.

Then Gawain for his perilous journey was armed 'neath the
 light of eyes 195
 Tear-dimmed, and they secret held it, and none knew save
 the merchant wise.
 And they bade him the steed make ready, and the hero he
 slowly stept

To the place where his charger waited—nor light on its back
he leapt,
But scarcely his shield might he carry, for in sooth was he
wounded sore.
And thro' centre and rim was it piercèd, and traces of battle
bore! 200

Then again he bestrode his charger, and he turned from the
Burg away,
And he rode to his host so faithful; and never he said him
Nay,
But all that he asked he gave him, a spear both strong and
new,
(Many such had, I ween, been his tribute from that plain
where they joustèd true.)
Then Gawain bade him ship him over, in a ferry they sought
the shore, 205

And the Turkowit, who high courage and the thought of
sure victory bore;
For so well against shame was he armèd that ill-deeds from
before him fled,
And his fame was so high accounted, that they made of the
sword their bed
Who would ride a joust against him—From their charger
they needs must fall,
And of those who had faced his valour, his spear had
o'erthrown them all. 210
And this was the rule of the hero, that by spear-thrust, and
no sword-blade,
Would he win to him fame in battle, or his honour be
prostrate laid.
And to him who should face his onslaught, and o'erthrow
him, the self-same day
Would he yield, nor defend him further, but would give him
his pledge straightway.

And thus heard Gawain the story from him who the pledge
did hold, 215
For his pledge Plippalinòt took there, when the tale of the
joust was told.
Did one fall while the other sat still, with goodwill of the
heroes twain
Did he take that which one must forfeit, and the other
methinks should gain,
Of the charger I speak, hence he led it, for he deemed they
enough had fought.

Who was victor, and who the vanquished, from the Burg
 were the tidings brought, 220
 For the women, they looked on the jousting, and many a
 conflict saw.
 Then he bade Gawain seat him firmly, and the charger he
 led to shore,
 And his shield and his spear he gave him—and the Turkowit
 swiftly came
 As one who his joust can measure, nor too high nor too low
 his aim.
 And Gawain turned his horse against him—of Monsalväsch,
 Gringuljet, 225
 And it answered unto the bridle, and his spear 'gainst the
 foe he set.

Now forward!—the joust be ridden—Here rideth King Lot's
 fair son,
 Undaunted his heart—Now know ye where the helm hath
 its fastening won?
 For there did his foeman strike him; but Gawain sought
 another aim,
 And swift thro' the helmet's visor with sure hand the spear-
 point came, 230
 And plain to the sight of all men was the fate of the joust
 that day,
 On his spear short and strong the helmet from his head
 Gawain bare away,
 And onward it rode, the helmet! But the knight on the grass
 lay low,
 Who was blossom and flower of all manhood till he met
 with such mighty foe.
 But now he in joust was vanquished, and the jewels from his
 helm were seen 235
 To vie with the dew on the herbage and the flowers on the
 meadow green.
 And Gawain, he rode back unto him, and his pledge did he
 take that day,
 And the boatman he claimed the charger, who was there
 should say him Nay?

Thou art joyful, and yet hast small reason,' spake the lady of
 Gawain's love,
 (As of old were her words of mocking,) 'Since wherever thy
 shield doth move 240
 The lion's paw doth follow—And thou thinkest fresh fame
 to gain

Since the ladies have looked on thy jousting—Well thou
 mayst in thy bliss remain,
 Since the Lit Merveil hath dealt gently and but little harm
 hath wrought!
 And yet is thy shield all splintered as if thou hadst bravely
 fought—
 Thou art doubtless too sorely wounded to yearn for a
 further fray? 245
 And such ill to the 'Goose' be reckoned, that I called thee
 but yesterday.
 So eager wert thou to vaunt thee, as a sieve hast thou
 piercèd thro'
 Thy shield, one would deem it riddled with the darts that
 toward thee flew.
 But *to-day* mayst thou well shun danger—If thy finger shall
 wounded be
 Ride hence to the maids of the castle, for well will they care
 for thee! 250
 Far other strife were *his* portion, to whom I a task would
 give,
 Did thine heart yet yearn for my favour, and thou wouldst in
 my service live!'

Quoth Gawain to the Duchess, 'Lady, tho' deep were my
 wounds I trow
 They ere this have found help and healing—If such help I
 from thee might know
 That thou, gracious, wouldst own my service, no peril would
 be so great, 255
 But I, for thy love and rewarding, the issue would gladly
 wait!'

Quoth she, 'Then shalt thou ride with me new honour
 perchance to gain!'
 Then rich in all joy and contentment was that valiant knight
 Gawain—
 And the Turkowit went with the boatman, and he bade him
 the tidings bear
 To the Burg, and there pray the maidens to have of the
 knight good care. 260

And his spear it was yet unsplintered, tho' both horses they
 spurred amain
 To joust, his right hand yet held it, and he bare it from off
 the plain.
 And many a maiden saw him, and wept as he rode away.
 Quoth Arnivé, 'Our joy and comfort hath chosen to him to-
 day

A joy for the eyes and a sorrow for the heart, yea, both
 flower and thorn, 265
 Alas! that he rides with the Duchess, since he leaveth us
 here forlorn.
 To the Perilous Ford he rideth, and his wounds sure shall
 work him ill!
 (Maids four hundred must weep for his going, yet new tasks
 would he fain fulfil.)

But yet tho' his wounds they pained him, his sorrow had
 taken flight
 When he looked upon Orgelusé, so fair was her mien and
 bright. 270
 Then she quoth, 'Thou shalt win me a garland of fresh
 leaves from off a tree,
 And I for the gift will praise thee—If thou doest this deed
 for me
 Thou shalt find in my love rewarding!' Then he quoth,
 'Wheresoe'er it stand,
 The tree that shall bring such blessing as reward unto this
 mine hand,
 If I not in vain bemoan me, but win hearing for this my grief,
 Then thy garland, tho' death it bring me, shall lack not a 275
 single leaf!'

And tho' many a blossom bloomed there yet their colour it
 was as naught
 To the colour of Orgelusé, and Gawain on her beauty
 thought
 Till it seemed him his grief of aforetime and his anguish had
 fled away—
 And thus with her guest did she journey a space from the
 Burg that day, 280
 And the road it was straight and easy, and it led thro' a
 forest fair,
 And Tamris I ween and Prisein were the names that the trees
 did bear,
 And the lord of the wood was Klingsor—Then Gawain the
 hero spake,
 'Say, where shall that garland blossom which the spell of my
 grief shalt break?'

(In sooth he had best o'erthrown her, as oft shall have
 chanced I trow 285
 To many a lovely lady.) Then she quoth, 'Thou shalt see the
 bough

Whose plucking shall win thee honour!' O'er the field ran a
 deep ravine,
 And so near did they ride to the chasm that the tree from
 afar was seen.
 Then she quoth, 'Now, Sir Knight, one guardeth that tree
 who my joy hath slain,
 If thou bring me a bough from off it, no hero such prize
 shall gain 290
 As from me shall be thy rewarding! And here must I hold my
 way,
 Nor further may I ride with thee; but make thou no more
 delay,
 God have thee in His safe keeping! Thine horse must thou
 straightway bring
 To the gulf, and with sure hand urge it o'er the Perilous Ford
 to spring.'

So still on the plain she held her, and on rode the gallant
 knight, 295
 And he hearkened the rush of water that had riven a path
 with might
 Thro' the plain—it was deep as a valley, and no man its
 waves might ford;
 Then Gawain spurred his steed towards it, and he sprung
 o'er the flood so broad,
 And yet but the charger's fore-feet might light on the
 further side,
 And they fell in the foaming torrent; and the lady in anguish
 cried, 300
 For swift and wide was the water; yet Gawain he had
 strength enow,
 Tho' heavy the weight of his armour, for he saw where there
 grew a bough
 That hung o'er the foaming torrent, and he grasped it, for
 life was dear,
 And he gained on the bank a footing, and he drew from the
 waves his spear.

Up and down the stream swam the charger, and Gawain to
 its aid would go, 305
 Yet so swift was the rush of the water he followed with pain
 its flow,
 For heavy I ween his harness, and his wounds they were
 deep and sore:
 Then he stretched out his spear as a whirlpool bare the
 charger towards the shore—

For the rain and the rush of the waters had broken a
 passage wide,
And the bank at the place was shelving, and the steed swept
 towards the side— 310
And he caught with the spear its bridle, and drew it towards
 the land
Till the hero at last might reach it and lay on the rein his
 hand.

And Gawain, the gallant hero, drew his horse out upon the
 plain,
And the steed shook itself in safety, nor the torrent as prize
 might gain
The shield—Then he girt his charger, and the shield on his
 arm he took: 315
And if one weepeth not for his sorrow methinks I the lack
 may brook,
Tho' in sooth was he in sore peril—For love he the venture
 dared,
For the fair face of Orgelúsé, his hand to the bough he
 bared.

And I wot, 'twas a gallant journey, and the tree it was
 guarded well,
He was *one*, were he *twain*, for that garland his life must the
 payment tell. 320
King Gramoflanz, he would guard it, yet Gawain he would
 pluck the bough.
The water, men called it Sabbins, and the tribute was harsh
 enow
That Gawain would fetch when both charger and knight did
 the wild waves breast.
Tho' the lady was fair, / had wooed not! To shun her
 methinks were best.

When Gawain erst the bough had broken and its leaves in
 his helm did wave, 325
Uprode a knight towards him, and his bearing was free and
 brave.
Nor too few were his years nor too many; and in this he his
 pride had shown,
What evil so e'er befell him he fought not with *one* alone,
Two or more must they be, his foemen! So high beat his
 gallant heart,
That whate'er *one* might do to harm him unscathed might
 he thence depart. 330
To Gawain this son of King Irôt a fair 'good-morrow' gave,

'Twas King Gramoflanz—"To the garland that doth there in
thine helmet wave
I yield not my claim!" thus quoth he, 'Sir Knight, were ye two
I trow,
Who here for high honour seeking had reft from my tree a
bough,
I had greeted ye not, but had fought ye, but since thou
alone shalt be, 335
Thou canst ride hence, for strife unequal I deem it a shame
to me!'

And Gawain, too, was loth to fight him, for no armour the
king did wear,
And naught but a yearling falcon he did on his white hand
bear.
(And the sister of Gawain gave it, Itonjé the maid was hight.)
His headgear in Sinzester fashioned was of peacock's
plumage bright, 340
And green as grass was the mantle of velvet that wrapped
him round,
And with ermine lined, and on each side it swept even unto
the ground.

None too tall yet strong was the charger on which the king
did ride,
From Denmark by land they brought it, or it came o'er the
waters wide.
And the monarch he rode unarmèd, nor even a sword
would bear. 345
Quoth King Gramoflanz, 'Thou hast foughten, if thy shield
may the truth declare,
For but little unharmed remaineth, and it seemeth sure to
me
That the "Lit Merveil" was thy portion, and this venture hath
fallen to thee!'

'Now hast thou withstood the peril that myself I were fain to
dare,
Had not Klingsor been ever friendly, and warfare with her
my share 350
Who in Love's strife is ever victor, since her beauty doth win
the day;
And she beareth fierce wrath against me, and in sooth hath
she cause away!
Eidegast have I slain, her husband, and with him I slew
heroes four;

Orgelusé herself, as my captive, I thence to my kingdom
 bore,
 And my crown and my land would I give her, yet what
 service my hand might yield, 355

Of all would she naught, but with hatred her heart 'gainst
 my pleading steeled.
 And a whole year long I held her, and a whole year long I
 prayed,
 Yet never she hearkened to me, and ever my love gainsaid.
 And thus from my heart I bemoan me, since I know that her
 love to thee
 She hath promised, since here I meet thee, and death
 wouldst thou bring to me. 360

If with *her* thou hadst hither ridden, perchance had I here
 been slain,
 Or perchance ye had died together—such guerdon thy love
 might gain!'

'And my heart other service seeketh, and mine aid lieth in
 thine hand,
 Since here thou hast been the victor thou art lord o'er this
 wonder-land;
 And if thou wilt show me kindness help me now a fair maid
 to win 365

For whose sake my heart knoweth sorrow, to King Lot is she
 near of kin,
 And no maiden of all earth's maidens hath wrought me
 such grief and pain!
 Her token I bear—I prithee, if thou seest that maid again
 Swear thou to her faithful service—I think me she means me
 fair, 370

And for her sake I fight, for her favour I many a peril dare;
 For since with true words Orgelusé her love hath denied to
 me,
 Wherever for fame I battled, whate'er might my portion be,
 Of joy or of grief, *she* hath caused it, Itonjé, for whom I fight,
 Yet alas! I have ne'er beheld her! Now do me this grace, Sir
 Knight,
 If aid thou art fain to give me, then take thou this golden
 ring, 375

And unto my lovely lady, I prithee, the token bring.
 Thou art free from strife, I fight not till thou bring with thee
 two or more.
 What honour were mine if I slew thee? I ever such strife
 forbore!'

'Yet in sooth I can well defend me, as a man should,' quoth
 knight Gawain,
 'Thou thinkest small fame will it bring thee if I here at thine
 hand be slain, 380
 But what honour shall I have won me by breaking this
 bough, I pray?
 For none will account it glory if I slay thee unarmed to-day!
 But yet will I do thy message—Give me here the finger-ring,
 And thy sorrow of heart, and thy service, I will to thy lady
 bring.'
 Then the king he thanked him freely—But Gawain he quoth
 in this wise, 385
 'Now tell me, Sir Knight, who may he be who doth conflict
 with me despise?'
 'An thou count it me not for dishonour,' quoth the king,
 'here my name be told,
 King Irôt he was my father, who was slain by King Lot of old.
 And King Gramoflanz do men call me, and my heart doth
 such valour know
 That never, for evil done me, will I fight with but one for foe,
 Saving one man alone, hight Gawain, of *him* have I heard 390
 such fame
 That to fight with him I am ready, and vengeance from him I
 claim.
 For his father he dealt with treason, in fair greeting my
 father slew,
 Good cause have I here for mine anger and the words that I
 speak are true.
 Now dead is King Lot, and Gawain, his fame o'er all knights
 stands high 395
 Of the Table Round, and I yearn still till the day of our strife
 draw nigh.'
 Then out quoth King Lot's son dauntless, 'Wouldst pleasure
 thy lady still,
 If indeed she shall be thy lady, and dost speak of her father
 ill?
 And reckonest to him false treason, and her brother art fain
 to slay!
 Then indeed must she be false maiden if she mourn not thy
 deeds away! 400
 If true daughter she were, and sister, for the twain would
 she surely speak,
 And forbid thee, methinks, thine hatred on kinsmen so near
 to wreak.

If so be that thy true love's father hath broken his troth, yet
 thou
 Shouldst, as kinsman, avenge the evil that men spake of the
 dead, I trow!
 His *son* will not fear to do so, and little methinks he'll care 405
 If small aid in his need he findeth from the love of his sister
 fair.
 He, himself, will be pledge for his father, and his sin be upon
my head,
 For Sir King, I who speak am Gawain, and thou warrest not
 with the dead!
 But I, from such shame to free him, what honour be mine or
 fame,
 In strife will I give to the scourging ere thou slander my
 father's name! 410

Quoth the king, 'Art thou he whom I hated with a hatred as
 yet unstilled?
 For alike with both joy and sorrow thy valour my soul hath
 filled.
 And *one* thing in thee doth please me, that at last I may
 fight with thee,
 And I rede thee to wit that great honour in this hast thou
 won from me,
 Since I vowed but to fight with thee only—And our fame
 shall wax great alway, 415
 If many a lovely lady we bring to behold the fray.
 For I can bring fifteen hundred, and thou art of a fair host
 king
 At Château Merveil; and on thy side thine uncle can others
 bring
 From the land that he rules, King Arthur, and Löver its name
 shall be,
 And the city is Bems by the Korka, as well shall be known to
 thee. 420
 There lieth he now with his vassals, and hither can make his
 way,
 In eight days, with great joy; so I bid thee to meet me the
 sixteenth day,
 When I come, for my wrong's avenging, to loflanz upon the
 plain,
 And the pay for this garland's plucking I there from thine
 hand shall gain!

Then King Gramoflanz prayed of Gawain to ride unto
 Rosche Sabbin, 425

'For nearer methinks than the city no way o'er the flood
thou'lt win!
But out quoth the gallant Gawain, 'I will back e'en as erst I
came,
But in all else thy will I'll follow.' Then they sware them by
their fair fame
That with many a knight and lady at loflanz they'd meet for
strife
On the chosen day, and alone there would battle for death
or life. 430

And on this wise Gawain he parted for awhile from the
noble knight,
And joyful he turned his bridle, and the bough decked his
helm so bright.
And he checked not his steed, but spurred it to the edge of
the gulf once more,
Nor Gringuljet missed his footing, but he sprang well the
chasm o'er,
And he fell not again, the hero—Then the lady she turned
her rein 435
As he sprang to the ground, and tightened the girths of his
steed again,
And swiftly to give him welcome, I ween, she to earth did
spring,
And low at his feet she cast her, and she spake, 'I such need
did bring
Upon thee, Sir Knight, as I wot well was more than thy worth
might ask,
And yet have I felt such sorrow, for the sorrow of this thy
task, 440
And the service that thou hast done me, as I deem she
alone doth know
Who loveth in truth, and, faithful, doth weep o'er her lover's
woe!

Then he quoth, 'Is this truth, and thy greeting be not
falsehood in friendly guise,
Then *thyself* dost thou honour, Lady! For in this shall I be so
wise
That I know a knight's shield claimeth honour, and thou
didst against knighthood sin, 445
For so high doth it stand that from no man methinks doth
he mocking win,
Who as true knight hath ever borne him—This, Lady, I needs
must say,

Whoever had looked upon me had known me for knight
 alway,
 Yet knighthood thou wouldst deny me when first thou my
 face didst see,
 But henceforth that may rest—Take this garland I won at thy
 will for thee, 450
 But I bid thee henceforth beware thee that never thy beauty
 bright
 Shall again in such wise mislead thee to dishonour a gallant
 knight,
 For I wot, ere such scorn and mocking again at thine hand I
 bore,
 Thy love thou shouldst give to another, I would ask for it
 nevermore!

Then she spake as she wept full sorely, that lady so sweet
 and fair, 455
 'Sir Knight, did I tell unto thee the woe that my heart doth
 bear,
 Thou wouldst own that full sore my sorrow—if I shall
 discourteous be,
 Then he whom I wrong may forgive me of true heart with
 forgiveness free.
 For of such joy no man can rob me as the joy that I lost
 awhile
 In that knight of all knights the bravest, Eidegast, who knew
 naught of guile! 460
 So brave and so fair my true love, his fame was as sunlight's
 ray,
 And for honour he strove so truly that all others, in this his
 day,
 Both here and afar, born of woman, they owned that his
 praise stood high
 O'er that of all men, and no glory might e'er with his glory
 vie.
 A fountain, for aye upspringing, of virtue, his gallant youth, 465
 And falsehood ne'er shamed his honour nor darkened the
 light of truth.
 Into light came he forth from the darkness, and his honour
 aloft he bore,
 That none who spake word of treason might reach to it
 evermore.
 From the root in a true heart planted it waxed and it spread
 again,
 Till he rose o'er all men as Saturn doth high o'er the planets
 reign. 470

And true as the one-horned marvel, since the truth I am fain
to tell,
The knight of my love and desiring,—for whose fate maids
may weep full well,
Thro' its virtue I ween it dieth—And I, I was as his heart,
And my body was he! Ah! woe is me, that I must from such
true love part!
And King Gramoflanz, *he* slew him, the knight thou but now
didst see, 475
And the bough thou hast brought unto me from the tree of
his ward shall be.'

'Sir Knight, did I ill-entreat thee, I did it for this alone,
I would prove if thine heart were steadfast, and my love
might to thee atone.
I know well my words did wound thee, yet they were but to
prove thee meant,
And I pray thee, of this thy goodness, be thine anger with
pity blent, 480
And forgive me the ill I did thee. I have found thee both
brave and true,
As gold that is tried in the furnace shineth forth from the
flame anew,
So, methinks, doth it shine, thy courage. He, for whose harm
I brought thee here,
As I thought me afore, and I think still, his valour hath cost
me dear.'

Quoth Gawain, 'If awhile death spare me, such lesson I'll
read the king 485
As shall put to his pride an ending, and his life in sore peril
bring.
My faith as a knight have I pledged him, hereafter, a little
space,
To meet him in knightly combat, nor our manhood shall we
disgrace.
And here I forgive thee, Lady, and if thou wilt not disdain
My counsel so rough, I'll tell thee wherewith thou mayst
honour gain, 490
What shall 'seem thee well as a woman, nor in aught shall
unfitting be,
Here we twain are alone, I pray thee show favour and grace
to me!'
But she quoth, 'In an arm thus mail-clad but seldom I
warmly lay;
Yet would I not strive against thee, thou shalt on a fitting
day

Win rewarding for this thy service—Thy sorrow will I
 bemoan, 495
 Till thou of thy wounds art healèd and all thought of thine ill
 be flown;
 To Château Merveil I'll ride with thee.' 'Now waxeth my joy
 indeed!'

Quoth the hero, of love desirous, and he lifted her on her
 steed,
 And close clung his arm around her: 'twas more than she
 deemed him worth
 When first by the spring she saw him, and mocked him with
 bitter mirth. 500

Then joyful Gawain he rode hence; yet the lady she wept
 alway,
 And he mourned with her woe, and he prayed her the cause
 of her grief to say,
 And in God's Name to cease from weeping! Then she quoth,
 'I must mourn, Sir Knight,
 Because of the hand that slew him, the knight of my love, in
 fight;
 For that deed to my heart brought sorrow, tho' I naught but
 delight had known 505
 When Eidegast's love rejoiced me; yet was I not so
 o'erthrown
 But since then I might seek his mischief, whatever the cost
 might be,
 And many fierce jousts have been ridden that were aimed at
 his life by me.
 And here, methinks, canst thou aid me, and avenge me on
 him, my foe,
 And repay me for this sore sorrow that my heart doth for
 ever know.' 510

'For the winning his death I took gladly the service he
 proffered me,
 A king, who of earthly wishes the master and lord should
 be,
 Sir Knight, he was named Anfortas—As his love-pledge to
 me he sent
 That which standeth without thy portals, from Tabronit it
 came, that tent,
 And great I ween is its value—But alas! for that gallant king, 515
 Such reward did he win in my service as all joy to an end
 must bring
 Where fain I my love had given, there must I fresh sorrow
 know,

For bitter indeed was his guerdon!—As great, or e'en
 greater, woe
 Than the death of Eidegast brought me, was my lot thro'
 Anfortas' fate.
 Now say, how shall I, of all women most wretched, in this
 estate, 520
 If my *heart* yet be true, be other than of senses and mind
 distraught,
 Yea, at times have I been beside me when I on Anfortas
 thought;
 After Eidegast did I choose him, my avenger and love to be
 —
 Now hearken and hear how Klingsor won that booth thou
 erewhile didst see:
 When it fell so the brave Anfortas, who this token had sent
 to me, 525
 Was of love and of joy forsaken, then I feared lest I shamed
 should be;
 For Klingsor, such power he wieldeth by the force of his
 magic spell,
 That maiden or man to his purpose can he force as shall
 please him well.
 All gallant folk that he seeth, unharmed may they ne'er go
 free—
 Thus my riches to him I proffered, if so be he sware peace
 with me. 530
 And he that should brave the venture, and he that should
 win the prize,
 To *him* I my love should offer; but if so be that in his eyes
 My love were a thing unworthy, the booth should be mine
 again.
 But now hast thou done my bidding, and it falleth unto us
 twain;
 And 'twas sworn in the ears of many, for thereby I hoped to
 lure 535
 My foe (yet in this I failèd) for the strife he might ne'er
 endure.'

'Now courtly and wise is Klingsor; for his honour it pleased
 him well
 That many a deed of knighthood, at my will, in his land
 befell,
 By the hand of my valiant servants, with many a thrust and
 blow.
 All the week, every day as it passes, and the weeks into
 years do grow, 540

My troops in their changing order beset him by night and
 day,
 For at great cost my snares so cunning for Gramoflanz did I
 lay.
 And many have striven with him, yet must him as victor
 own;
 Yet I still for his life am thirsting, and at last shall he be
 o'erthrown.
 And some were too rich for my payment, and but for my
 love would serve, 545
 Then I bid them for *that* do me service, but reward did they
 ne'er deserve.'

'And never a man beheld me but his service I swiftly won,
 Save *one*, and he bare red armour; to my folk he much ill
 had done,
 For hither he rode from Logrois, and he there did my
 knights o'erthrow
 In such wise that they fell before him, and it pleased me but
 ill I trow. 550
 And, between Logrois and thy meadow, five knights they
 followed fair,
 And he cast them to earth, and their chargers the boatman
 from thence must bear.
 Then as he my knights had vanquished, I myself did the
 hero pray
 For my love and my land to serve me, but naught would
 that red knight say,
 Save he had a wife who was fairer, and should aye to his
 heart be dear. 555
 Then wroth was I at his answer, and the name of his wife
 would hear:
 "Wouldst thou know the name of my chosen?—She
 reigneth at Pelrapär,
 And *Parzival* all men call me, and naught for thy love I care,
 Other sorrow the Grail doth give me!" Then in anger he
 rode away;
 Now, I prithee, here give me counsel, if evil I did that day, 560
 When I, by heart-sorrow driven, proffered love to that
 gallant knight?
 Should I count my fair fame dishonoured?' Quoth Gawain to
 that lady bright,
 'A gallant knight is he, truly, who thus thy desire hath
 crossed,
 Had he to thy bidding hearkened no fame thou thro' him
 hadst lost!'

Then Gawain, the courteous hero, and the lady his rein
 beside, 565
 Gazed lovingly on each other—and so far on their way did
 ride,
 That they drew anear to the castle, where the venture
 erewhile befell,
 And they who looked forth might see them—'Now, Lady,
 'twould please me well
 If thou do this thing that I ask thee, from all men my name
 withhold,
 Which the knight who once stole my charger aloud in thine
 hearing told. 570
 But do this that I say, if any shall pray thee to tell my name,
 Say, "I know not the name of my true knight, none spake it
 when here he came."
 Then she quoth, 'I will keep it secret, since thou wouldst not
 'twere spoken here.'
 And the knight and the lovely lady they rode to the Burg
 anear.

Now the knights they had heard of the coming of one who,
 with valiant hand, 575
 Faced the venture, and slew the lion, and the Turkowit dared
 withstand,
 Yea, and had in fair joust o'erthrown him; and now on the
 flowery plain,
 The meadow of strife, rode the hero, and they looked on
 the knight Gawain,
 From the battlements could they see him; and the forces
 together draw;
 And with ringing blast of trumpet they pass thro' the castle
 door, 580
 And rich banners on high were tossing, and their steeds o'er
 the plain they flew,
 And he deemed that they came for battle, so swift they
 towards him drew.
 As Gawain from afar might see them to the lady he spake
 again,
 'Do they come here with thought of battle?' But she quoth,
 'They are Klingsor's men,
 From afar have they seen thy coming, and they ride their
 new lord to greet, 585
 With joy would they bid thee welcome! Refuse not this
 honour meet,
 Since 'tis gladness that doth constrain them.' There, too, in a
 vessel fair

Plippalinòt came to meet them, and his daughter with him
did bear;
And swift o'er the flowery meadow the maiden towards
them stept,
And joyful she hailed the hero for whom she aforesime
wept. 590

Then Gawain gave her courteous greeting, and stirrup and
foot she kissed,
And she turned her to Orgelusé, nor the lady her welcome
missed.
And she prayed him to 'light from his charger the while that
she held the rein,
And then to the ship she led them, the lady and knight
Gawain;
And there, in the place of honour, a carpet and cushions lay,
And the Duchess by Gawain sat her, as the maiden the twain
did pray. 595

And her office the maid forgat not, she disarmèd the hero
there,
And in sooth it is said that the mantle she did for his robing
bear
Which had served him that night for cover, when he did
'neath her roof-tree lie,
And now was the hour for its wearing and it wrapped him
right royally. 600
So clad was Gawain in her mantle, and his own robe
beneath he wore,
And the harness he laid from off him on one side the
maiden bore.

And now as they sat together for the first time the lady fair
Might look on his face and know him—Then unto the twain
they bare
Two game-birds that well were roasted, and with them a
flask of wine, 605
And two cakes did the maiden bring them on a cloth that
was white and fine—
The birds were the prey of the falcon—but Gawain and his
lady bright
Must seek water themselves, if to wash them ere they ate
here should seem them right,
And this did the twain; and joyful was the knight that he
now might eat
With her, for whose sake he would suffer joy, or sorrow, as
seemed her meet. 610

And oft as the cup she gave him that her sweet lips had
touched, anew
Sprang his joy that he thus drank with her, and his sorrow
behind him drew,
And it halted nor might o'ertake him, and his gladness on
swift foot sped,
So fair was her mouth and so rosy her lips that from grief he
fled.

And no longer his wounds they pained him—Then the
ladies from out the tower 615
They looked on the feast, and below them there rode in the
self-same hour,
On the further side of the river, brave knights who would
show their skill.
And the boatman alike and his daughter Gawain thanked
with right goodwill,
Ere yet he might ferry them over, and the lady spake with
him there,
For the food and the drink they had brought them—Then
out quoth the lady fair, 620
'Now what hath that knight befallen, who yestreen, ere I
rode away,
Was o'erthrown in a joust by another? Was he slain, or doth
live alway?'

Quoth the boatman, 'He liveth, Lady, and he spake but this
day with me,
He was given to me for his charger: if thy will be to set him
free,
In his stead will I have the "swallow" that Queen Sekundillé
sent 625
To Anfortas, be thine the hero, with the harp were I well
content!'

'Both the harp and the other riches that the booth may
within it hold,'
Quoth the lady, 'are his who sits here, he may give them, or
aye withhold,
Let him do as he will! If he love me, Lischois he methinks will
loose,
Nor freedom unto the other, my prince, will he here refuse. 630
Florand of Itolac is he, of my night-watch was he the chief,
And as he as Turkowit served me, so his sorrow shall be my
grief!'

Quoth Gawain to his lovely lady, 'Ere it weareth to eventide

Thou shalt look on the twain in freedom!' Then they came
 to the further side,
 And the Duchess, so fair to look on, he lifted upon her
 steed, 635
 And many a noble horseman were waiting them on the
 mead,
 And greeting fair they gave them; and they turned to the
 Burg again,
 And joyful they rode around them and skilful they drew the
 rein,
 And the Buhurd was fair to look on—What more shall I tell
 ye here?
 Gawain, and his lovely lady, at the castle they found good
 cheer, 640
 In such wise did the ladies greet them at Château Merveil
 that day,
 And good fortune had here befallen that such bliss should
 be his alway.
 Then Arnivé she straightway led him to a chamber, and they
 who knew
 Of such lore his hurts they tended, and they bound up his
 wounds anew.

Quoth Gawain unto Arnivé, 'Give me, Lady, a messenger!' 645
 Then straightway she sent a maiden, and the maid brought
 again with her
 A footman, both true and manly, as behovèd him well to be.
 And an oath did he swear unto Gawain, to serve him right
 faithfully,
 And, were it for joy or for sorrow, his errand to secret hold
 From all men, both there and elsewhere, till he came where
 it might be told. 650
 Then they brought to him ink and parchment, and Gawain,
 King Lot's fair son,
 Wrote clear with his hand the message, and thus did the
 writing run—
 To them who abode in Löver's fair country, King Arthur
 brave
 And his queen, with a faith unstainèd, true service and good
 he gave;
 And he said, had he fame deservèd, and they would not his
 praise were slain, 655
 They should come to his aid in his trouble, and show to him
 truth again,
 And with following of knights and ladies to loflanz their way
 should wend,

Where he came himself, and his honour would in mortal
 strife defend.
 And further, this thing he told them, the foemen on either
 side
 Had pledged themselves in all honour and pomp to the
 field to ride; 660
 And therefore he, Gawain, prayed them, both lady alike and
 knight,
 If they bare goodwill towards him, with their king to behold
 the fight.
 For so should it be to their honour. He commended him to
 them all
 Who were of his service worthy, for the strife that should
 there befall!—

No seal did he put to the letter, yet token enough it bare 665
 Of him who should be the writer. Quoth Gawain to the
 footman there,
 'No longer shalt thou delay thee, the king and the queen
 abide
 In the city of Bems by the Korka; seek the queen in the
 morning-tide
 And the thing she shall bid thee, do thou. But this shalt thou
 secret hold,
 That I in this land am master shall unto no ear be told. 670
 Nor of this thing be thou forgetful, that thou shalt my
 servant be,
 And do thou, without delaying, the errand I give to thee!'

Then the footman from thence he gat him, and Arrivé she
 softly went,
 And she asked of him what was his errand? and whither his
 road was bent?
 And he quoth, 'Nay, I may not tell thee, for an oath have I
 sworn to-day, 675
 God keep thee, for I must ride hence!' To the army he took
 his way.

BOOK XIII KLINGSOR

ARGUMENT


Book XIII. tells of the goodly feast that was holden in Château Merveil, and of the wedding of Gawain and Orgelusé. How Gawain's squire did his bidding; and how King Arthur and Queen Guinevere pledged themselves to ride to Ioflanz to behold the conflict between Gawain and Gramoflanz.

How Gawain fared in Château Merveil; and how Arnivé told him the history of Klingsor, and of his unlawful love.

Of the coming of King Arthur and his host; how they fought before Logrois; and came with great pomp to the plain of Ioflanz.

How Gawain and the dwellers in Château Merveil followed to the plain; of the goodly camp prepared for them; of the wonder of the court and Kay's jealousy; and how the four queens were made known to King Arthur.

BOOK XIII KLINGSOR

Then wrathful, I ween, was Arnivé that the messenger said
her Nay,
told her aught of his errand, nor whither his journey
lay.
In this wise she quoth to the porter, 'Now, whatever
the hour may be,
Be it day, be it night, when he cometh, send tidings
thereof to me,
In secret would I speak with him; thou art wise, as full well I
know!' 5
Yet wroth was she still with the footman—Then she would
to the Duchess go,
And win from her lips the answer, but ready was she of wit,
And the name that he bare, her hero, her mouth spake no
word of it.
Gawain he would have her silent, in her hearing his prayer
found grace,
And she spake not, nor might Arnivé learn aught of his
name and race. 10
Then the sound as of many trumpets thro' the hall of the
palace rang,

And joyful the blasts—Then rich carpets around on each
 wall they hang,
 And no foot but fell on a carpet would it tread on the palace
 floor,
 A poor man had surely feared him for the riches that there
 he saw.
 And many a couch they stood there, around the stately hall, 15
 Soft were they as down, and rich cushions they laid upon
 each and all.

But Gawain with his toil was wearied, and he slept tho' the
 sun was high,
 And his wounds, with such skill they bound them, tho' his
 love should beside him lie,
 And he in his arms should hold her, he had gotten no hurt I
 ween.
 And sounder his daylight's slumber than his sleep of the
 night had been 20
 When his love had so sorely vexed him; he slept till the
 vesper bell,
 Yet still in his sleep he battled for the lady he loved so well.
 Then rich garments of fair silk fashioned, and heavy with
 broidered gold,
 Did the chamberlain bear unto him—Then out quoth the
 hero bold,
 'More robes such as these, and as costly, I ween, shalt thou
 hither bear, 25
 For Gowerzein's Duke shall need them, and Florand, the
 hero fair,
 For in many a land hath he battled, and hath won for him
 glory's meed—
 Now see that thou make them ready, and do my behest
 with speed!'

Then he prayed, by a squire, the boatman send hither the
 captive knight,
 And Lischois did he send at his bidding by the hand of his
 daughter bright. 30
 And the maiden Bené brought him for the love that she
 bare Gawain,
 And the good that he vowed to her father that morn when
 she wept amain,
 And the knight he left her weeping, and rode on his
 toilsome way—
 And the highest prize of his manhood it fell to his lot that
 day.

The Turkowit too had come there, and Gawain the twain did
 greet 35
 In all friendship, and then he prayed them beside him to
 take their seat
 Till their robes should be brought unto them; and costly
 they needs must be,
 For never was fairer raiment than the garb of those heroes
 three.
 For one lived of yore named Sarant, (a city doth bear his
 name,)

From out of the land of Triande in the days that are gone he
 came. 40
 In the land of Queen Sekundillé stood a city so great and
 fair,
 (E'en Nineveh or Akration with its glories might scarce
 compare,)

And the city, men called it Thasmé; there Sarant won meed
 of fame,
 Since he wove there a silk with cunning, *Saranthasmé*
 should be its name.

Think ye it was fair to look on? How might it be otherwise, 45
 For much gold must he give for the payment who would
 win to him such a prize.

Such robes ware these two and Gawain: then they gat them
 unto the hall,
 And on one side the knights they sat them, on the other the
 ladies all,
 And he who a woman's beauty had wisdom to judge aright
 Must reckon Gawain's fair lady the first of these ladies
 bright. 50
 And the host and his guests so gallant they gazed on her
 radiant glow,
 As they stood before Orgelusé; and her knights she again
 must know,
 And her Turkowit, gallant Florand, and Lischois, the young
 and fair,
 Were set free, without let or hindrance, for the love that
 Gawain must bear

To the lovely lady of Logrois—Then their victor they thanked
 amain, 55
 Who was dull to all ill, yet had wisdom in all that might true
 love gain.
 As the captives thus free were spoken, Gawain the four
 queens must see
 As they stood by the side of the Duchess, and he spake in
 his courtesy,

And he bade the two knights go nearer, and with kiss greet
those ladies bright,
The three younger queens, and joyful, I ween, was each
gallant knight. 60
And there was the maiden Bené, with Gawain had she
sought the hall,
And I think me a joyful welcome she found there from each
and all.

Then the host would no longer stand there, and the twain
did he pray to sit
By the maidens, as best should please them, and it grievèd
them not one whit,
Such counsel it grieveth no man! Then the gallant Gawain
spake, 65
'Now which of these maids is Itonjé? Beside her my seat I'd
take!'

Thus in secret he spake to Bené, and she showed him the
maiden fair,
'She, with eyes so clear and shining, and red lips, and dusky
hair!
Wouldst thou speak with the maid in secret? Then thy words
be wise and few.'
Thus quoth Bené the wise in counsel, who Itonjé's love-tale
knew, 70
And knew that King Gramoflanz loved her, and did service
for her heart's love,
And his faith as a knight unstainèd would fain to the maiden
prove.

Gawain sat him by the maiden, (as I heard so the tale I tell,
And soft was his speech and gentle, and his words they
beseemed him well.
And tho' few were the years of Itonjé yet great was her
courtesy, 75
And well did she know how to bear her as a maiden of high
degree.
And this question he asked the maiden, if a lover she aye
had known?
And with wisdom she made him answer, 'To whom might
my love be shown,
For ne'er to a man have I spoken, since the day I first saw
the light,
Save the words which thou now dost hearken as I speak
unto thee, Sir Knight!' 80

'Yet mayst thou have heard the rumour of one who hath
 bravely fought,
 And striven for prize of knighthood, and with dauntless
 heart hath sought
 Fair service for fair rewarding?' In such wise spake the knight
 Gawain;
 But the maiden she quoth, 'Nay, no hero hath striven *my*
 love to gain;
 Yon lady, the Duchess of Logrois, hath many a gallant knight
 Who serve her for love, or for payment, and hither they
 come to fight, 85
 And we of their jousts are witness, yet none shall have come
 so nigh
 As *thou* hast, Sir Knight, and this conflict thy glory hath
 raised on high!'

Then he quoth to the lovely maiden, 'Whose pathway shall
 she have crossed
 With many a chosen hero? Say, who hath her favour lost?' 90
 'That, Sir Knight, hath the valiant monarch, King Gramoflanz,
 he who bore
 From aforetime the crown of honour; so men say, and /
 know no more!'

Quoth Gawain, 'Thou shalt know more of him, since he
 draweth the prize anear,
 And with steadfast heart doth he seek it; from his lips I this
 tale did hear—
 Of true heart would he do thee service, if such service shall
 be thy will, 95
 And help at thine hand he seeketh that thy love may his
 torment still.
 It is well that a king face peril, if his lady shall be a queen,
 And *thou* art the maid whom he loveth, if King Lot hath thy
 father been;
 Thou art she for whom his heart weepeth, if thy name shall
 ltonjé be,
 And sorrow of heart dost thou give him—By my mouth
 would he plead with thee.' 100

'Now if thou be true and faithful of his woe wilt thou make
 an end,
 And *both* would I serve right gladly—This ring he to thee
 doth send,
 I prithee to take it, Lady! In sooth do I mean thee well,
 And if thou wilt trust unto me no word of the tale I'll tell!'

Then crimson she blushed, the maiden, and e'en as her lips
 were red 105
 So red grew her cheek, yet the blushes as they came so they
 swiftly sped.
 And she stretched forth her hand so shyly toward the little
 ring of gold,
 For e'en at a glance she knew it, and her hand did the token
 hold.

Then she spake, 'Now, Sir Knight, I see well, if I freely to thee
 may speak,
 That thou comest from him, whom, desiring, my heart doth
 for ever seek. 110
 My words shalt thou still hold secret, as courtesy biddeth
 thee,
 This ring have I seen aforetime, for it oft hath been sent to
 me;
 From the hand of the king it cometh, and I know it for token
 true,
 From my hand did he first receive it. What sorrow so e'er he
 knew,
 Of that do I hold me guiltless; what he asked, that in
 thought I gave, 115
 Had we met I had ne'er withholden the boon he from me
 did crave.'

'This day have I kissed Orgelusé, who thinketh his death to
 win,
 I ween 'twas the kiss of Judas which all men count to him
 for sin!
 And honour and faith forsook me, when the Turkowit, brave
 Florand,
 And Gowerzein's Duke, fair Liscois, I kissed here at thy
 command. 120
 From my heart I might not forgive them, for my true love
 they hate away—
 But speak thou no word to my mother.' Thus the maiden
 Gawain did pray.

'Sir Knight, it was *thou* didst pray me to take from their lips
 this kiss,
 Tho' no will for forgiveness had I, and my heart sickeneth
 sore for this!
 If joy shall be e'er our portion, our help in thine hand shall
 be, 125
 And I know well, above all women, the king he desireth me;

And his will shall he have, for I love him o'er all men on
earth that live—
God send thee good help and good counsel, that joy thou
to us mayst give!

Quoth Gawain, 'How may that be, Lady? He beareth thee in
his heart,
And in thine dost thou ever hold him, and yet are ye twain
apart. 130

If I knew how to give thee counsel that ye twain might in
gladness dwell,
Of a sooth no pains would I spare me such rede unto thee
to tell.'

Then she quoth, 'Yet in truth shalt thou rule us, myself, and
my gallant king,
And naught but thy help and God's blessing our love to its
goal may bring,
So that I, poor homeless maiden, his sorrow may put away, 135
For his joy shall be set upon me! If so be I from truth ne'er
stray,

What other can I desire here, or for what shall my true heart
yearn,
Save to give him the love he asketh, and his grief unto
gladness turn?'

Gawain, he saw well that the maiden would fain to her love
belong,
Yet her hatred towards the Duchess as aforetime was fierce
and strong; 140

Thus hatred and love did she bear here, and wrong had he
done the maid
Who thus, of a true heart simply, her plaint had before him
laid.

Since never a word had he told her how one mother had
borne them both,
And King Lot he had been their father—Then he answered
her, little loth,

He would do what he might to aid her, and in secret with
gracious word 145
She thanked him who brought her comfort, and her sorrow
with kindness heard.

Now the hour it was come, and they brought there for the
tables fair linen white,
And bread did they bear to the palace unto many a lady
bright,

And there might ye see a severance, for the knights they sat
by one wall,
Apart from the maids; and their places Gawain gave to each
and all. 150
And the Turkowit sat beside him, and Lischois ate with
Sangivé,
(And that fair queen was Gawain's mother,) and Orgelusé by
Arnivé.
And Gawain set his lovely sister by his side at that festal
board,
And all did as he bade them gladly, for he was that castle's
lord.

My skill not the half doth tell me, no such master-cook am I,
That I know the name of the viands they offered them
courteously; 155
The host, and each one of the ladies, their servers were
maidens fair,
To the knights who sat over against them many squires did
their portion bear.
For this was the seemly custom, that no squire, in his
serving haste,
Brushed roughly against a maiden, but ever apart they
paced— 160
And whether 'twas wine, or 'twas viands, they offered unto
the guests,
In naught was their courtesy harmèd, for so did men deem
it best.

And a feast they to-day must look on such as no man
before had seen,
Since vanquished by Klingsor's magic both lady and knight
had been.
Unknown were they yet to each other, tho' one portal it
shut them in, 165
And never a man and a maiden might speech of each other
win;
And a good thing Gawain he thought it that this folk should
each other meet,
And much he rejoiced in their gladness, and his own lot it
seemed him sweet;
Yet ever he looked in secret on his lady and love so fair,
And his heart it waxed hot within him, and love's anguish he
needs must bear. 170

But the day drew near to its closing, and faint waxed the
waning light,

And fair thro' the clouds of heaven gleamed the messengers
 of the night,
 Many stars so bright and golden, who speed on their silent
 way
 When the night would seek for shelter in the realm of
 departing day;
 And after her standard-bearers, with her host doth she
 swiftly tread— 175
 Now many a fair crown golden in the palace hung high
 o'erhead,
 And with tapers they all were lighted around the stately hall,
 And they bare unto every table a host of tapers tall;
 And yet the story telleth that the Duchess she was so fair,
 That ne'er was it night in her presence tho' never a torch
 were there! 180
 For her glance was so bright and radiant it brought of itself
 the day;
 And this tale of fair Orgelusé full oft have I heard men say.
 He had spoken, methinks, untruly who said that he e'er had
 seen
 A host so rich and joyous, and joyous his guests, I ween;
 And ever with eager gladness each knight and each gentle
 maid 185
 Looked well on each other's faces, nor shrank from the
 glance afraid.
 If friendship they here desired, or each other would better
 know,
 Then naught of their joy would I grudge them, methinks it
 were better so!

 Tho' I wot well there none was a glutton, yet still had they
 ate their fill,
 And they bare on one side the tables, and Gawain asked,
 with right goodwill, 190
 If here there should be a fiddler? and many a gallant squire
 Was skilled on the strings, and gladly would play at the
 host's desire,
 Yet were they not all too skilful, and the dances were old
 alway,
 Not new, as in fair Thuringia the dances they know to-day.

 Then they thanked their host who, joyful, would give to their
 joy its vent, 195
 And many a lovely lady in his presence danced well content,
 For goodly their dance to look on, and their ranks, with
 many a pair

Of knight and lady, mingled, and grief fled from their faces
 fair.
 And oft 'twixt two gentle maidens might be seen a noble
 knight,
 And they who looked well upon them in their faces might
 read delight. 200
 And whatever knight bethought him, and would of his lady
 pray
 Reward, if for love he served her, none said to his pleading
 Nay.
 Thus they who were poor in sorrow, and rich in joy's fairest
 dower,
 With sweet words, by sweet lips spoken, made gladsome
 the passing hour.

Gawain and the Queen Arnivé, and Sangivé, the dance so
 fleet 205
 Would look on in peace, for they danced not; then the
 Duchess she took her seat
 By the side of Gawain, and her white hand he held in his
 own a while,
 And they spake of this thing and the other, with many a
 glance and smile;
 He rejoiced that she thus had sought him, and his grief it
 waxed small and faint,
 And his joy it grew strong and mighty, nor vexed him with
 sorrow's plaint. 210
 And great was the joy of the lady o'er the dance, and the
 merry feast,
 Yet less was the sorrow of Gawain, and his joy o'er her joy
 increased.

Then spake the old Queen Arnivé, 'Sir Knight, now methinks
 'twere best
 That thou get thee to bed, for sorely, I ween, shall thy
 wounds need rest
 Has the Duchess perchance bethought her to care for thy
 couch this night, 215
 And tend thee herself, with such counsel and deed as shall
 seem her right?'
 Quoth Gawain, 'That thyself mayst ask her; I will do as shall
 please ye twain!'
 Then the Duchess she spake in answer, 'He shall in my
 charge remain.
 Let this folk to their couch betake them, I will tend in such
 sort his rest
 That never a loving lady dealt better by gallant guest; 220

And the other twain, my princes, in the care of the knights
shall be,
Florand, and the Duke of Gowerzein, for so seemeth it good
to me.'

In short space the dance was ended, and the maidens in
beauty bright
Sat here and there, and between them sat many a gallant
knight;
And joy took her revenge on sorrow, and he who so sweetly
spake 225
Words of love, from his gentle lady must a gracious answer
take.

Then the host must they hear, as he bade them the cup to
the hall to bear,
And the wooers bemoaned his bidding; yet the host he
wooed with them here,
And he bare of his love the burden, and the sitting he
deemed too long,
For his heart by love's power was tortured with anguish so
fierce and strong. 230

And they drank the night-drink, and sadly to each other
they bade goodnight,
And the squires they must bear before them full many a
taper bright.
And the two gallant guests did Gawain commend to them
each and all,
And glad were the knights, and the heroes they led forth
from out the hall.

And the Duchess, with gracious kindness, wished fair rest to
the princes twain, 235
And then to their sleeping chambers forth wended the
maiden train,
And as their fair breeding bade them, at the parting they
curtseyed low:
Queen Sangivé and her fair daughters they too to their rest
would go.

Then Bené, the maid, and Arnivé, they wrought with a
willing hand
That the host he might sleep in comfort, nor the Duchess
aside did stand, 240
But she aided the twain, and Gawain was led of the helpers
three
To a chamber fair where his slumber that even should joyful
be.

Two couches alone did he see there, but no man to me hath
told
Of their decking, for other matters, I ween, doth this story
hold.

Quoth Arnivé unto the Duchess, 'Now, Lady, think thou how
best 245

This knight whom thou broughtest hither, shall beneath this
roof-tree rest,

If aid at thine hand he craveth, to grant it shall honour thee;
No more would I say, save this only, his wounds they shall
bandaged be

With such skill he might bear his armour—But if he bemoan
his grief

Then methinks it were good and fitting that thou bring to
his woe relief. 250

If thou wakest anew his courage, then we all in his gladness
share—

Now think thou no ill of my counsel, but have for thy knight
good care!

Then the Queen Arnivé left them, (yet leave had she craved
before,)

And Bené she bare the taper, and Gawain he made fast the
door.

If the twain to their love gave hearing? The tale how should
I withhold, 255

I would speak, were it not unseemly that love's secrets
aloud be told,

For courtesy doth forbid it; and he who would tell the tale
Worketh ill to himself, o'er love's dealings true hands ever
draw the veil.

Now betwixt his love and his lady had the joy of Gawain
waxed small,

An the Duchess would have no pity, then healing might
ne'er befall. 260

They who sat in the seat of the wise men, and knew many a
mystic word,

Kancor, and Thèbit, and Trebuchet, the smith who Frimutel's
sword

Once wrought, ('twas a wondrous weapon, and men of its
marvels tell)—

Nay, all the skill of physicians, tho' they meant to the hero
well

And plied him with roots well mingled—Had a *woman* ne'er
sought his side, 265

Then vain were their skill, in his torment methinks had he
surely died!

Fain would I make short the story, he the rightful root had
found

That helped him unto his healing, and the chain of his grief
unbound,

And brought light in the midst of his darkness—(Breton by
his mother's side

Was Gawain, and King Lot his father) thus the healing task
he plied,

270

And sweet balsam for bitter sorrow was his lot till the dawn
of day.

Yet that which had wrought him comfort it was hid from the
folk alway,

But all there, both knights and ladies, they beheld him so
gay and glad

That their sorrow was put far from them and their heart was
no longer sad.

Now list how he did the message whom Gawain he had sent
afar,

275

Yea unto the land of Löver, unto Bems by the fair Korka,
For there he abode, King Arthur, and his lady, the gracious
queen,

With fair maids and a host of vassals; this the lot of the
squire had been.

'Twas yet in the early morning, when his message he fain
had brought,

And the queen, in the chapel kneeling, on the page of her
psalter thought;

280

Then the squire bent his knee before her, and he gave her a
token fair,

For she took from his hand a letter, and the cover must
writing bear

That was writ by a hand she knew well, ere yet she the name
might know,

From the squire, of him who had sent him, as she looked on
him kneeling low.

Then the queen she spake to the letter, 'Now blessed that
hand shall be

285

That wrote thee; for care was my portion since the day that
mine eyes might see

The hand that hath writ this writing'—She wept, yet for joy
was fain,

And she quoth to the squire, 'Of a surety thy master shall be
Gawain!'

'Yea, Lady, he truly offers true service as aye of yore,
 With never a thought of wavering, yet his joy it shall suffer
 sore, 290
 If so be thou wilt not upraise it; and never it stood so ill
 With his honour as now it standeth—And more would he
 tell thee still,
 In joy shall he live henceforward if comfort he gain from
 thee;
 And I wot that yet more shall be written than what thou hast
 heard from me.'

Then she quoth, 'I have truly read there the cause that hath
 brought thee here, 295
 And service I think to do him with many a woman dear,
 Who to-day shall I ween be reckoned to have won to them
 beauty's prize—
 Save Parzival's wife and another, Orgelusé, in all men's eyes,
 Thro' Christendom none shall be fairer—Since far from King
 Arthur's court
 Gawain rode, sore grief and sorrow have made of my life
 their sport. 300
 And Meljanz de Lys hath told me he saw him in Barbigöl—
 Alas!' quoth the queen, 'that ever mine eyes saw thee,
 Plimizöl!
 What sorrow did there befall me! Since that day might I
 never greet
 Kunnewaare of Lalande, she hath left me, my friend and
 companion sweet.
 And the right of the good Round Table was broken by
 words of scorn, 305
 And four years and a half and six weeks have left us, I ween,
 forlorn,
 Since the Grail Parzival rode seeking; and after him rode
 Gawain
 To Askalon—Nor Jeschuté nor Hekuba come again
 Since the day that they parted from me, and grief for my
 friends so true
 Hath driven my peace far from me, nor joy since that day I
 knew!' 310
 And the queen spake much of her sorrow: then the squire
 would her counsel know,
 'Now do thou in this my bidding, in secret thou hence shalt
 go,
 And wait till the sun be higher, and the folk all at court shall
 be,
 Knights, servants, and gentle ladies, and vassals of all
 degree;

And then to the court ride swiftly, nor think who shall hold
 thy steed, 315
 But spring from its back, and hasten where the king shall thy
 coming heed.
 They will ask of thee news of venture, but thou, do thou act
 and speak
 As one who from peril flieth, whom the flames would
 devouring seek,
 And they may not prevail to hold thee, nor win from thy lips
 the tale,
 But press thou thro' them to the monarch, and to greet thee
 he will not fail. 320
 Then give to his hand the letter, and swiftly from it he'll read
 Thy tale, and thy lord's desiring; I doubt not the prayer he'll
 heed!

'And this will I further rede thee, make thou thy request to
 me
 Where I sit, and, amid my ladies, thy dealings may hear and
 see;
 And beseech us, as well thou knowest, for thy lord wouldst
 thou gain. 325
 But say, for as yet I know not, where abideth the knight
 Gawain?'
 'Nay,' quoth the squire, 'I may not, ask not where my lord
 doth dwell,
 But think, an thou wilt, that good fortune is his, and he
 fareth well!'
 Then glad was the squire of her counsel, and he took from
 the queen his way
 In such wise as ye here have hearkened, and he came, e'en
 as she did say. 330

For e'en at the hour of noontide, not in secret but openly
 He came to the court, and the courtiers his garments eyed
 curiously,
 And they thought that they well beseemed him, and were
 such as a squire should wear,
 And his horse on each flank was wounded, where the spurs
 they had smitten fair.
 And, e'en as the queen had taught him, he sprang
 straightway unto the ground, 335
 And a crowd of eager courtiers pressed, thronging, his steed
 around.
 Mantle, sword, and spurs, e'en his charger might be lost, he
 would little care

But he gat thro' the crowd to the heroes, and the knights
 they besought him there,
 Brought he news of some gallant venture? For the custom
 was aye of yore,
 That they ate not, nor man nor maiden, save unto the court
 they bore 340
 The news of some deed of knighthood, and the court might
 claim its right,
 If so be 'twas a worthy venture, and one that beseemed a
 knight.
 Quoth the squire, 'Nay, I naught may tell ye, for my haste
 doth not brook delay,
 Of your courtesy then forgive me, and lead to the king the
 way,
 For 'tis meet that I first speak with him, and mine haste it
 doth work me ill; 345
 But my tale shall ye hear, and God teach ye to aid me with
 right goodwill!'

And so did his message urge him he thought not on the
 thronging crowd,
 Till the eyes of the king beheld him, and greeting he spake
 aloud.
 Then he gave to his hand the letter that bade to King
 Arthur's heart,
 As he read it, two guests, joy and sorrow, alike there the
 twain had part 350
 And he spake, 'Hail! the fair day's dawning, by whose light I
 have read this word,
 And of thee, O son of my sister, true tidings at last have
 heard!
 If in manhood I may but serve thee as kinsman and friend, if
 faith
 Ever ruled my heart, 'twill be open to the word that Sir
 Gawain saith!'

Then he spake to the squire, 'Now tell me if Sir Gawain be
 glad at heart?' 355
 'Yea, sire, at thy will, with the joyful I ween shall he have his
 part,'
 (And thus quoth the squire in his wisdom,) 'yet his honour
 he sure shall lose,
 And no man fresh joy may give him, if thine aid thou shalt
 here refuse.
 At thy succour his gladness waxeth, and from out of dark
 sorrow's door

Shall grief from his heart be banished, if thou hearken his
 need so sore. 360
 As of yore doth he offer service to the queen, and it is his
 will
 That the knights of the good Round Table as their comrade
 account him still,
 And think on their faith, nor let him be 'spoiled of his
 honour's meed,
 But pray thee his cry to hearken, and make to his aid good
 speed!'

Quoth King Arthur, 'Dear friend and comrade, bear this
 letter unto the queen, 365
 Let her read therein, and tell us why our portion hath
 twofold been,
 And at one while we joy and we sorrow. How King
 Gramoflanz is fain
 In the pride of his heart, and his malice, to work ill to my
 knight, Gawain;
 He thinketh for sure that my nephew shall be Eidegast,
 whom he slew,
 Thence grief hath he won; deeper sorrow I'd teach him, and
 customs new!' 370

Then the squire he would pass where a welcome so kindly
 he did receive,
 And he gave to the queen the letter, and many an eye must
 grieve,
 And with crystal tears run over, as with sweet lips she read
 so clear
 The words that within were written, and the need of Gawain
 they hear,
 And his prayer did she read before them; nor long would
 the squire delay 375
 With skill to entreat the ladies, and aid at their hand to pray.

King Arthur, Sir Gawain's uncle, he wrought with a hearty
 will
 That his vassals might take the journey: nor did she abide
 her still,
 Guinevere, the wise and the courteous, for she prayed them
 make no delay,
 Her ladies, but bravely deck them, and get on their stately
 way. 380
 Quoth Kay aloud in his anger, 'If ever I dared believe
 That so gallant a man as Gawain of Norway on earth should
 live

I would cry to him, "Come thou nearer!" Fetch him swift,
else he swift will go,
As a squirrel away he flasheth, and is lost ere his place ye
know!

To the queen quoth the squire, 'Now, Lady, my lord must I
swiftly seek, 385
His cause do I leave to thine honour!' To her chamberlain
did she speak,
'See thou that this squire doth rest well, and look well unto
his steed,
Is it hewn with spurs, find another, the best that shall serve
his need.

And what else beside shall fail him, for his dress, or lest
pledge he lose,
Make ready as he shall ask thee, and naught unto him
refuse!' 390
And she quoth, 'Thou shalt say unto Gawain, I am ever to
serve him fain,
Thy leave from the king will I care for, he greeteth thy lord
again!'

Thus the king he was fain for the journey; and the feast it
might now be served,
Since the right of the good Round Table by this venture was
well observed;
And joy in their hearts awakened, since this gallant knight
Gawain 395
Should be yet in life, and true tidings they might of his
welfare gain.
And the knights of that noble order, that even were glad at
heart,
And there sat the king, and those others who had in the ring
their part,
And they sat and they ate with their monarch who fame by
their strife had won,
And the news of this gallant venture wrought joy to them
every one. 400

Now the squire might betake him homewards, since his
errand so well had sped,
He gat forth at the early dawning, ere the sun should be
high o'erhead,
And the queen's chamberlain he gave him a charger, and
robes beside,
And gold lest his pledge be forfeit, and glad on his way he
hied,

For had he not won from King Arthur what should end his
 lord's sorrow sore? 405
 And I know not the days of his journey, but in safety he
 came once more
 To Château Merveil; then joyful was Arrivé, for as she bade
 The porter bare news of his coming, how his steed he no
 whit had stayed,
 But swiftly had done his errand. Then in secret she made her
 way
 To where by the castle drawbridge the squire did his charger
 stay, 410
 And she asked him much of his journey, and why he in
 haste must ride?
 Quoth the squire, 'Tis forbidden, Lady! my errand I needs
 must hide,
 An oath have I sworn of silence, and my lord he might well
 be wroth
 If to thee I should tell the tidings, for so should I break mine
 oath,
 And a fool would he surely hold me! Ask himself what thou
 fain wouldst learn!' 415
 Yet she strove still with many a question from his purpose
 the squire to turn,
 Then weary was he of her pleading, and in anger this word
 he spake,
 'Without cause dost thou here delay me, for I think not
 mine oath to break!'

So he went where he found his master, and the Turkowit
 brave Florand,
 And Lischois, and the lady of Logrois, many ladies did with
 them stand, 420
 And the squire made his way to his master, and up stood
 the knight Gawain,
 And he took him aside, and welcome he bade him in joyful
 strain,
 'Now tell unto me, my comrade, the tidings thou here hast
 brought,
 If thy news be for joy or for sorrow, what speak they of me
 at court?'

'And say, didst thou find King Arthur?' quoth the squire, 'My
 master, yea, 425
 The king, and the queen, and with them many brave knights
 I saw alway,
 And they offer to thee their service, and they will at thy
 bidding come,

And they heard in such sort thy message, with such
 gladness, that every one,
 Rich and poor, as one man were joyful when I spake, thou
 wert safe and well.
 And the folk there were sure a marvel! Their number I may
 not tell! 430
 And the Table Round, by thy message, was spread for the
 feast I ween;
 And if knight e'er won fame by his valour, then I wot that
 thy fame hath been
 Far greater than all who hearkened to the words that I spake
 of thee,
 And it beareth the crown o'er all others, tho' mighty their
 fame shall be!

Then he told him all that befell there, how he spake with the
 gracious queen, 435
 And the counsel she gave unto him; and how he the folk
 had seen,
 Those brave knights and gentle ladies; how Gawain should
 behold their face
 At loflanz, before the combat, and the end of his day of
 grace.
 And the sorrow of Gawain vanished, yet his joy in his heart
 he'd hide,
 Tho' from grief did he pass to gladness; yet the squire must
 his oath abide 440
 And yet for a space keep silence—Forgotten was all his care,
 And thither he went, and he sat him again by his lady fair,
 And with joy he abode in the castle till King Arthur to his
 relief
 Might come with his host—Now hearken to a story of love
 and grief:

Gawain he was ever joyful; one morn did it so befall 445
 That many a knight and lady were seen in that stately hall,
 And Gawain sat apart in a window, and looked o'er the
 stream so wide,
 And with many a tale of wonder sat Arnivé the knight
 beside.

To the queen spake the gallant hero, 'Ah! hearken, my Lady
 dear,
 If my questions they shall not vex thee, do thou to my
 words give ear 450
 And tell me the wondrous story, which as yet shall be hid
 from me—

That I live, and my life is joyful, I owe it to none but thee;
 Tho' my heart had the wit of manhood, yet the Duchess she
 held it fast,
 But thou in such wise hast helped me that my sorrow is
 overpast;
 Of my love, and my wounds had I died here, but with
 wisdom thy helpful hand 455
 Thou didst stretch to my aid, and hast loosed me for aye
 from my sorrow's band.
 I owe thee my life! My Lady of healing, now tell to me
 The wonder that was, and the marvel that yet in this place
 shall be.
 Say, wherefore by mighty magic hath Klingsor this palace
 made?
 For surely my life had I lost here had thy wisdom not been
 mine aid!' 460

Then out quoth the wise Arnivé, (and ne'er with such goodly
 fame
 Of womanly faith and wisdom fair youth unto old age
 came,)
 'Sir Knight, these are but small marvels to the marvels his
 cunning hand,
 And his skill in hidden magic, have wrought in full many a
 land.
 He who counteth it shame unto us that into his power we
 fell, 465
 He sinneth for sure! His doings, Sir Knight, I to thee will tell.
 Many folk, I ween, hath he troubled, his land is Terre de
 Labûr:
 From a wondrous race he springeth, whose marvels they
 aye endure,
 For Virgil was his forefather, in Naples his spells he wrought:
 And in this wise his nephew Klingsor was to shame and to
 sorrow brought;' 470

'And the chief of his towns was Capua—such high fame was
 his, I ween,
 That never in praise or in honour methinks had he shamèd
 been,
 And all folk they spake of Duke Klingsor, and praised him,
 both man and maid,
 Till in this wise he won dishonour, and his glory to earth was
 laid.
 In Sicily reigned a monarch, King Ibert, his life was blest 475
 With a fair wife, Iblis, none fairer e'er hung on a mother's
 breast,

And Klingsor would do her service, till her love should be his
reward,
And in shame did he win his guerdon from the hand of her
rightful lord.'

'If here I must tell his secret, forgiveness I first must pray,
For methinks it shall be a story that scarce fitteth my lips to
say; 480
With a stroke was he made magician, with the self-same
stroke unmanned'—
Then loudly he laughed, Sir Gawain, as the tale he must
understand.

'In Kalot Enbolot's castle he won him this lasting shame,
(I trow 'tis a mighty fortress, and far lands shall know its
fame,) 485
With his wife did the monarch find him, there lay Klingsor
within her arm,
And sorely must he repent him of his slumber so soft and
warm,
For the hand of the king avenged him in such wise as he
deemed his right;
And he left with his knife such token of shame on the traitor
knight
That henceforward the love of woman it rejoiceth him never
more!
And I wot well for his dishonour many folk shall have
suffered sore.' 490

'('Tis not in the land of Persia) in a city called Persida
Were magic spells first woven; it stands in a land afar,
And thither did Klingsor journey, and there did he learn
such skill,
That with secrets of magic cunning he worketh whate'er he
will.
For the ill that was wrought his body he beareth goodwill to
none, 495
But rejoiceth to work them evil, the more if they fame have
won.'

'E'en such peril beset one monarch—Irôt was, I ween, his
name,
And Rosch-Sabbins was his kingdom—At length to such
pass he came,
That he bade him to take of that country what he would, so
he peace would keep;

Then Klingsor he took of the monarch this mountain so high
 and steep, 500
 And the land for eight miles around it; on the summit did
 Klingsor rear
 The wonder-work thou seest, and this palace we look on
 here.
 And there faileth nor worldly riches, nor marvel of magic
 skill,
 If for thirty years one besieged it, methinks 'twere
 provisioned still.
 And power doth he hold o'er all spirits, 'twixt the earth and
 the heaven above, 505
 Both evil and good, save those only whom God doth from
 his power remove.'

'Sir Knight, since thy deadly peril thou hast passed, nor thy
 death hast found,
 He gives to thine hand his kingdom, this Burg, and the lands
 around,
 No claim doth he make upon it; and peace doth he promise
 thee—
 This he sware in the ears of his people, and a man of his
 word is he, 510
 That the knight who withstood the venture, this gift should
 be his for aye.
 And all who from Christendom's countries 'neath the spell
 of his magic lay,
 Be they woman, or man, or maiden, are thy vassals both one
 and all,
 And many from lands of paynim with us 'neath his power
 must fall.
 Let this folk then now get them homewards, where yet for
 our loss they mourn, 515
 For to dwell in the land of the stranger, it maketh my heart
 forlorn
 And He, who the stars hath counted, may He teach thee to
 give us aid,
 And turn once again to rejoicing those hearts that are sore
 afraid!'

'A child was born of a mother, who its mother's mother shall
 be;
 For the ice it came of the water; when the sunlight shineth
 free, 520
 Then nothing I ween shall hinder that water from ice be
 born—

Of my glad youth I often think me, tho' now I must weep
forlorn,
If my lot shall once more be joyful then the child from the
child shall spring.
And thou, art thou wise and courteous, methinks well mayst
work this thing!

'Tis long since all joy forsook me! The skiff 'neath its sail
flies fast, 525
But the man who doth sail within it hath swifter his voyage
o'erpast.
If thou readest aright my riddle thy fame shall wax high and
fleet,
For our joy canst thou make to blossom, and our song to
ring clear and sweet.
And, bringers of joy, shall we journey into many a distant
land,
Where the folk weep sore for our losing, and shall greet us
with outstretched hand! 530

'Of joy had I once full measure: a crownèd queen was I!
And my daughter amid her princes bare a crown too right
royally,
And all men they deemed us worthy—Sir Knight, I wrought
ill to none,
But alike, both man and maiden, from my hand due
guerdon won.
And all men they knew, and they owned me one fit o'er the
folk to reign, 535
For I, so God gave me wisdom, ne'er brought to another
pain.
Yet she who in gladness dwelleth, tho' a fair praise she think
to earn,
And the prayer of the poor she hearken, yet her joy to such
grief may turn
That a poor lad may make her joyful—Sir Knight, here
o'erlong I stay,
Yet there cometh no man who doth know me, and turneth
my care away! 540

Then out quoth the gallant hero, 'Lady, if life be mine,
Then gladness shall be thy portion, nor shalt thou in exile
pine!
Now this self-same day brought the coming of Arthur the
Breton king,
The son of the sad Arnivé, whom kinship and faith did bring;
And many a fair new banner Gawain from the castle saw, 545

And the field it was thick with the horsemen who near at his
summons draw.
On the road that wound hence from Logrois came many a
blazoned spear,
And Gawain, he was glad at their coming; for delay it oft
teacheth fear,
Who waiteth o'erlong for succour, he doubteth 'twill come
too late!
From such doubt had King Arthur freed him! Ah me! how he
rode in state! 550

Gawain, he would hold it secret, yet his eyes they were fain
to weep,
Little good had they been for cisterns, since the water they
failed to keep.
And for love must he weep, for Arthur such love had toward
him shown,
He had cherished him from his childhood, and had dealt
with him as his own;
And the twain they had never wavered, but their faith to
each other kept, 555
And nor falsehood nor thought of doubting betwixt their
two hearts had crept.

But Arnivé was 'ware of his weeping, and quoth, 'Now shalt
thou begin
To joy with the shout of rejoicing, thus comfort we all shall
win.
'Gainst sorrow shouldst thou defend thee—See the host
that now draweth nigh,
Methinks 'tis the Duchess' army, with their coming shall joy
wax high.' 560

Now many a tent and banner they saw wind across the
plain,
But *one* shield did they bear before them, and Arnivé beheld
again,
And she knew, as of yore, the blazon, and Isayé she called
the name
Of the knight, he should be king's marshal, and Uther
Pendragon came!
But the shield it was borne by another, graceful of limb and
tall, 565
And she said, 'He shall be *queen's* marshal, and *Maurin* his
name they call.'
But little she knew, Arnivé, that dead were both king and
knight,

And Maurin, he held the office that afore was his father's
 right.
 To the bank in the meadow of conflict rode the host—They
 who served the queen
 Found a resting-place for the ladies, and a fair camp it was I
 ween. 570
 By the side of a swift, clear streamlet they set up the tents
 so fair,
 And, apart, many goodly circles for the king and his knights
 prepare.
 And methinks they had left behind them, wherever the host
 must ride,
 A mighty track of hoof-prints on the field and the roadways
 wide!

Gawain, by the mouth of Bené, his host Plippalinòt prayed 575
 To hold vessel and boat in safe keeping that no crossing
 that day be made.
 And the maid from the hand of Gawain took the first gift of
 his rich store,
 'Twas a swallow, the harp was costly, such as harpers in
 England bore.

Then joyful, she sought her father, and Gawain, he gave
 command
 To shut fast the outer portals, since a host at the gate did
 stand; 580
 And old and young they listed the word that he courteous
 spake:
 'On the further side of the river an army its camp doth
 make,
 And never, by land or by water, a mightier host I saw,
 Would they fight, then I pray ye help me my knighthood to
 prove once more!'

With one voice did they make the promise—Then they
 asked of the Duchess fair, 585
 If the host should be hers? But she answered, 'Believe me, of
 all men there
 I know neither shield nor bearer; perchance he who wrought
 me ill
 Hath entered my land, and thought him to bow Logrois
 unto his will.
 He hath found it right well defended! My people might well
 defy,
 From their tower and their battlements lofty, e'en such army
 as here doth lie! 590

Hath he wrought there fresh deeds of knighthood, then
King Gramoflanz sure hath thought
To revenge himself for the garland that my knight from his
tree hath brought.
But whoever they be, I know well, they shall many a joust
have seen,
And many a spear at Logrois by mine army hath splintered
been.'

And never a lie had she spoken—For Arthur must peril face 595
As he rode thro' the land of Logrois; and many of Breton
race
In knightly joust had fallen—But Arthur their ill repaid
In the self-same coin, and on both sides sore stress on the
host was laid.

Battle-weary, so came they hither of whom one full oft must
hear
That they sold their lives full dearly, and did never a foeman
fear. 600

And either side had suffered, both Garel and Gaherjet,
King Meljanz of Lys, and Iofreit, son of Idol, in durance set
Ere even the end of the Tourney—From Logrois they captive
bare
The Duke of Vermandois, Friam, and Count Richard, he of
Nevers,

Who naught but one spear had needed ere he against
whom he rode 605
Had fallen 'neath his stroke so mighty, and no man his joust
abode.

With his own hand King Arthur made him his captive, this
gallant knight;
Then, dauntless, they spurred them onward, and the armies
they met in fight,
And a forest, methinks, it cost them! For no man the jousts
might know

That were ridden, a rain of splinters fell thick at each mighty
blow; 610
And the Bretons, they bore them bravely 'gainst the Lady of
Logrois' host,
And Arthur himself the rear-guard would keep at sore
conflict's cost.

And in this wise they fought and they vexed them through
the hours of the livelong day,
Till the greater part of the army outwearied with conflict lay.

And well might Gawain have told her, the Duchess, that to
 his aid
 They had ridden her land, then, I wot well, no strife had their
 way delayed,
 But he would that no lips should tell her till her own eye the
 truth had seen—
 Then he dealt as should well befit him had King Arthur his
 foeman been,
 And made ready to march against him with rich tents and
 warlike gear.
 And no man of them all repented that he came as a
 stranger here,
 For with open hand Sir Gawain his gifts upon all did shower
 In such wise that ye might have deemed well he drew nigh
 to his dying hour.
 And servant, and knight, and lady, they looked on his gifts
 so fair,
 And all, with one mouth, they praised him who brought
 help in their sore
 despair;

And all, for his sake, were joyful—Then the hero he bade
 prepare
 Strong chargers, and well-trained palfreys, such as well
 might a lady bear.
 Nor the knights should be lacking armour—Strong squires
 in coat of mail
 Were ready to do his bidding, nor should one of their
 number fail.
 And in this wise he gave his orders, four knights he aside
 did take:
 His chamberlain one; and another, cup-bearer he fain would
 make;
 The third he would make his steward; and his marshal the
 fourth should be,
 For this was his prayer, and the four knights said 'Yea' to
 him willingly.

At peace lay King Arthur's army, and no greeting did
 Gawain send,
 Yet I wot well it sorely grieved him! With the morning the
 host did wend,
 With the blast of many a trumpet, their way unto Ioflanz'
 plain,
 And the rear-guard was armed, yet no foeman did they find
 in their path again.

Then Gawain took his office-bearers, and in this wise to
 them he spake,
 The marshal, he bade him straightway to loflanz his way to
 take,
 'There a camp of my own prepare me—The host that thou
 here didst see
 Shall unto that plain have ridden, and its lord will I name to
 thee, 640
 For 'tis well that thou too shouldst know him, he is Arthur,
 my kinsman true,
 In whose court and whose care from my childhood I unto
 my manhood grew.
 Now do this thing in which I trust thee, rule my journey in
 such a wise,
 With such riches and pomp, that my coming be stately in all
 men's eyes;
 But within the walls of this castle no word of the truth be
 told— 645
 That the king for my sake cometh hither, this must thou for
 secret hold!'

So did they as Gawain bade them, and Plippalinòt he found
 Little space had he now for leisure, since his lord was on
 journey bound.
 For large and small his vessels, both boat and skiff, must
 fare
 O'er the water, and troops well armèd, ahorse and afoot
 they bare. 650
 And the marshal the squires and footmen on the track of
 the Bretons led,
 And hither and thither riding behind them the army sped.

And they bare with them, so 'twas told me, the tent that in
 days of yore
 Fair Iblis had sent to Klingsor, as pledge of the love she
 bore.
 By the sending of this love-token their secret to men was
 told, 655
 And the favour they bare each other in the days that have
 waxen old.
 And no cost had they spared who had wrought it, and no
 better was ever seen
 Save the tent of Eisenhart only—Then apart on the grass so
 green
 They set up the tent, and around it many others in goodly
 ring,

And so great was the pomp and the riches that men
deemed it a wondrous thing. 660

And they spake before King Arthur that the marshal of
Gawain came,
And his lord the same day would follow, and encamp him
upon the plain.

'Twas the talk of all the vassals—Then Gawain, from
falsehood free,
Rode forth from his home and there followed a goodly
company.

And their train was so richly ordered that marvels I here
might tell! 665

With church gear and chamber hangings the pack-steeds
were burdened well;
And some were with harness laden, and above the harness
bare
Full many a crested helmet, and shield that was blazoned
fair.

And many a gallant war-horse was led by the bridle rein,
And behind them both knight and lady rode close in the
glittering train. 670

Would ye measure the length? a mile long, methinks, had it
stretched, and more,

And Sir Gawain, I ween, forgot not that a gallant knight
should draw

His rein by the side of each lady, and ever of love they
spake,

Or one scant of wit had deemed them! And in this wise the
road they take,

The Turkowit, brave Florand, for companion upon his way 675
Had the daughter of Queen Arnivé, Sangivé of Norrway,
And Lischois, who was ne'er unready, he rode at sweet
Kondrie's side,

And by Gawain the maid Itonjé, his sister, perforce must
ride.

At the same time the Queen Arnivé and the Duchess of fair
Logrois

Rode gaily the one by the other, for in such wise they made
their choice. 680

Beyond the camp of King Arthur the tents of Gawain they
lay,

And they who were fain to reach them thro' the army must
take their way.

'Twas a sight for all men to gaze at! Ere the folk to their
journey's end

Might come, of a courteous custom, to do honour unto his
friend,
Gawain by the tent of Arthur bade the first maiden take her
stand, 685
Then the marshal so did his office that the second, to her
right hand,
And the third beside the second, should unto each other
ride,
And none of them all delayed them—So made they a circle
wide,
Here the matrons, and there the maidens, and by each of
them rode a knight
Who would fain do the lady service, and would for her
favours fight. 690
And thus round the tent of the monarch stood the ladies, a
goodly ring,
And to Gawain, the rich in gladness, fair welcome would
Arthur bring.

To the ground sprang Gawain and Arnivé, and her
daughters with children twain,
The Lady of Logrois, and the heroes he o'erthrew on the
grassy plain,
Lischois and the gallant Florand; then unto those heroes
brave 695
Stepped Arthur from his pavilion, and a kindly welcome
gave;
And the queen, she greeted Gawain, and she welcomed him
and his
Of true heart, and from many a lady, I ween, was there many
a kiss!

Quoth Arthur unto his nephew, 'Say, who shall thy comrades
be?'
Quoth Gawain, 'A kiss of greeting from my lady I fain would
see, 700
'Twere ill an she should refuse it, for noble are both I ween.'
Then Florand and the Duke of Gowerzein were kissed by the
gracious queen.

Then into the tent they gat them, and to many the fair field
wide
Was as if it were full of maidens, so close stood they, side by
side.
Then not as the heavy-footed sprang Arthur upon his steed,
And he turned to the knights and the ladies in the ring with
a kindly heed, 705

And he rode from one to the other, and gracious the words
 he spake,
From the lips of the king so kindly each one must his
 welcome take.
For this was the will of Gawain that no man from hence
 should ride
Till he himself rode with them, but courteous his coming
 bide. 710

Then the king would dismount, and straightway he entered
 the tent again,
And he sat him beside his nephew, and straitly he prayed
 Gawain
To say who were these five ladies, whom hither the knight
 did bring.
Then Gawain he looked on the eldest and he spake to the
 Breton king,
'Didst thou know Uther Pendragon? 'Tis Arnivé, his queen
 and wife, 715
And well mayst thou look upon her, from the twain didst
 thou draw thy life.
And there standeth the Queen of Norway, and / am the son
 she bare,
And these twain they shall be my sisters; say, are they not
 maidens fair?'

Ah! then once again they kissed them, and sorrow and joy
 were seen
Of all those who looked upon them, from Love this their lot
 had been; 720
And they laughed, and they cried together, and their lips
 spake of joy and woe,
And I ween that with tears of gladness their bright eyes
 must overflow.
Then Arthur he spake to Gawain, 'Nephew, unknown to me
Is the fifth of these lovely ladies, I prithee who may she be?'

'The Duchess, is she, of Logrois,' quoth Gawain in his
 courtesy, 725
'In her service have I come hither, and, so it was told to me,
Thou thyself hast sought her dwelling, and how it rejoiced
 thee there,
Thou canst without shame declare us, as a widower dost
 thou fare.'
Quoth Arthur, 'She doth, as her captive, thy kinsman
 Gaherjet hold,

And Garel, who in many a conflict hath shown h'm a hero
 bold; 730
 From my very side was he taken, one charge had we made
 so nigh
 That almost we gained the portal, when lo! from the gate
 did fly
 Meljanz of Lys! How he battled! On high flew a banner white
 And the host who fought beneath it took captive my gallant
 knight.
 And the banner it bare a blazon of crimson, a bleeding
 heart, 735
 And right through the midst was it pierced by the shaft of a
 sable dart,
 As one who to death is smitten—'Lirivoïn' was the battle-cry
 Of the army who fought beneath it, and their hand did the
 victory buy.
 My nephew, Iofreit, was taken, and grief for his sake I know
 —
 Yestreen did I keep the rear-guard, and the chance it hath
 worked me woe! 740

Sore mourned the king for his sorrow—quoth the Duchess,
 with courteous mien,
 'Sire, I speak thee free of all shaming, I had greeted thee
 not, I ween.
 Thou mayst well have wrought me evil, tho' no wrong had I
 done to thee,
 And I would that God's wisdom teach thee that harm to
 make good to me.
 The knight to whose aid thou camest, if combat with me he
 dared, 745
 Hath found me, methinks, defenceless, with side to the
 foeman bared.
 If yet for such strife he lusteth, nor of conflict hath had his
 fill,
 With never a sword or a weapon I think to withstand him
 still.'
 Then Gawain, he quoth to King Arthur, 'Wilt thou that we fill
 the plain
 With knights? For we well can do so—I think me such grace
 to gain 750
 From the Duchess that all the captives from thine host she
 will swiftly free,
 And, many a new spear bearing, her knighthood we here
 may see.'
 'Yea, such were my will,' quoth Arthur; then the Duchess she
 gave command,

And many a gallant hero she summoned from Logrois' land
 —
 And I wot well a host so goodly the earth ne'er had seen
 before— 755
 Then Gawain, he prayed leave of the monarch, he would to
 his tent withdraw,
 And the king's will was e'en as Gawain's, and all they who
 hither rode
 With the knight, they turned their bridles, and with him in
 his camp abode.
 And his tent was so rich and so goodly, as befitted a gallant
 knight,
 That afar from its costly trappings had poverty taken flight. 760

 And there rode unto his pavilion full many whose hearts
 were sore
 For the weary days since he left them, and the love they to
 Gawain bore.
 And the wounds of Kay had been healèd since he joustèd
 by Plimizöl,
 And he looked on the wealth of Gawain, and with envy his
 heart was full,
 And he quoth, 'Now, King Lot, his father, my monarch's near
 of kin, 765
 Ne'er thought with such pomp to shame us, nor a camp of
 his own would win.'
 (For ever did he bethink him how Gawain would no
 vengeance take
 On the knight who so sorely smote him, when his right arm
 in joust he brake,)
 'God worketh for *some* His wonders,—Who gave Gawain
 this woman folk?'
 And the words they were scarce a friend's words that Kay in
 his anger spoke. 770

 Of the honour his friend hath won him the true knight is
 ever glad,
 But the faithless, aloud he crieth, and his heart ever waxeth
 sad
 When the heart of his friend rejoiceth, and he needs must
 his gladness see.
 Bliss and honour had fallen to Gawain; and, if one would
 more favoured be,
 I know not what thing he may wish for! Thus ever the evil
 mind 775
 Is with envy filled, while the brave man his comfort and joy
 doth find

When honour shall seek his comrade, and shame from his
 face doth flee—
 Gawain ne'er forgot his knighthood, and from falsehood
 was ever free;
 And thus it was right and fitting that men on his bliss should
 gaze,
 And gladness and fair rejoicing henceforward should crown
 his days. 780
 In what wise for the folk that followed did the knight of
 Norway care,
 Alike for his knights and ladies? Not ill was, methinks, their
 fare.
 And Arthur and all his people they looked on King Lot's fair
 son,
 And I trow well they greatly marvelled at the riches his hand
 had won.
 Now the evening meal was ended, and 'twas time for the
 folk to sleep, 785
 And little I grudge their slumber! A guard thro' the night
 they keep,
 And lo! at the early morning, ere the dawning had waxed
 to-day,
 Came a folk in goodly armour, and the men of Logrois were
 they.
 And they read their helmet's token by the light of the
 waning moon,
 On this side lay the host of Arthur, and his camp had they
 passed full soon, 790
 And they came to the goodly circle where Gawain and his
 men should lie—
 And, methinks, who such gallant succour by the might of his
 hand could buy
 Were reckoned of men a hero! Then Gawain bade his
 Marshal find
 A place for the host to camp on, but, such was their leader's
 mind,
 He deemed it best that their circle apart from the rest
 should be, 795
 And 'twas even the hour of noontide ere all were lodged
 fittingly.
 Then Arthur, the noble monarch, a message would
 straightway send;
 Unto Rosche Sabbins, and the city, a squire on his way
 should wend
 To King Gramoflanz should he speak thus, 'Since conflict the
 king doth pray,

And he lusteth to fight my nephew, the strife shall he not
 delay, 800
 For Sir Gawain is fain to meet him—But bid him to meet us
 here,
 As a gallant man do we know him, were he other, 'twould
 cost him dear!'

And the messenger of King Arthur he rode on his errand
 fain—
 Then forth, with Lischois and Sir Florand, rode the gallant
 knight, Gawain,
 And he prayed them to show them to him who from many a
 land afar 805
 Had ridden for love's high service, and had fought in his
 lady's war.
 And he met them and gave them greeting in such wise that
 the heroes knew
 Sir Gawain for courteous lover, and faithful knight and true.

With that again he left them, and in secret his way he sped,
 And he gat him again to his chamber, and he armed him
 from foot to head; 810
 He would know if his wounds were healed so that never a
 scar should pain,
 And his limbs would he test, since so many, both maiden
 and man were fain
 To look on the strife, had they wisdom they should see if his
 dauntless hand
 Might even to-day, as aforetime, the victor's crown
 command.

A squire did he bid to bring him his charger, Gringuljet, 815
 And he sprang to the saddle lightly and the horse to a
 gallop set.
 He would try both himself and his charger, if ready for strife
 the twain—
 Ah! woe is me for his journey! so rode he upon the plain,
 And so had his Fortune willed it, that a knight his bridle
 drew
 By the side of the river Sabbins, and ye know that knight so
 true, 820
 And a rock, men well might call him, for manhood and
 courage high,
 And no knight might stand before him, and falsehood his
 heart did fly.
 And yet so weak was his body that no burden it bare of
 wrong,

Yea, a hand's-breadth had been too heavy, and a finger-
length too long!
And, I ween, of this gallant hero of old time ye oft must
hear,
For my tale hath come to its root-tree, and draweth its goal
anear.

825

BOOK XIV GRAMOFLANZ

ARGUMENT


Book xiv. tells how Parzival and Gawain met and, unknowing, fought with each other, how Gawain was defeated, and of Parzival's grief when he learnt with whom he had fought.

How the combat between Gawain and Gramoflanz was deferred till the morrow; and how Parzival was welcomed at the court of King Arthur, and admitted to the Brotherhood of the Round Table.

How Parzival, in Gawain's stead, fought with and overcame King Gramoflanz, and how the latter sent messengers to King Arthur to pray that none but Gawain should fight against him. Of the grief of Itonjé when she learnt how her brother would fight with King Gramoflanz, and how she prayed the aid of King Arthur.

How Arthur and Brandelidelein made peace between the Duchess and Gawain, and of the wedding feast that was held in the camp. Of Parzival's sorrow and longing for his wife, and how ere the dawn of day he stole in secret from the court.

BOOK XIV GRAMOFLANZ

 If now the gallant Gawain a knightly joust would ride,
I never I feared for his honour yet I fear what may now
betide.
And tho' dear be the other's safety yet never a doubt I
know,
For he who in strife would face him an army had found for
foe.
O'er far seas, in the land of paynim, his helmet was
fashioned fair,
And ruby-red was his harness, and the trappings his charger
bare.
So rode he in search of adventure, and his shield it was
piercèd thro'—
He had plucked for his helm a garland, and the tree where
the garland grew
Was the tree that Gramoflanz guarded; and Gawain knew
the wreath again,

5

And he thought, did the king here wait him it were counted
to him for shame, 10
If hither for strife he had ridden then strife there perform
must be,
Tho' alone were the twain, and no lady the fate of their
jousting see.

From Monsalväsche they came, the chargers, which each of
the knights bestrode,
And they spurred them alike to a gallop, and each 'gainst
the other rode,
On the dewy grass of the meadow, not the sand of the
Tourney ring, 15
Should the joust this morn be ridden; and I ween, as their
deeds I sing,
I had mourned for the harm of either—'Twas a fair joust
they rode that morn,
Of a race that fought fair and knightly was each gallant hero
born;
And little had been his winning, great his loss, who there
won the prize,
And ne'er had he ceased to mourn it, if he were in his
calling wise. 20
For faith had they pledged to each other, nor of old time,
nor yet to-day,
Had their love and their truth been wounded—Now hear
how they fought the fray:

Swiftly they rode, yet in such wise that each knight must
mourn his fate—
For kinsman and knightly brethren, in strength of foeman's
hate,
In strife had come together; and he who this joust should
win 25
His joy were the pledge of sorrow, and his deed must he
count for sin—
And each right hand it smote so surely that the comrades
and foemen twain,
With horse and with goodly harness, fell prone on the
grassy plain.
And then in such wise they bear them, with their swords
such blows they smite,
That their shields are hewn and riven, and cloven in deadly
fight. 30
And the splinters of shields, and the grass blades, were
mingled upon the ground,

And far other the look of the meadow ere their strife had its
ending found;
And too long must they wait for a daysman—'twas early
when first they fought,
And the hours sped by, and no man an end to their conflict
brought,

And no man was there beside them—Will ye hear how, the
self-same day, 35
King Arthur's knights to the army of King Gramoflanz made
their way?

On a plain by the sea he camped him—On the one side of
the ground
Flowed the Sabbins, and over against it the Poinzacleins its
ending found.

And the plain it was strongly guarded; Rosche Sabbins the
citadel,
With towers and with walls deep-moated, defended the
fourth side well. 40

And the host on the plain lay stretching its length for a mile
and more,
And half a mile broad had they deemed it—As the
messengers toward it bore,
Many unknown knights rode forward, archers, squires, with
arms and spear,
And behind them, with waving banners, did the mighty host
draw near.

With ringing blasts of trumpet would the army leave the
plain, 45
That very morn to loflanz marched the monarch and all his
train.

And clear rung the ladies' bridles as they circled around the
king—

And, if I may tell the story, the tidings I fain would bring
Of those who had ridden hither, and camped on the sward
so green,
For Gramoflanz bade them hither, and his combat they fain
had seen. 50

If ye shall not before have heard it then here would I make it
known,
From Punt, the water-locked city, to his nephew's aid had
flown

Brandelidelein, and with him were six hundred ladies fair,
By the side of each lovely lady her knight must his armour
wear;

For knighthood and love would he serve her—Of Punturtois,
the gallant knights 55
Were fain for this stately journey, in sooth 'twas a noble
sight.

And there rode, an ye will believe me, Count Bernard of
Riviers,
Rich Narant had been his father, and left Uckerland to his
heir.
And in many a ship o'er the water had he brought so fair a
host
Of ladies, that none gainsaid him who would make of their
beauty boast. 60
Two hundred of them were maidens, and two hundred
already wed—
And if I have rightly counted 'neath his banner Count
Bernard led
Five hundred knights well proven, who with him had sailed
the sea,
And each well might face a foeman, and each should a hero
be.

Thus King Gramoflanz would wreak vengeance in strife for
the broken tree, 65
For he deemed he should be the victor, and the folk should
his prowess see.
And the princes from out his kingdom, with many a valiant
knight,
And many a lovely lady, had come to behold the fight;
And a goodly folk were gathered—Now Arthur's men drew
near,
And they looked upon the monarch, how they found him ye
now shall hear. 70
Of Palmât was the high seat 'neath him, and with silk was
the couch spread o'er,
And maidens, so fair and graceful, they knelt low the king
before,
And with iron hose they shod him; and high o'er the
monarch's head,
A silk, Ecidemon-woven, both broad and long, was spread,
On twelve spear-shafts tall was it lifted, from the sunlight to
be a shade— 75
Then came the men of King Arthur, and this was the word
they said:

'Sire, King Arthur hath hither sent us, and ever hath he been
known

As one whom all men have honoured, and whom all shall as
 victor own.
 Yea, honour enow is his portion—And yet wouldst thou mar
 his fame,
 Since upon the son of his sister thou thinkest to bring this
 shame! 80
 And e'en had Sir Gawain wrought thee worse ill by far, I
 ween,
 That the fame of the great Round Table might here for a
 shield have been.
 For brotherhood all have sworn him who sit at that noble
 board,
 And stainless shall be their knighthood who own Arthur for
 king and lord!

Quoth the king, 'The strife I sware him e'en to-day my hand
 shall dare, 85
 And Gawain to-day shall face me, if well or if ill he fare.
 For this hath been truly told me, that King Arthur draweth
 near
 With his queen, and his host of warriors; I bid them
 welcome here!
 Tho' it may be the angry Duchess shall counsel him to mine
 ill,
 Yet hearken and heed, ye children, the strife shall be
 foughten still. 90
 For here have I many a follower, and hindered of none will
 be,
 What *one* man can do unto me that bear I right joyfully!
 And if now I should fear to face that to which I my pledge
 have sworn,
 Of Love's service and Love's rewarding henceforward were I
 forlorn!
 In her favour I found aforetime my life and my life's best
 bliss— 95
 God knoweth how *he* hath pleased her, she oweth me much
 for this!—
 And tho' ever I did disdain me to fight with one man alone,
 Yet Gawain hath so bravely borne him that him as I my peer
 I'll own.
 And I think me I shame my manhood when such easy strife I
 fight;
 And yet have I fought, believe me, (ye can ask if it seem ye
 right,) 100
 With folk whom mine hand hath proven to be valiant men
 and true,

But ne'er have I fought but *one* man! No praise shall be here
 my due,
 From the lips of gracious women, tho' the victory be mine
 to-day—
 And greatly my heart rejoiceth that her bands have been
 reft away
 For whose sake I fight this conflict; so many a distant land 105
 Are vassals unto King Arthur, and pay tribute unto his hand,
 It may well be with him she cometh, for whose sake both
 joy and pain
 Unto death I would gladly suffer, if she be for my service
 fain.
 And what better fate can befall me than that this my fair lot
 shall be,
 That she looketh upon my service, and her eyes shall my
 victory see!' 110

And near to the king sat Bené, nor her heart for the strife
 did fail,
 For full oft had she seen his valour, and she deemed he
 might well prevail.
 But yet had she known that Gawain was brother unto the
 maid,
 And 'twas *he* who now stood in peril, of a sooth had she
 been dismayed.

A golden ring from Itonjé she brought him for token fair, 115
 'Twas the same as her gallant brother did over the Sabbins
 bear
 O'er the Poinzacleins came Bené in a boat, and this word
 she spake,
 'From Château Merveil doth my lady, with the others, her
 journey take.'
 And she spake from the lips of Itonjé such steadfast words
 and true,
 That more, from the lips of a maiden, I ween never monarch
 knew. 120
 And she prayed him to think of her sorrow, since all gain did
 she hold as naught
 For the gain of his love, and his service was all that her true
 heart sought.
 And glad was the king at the tidings, yet would fight with
 her brother still—
 'Twere better I had no sister, such rewarding would please
 me ill!

Then they bare unto him his harness, 'twas costly beyond
 compare— 125
 No hero, by love constrained, who fought for love's
 guerdon fair,
 Were he Gamuret, or Galoes, or Killicrates, the valiant king,
 Had better decked his body the love of a maid to win—
 And no richer silk had been woven in Ipopotiticon,
 Or brought from Kalomedenté, or the city of Akraton, 130
 Or from far-off Agatysjenté, than the silk for his garment
 wove—
 Then he kissed the small ring golden, the pledge of Itonjé's
 love,
 For he knew her for true and faithful, and tho' peril upon
 him pressed,
 Yet the thought of her love and her longing would guard, as
 a shield, his breast.

All armed was now the monarch; twelve maidens on
 palfreys fair, 135
 Each one a spear-shaft holding, the awning aloft would
 bear.
 And the king, he rode beneath it, and its shadow was o'er
 his head,
 As on to the strife he craved for the gallant hero sped.
 And on either side of the monarch there rode fair maidens
 twain,
 Tall and stately were they to look on, the noblest of all his
 train. 140
 The messengers of King Arthur no longer they made delay,
 And, behold! they met with Gawain as they rode on their
 homeward way,
 And ne'er had they felt such sorrow, their voices they raised
 on high,
 And they cried aloud for his peril, and their love and their
 loyalty.

For the strife had near found its ending, and victor was
 Gawain's foe, 145
 For his strength, it was more than Gawain's, and well-nigh
 had he laid him low,
 When the pages who rode towards them called loudly on
 Gawain's name,
 For well did they know the hero, and it grieved them to see
 his shame.
 Then he, who erewhile would fight him, of conflict would
 have no more,

But he cast from his hand his weapon, and he cried, as he
 wept full sore, 150
 'Accursèd am I, and dishonoured, and all blessing from me
 hath flown,
 Since my luckless hand, unwitting, so sinful a strife hath
 known.
 Methinks it is too unseemly! yea, guilty am I alway,
 And born 'neath a star of Ill Fortune, and forced from all
 bliss to stray.
 And the arms that to-day I carry are the same that of old I
 bore, 155
 For they are of Ill-luck the token, e'en to-day as they were of
 yore.
 Alas! that with gallant Gawain I have foughten so fierce a
 fight,
 'Tis *myself* whom I here have vanquished, and my joy shall
 have taken flight.
 With the first blow I struck against him misfortune hath
 reached my side,
 And peace shall have sped far from me, and her face from
 my face doth hide!' 160

And Gawain heard, and saw his sorrow, and he spake out
 right wonderingly,
 'Alas, Sir Knight, who art thou, who speakest thus well of
 me?
 If I might such words have hearkened the while I had
 strength and power,
 Then my honour had ne'er been forfeit, for the victory is
 thine this hour!
 And fain would I know how men call him with whom I shall
 find my fame, 165
 Since hereafter I needs must seek it, so tell me, I pray, thy
 name—
 For ever was I the victor when I fought with one man alone.'
 'Yea, gladly my *name* I'll tell thee who aforetime my *face*
 hast known,
 And true service I fain would do thee wherever such chance
 befall,
 For thy kinsman am I, and cousin, and men call me *Parzival!*
 Then out quoth Gawain, 'So, 'tis fitting, here Folly her goal
 hath found, 170
 And her ways full straight hath she wroughten which
 aforetime but crooked wound.
 Here have two hearts, leal and faithful, their hate 'gainst
 each other shown,

And thy hand which hath won the victory hath the twain of
us overthrown.
And for *both* of us shalt thou sorrow, for thyself by thyself
laid low, 175
And the thought it shall surely grieve thee if thy true heart
true faith doth know!

Then, e'en as the words were spoken, no longer the knight
Gawain
Might stand for very weakness, for the blows they had
dulled his brain,
And his footsteps they failed and faltered, and prone on the
grass he lay—
Then down sprang the squire of King Arthur, and aid did he
bring straightway, 180
For he lifted his head, and from off it he loosened the
helmet's band,
With his head-gear of peacock's feathers the face of Gawain
he fanned
Till his care new strength had brought him—Now on to the
field did ride,
From the armies twain, much people, they flocked hither
from either side.
And each one would seek his station, for here should the
fight be fought, 185
And the lists, they were set with tree-trunks, each smooth as
a mirror wrought.

Gramoflanz the cost had given, since from him had the
challenge come,
A hundred in all the tree-trunks, and brightly they shone
each one.
And no man should come within them, and the place
between was wide,
Full forty lengths from each other stood the fifty on either
side, 190
Each blazoned with many colours; and here should the
combat be;
And on either side the army from the strife should hold
them free.
As by moat and rampart sundered, so should they in peace
remain,
In this wise they sware, the foemen, King Gramoflanz and
Gawain.

To this combat, by none awaited, came the folk from either
side, 195

At the self-same hour, fain were they to know what should
 there betide,
 For they marvelled much who had fought here, and had
 shown such knightly skill;
 Or who should such strife have challenged, for alone was it
 foughten still,
 And neither side their comrades had bidden unto the ring,
 But alone had each knight come hither, and men deemed it
 a wondrous thing. 200
 But now as the fight was foughten on the flower-
 besprinkled plain,
 Came King Gramoflanz, to wreak vengeance for the garland
 upon Gawain;
 And he heard what thing had chanced there, that so fierce
 the fight had been
 That never a fiercer conflict with sword might a man have
 seen,
 And the twain who fought together had never a cause to
 fight— 205
 Then the king, from out his army, rode straight to the
 gallant knights;

 And he found them battle-weary, and much he mourned
 their pain;
 Tho' scarcely his strength might bear him, up-sprang the
 knight Gawain,
 And the twain they stood together—Now Bené rode with
 the king,
 And with him, as the strife was ended, she came to the
 battle-ring, 210
 And she saw Gawain all powerless, whom, for honour and
 fair renown,
 O'er all the world had she chosen to crown with joy's fairest
 crown.
 With a cry of heartfelt sorrow from her palfrey the maiden
 sprung,
 And she spake, as her arms around him in a close embrace
 she flung,
 'Accurst be the hand that such sorrow on so fair a form hath
 brought, 215
 For in sooth all manly beauty its mirror in thee hath sought!
 On the sward did she bid him seat him, and, the while that
 she wept full sore,
 With tender hand from his eyelids she wiped the sweat and
 gore;

And heavy and hot his harness—Then Gramoflanz quoth
 again,
 'In sooth must I grieve for thy sorrow, since my hand
 wrought it not, Gawain; 220
 If to-morrow again thou comest, and wilt meet me upon
 this field,
 Then gladly will I await thee, and will face thee with spear
 and shield.
 Now as lief would I fight with a woman as with thee, who art
 brought so low,
 For how shall I win me honour if strength shall have failed
 my foe?
 Go, rest thee to-day, for 'tis needful, and then wouldst thou
 take the place 225
 Of thy father, King Lot, I am ready to meet thee here, face to
 face.'

But Parzival stood unwearied, nor as yet a sign he bare
 Of pallor, nor strength had failed him, and he faced the
 monarch fair,
 And he loosed from his head the helmet, that the king his
 face might see,
 And he spake, 'Sir, if this my cousin in aught shall have
 wrongèd thee 230
 Then take *me* as his pledge, unwearied, as thou seest, is yet
 mine hand,
 And the wrath thou dost bear against him I may well with
 my sword withstand.'

Then spake the King of Rosche Sabbins, 'Sir Knight, at the
 morrow's morn
 For my garland he payeth tribute, and its fame shall anew
 be born,
 Or to such a pass shall he bring me that shame shall my
 portion be— 235
 Thou mayst otherwise be a hero, but this conflict is not for
thee!'

In wrath spake the lips of Bené, 'Fie on thee! thou faithless
 hound,
 Thro' him whom thy false heart hateth thine heart hath its
 freedom found.
 She to whom thou wouldst do love-service, she liveth at his
 command,
 Thyself hast renounced the victory which else might have
 crowned thine hand. 240

Thou hast no claim on Love's rewarding, and if ever within
thine heart
Love had for awhile her dwelling with falsehood she bare a
part!
As thus she waxed full wrathful, Gramoflanz led the maid
aside,
And quoth, 'Now, Lady, grieve not, this strife must needs
betide.
But stay thou here with thy master, and say to his sister
sweet
That I am in truth her servant, in all that a knight finds
meet.'

245

But now as Bené hearkened, and knew of a truth Gawain
Was brother unto her lady, and must fight on the grassy
plain,
Then drave griefs plough its furrows thro' her heart, both
deep and sore,
And filled them with flood of sorrow, for truth in her heart
she bore.
And she quoth, 'Ride hence, accursèd, thou false and
faithless one,
For steadfast love and loyal thine heart hath never won!'

250

The king and his knights they rode hence, and the lads of
Arthur's train
They took the heroes' chargers, weary with strife the twain.
Then Parzival, and Gawain, and Bené, that maiden bright,
They rode to the camp of King Arthur with many a gallant
knight.
And Parzival in manhood had so borne the prize away
That all men were glad at his coming, and rejoiced in his
fame that day.

255

And more, if I can, would I tell ye—the wise men of either
host
Spake but of this man, of his valour in this wise they made
their boast,
'Wot ye well who hath here been victor? 'Twas Parzival, he
alone!
And so fair was his face to look on none fairer was ever
known.
So thought they who looked upon him, and they swear it,
both man and maid—
So he came to the tent of Gawain; and little his host
delayed,

260

But he bade them bring costly raiment, and rich as was his
 own gear, 265
 And alike were they clad, the heroes, and all folk must the
 marvel hear
 That Parzival came among them, of whose glory all men had
 heard,
 And the fame of his deeds so knightly, and no mouth but
 spake this word.

Quoth Gawain, 'Art thou fain to look on four queens who
 are kin to thee,
 And other fair ladies with them, then thy guide will I gladly
 be.' 270
 Quoth Gamuret's son, 'If fair ladies be here thou shalt vex
 them not
 With the sight of my face, for no kindness from woman shall
 be my lot
 Since by Plimizöl's bank they hearkened to the shame that
 upon me fell:
 May their honour of God be guarded, for ever I wish them
 well,
 But my shame weigheth heavy on me, and it vexeth so sore
 my heart, 275
 I were fain ne'er to look on woman, but live me a life apart'

'Yet so must it be,' quoth Gawain; then Parzival he led
 To the four queens, who gave him greeting and kissed him
 with lips so red.
 But sorely it vexed the Duchess, that she, too, must kiss this
 knight,
 Who little had cared for her kisses, nor would for her
 favours fight— 280
 Tho' her lands and her love she proffered when he before
 Logrois fought,
 And she rode far to overtake him—thus shame in her anger
 wrought.
 But the others they spake him gently, with never a thought
 of wrong,
 Till shame from his heart was driven, and joy in its stead
 waxed strong.

Then Gawain of right and reason, if Bené his grace would
 hold, 285
 Bade her seal her lips to silence, to her lady no word be
 told,
 'That King Gramoflanz for his garland doth hatred toward
 me bear,

And at the set time to-morrow our strife must be foughten
 fair,
 Speak no word of this to my sister, and do thou thy tears
 give o'er;
 And she spake, 'I do well to weep thus, and to mourn, and
 to sorrow sore, 290
 For whoever shall fall in the combat my lady must sorrow
 know,
 And however the battle goeth, the issue shall be for woe.
 And well may we mourn the venture, my lady and I alike,
 What boots it to be her brother, if thou at her heart wilt
 strike?'

Now the host to their tents betook them, and the mid-day
 meal was spread 295
 For Gawain, and the knights and ladies who should break at
 his table bread,
 And Parzival as companion should have the Duchess fair—
 And Gawain, he besought his lady for the hero to have
 good care;
 But she quoth, 'To my care dost thou give him, who can
 make of a woman sport?
 How should I care for this man? Yet would I gainsay thee
 naught; 300
 And if this be thy will, I will do it, tho' for payment I mocking
 know'—
 Quoth Gamuret's son, 'Nay, Lady, thou doest me wrong I
 trow,
 At least have I so much wisdom, if I know myself aright,
 That women are free from my mocking, since ill 'twould
 beseem a knight!'

Whatever they set before them no lack had they there of
 meat, 305
 And courteous was their service, and with joy all the folk did
 eat.
 But Itonjé, she looked on Bené, and she read in her eyes the
 tale
 Of the tears she had wept but lately, and for sorrow her
 cheeks grew pale,
 And nothing she ate, for she thought still, 'Now wherefore
 doth Bené weep?
 For I sent her but now to the monarch who my heart doth
 his captive keep, 310
 And for whose sake I grieve me sorely—Have I done aught
 to vex my knight?

Doth he think to renounce my service and no more for my
love to fight?
If, with steadfast heart and manly, he thinketh on me no
more,
Poor maid, I must die of sorrow, and the love that to him I
bore!

The noontide hour was over ere the feast had ended here, 315
Then hither rode King Arthur, and his queen, fair Guinevere,
With a host of knights and ladies, to where, within their
sight,
Mid the band of gracious maidens sat that true and valiant
knight;
And to Parzival such greeting and such welcome fair they
gave
That from many sweet lips sweet kisses he won, that hero 320
brave!
And Arthur would do him honour, and with many a gracious
word
He thanked him for the valour that had spread his name
abroad,
And the fame that had waxed so goodly, and that stood so
high and fair,
That of right o'er all men living the crown of worth he bare.

Quoth the Waleis unto King Arthur, 'Yet Sire, when I saw 325
thee last
My honour so sore was wounded that it well-nigh to earth
was cast;
And in knighthood I paid such forfeit that of knighthood
was I forlorn—
But now have I hearkened to thee, and if thou be not
forsworn
Then honour still dwelleth with me, tho' my heart it misgives
me sore!
I would trust in thy word right gladly—But what of these 330
knights who swore
True friendship and brotherhood with me, and from whom I
must part in shame?'
Then all with one voice they spake there—He had won for
himself such fame
And had wrought such brave deeds of knighthood in many
a distant land,
That his fame o'er the fame of all others did high and
unspotted stand.

Then the knights of the Duchess' army they came where by
 Arthur's side 335
 Sat Parzival, fair to look on, 'mid the knightly circle wide.
 And the king in the tent received them, but so courtly was
 he and wise,
 That, tho' wide was the tent of Gawain, he thought best that
 in all men's eyes
 He should sit without on the meadow, and the knights they
 should sit around,
 And strangers they were to each other who place in the
 circle found. 340
 Would ye know who was this and that one? The tale it were
 all too long
 If Christian I named and paynim—Who were Klingsor's
 warriors strong;
 Who were they who so well were armèd, and showed them
 such men of might
 When they rode from the city of Logrois, and would for
 their Duchess fight;
 Who had followed King Arthur hither—If each one, his land
 and kin, 345
 I named in their rightful order 'twere ill to the end to win!
 But all men they spake together, there was none there like
 Parzival,
 For his face and his form so lovely many women might love
 him well;
 And nothing there failed unto him of aught that beseemed
 a knight
 Who beareth the crown of honour, and fighteth a goodly
 fight. 350
 Then Gamuret's son upstood there, and he spake, 'Ye who
 shall be here
 Give counsel, and help me win that which my soul ever
 holdeth dear;
 A strange and a hidden wonder it drave me from out your
 band—
 Ye who brotherhood once have sworn me, and in friendship
 have clasped my hand,
 Now help me, by this your knighthood, mine honour to win
 again!' 355
 And gladly would Arthur grant him that for which his desire
 was fain.
 Then aside with few folk he stepped him, and straitly he
 prayed this grace,

That the strife, at the hour appointed, he in Gawain's stead
 might face,
 'Right gladly will I defy him, King Gramoflanz, in his pride;
 I brake from his tree this morning a bough ere I thence did
 ride, 360
 And for that he of need must fight me—For conflict I sought
 his land,
 And for nothing else came I hither but to fight with his
 strong right hand.
 I thought not I here should find thee, my cousin, it grieves
 me sore,
 For this king did I surely take thee, who never from strife
 forbore.
 Now let me, I prithee, fight him; if ever he know defeat 365
 My hand shall such lesson teach him as he findeth not over
 sweet!
 They have given me back mine honour, and thy brother
 knight am I,
 And thy kinsman true, fair cousin, so grant to me, cousinly,
 That this combat be mine—I swear thee for us twain will I
 face the foe,
 And there do such deeds of valour that all men shall my
 manhood know! 370

 Quoth Gawain, 'In the court of King Arthur have I many a
 brother dear,
 And kinsman true, yet to no man may I grant what thou
 prayest here.
 My cause is so good, I think me, that Fate so shall rule the
 fight
 That I stand at the last the victor, tho' my foe be a man of
 might.
 God reward thee that thou, of thy kindness, this conflict for
 me wouldst face, 375
 But the day is not yet in its dawning when another may take
 my place!'

Now Arthur the prayer had hearkened, of their speech he an
 end would make,
 Once more in the ring beside them his seat did the monarch
 take.
 And the cup-bearers did not tarry, the noble youths they
 bare
 Many golden cups so precious, and wroughten with jewels
 fair, 380
 Nor one alone could fill them—and when their task was o'er

The folk uprose, and gat them each one to his rest once
more.

And night-fall had come upon them—Naught did Parzival
delay,
But he wrought in such wise that his harness might be ready
ere break of day.

Were a strap or a fastening broken, of that did he have
good care, 385

And he bade them look well unto it, that all should be fit
and fair.

And a shield new and strong must they bring him, for his
own, in many a fight,

With many a blow was cloven, and they brought him a
shield of might;

And the serving-men who bare it, they knew not the knight,
I trow,

And Frenchmen were some among them, as the venture
doth bid ye know. 390

And the steed that erewhile to jousting the Knight of the
Grail must bear,

Of that did a squire bethink him, and ne'er might it better
fare.

But now 'twas the hour for slumber, and the night had
o'ercome the day,

And Parzival slept, and before him all ready his armour lay.

And King Gramoflanz, he rued it that the day such chance
had brought 395

That another man in his presence for the sake of his garland
fought;

Nor his folk might still his longing for the strife that the
morn should bring,

And the thought, that he had delayed him, full sorely it
vexed the king.

What, then, should the hero do here? Since honour he
sought and fame,

He scarce might await the dawning, and the strife that with
daylight came, 400

But ere sunrise himself and his charger were clad all in
harness rare—

Did women, with wealth o'erburdened, the cost of his
decking share?

I wot that, without their aiding, it costly and fair should be,
For the sake of a maid did he deck him, in her service no
laggard he!

So he rode hence to seek his foeman, and sorely it vexed
the king
That the early light of the morning Sir Gawain had failed to
bring. 405

Now, unknown unto all, in secret stole Parzival from the
court,
And he stripped of its floating pennon a strong spear from
Angram brought;
And fully armed was the hero, and lonely he took his way
Where the posts round the ring of battle shone fair in the
dawning day. 410

And he saw the king await him, and ere ever a word they
spake
Men say that they smote each other thro' the shield, and
the spear-shafts brake;
And from either hand the splinters flew high in the summer
air,
For skilled were they both in jousting, and their swords they
right well might bear.
And the dew was brushed from the meadow, and the
helmets felt many a blow 415
From the edge of the blades keen-tempered, no faltering
might either know.

And the grass underfoot was trodden, and the dew-drops in
many a place
Swept away, and I needs must mourn here the red
blossoms' vanished grace.
Yet more do I mourn for the heroes, and their toil without
thought of fear,
And who with unmixed rejoicing, the tale of their strife
should hear 420

To whom they had ne'er done evil?—Then Gawain must
himself prepare
For the toil and the stress of battle, and the peril he thought
to dare.
And 'twas even the midst of the morning ere of all men the
tale was told
From his tent was Parzival missing, and they sought for the
hero bold.
Did he think to make peace? Nay, his bearing spake little,
methinks, of peace, 425
For he fought as a man, and 'twas noontide ere ever the
strife might cease.

A bishop sang Mass for Gawain, and the folk they stood
 thick around,
 And many a knight and lady on horseback might there be
 found,
 Without the tent of King Arthur, ere the Mass to an end
 they sing—
 While the priest did his holy office, beside him there stood
 the king; 430
 When he spake the Benediction, then Gawain armed himself
 for fight,
 And greaves of iron, well wroughten, they did on his limbs
 of might.
 Then uprose a voice of wailing from the women, and one
 and all
 The host rode forth to the meadow; and lo! there did strife
 befall,
 And they heard the clash of the sword-blades, and they saw
 the fire-sparks fly 435
 From the helmets as there the foemen their blows with
 fierce strength did ply.
 King Gramoflanz oft had boasted he would scorn with *one*
 man to fight,
 He thought here that *six* were his foemen, and each one a
 valiant knight
 Yet none but Parzival faced him, and he fought in such
 gallant wise,
 That he taught to the king a lesson which men e'en to-day
 may prize; 440
 That in his own praise his own lips should speak never more
 this tale,
 He could fight and could conquer *two* men, since o'er *one*
 he might not prevail.

From left and from right came the armies, o'er the grassy
 plain so wide,
 And, each one their station keeping, they halted on either
 side,
 And they looked on the mighty combat, on one side the
 chargers stood, 445
 And afoot on the ground they battled with sword-blades,
 the heroes good.
 And sharp and sore was the conflict, and steadfast the twain
 did stand,
 And their swords on high they tossed them, and oft did the
 blades change hands.

Now Gramoflanz reaped sore payment for the garland from
 off his tree,
 To the kinsman of his fair lady should the strife none too
 easy be. 450
 His kinship with fair Itonjé had stood Parzival in good stead,
 If right might have claimed a hearing, yet was not his strife
 ill-sped.
 And they who much fame had won them, again for fair fame
 would fight;
 And one strove for the sake of his kinsman, and one for his
 lady bright,
 For he did but Frau Minne's bidding, as was meet for her
 vassal true— 455
 Now upode the gallant Gawain, and e'en as he nearer drew
 The conflict was nigh its ending, and the Waleis should
 victor be;
 And, bareheaded, unto the battle, there hastened those
 heroes three,
 Brandelidelein of Punturtois, and Count Bernard of Riviers,
 And the third knight who rode beside them was Affinamus
 of Clitiers. 460
 From the army over against them came King Arthur beside
 Gawain,
 To the two knights, with battle wearied, they rode o'er the
 grassy plain;
 And all the five they thought them 'twas time that the strife
 should end,
 And Gramoflanz must confess here that no longer he might
 contend,
 And his own mouth proclaimed him vanquished, and his
 foeman had won the day— 465
 And the folk who had seen the combat might never his
 word gainsay!

 Then out spake King Lot's son gaily, 'Sir King, I will speak to
 thee
 To-day, as yestreen thou spakest when rest thou didst bid to
me
 "Go rest thee to-day, for 'tis needful," he who conflict did
 here demand,
 He will own thou art all too feeble this day to resist mine
 hand. 470
 Alone I might well have faced thee, but thou with but *two*
 wilt fight!
 To-morrow I'll dare the venture, and may God show forth
 the right!'

Then the king he rode to his army, but first must he pledge
his word
He would meet Gawain on the morrow, and face him with
spear and sword.

To Parzival quoth King Arthur, 'Nephew, thou late didst pray,
Of thy manhood, to fight this combat for Gawain, and he 475
said thee Nay,
And therein didst thou sore lament thee, and yet thou this
fight hast fought
For him who did strait forbid thee! Of our will hast thou
asked us naught.
From our court, as a thief, hast thou stolen, or else had we
held thine hand
Afar from this strife, I wot well thou didst fight not at *our*
command! 480
Yet Gawain, he shall not be wrathful, tho' great praise be for
this thy meed.'—
Quoth Gawain, 'Nay, it nothing grieves me, my cousin's
gallant deed,
To-morrow is all too early if this combat I needs must face,
An the king would withdraw his challenge I would count it
to him for grace.'

To the camp rode the mighty army, there were many ladies
fair, 485
And many a knight in armour, and costly the arms they
bare.
And I ween that never an army was so richly decked before,
For the knights of the good Round Table, and the men of
the Duchess wore
Fair surcoats richly blazoned, of silk from Zinidunt,
And bright was their outer garments, and brought from far 490
Pelpiunt.
But the heroes in either army spake ever of Parzival,
And their lips, in such wise they praised him, that his friends
it rejoiced them well.
And the men of Gramoflanz spake thus, that never the sun
had shone
On a knight who fought so bravely, or such gallant deeds
had done;
And whatever feats of knighthood had been wrought on 495
either side,
Yet he, o'er all other heroes, the victor should still abide.
Yet they knew not of whom they spake thus, nay, neither his
race or name,

Tho' the army it rang with his praises, and no mouth but
 declared his fame.

Then Gramoflanz did they counsel, King Arthur he well
 might pray
 To take good heed to his army that no knight from his ranks
 should stray 500
 For combat, as e'en that morning, but to send unto him *one*
 knight,
 The son of King Lot, Sir Gawain, for with *him* had he come
 to fight.
 And straightway he sent the message by two courtly lads
 and wise,
 And he spake, 'Now look well for the maiden who is fairest
 in all men's eyes,
 Look well by whom Bené sitteth; and so ye play well your
 part, 505
 Ye shall see in what wise she bear her, if joyful, or sad at
 heart.
 Ye shall prove these her ways in secret, in her eyes ye right
 well may see
 If yet for a friend she mourneth; and this too your task shall
 be,
 Ye shall give to my friend, fair Bené, this letter and golden
 ring,
 She knoweth for whom is the token—Now see that ye do
 this thing!' 510

In the other camp, the meanwhile, did Itonjé the tidings
 hear
 That her gallant brother, Gawain, and he whom her soul
 held dear,
 The fairest knight that a maiden within her heart might hold,
 Would fight, the one with the other, and their hand might
 no man withhold.
 Then her maiden shame it yielded to the flood of her grief
 so sore, 515
 And none shall rejoice at her sorrow, for the pain
 undeserved she bore.

Then her mother and Queen Arnivé they led the maid aside
 To a tent so small and silken, and Arnivé her grief would
 chide,
 And she bade her cease her weeping—There was naught
 that the maid might say,
 But to speak aloud the secret she hid in her heart away; 520

Then out quoth the royal maiden, 'Of my brother shall he be
slain
Who is lord of my heart and my true love! Let his hand from
such deed refrain!'

To a noble youth spake Arnivé, 'Now get thee unto my son,
And bid him come hither quickly, with him would I speak
alone.'

Then the lad he brought King Arthur—Now this was
Arnivé's mind, 525
If she told unto him the story perchance he might counsel
find,
And by him should that strife be hindered, for which the
maiden fair
So sorely wept, and such sorrow and anguish of heart must
bear.

Now they came to the camp of King Arthur, who
Gramoflanz' message bore,
By the silken tent they dismounted; there sat Bené before
the door, 530
And within spake the maid to King Arthur, 'If my brother
shall slay my king
To pleasure his faithless Duchess, doth he deem that shall
honour bring?
He might know of himself it were ill-done—He hath
wronged him no whit I ween,
That he doeth to *me* true service, his safety might well have
been!

If my brother be yet in his senses he doth of our true love
know, 535
How pure it is, and how faithful, and this venture should
work him woe.

A bitter death shall it bring me, the hand that my love doth
kill—

Sir King, thou shalt mourn my sorrow, and I think not that
such thy will,'
Spake the fair maid unto King Arthur, 'Forget not that thou
shalt be

Mine uncle, and stay this combat which worketh such ill to
me!' 540

Quoth Arthur aloud in his wisdom, 'Alas, thou fair niece of
mine,

That thus young thou canst love so dearly, for sorrow shall
sure be thine,

As sorrow befell thy sister, Surdamur, for her love so true

To the Emperor of Greece—Sweet maiden, thy will might I
surely do,
And hinder this strife, if I knew well that ye twain were but
one in heart— 540
Yet King Irot's son, he is valiant, and courage in him hath
part,
And this combat he'll fight, full surely, an Love stay not his
hand so bold—
Did he ne'er, in a joyful moment, thy fair face and sweet lips
behold?'

And she spake, 'Nay, we love, but neither as yet hath the
other seen,
Tho' of true love many a token from his hand hath my
portion been. 550
And tokens true have I sent him, that no doubt should
betwixt us lie—
No falsehood my king's heart ruleth, but he loveth me
steadfastly!'

Then the maiden Bené saw them, and knew them, the
squires twain
Who came to the court of King Arthur from Gramoflanz'
kingly train,
And she spake, 'Here should no man linger, will ye that I bid
them go, 555
The folk, from our tent? It were ill-done, methinks, that all
men should know
How sorely my lady sorroweth for the sake of her love so
dear;
Methinks it might lightly happen that too many the tale
should hear!'

Then forth from the tent went Bené, and in secret unto her
care
The squire gave the folded letter, and the golden ring he
bare, 560
And they, too, had heard the wailing of the maid, and they
knew full well
Why she sorrowed, and this their errand they fain to the
king would tell.
And they asked of the maiden Bené if she their friend would
be?
And she spake, 'Stand without the circle till I bid ye to come
to me!'

Then Bené, the gentle maiden, she told them within the tent
565

That without two squires were waiting, from Gramoflanz
hither sent,
And fain would they speak with King Arthur—'But unfitting
it seemeth me
That we call them unto our counsels, and that witnesses
they should be.
On my lady must I avenge me, if thus they shall see her
weep,
I bade them await my bidding, and without there their
station keep!' 570

Quoth Arthur, 'Are they the pages whom I saw behind me
ride?
Of noble birth shall the twain be, methinks, it might well
betide
That so wise are they both and courteous they might give
us counsel good,
Methinks of their king's love either would treat in a fitting
mood?'
Quoth Bené, 'Nay, that I know not, but Sire, of thy grace,
this ring 575
And the letter which now I bring thee, they bare hither from
their king.
As but now I left the pavilion, of the pages, one gave it me.
Now see, Lady, do thou take it, for methinks it is meant for
thee!'

Then Itonjé, she kissed the letter, and she held it unto her
heart,
And she quoth, 'Now, Sire, thou canst see here if he would
in my love have part.' 580
In his hand Arthur took the letter, and within he found
written fair
The words of one who loveth, and his passion would fain
declare.
For Gramoflanz' hand had written the words that his lips
would say,
And Arthur, he saw by the letter that Love held o'er his
heart such sway
That ne'er had he known aforetime one who loved with so
true a love— 585
And the words that within were written Frau Minne might
well approve.
'Now greeting to whom I owe greeting, whose greeting I
fain would earn,

To thee, O thou gracious maiden, whose heart toward my
 heart doth turn!
 Who with comfort would fain console me—Our love goeth
 hand-in-hand,
 And the solace thy love would bring me doth high o'er all
 solace stand; 590
 And my joy in thy love is rooted, and my faith is to thee
 held fast,
 And sorrow and bitter anguish shall forth from my heart be
 cast.
 And thou bringest me help and counsel, so that never an
 evil thought
 Or a faithless deed, and shameful, shall against my fame be
 brought.
 But I look on thy truth and thy beauty with ever a steadfast
 mind, 595
 As the Pole-star doth in the north pole the goal of its gazing
 find,
 And neither its post forsaketh; e'en so shall our true love be,
 And waver not, one from the other—So think thou, sweet
 maid, on me,
 How I mourned unto thee my sorrow, nor be weary of this
 my prayer—
 And if one would part thee from me, for the hatred that he
 shall bear 600
 Unto me, then shalt thou bethink thee how thy love shall
 reward us both,
 And think thou of woman's honour, nor be of thy favours
 loth;
 But still let me be thy servant, in thy service I fain would live,
 And, in all that I may, true service I will to my lady give!

Quoth Arthur, 'Fair niece, thou saidst truly, he greeteth thee
 without guile 605
 Such tale doth this letter tell me that never, at any while,
 Have I found of true love such marvel! His grief shalt thou
 put away,
 As he too shall cure thy sorrow, so do thou thy weeping
 stay,
 And trust unto me, this combat shall be hindered—Yet say
 thou here,
 Thou wert captive, how hath it chanced then that ye hold
 each other dear? 610
 Thou shalt give him thy fair love's payment, that he do thee
 service true.'—
 Spake Itonjé, 'See, here she standeth who us twain together
 drew,

Our love, it had else been hidden—If thou will that I now
may see
Him whom my heart desireth she will summon him unto
me!

Quoth Arthur, 'Now, show her to me; if I may, I this thing
will guide 615

That your will shall be done, and hereafter ye twain shall in
joy abide!

Quoth Itonjé, 'Twas none but Bené; and two of his squires
are here,

If thou wilt, do this thing, (for I think me my life shall to thee
be dear,)

Thou shalt see that the king cometh hither, that he looketh
upon my face

In whom all my joy is hidden, and my life shall be in his
grace! 620

Then Arthur, the wise and courteous, would speak with the
squires without,

He greeted them as he saw them, and boldly the one spake
out,

'Sire, King Gramoflanz, he prays thee, for thine honour as
knight and king,

That the oath sworn 'twixt him and Gawain thou wilt to
fulfilment bring.

And further, Sire, he prays thee that none other with him
shall fight, 625

So great is thine host, must he face *all*, methinks it would
scarce be right!

But *Gawain* shalt thou send against him, for he willeth no
other foe,

And Gawain alone hath he challenged, as thyself thou shalt
surely know!

Quoth King Arthur unto the pages, 'I will free us from blame
alway,

And sorely it grieved my nephew that he fought not the
strife to-day. 630

And the knight who fought with your monarch, to victory
was he born,

The son of Gamuret is he—Three armies are here this morn,
And from many a land came they hither, but never a man
hath seen

In combat so brave a hero, and glorious his deeds have
been.

He is Parzival, my kinsman, ye shall see him, the fair of face,
 — 635
 For the faith and the need of Gawain will I do to the king
 this grace.'

Then King Arthur and maiden Bené, with the squires they
 rode here and there,
 And in sooth those squires they looked on full many a lady
 fair,
 And they saw on the jewelled helmets many proud crests
 and knightly wave,
 And few for such sight shall vex them, for he who is rich as
 brave 640
 Full many a friend he findeth! They 'lighted not from their
 steed,
 And the bravest men of the armies that lay camped on the
 flowery mead
 King Arthur would show unto them, they might gaze on
 them at their will,
 Knights, ladies, and gentle maidens, of beauty they saw their
 fill!

In three portions it lay, the army, and two spaces there were
 between— 645
 Then away from the camp rode King Arthur, far out on the
 plain so green,
 And he quoth, 'Now sweet maiden Bené, her plaint didst
 thou hear alway,
 Itonjé, the child of my sister, her weeping she will not stay.
 These my comrades who ride beside me, if they will, they
 may well believe
 Of her beauty their king hath robbed her, so sorely the maid
 doth grieve! 650
 Now help me, ye twain, and thou, Bené, that the king he
 shall hither ride,
 E'en to-day, tho' the strife to-morrow he may, if he will,
 abide.
 I will bring Gawain to meet him on the plain, as he prayed
 but now—
 If he cometh to-day to mine army 'gainst the morn is he
 armed I trow,
 For Love such a shield shall give him that his foeman may ill
 withstand 655
 The courage that Love doth kindle, and that nerveth anew
 the hand.
 And his princes shall he bring with him, for here would I do
 as best

Doth lie in my power that the Duchess shall hearken to my
 behest,
 And peace shall be sealed between them—Now strive ye,
 my comrades dear,
 With skill for such happy ending, 'twill be to your honour
 here. 660
 And further I make my mourning, wherein shall have been
 my sin
 That I wrought 'gainst your king that he beareth, in such
 measure, against my kin,
 Both love alike and hatred? Methinks, he doth hold us light!
 Another king, mine equal, had thought more of this my
 right.
 Doth he think to repay with hatred *her* brother, who loves
 him well? 665
 If his heart such thought shall teach him, then he knoweth
 not true Love's spell!'

Quoth one of the squires to King Arthur, 'What my king did
 to thee of ill,
 That, Sire, shall he do no longer, for courteous shall he be
 still.
 But thou knowest well the old hatred, and 'twere better the
 king should stay
 Within his camp, I think me, than ride to thine host to-day. 670
 Of the same mind is still the Duchess, that she counteth him
 for her foe,
 And maketh her plaint against him, as many a man doth
 know!'

'With but few folk shall he come hither,' quoth Arthur, 'the
 while I'll pray
 Of that high and noble lady that her anger she put away.
 And an escort good I'll send him, Beau-corps, my sister's
 son, 675
 Shall meet him half-way, and his journey shall under my
 care be done.
 Nor as shame shall he look upon it, for brave men and true
 I'll send'—
 Then leave did they take of King Arthur, and their way to the
 camp they wend.

Alone did they leave the monarch, and Bené and the pages
 twain
 Rode swiftly unto Rosche Sabbins, on the further side of the
 plain. 680
 'Twas the fairest day of his life-time, so thought the joyful
 king,

When his squires and the maiden Bené such tidings to him
might bring.
And e'en as he hearkened to them his heart spake, in sooth
to-day
Good Fortune had thought upon him, and his sorrow was
put away!

Then he spake, 'He would come, right gladly,' and he chose
to him comrades three, 685
A prince of his land was each one who bare the king
company.

Brandelidelein, his uncle, with his nephew was fain to ride,
Affinamus of Clitiers, and Count Bernard of Riviers rode
beside.
And each man he chose another who should be for such
journey meet,
And twelve in all might ye reckon who rode hence the king
to greet. 690
And many a squire went with them, and many a footman
strong,
Well armèd, as should befit them, did unto the train belong.

Would ye know how the knights had robed them? Of silk
was their raiment bright,
And heavy with gold inwoven that shone in the morning
light.
And the king, he went as to hawking, with his falconer by his
side— 695

Now Arthur had well bethought him, and Beau-corps he
bade to ride,
And half-way to meet the monarch as escort both fit and
fair—
And over the stretch of the meadow, or a pool or a brook
lay there,
Where'er one might find the water rode the king as on
pastime bent,
Yet ever Love drew him onward, and on Love was his heart
intent. 700

And Beau-corps, he rode towards him, and in such wise the
king would greet
That I ween 'twas a joyful moment when the twain and their
folk did meet.

And more than fifty pages with Beau-corps should ride that
day,
And their faces were fair to look on, Dukes and Counts
might they be alway,

And kings' sons, too, rode among them—And the greeting
was good to see, 705
When from either side the children kissed each other, of
true heart free.

And Beau-corps was fair to look on, and the king asked,
who might he be?
And Bené, she straightway answered. 'The son of King Lot is
he,
And *Beau-corps* the name men call him'—Then he thought,
'Of a sooth, my heart,
Thou hast found her! For she shall be like him who so
knightly doth play his part, 710
For in truth shall she be his sister, she who sent me the
headgear rare
That of erst was in Sinzester fashioned, and the hawk on
mine hand I bear.
If she further will show me kindness then all earthly power
and pride
Would I count as naught, might I win her, tho' the earth
were twice as wide.

And surely she meaneth truly—For love of her came I here, 715
Hitherto hath she dealt so kindly that methinks I but little
fear;
She will show unto me such favour that my courage shall
wax full high!
Then he clasped the hand of her brother that fair in his
hand did lie.

In the meanwhile within his army King Arthur in such wise
wrought
That the Duchess was fain to grant him the peace that his
lips had sought. 720
For rich was her consolation for her love by King
Gramoflanz slain,
For whose sake she had borne him hatred; and no more
might her lips complain,
For her anger had sunk to slumber, and she wakened to life
anew
'Neath Gawain's embrace so tender, and her wrath, it was
smitten thro'.

Then Arthur, the king of the Bretons, took many a lady
bright, 725
One hundred, both wife and maiden, who were lovely in all
men's sight,
In a tent apart he set them—Nor might her lot fairer be,

Itonjé, who sat beside them, since her king there she
 thought to see.
 And ever her heart was joyful, and yet in her soft eyes' glow
 Ye might see that the gentle maiden thro' love must sore
 sorrow know. 730

And many a knight and hero sat there, yet among them all
 No face was so fair to look on as the fair face of Parzival.
 To the tent-door up rode the monarch, and Gramoflanz, he
 ware
 For garment a robe of wonder, in Gampfassâsch wroughten
 fair.
 'Twas a rick silk, all gold embroidered, and woven with
 golden thread, 735
 And a shimmer of light from his vesture afar round the
 monarch spread.

Then they who had hither ridden adown from their steeds
 they spring,
 And the squires, they press them forward to the tent before
 their king,
 And the chamberlains vie with each other, and they make
 thro' the court a way
 To the throne where the queen of the Bretons in her glory
 sat that day. 740

Brandelidelein, his uncle, before the monarch went,
 And the twain, Guinevere she kissed them, and bade
 welcome within her tent.
 And Count Bernard, and Affinamus a kiss from her lips must
 take—
 Then to Gramoflanz Arthur turned him, and thus to the king
 he spake,
 'Ere thou takest thy seat, bethink thee; if thou dost a maiden
 love, 745
 And thou seest her here, thou mayst kiss her, nor will I such
 kiss reprove!'

It had told him which was his lady, the letter he read but
 now
 In the open field, and that letter, 'twas her brother's face I
 trow!
 The brother of her who from all men had hidden her love so
 true—
 And Gramoflanz' eyes beheld her, and straightway his love
 he knew, 750
 And his heart swelled high within him—Since Arthur had
 willed their bliss,

And had bid him in men's sight greet her, on her sweet lips
the maid he kissed.

Brandelidelein, he sat him by the queen, fair Guinevere,
And King Gramoflanz, he was seated by the maid, who with
many a tear

Had dimmed the glow of her beauty; 'twas for his sake she
wept so sore, 755

Nor might he take vengeance on her, since guiltless this
woe she bore.

But softly he spake unto her, and he vowed to her service
true,

And she thanked him for this his coming, and their hearts
toward each other flew,

And further no word they spake there, but they gazed in
each other's eyes,

And their yea and their nay would I tell here, were I but in
Love's language wise. 760

To Brandelidelein quoth Arthur, 'Methinks thou enow hast
told

Thy tale in the ears of my lady!' Then he led forth the hero
bold,

To a little tent he led him, apart on the grassy field;
Yet Gramoflanz came not with them, but, e'en as King

Arthur willed,

He abode in the tent with his comrades, and so fair were the
ladies bright, 765

That I deem well to look upon them but little would vex a
knight

And fair was their joy and their pastime, 'twould please
many a man, I trow,

Who to-day, after peril ended, would joy for his sorrow
know.

Then wine to the queen and her ladies and to many a knight
they bare,

And, methinks, an enow they tasted, their faces waxed fresh
and fair. 770

To Brandelidelein and King Arthur the cup-bearers wine
must bring;

As they passed from the tent in this wise quoth Arthur, the
goodly king:

'Sir King, say, the conflict ended, if the strife in such wise
have run

That the king, the son of thy sister, shall have slain my
sister's son,

Yet would woo my niece, the maiden who maketh to him
 her moan 775
 But now, as they sit together and their love for each other
 own;
 If she do as shall best beseem her, she will favour him never
 more,
 But will give him for payment hatred as shall vex the king
 full sore
 If her love he yet desireth—for where love is o'ercome by
 hate
 Then joy from true hearts is banished, and desire doth with
 sorrow mate! 780

Then out spake the King of Punturtois to Arthur of Brittany,
 'Sir King, they are sons to our sisters betwixt whom this hate
 shall be.
 'Tis our part this strife to hinder, nor other shall be its end
 Save that they twain shall love each other, and from foe
 shall be turned to friend.
 'Twere best that thy niece, Itonjé, ere she yield to my
 nephew's prayer, 785
 Shall say, if in truth he love her he shall from this strife
 forbear.
 Thus an end shall be put to the combat, and the quarrel
 shall turn to peace—
 And thou, thou shalt pray the Duchess that her wrath 'gainst
 my nephew cease!'

'Yea, that have I done,' quoth Arthur, 'my sister's son,
 Gawain,
 He holdeth such power o'er the lady, that, as courtesy doth
 constrain, 790
 For his sake and mine she forgiveth the ill that the king hath
 done—
 Now do thou thy part with thy nephew, that peace on his
 side be won.'
 Brandelidelein quoth straightway, 'I will do e'en as thou dost
 say'—
 And back to the tent and the feasting the monarchs they
 took their way.

Then sat the King of Punturtois on one side of the gracious
 queen, 795
 And Parzival sat on the other, and so fair was his face, I
 ween,
 That never a man so goodly their eyes had beheld afore—

Then Arthur, the king, he rose up, and he gat him from out
the door,
And he sought Gawain, his nephew; then he, who a while
must hear
How his foemen had ridden hither, learnt that Arthur now
drew anear, 800
And before his tent dismounted—Then swift did Sir Gawain
spring,
And forth from the tent on the meadow he hastened to
meet the king.

Then counsel they took together, and the Duchess, she
peace would swear,
But not otherwise save that Gawain for her sake should this
strife forbear.
Then should Gramoflanz be forgiven, if *he*, too, would
forgive the ill 805
Once done by King Lot, her kinsman—so Arthur should
speak her will.

Then Arthur the wise and courteous, he brought the tale
again,
And King Gramoflanz, for his garland, henceforward must
mourn in vain.
And his hatred to Lot of Norway it passed as the snow
flakes melt
In the sun, 'neath the glance of Itonjé, and anger no more
he felt. 810
And the while he sat beside her he said to her bidding, yea,
—

Then they spake, Gawain came hither with his knights in
brave array,
And their names I may not tell ye, nor the land in which
each was born;
But here love had banished sorrow, and sadness was
overworn.

Then the Duchess, Orgelusé, and her gallant men and true, 815
With part of the host of Klingsor, with Gawain nearer drew;
And the covering 'gainst wind and weather from the king's
tent they took away,
And thither came good Arnivé with Sangivé and Kondrie
always,
They came at King Arthur's bidding where men words of
peace would speak,
(He who counteth this but a small thing, at his will may a
greater seek.) 820

Then Iofreit, Gawain's comrade, by her white hand, within
 the tent
 Led the Duchess, fair and stately, and on this was she
 courteous bent,
 That the three queens should go before her—Brandelidelein
 they kissed,
 Then she followed, proud Orgelusé, nor the monarch her
 greeting missed.
 Then Gramoflanz stepped towards her, atonement he fain
 would make, 825
 From her sweet lips the kiss of forgiveness as token of
 peace he'd take;
 And the lady was moved to weeping, for she thought of her
 true love slain,
 And the faith and the sorrow of women did her heart to
 such woe constrain.

Then Gramoflanz and Sir Gawain with a kiss put an end to
 strife;
 And Arthur gave maid Itonjé to King Gramoflanz to wife, 830
 For truly and long had he served her; and Bené was glad
 that day—
 And another for love's sake sorrowed, and his sorrow was
 put away,
 For Lischois, the Duke of Gowerzein, won fair Kondrie for his
 own,
 And, I ween, were her love not his portion his life little joy
 had known.

To the Turkowit, brave Florant, as his wife King Arthur gave 835
 Her who wedded King Lot aforetime, and her love a man
 well might crave;
 'Twas a gift such as love beseemeth, and the knight took it
 joyfully—
 For the king, he was aye free-handed, and he gave such
 gifts readily!

To this end had he well bethought him, and counsel wise
 had ta'en,
 And soon as his speech was ended, the Duchess, she spake
 again, 840
 And she said that her love Sir Gawain had conquered with
 valiant hand,
 And henceforth he of right was master alike of her life and
 land.
 And many a knight who hearkened he thought her speech
 ill to hear,

For they fought for her love, and had broken in her service
full many a spear.

Gawain, and they who rode with him, Arnivé, and the
Duchess fair, 845

And many a lovely lady prayed leave of the monarch there.
And Parzival, he went with them—Sangivé and maid
Kondrie

They rode hence, but with King Arthur she abode still, fair
Itonjé.

And the wedding feast that was holden was a feast beyond
compare;

And Guinevere took Itonjé, and her true love, within her
care, 850

The gallant king who with knighthood full many a prize had
won,

And for love and desire of Itonjé full many brave deeds had
done.

And many they sought their lodging who for love's sake
must sorrow sore;

And how that night they had feasted, of that will we think
no more—

But they who for love did service, who knew of true love the
might, 855

They would that the day was ended, for fairer they deemed
the night.

Then King Gramoflanz sent this message (he bethought him
in his pride)

To his men, who, before Rosche-Sabbins, lay camped by the
water-side.

They should spare nor pains nor labour, but their tents
should they strike straightway,

And hither, with all his army, should they hasten ere break
of day. 860

And his marshal here must seek him a fitting place and fair
—

'Each prince by himself be encamped, and ye shall for
myself prepare

Such goodly state and royal as well shall beseem a king,
Nor spare ye the cost'—'Twas nightfall ere this word to the
host they bring.

And many a man must sorrow who had learnt from a
woman woe,— 865

Whose love to the winds is scattered, and who ne'er doth
rewarding know

For his service, to grief he speedeth, and naught shall his
steps delay,
Save only the help of a woman o'ertaketh him on his way.

But Parzival, he bethought him of his wife so fair and sweet,
How pure she was, and how gentle—Did he ne'er another
greet, 870
And offer for fair love service, and, wavering, love anew?
Nay, nay, he was far from such dealings, and naught of such
love he knew!

For a mighty faith so guarded his body alike and heart
That never a woman living might have in his love a part,
Save only his queen and lady, Kondwiramur, the flower 875
Of women, Love's fairest blossom, with none should she
share her power.

And he thought, 'Since to Love I wakened but ill hath Love
dealt with me,
Of Love was I born, how comes it that I must from her
presence flee?
Tho' my hand for the Grail be seeking yet desire it doth
rend my heart,
And I yearn for her sweet embraces; ah, too long have we
dwelt apart! 880

Shall I look with mine eyes on rejoicing while my heart seeth
naught but woe?
The twain fit but ill together, and no man thereby shall
know
High courage, a knight befitting—Now Good Fortune direct
my way,
And show me what best beseemeth!' His harness before
him lay,

And he thought, 'Since to me that lacketh with which others
are richly blest,— 885
The love in whose sweet fulfilment many sad hearts have
found their rest—
Since this sorrow must be my portion I care not what else
my lot,
Little reck I what shall befall me, since my joy Heaven willeth
not!

And thou, for whose love I am yearning, were it so both with
me and thee,
That our hearts ever dreamed of parting, nor our love from
all doubt were free, 890
It might well be that with another joy and blessing again
were mine,

But thy love it so fast doth hold me, I may rest on no heart
but thine!
And for aye am I Sorrow's captive! Now Good Fortune bring
joy to all
Who find peace in fair Love's fulfilment, they are blessed
whate'er befall—
May God give to this folk rejoicing! But I from their joy must
flee, 895
And wend lonely as of aforetime, since gladness is not for
me!'

Then he stretched out his hand to his harness, and as oft
was his wont of yore,
Unaided he girt it on him, and soon was he armed once
more.
Now sorrow anew he seeketh—When he, who from joy
would fly,
Had armed himself, his charger he saddled right speedily, 900
And his shield and spear were ready—O'er his loss did they
wail next morn,
For no eye looked on his departing, he rode thence ere the
day was born.

BOOK XV FEIREFIS

ARGUMENT

Book XV. tells how Parzival met with a mighty heathen, with whom he fought fiercely, and how he was well-nigh vanquished. How he found the heathen to be his brother, Feirefis Angevin, and how the twain rode together to the court of King Arthur.

Of the welcome given to Feirefis by King Arthur and his knights; of his riches; and of the kings conquered by the two brothers.

How a feast of the Round Table was holden, and how Kondrie bare tidings of Parzival's election to the Grail Kingdom, and summoned him, his wife, and his son Lohengrin, to Monsalväsch; and how Parzival and Feirefis rode thither with Kondrie as their guide.

BOOK XV FEIREFIS

Now many were sorely angered that I told not this tale
afore
Howe it wearied them naught in the hearing—Now my
words I withhold no more,
But give ye to wit full truly, as my mouth may the story
tell,

The end of this wondrous venture for methinks it shall
please ye well.

Ye shall know how the king, Anfortas, of his wound was
made whole again—

5

Of the queen doth the venture tell us, who in far Pelrapär
did reign;

How she kept a pure heart and loyal till the day of her great
reward,

And earth's fairest crown was her guerdon at the hand of
her faithful lord.

Ye shall hear the tale of its winning, if my skill fail me not
always;

Yet first must ye list the labour that Parzival wrought that
day.

10

Now, tho' dauntless his hand had striven, but as children his
foemen all,

And ne'er would I risk my hero might I rule that which shall
 befall.
 I must sorrow sore for his peril, and fain would I speak him
 free,
 But now must I trust that Good Fortune the shield of his
 heart may be.
 For purity, and high courage, side by side in his heart they
 lay, 15
 And ne'er had he cherished cowardice, nor shrunk from the
 knightly fray;
 And I deem this shall surely give him such strength he his
 life may hold,
 Since fierce strife draweth nigh unto him, and his foe is a
 hero bold.
 For he meeteth a prince of battles who dauntless to strife
 doth ride,
 And unbaptized was the foeman who rode here in his
 heathen pride. 20

Full soon had he come, our hero, to a mighty woodland
 shade,
 And without, in the light of the dawning, his armour a
 knight displayed.
 'Twere a marvel could I, a poor man, of the riches now speak
 to ye
 That the heathen he bare as his decking, so costly their
 worth should be.
 If more than enough I told ye, yet more would be left to tell;
 Yet I would not his wealth were hidden—What of riches, I 25
 ween, shall dwell
 In Bretagne alike and England, and be tribute to Arthur's
 might,
 They had paid not the stones that, shining, glowed fair on
 his armour bright.
 His blazoned coat was costly, and naught but the truth I say,
 Ruby and Chalcedony, ye had held them not fair that day. 30
 And bright as the sun was his vesture, on the mount of
 Agremontein,
 In the glowing fires, Salamanders had welded that
 garment's shine.
 There jewels rare and precious, with never a fault or flaw,
 Glowed dark and light; of their nature, I ween, I can tell no
 more!

His desire was for love's rewarding, and the winning of high
 renown, 35

He had won from the hands of fair women the jewels that
 his pride did crown.
 For the favour Frau Minne showed him with joy did his
 proud heart beat,
 And it swelled high with manly courage, as is for a lover
 meet.
 As reward for his deeds of knighthood on his helmet a beast
 he bare,
 Ecidemon, all poisonous serpents they must of its power
 beware, 40
 For of life and of strength doth it rob them, if they smell it
 but from afar—
 Thopedissimonté, Assigarzionté, Thasmé, and Arabia,
 They scarce of such silk might boast them as was covering
 for his steed—
 He sought, that mighty heathen, in a woman's love his
 meed,
 And therefore he bravely decked him, and fain would his
 courage prove, 45
 And his manhood, it urged him onward to battle for sake of
 love.

Now the knight, so young and gallant, in a haven beside the
 wood,
 But little known, on the water had anchored his ships so
 good.
 And his armies were five-and-twenty, and they knew not
 each other's speech—
 'Twas a token fair of his riches, and the lands that his power
 might reach, 50
 As the armies, so were the kingdoms that did service unto
 his hand—
 And Moors and Saracens were they, and unlike was each
 warlike band,
 And the hue of their skins was diverse—Thus gathered from
 lands afar
 Ye might see in his mighty army strange weapons of
 heathen war.

So thus, in search of adventure, from his army this man
 would ride, 55
 In the woodland green he wandered, and waited what
 should betide.
 And since thus it well doth please them, so let them ride,
 these kings,
 Alone, in search of ventures, and the fair fame that combat
 brings.

Yet Parzival rode not lonely, methinks he had comrades
 twain,
 Himself, and the lofty courage that lord o'er his soul did
 reign. 60
 And that he so bravely fought here might win from a
 woman praise,
 If falsehood should not mislead her, that injustice should
 rule her ways.

So spurred they against each other, who were lambs in their
 purity,
 Yet as lions were they bold and dauntless, 'twas a sight for a
 man to see!
 Ah! woe is me for their meeting, for the world and its ways
 are wide, 65
 And they well might have spared each other, nor, guiltless,
 to battle ride.
 I should sorrow for him whom I brought here, save my heart
 did this comfort hold,
 That the Grail shall with strength endue him, and Love
 shelter the hero bold,
 Since he was of the twain the servant, nor his heart ever
 wavering knew,
 And ever his hand was ready to serve them with service
 true. 70

My skill little wit doth give me this combat that here befell,
 In fitting words and knightly, from beginning to end to tell.
 But the eye of each flashed triumph as the coming foe he
 saw,
 And the heart of each knight waxed joyful, as they nearer to
 battle draw.
 Yet sorrow, I ween, was nigh them, true hearts, from all
 falsehood free, 75
 And each bare the heart of the other, and should comrade
 and stranger be!

Nor may I asunder part them, the paynim and Christian
 knight,
 Hatred they show to each other, tho' no cause have they
 here for fight.
 And methinks this of joy shall rob them, who, as true
 women, share their pain
 Who risk their lives for a woman! May they part, ere one
 here be slain! 80

As the lion-cub, that its mother beareth dead, doth to life
 awake
 At the awful voice of its father, so these twain, as the
 spear-shafts break
 Arouse to fresh life, and to honour, I ween, are they newly
 born,
 For many a joust have they ridden and many a spear
 outworn.
 Then they tighten the hanging bridle, and they take to their
 aim good care, 85
 That each on the shield of the other, as he willeth, shall
 smite him fair.
 And no point do they leave unguarded, and they give to
 their seat good heed,
 As men who are skilled in jousting, and sharply each spurs
 his steed.

And bravely the joust was ridden, and each gorget asunder
 broke,
 And the spears bent not, but in splinters they flew from
 each mighty stroke; 90
 And sore was he wroth, the heathen, that this man might his
 joust abide,
 For never a knight but had fallen who a course 'gainst his
 spear would ride.
 Think ye that their swords they wielded as their chargers
 together drew?
 Yea, the combat was sharp and bitter, and each must give
 proof anew
 Alike of his skill and his manhood—The strange beast,
 Ecidemon, 95
 Had many a wound, and beneath it the helmet sore blows
 had won;
 And the horses were hot and wearied, and many new turns
 they tried—
 Then down they sprung from their chargers, and their
 sword-blades afresh they plied.

And the heathen wrought woe to the Christian, 'Thasmé!
 was his battle-cry,
 And when 'Tabronit!' he shouted he drew ever a step anigh. 100
 And the Christian, he showed his valour in many an
 onslaught bold;
 So pressed they upon each other—Nor would I the tale
 withhold
 Of how the fight was foughten, yet must I the strife
 bemoan,

How, one flesh and one blood thus sharing, each wrought
 evil unto his own;
 For both were the sons of one father, and brothers, I ween,
 were they, 105
 And methinks upon such foundation faith and friendship
 their stone should lay!

And love ne'er had failed the heathen, and his heart was for
 combat fain,
 For the love of Queen Sekundillé fresh honour he thought
 to gain;
 Tribalibot's land she gave him, and she was his shield in
 strife—
 So bravely he fought, how think ye that the Christian might
 guard his life? 110
 On love let his thoughts be steadfast, else sure is he here
 undone,
 And he hath from the hand of the heathen in this combat
 his death-blow won.
 O thou Grail, by thy lofty virtue such fate from thy knight
 withhold!
 Kondwiramur, thine husband in such deadly stress behold!
 Here he standeth, of both the servant, in such danger and
 peril sore 115
 That as naught ye may count the ventures he hath dared for
 your sake of yore!
 Then on high flashed the sword of the heathen, and many
 such blow had slain,
 To his knee Parzival was beaten—Now see how they fought,
 the twain,
 If twain ye will still account them, yet in sooth shall they be
 but one,
 For my brother and I are one body, e'en as husband and
 wife are one! 120

The heathen wrought woe to the Christian—Of Asbestos, I
 ween, his shield,
 That wondrous wood that never to flame or decay shall
 yield;
 I' sooth, right well she loved him who gave him a gift so fair,
 Turquoise, Chrysoprase, Emerald, Ruby, rich jewels beyond
 compare
 Decked with shining lines its surface, on the boss shone a
 precious stone, 125
 Antrax, afar they call it, as Carbuncle it here is known.
 And as token of love, for his guarding, Sekundillé the queen
 would give

That wondrous beast, Ecidemon—in her favour he fain
would live,
And e'en as she willed he bare it, as his badge, did that
gallant knight—
Here with purity faith joined issue, and truth with high truth
would fight. 130

For love's sake upon the issue of this combat each risked his
life,
Each had pledged his hand to the winning of honour and
fame in strife;
And the Christian, in God he trusted since the day that he
rode away
From the hermit, whose faithful counsel had bidden him
trust alway
In Him who could turn his sorrow into bliss without thought
of bale— 135
To Him should he pray for succour, whose succour should
never fail.

And fierce and strong was the heathen, when 'Tabronit,' he
cried,
For there, 'neath the mount Caucasus did the queen,
Sekundillé', abide;
Thus gained he afresh high courage 'gainst him who ne'er
knew of yore
The weight of such deadly combat, for in sooth was he
pressed full sore— 140
To defeat was he aye a stranger, and ne'er had he seen its
face,
Tho' his foemen right well must know it, as they yielded
them to his grace!

With skill do they wield their weapons, and sparks spring
from the helmets fair,
And a whistling wind ariseth as the blades cleave the
summer air;
God have Gamuret's son in His keeping! and the prayer it
shall stand for both, 145
For the twain shall be one nor, I think me, to own it were
either loth.
For had they but known each other their stake ne'er had
been so great,
For blessing, and joy, and honour, were risked on that
combat's fate,
For he who shall here be victor, if true brother and knight he
be,

Of all this world's joy is he forfeit, nor from grief may his
heart be free! 150

Sir Parzival, why delay thee to think on thy queen and wife,
Her purity and her beauty, if here thou wouldst save thy
life?

For the heathen, he bare two comrades who kindled his
strength anew,
The one, in his strong heart, steadfast, lay ever a love so
true;
And the other, the precious jewels that burnt with a mystic
glow, 155

Thro' whose virtue his strength waxed greater, and his heart
must fresh courage know.

And it grieveth me sore that the Christian was weary and
faint with fight,
Nor swiftly might he avoid him, and his blows they were
robbed of might;

And if the twain fail to aid thee, O thou gallant Parzival,
Thy queen and the Grail, then I think me this thought it shall
help thee well, 160

Shall thy fair babes thus young be orphaned? Kardeiss and
Lohengrin,
Whom thy wife, e'en as thou didst leave her, for her joy and
her hope must win—
For children thus born in wedlock, the pledge of a love so
pure,
I ween are a man's best blessing, and a joy that shall aye
endure!

New strength did he win, the Christian, and he thought,
none too soon, I ween, 165

On his love so true and faithful, on Kondwiramur, his queen,
How he won his wife at the sword's point, when sparks from
the helm did spring
'Neath the mighty blows he dealt him, Klamidé, the warrior
king.

'Tabronit! and Thasmé!' and above them rung clear his
battle-cry, 170

'Pelrapär!' as aloud he cried it to his aid did his true love fly,
O'er kingdoms four she sought him, and her love gave him
strength anew,
And lo! from the shield of the heathen the costly splinters
flew,
Each one a hundred marks' worth—and the sword so strong
and keen

That lther of Gaheviess bare first brake sheer on the
 helmet's sheen,
 And the stranger, so rich and valiant, he stumbled, and
 sought his knee— 175
 For God, He no longer willed it that Parzival lord should be
 Of this weapon of which in his folly he had robbed a gallant
 knight—
 Then up sprang afresh the heathen who ne'er before fell in
 fight,
 Not yet is the combat ended, and the issue for both shall
 stand
 In the power of the God of battles, and their life lieth in His
 hand! 180

And a gallant knight was the heathen, and he spake out,
 right courteously,
 (Tho' the tongue was the tongue of a heathen yet in fair
 French his speech should be,)
 'Now I see well, thou gallant hero, thou hast no sword
 wherewith to fight,
 And the fame shall be small I win me if I fight with an
 unarmed knight,
 But rest thee awhile from conflict, and tell me who thou
 shalt be, 185
 For the fame that so long I cherished it surely had fallen to
 thee
 Had the blow not thy sword-blade shattered—Now, let
 peace be betwixt us twain,
 And our wearied limbs will we rest here ere we get us to
 strife again.'
 Then down on the grass they sat them, and courteous and
 brave were they,
 Nor too young nor too old for battle—fit foemen they were
 that day! 190

Then the heathen, he spake to the Christian, 'Believe me, Sir
 Knight, that ne'er
 Did I meet with a man so worthy the crown of such fame to
 bear
 As a knight in strife may win him—Now, I prithee, tell thou
 to me
 Thy name, and thy race, that my journey may here not
 unfruitful be!
 Quoth the son of fair Herzeleide, 'Thro' *fear* shall I tell my
 name? 195
 For thou askest of me such favour as a victor alone may
 claim!'

Spake the heathen prince from Thasmé, 'Then that shame
shall be mine, I ween,
For first will I speak my title, and the name that mine own
hath been;
"Feirefis Angevin" all men call me, and such riches are mine,
I trow,
That the folk of full many a kingdom 'neath my sceptre as
vassals bow!' 200

Then, e'en as the words were spoken, to the heathen quoth
Parzival,
'How shall "*Angevin*" be thy title, since as heirdom to *me* it
fell,
Anjou, with its folk and its castles, its lands and its cities fair?
Nay, choose thee some other title, if thou, courteous,
wouldst hear my prayer!
If thro' thee I have lost my kingdom, and the fair town
Béalzenan, 205

Then wrong hadst thou wrought upon me ere ever our strife
began!
If one of us twain is an Angevin then by birthright that one
am I!—
And yet, of a truth, was it told me, that afar 'neath an
Eastern sky,
There dwelleth a dauntless hero, who, with courage and
knightly skill,
Such love and such fame hath won him that he ruleth them
at his will. 210
And men say, he shall be my brother—and that all they who
know his name
Account him a knight most valiant, and he weareth the
crown of fame!'

In a little space he spake further, 'If, Sir Knight, I thy face
might see,
I should know if the truth were told me, if in sooth thou art
kin to me.
Sir Knight, wilt thou trust mine honour, then loosen thine
helmet's band, 215
I will swear till once more thou arm thee to stay from all
strife mine hand!

Then out he spake, the heathen, 'Of such strife have I little
fear,
For e'en were my body naked, my sword, I still hold it here!
Of a sooth must thou be the vanquished, for since broken
shall be thy sword

What availeth thy skill in combat keen death from thine
 heart to ward, 220
 Unless, of free will, I spare thee? For, ere thou couldst clasp
 me round,
 My steel, thro' the iron of thy harness, thy flesh and thy
 bone had found!
 Then the heathen, so strong and gallant, he dealt as a
 knight so true,
 'Nor mine nor thine shall this sword be!' and straight from
 his hand it flew,
 Afar in the wood he cast it, and he quoth, 'Now, methinks,
 Sir Knight, 225
 The chance for us both shall be equal, if further we think to
 fight!'

Quoth Feirefis, 'Now, thou hero, by thy courteous breeding
 fair,
 Since in sooth thou shalt have a brother, say, what face doth
 that brother bear?
 And tell me here of his colour, e'en as men shall have told it
 thee.'
 Quoth the Waleis, 'As written parchment, both black and
 white is he, 230
 For so hath Ekuba told me.' 'Then that brother am I alway,'
 Quoth the heathen—Those knights so gallant, but little they
 made delay,
 But they loosed from their heads the helmet, and they made
 them of iron bare,
 And Parzival deemed that he found there a gift o'er all
 others fair,
 For straightway he knew the other, (as a magpie, I ween, his
 face,) 235
 And hatred and wrath were slain here in a brotherly
 embrace.
 Yea, friendship far better 'seemed them, who owed to one
 sire their life,
 Than anger, methinks, and envy—Truth and Love made an
 end of strife.

Then joyful he spake, the heathen, 'Now well shall it be with
 me,
 And I thank the gods of my people that Gamuret's son I see.
 Blest be Juno, the queen of heaven, since, methinks, she
 hath ruled it so, 240
 And Jupiter, by whose virtue and strength I such bliss may
 know,

Gods and goddesses, I will love ye, and worship your
 strength for aye—
 And blest be those shining planets, 'neath the power of
 whose guiding ray
 I hither have made my journey—For ventures I here would
 seek, 245
 And found *thee*, brother, sweet and awful, whose strong
 hand hath made me weak.
 And blest be the dew, and the breezes, that this morning
 my brow have fanned.
 Ah! thou courteous knight who holdest love's key in thy
 valiant hand!
 Ah! happy shall be the woman whose eyes on thy face shall
 light,
 Already is bliss her portion who seeth so fair a sight! 250

 'Ye speak well, I would fain speak better of a full heart, had I
 the skill;
 Yet alas! for I lack the wisdom, tho' God knoweth, of right
 goodwill
 The fame of your worth and valour by my words would I
 higher raise,
 And as eye, and as heart should serve me, the twain, they
 should speak your praise;
 As your fame and your glory lead them, so behind in your
 track they fare— 255
 And ne'er from the hand of a foeman such peril hath been
 my share
 As the peril your hand hath wrought me! and sooth are
 these words I say.'
 In this wise quoth the knight of Kanvoleis; yet Feirefis spake
 away;

 'With wisdom and skill, I wot well, hath Jupiter fashioned
 thee,
 Thou true and gallant hero! Nor thy speech shall thus
 distant be, 260
 For "ye" thou shalt no more call me, of one sire did we
 spring we twain.'
 And with brotherly love he prayed him he would from such
 speech refrain
 And henceforward '*thou*' to call him, yet Parzival deemed it
 ill,
 And he spake, 'Now, your riches, brother, shall be e'en as
 the Baruch's still,
 And ye of us twain are the elder, my poverty and my youth 265

They forbid me "*thou*" to call ye, or discourteous were I in
truth.

Then the Prince of Tribalibot, joyful, with many a word
would praise
His god, Jupiter, and to Juno thanksgiving he fain would
raise,
Since so well had she ruled the weather, that the port to
which he was bound
He had safely reached, and had landed, and there had a
brother found.

270

Side by side did they sit together, and neither forgot the
grace
Of courtesy, to the other, each knight fain had yielded place.
Then the heathen spake, 'My brother, wilt thou sail with me
to my land,
Then two kingdoms, rich and powerful, will I give thee into
thine hand.

Thy father and mine, he won them when King Eisenhart's life
was run,

275

Zassamank and Assagog are they—to no man he wrong
hath done,
Save in that he left me orphaned—of the ill that he did that
day

As yet have I not avenged me, for an ill deed it was alway.
For his wife, the queen who bare me, thro' her love must
she early die,

When she knew herself love-bereavèd, and her lord from
her land did fly.

280

Yet gladly that knight would I look on, for his fame hath
been told to me
As the best of knights, and I journey my father's face to see!'

Then Parzival made him answer, 'Yea I, too, I saw him ne'er;
Yet all men they speak well of him, and his praises all lands
declare,

And ever in strife and conflict to better his fame he knew,
And his valour was high exalted, and afar from him
falsehood flew.

285

And women he served so truly that all true folk they praised
his name,

And all that should deck a Christian lent honour unto his
fame,

For his faith it for aye stood steadfast, and all false deeds
did he abhor,

But followed his true heart's counsel—Thus ever I heard of
 yore 290
 From the mouth of all men who knew him, that man ye
 were fain to see,
 And I ween ye would do him honour if he yet on this earth
 might be,
 And sought for fame as aforetime—The delight of all
 women's eyes
 Was he, till king Ipomidon with him strove for knighthood's
 prize,
 At Bagdad the joust was ridden, and there did his valiant life
 For love's sake become death's portion, and there was he 295
 slain in strife;
 In a knightly joust we lost him from whose life do we spring,
 we twain;
 If here ye would seek our father, then the seas have ye
 sailed in vain!'

'Alas, for the endless sorrow!' quoth the knight. 'Is my father
 dead?
 Here joy have I lost, tho' it well be that joy cometh in its
 stead. 300
 In this self-same hour have I lost me great joy, and yet joy
 have found,
 For myself, and thou, and my father, we three in one bond
 are bound;
 For tho' men as *three* may hold us, yet I wot well we are but
 one,
 And no wise man he counts that kinship 'twixt father,
 methinks, and son,
 For in truth for more must he hold it—With *thyself* hast thou
 fought to-day, 305
 To strife with *myself* have I ridden, and I went near myself to
 slay;
 Thy valour in good stead stood us, from myself hast thou
 saved my life—
 Now Jupiter see this marvel, since thy power so hath ruled
 the strife
 That from death hast thou here withheld us! Then tears
 streamed from his heathen eyes,
 As he laughed and wept together—Yea, a Christian such
 truth might prize, 310
 For our baptism truth should teach us, since there are we
 named anew
 In the Name of Christ, and all men they hold the Lord Christ
 for true!

Quoth the heathen, e'en as I tell ye, 'No longer will we abide
 In this place, but if thou, my brother, for a short space with
 me wilt ride,
 From the sea to the land will I summon, that their power be
 made known to thee, 315
 The richest force that Juno e'er guided across the sea.
 And in truth, without thought of falsehood, full many a
 gallant knight
 Will I show thee, who do me service, and beneath my
 banners fight,
 With me shalt thou ride towards them.' Then Parzival spake
 alway,
 'Have ye then such power o'er these people that your
 bidding they wait to-day 320
 And all the days ye are absent?' Quoth the heathen, 'Yea,
 even so,
 If for half a year long I should leave them, not a man from
 the place would go,
 Be he rich or poor, till I bade him. Well victualled their ships
 shall be,
 And neither the horse nor his rider setteth foot on the
 grassy lea,
 Save only to fetch them water from the fountain that
 springeth fair, 325
 Or to lead their steeds to the meadow to breathe the fresh
 summer air.'

Then Parzival quoth to his brother, 'If it be so, then follow
 me
 To where many a gracious maiden, and fair pleasures, ye
 well may see,
 And many a courteous hero who shall be to us both akin—
 Near by with a goodly army lieth Arthur, the Breton king, 330
 'Twas only at dawn I left them, a great host and fair are they,
 And many a lovely lady shall gladden our eyes to-day.'
 When he heard that he spake of women, since he fain for
 their love would live,
 He quoth, 'Thou shalt lead me thither, but first thou shalt
 answer give
 To the question I here would ask thee—Of a truth shall we
 kinsmen see 335
 When we come to the court of King Arthur? For ever 'twas
 told to me
 That his name it is rich in honour, and he liveth as valiant
 knight'—
 Quoth Parzival, 'We shall see there full many a lady bright,

Nor fruitless shall be our journey, our own folk shall we find
 there,
 The men of whose race we have sprung, men whose head
 shall a king's crown bear.' 340

Nor longer the twain would sit there, and straightway did
 Parzival
 Seek again the sword of his brother that afar in the
 woodland fell,
 And again the hero sheathed it, and all hatred they put
 away,
 And e'en as true friends and brothers together they rode
 that day.

Yet ere they might come to King Arthur men had heard of
 the twain a tale— 345
 On the self-same day it befell so that the host, they must
 sore bewail
 The loss of a gallant hero, since Parzival rode away—
 Then Arthur, he took good counsel, and he spake, 'Unto the
 eighth day
 Would they wait for Parzival's coming, nor forth from the
 field would fare'—
 And hither came Gramoflanz' army, and they many a ring
 prepare, 350
 And with costly tents do they deck them, and the proud
 knights are lodged full well,
 Nor might brides e'er win greater honour than here to this
 four befell.
 Then from Château Merveil rode thither a squire in the self-
 same hour,
 And he said, in their column mirrored, had they seen in their
 fair watch-tower
 A mighty fight, and a fearful—'And where'er men with
 swords have fought, 355
 I wot well, beside this combat their strife shall be held as
 naught.'
 And the tale did they tell to Gawain, as he sat by King
 Arthur's side,
 And this knight, and that, spake wondering to whom might
 such strife betide?
 Quoth Arthur the king, 'Now I wager that I know of the
 twain *one* knight,
 'Twas my nephew of Kanvoleis fought there, who left us ere
 morning light!' 360

And now, lo the twain rode hither—They had foughten a
 combat fair,
 As helmet and shield sore dented with sword-stroke might
 witness bear.
 And well skilled were the hands that had painted these
 badges of strife, I trow,
 (For 'tis meet in the lust of combat that a knight's hand such
 skill should show,)
 Then they rode by the camp of King Arthur—As the heathen
 knight rode past 365
 Full many a glance of wonder at his costly gear was cast.
 And with tents the plain was covered—Then rode they to
 Gawain's ring,
 And before his tent they halted—Did men a fair welcome
 bring,
 And lead them within, and gladly behold them? Yea, even
 so,
 And Gawain, he rode swiftly after when he did of their
 coming know; 370
 For e'en as he sat by King Arthur he saw that his tent they
 sought,
 And, as fitted a courteous hero, joyful greeting to them he
 brought.

And as yet they bare their armour—Then Gawain, the
 courteous knight,
 He bade his squires disarm them—In the stress of the
 deadly fight
 Ecidemon, the beast, was cloven; the robe that the heathen
 ware 375
 In many a place bare token of the blows that had been its
 share,
 'Twas a silk of Saranthasmé, decked with many a precious
 stone,
 And beneath, rich, snow-white, blazoned with his bearings
 his vesture shone.
 And one over against the other stood the gems in a double
 row;
 By the wondrous Salamanders was it woven in fierce flame's
 glow! 380
 All this glory a woman gave him, who would stake on his
 skill in strife
 Her crown alike and her kingdom, as she gave him her love
 and life.
 'Twas the fair Queen Sekundillé (and gladly he did her will,
 And were it for joy or for sorrow he hearkened her bidding
 still)

And, e'en as her true heart willed it, of her riches was he the
lord, 385
For her love, as his rightful guerdon, had he won him with
shield and sword.

Then Gawain, he bade his people of the harness to have
good care,
That naught should be moved from its station, shield, or
helmet, or vesture fair.
And in sooth a gift too costly e'en the blazoned coat had
been
If poor were the maid who a love-gift would give to her
knight, I ween, 390
So rich were the stones that decked it, the harness of pieces
four—
And where wisdom with goodwill worketh, and of riches
there be full store,
There love well can deck the loved one! And proud Feirefis,
he strove
With such zeal for the honour of women, he well was repaid
by Love!

And soon as he doffed his harness they gazed on the
wondrous sight, 395
And they who might speak of marvels said, in sooth, that
this heathen knight,
Feirefis, was strange to look on! and wondrous marks he
bore—
Quoth Gawain to Parzival, 'Cousin, I ne'er saw his like
before,
Now who may he be, thy comrade? For in sooth he is
strange to see!'
Quoth Parzival, 'Are we kinsmen, then thy kinsman this
knight shall be, 400
As Gamuret's name may assure thee—Of Zassamank is he
king,
There my father he won Belakané who this prince to the
world did bring.'
Then Gawain, he kissed the heathen—Now the noble
Feirefis
Was black and white all over, save his mouth was half red, I
wis!

Then they brought to the twain fair raiment, and I wot well
their cost was dear. 405
(They were brought forth from Gawain's chamber.) Then the
ladies, they drew anear,

And the Duchess she bade Sangivé and Kondrie first kiss the
knight
Ere she and Arnivé proffered in greeting their lips so bright.
And Feirefis gazed upon them, and, methinks, he was glad
at heart
At the sight of their lovely faces, and in joy had he lot and
part. 410

Then Gawain spake to Parzival, 'Cousin, thou hast found a
new battle-field,
If aright I may read the token of thy helmet and splintered
shield,
Sore strife shall have been your comrade, both thine and
thy brother's too!
Say, with whom did ye fight so fiercely?' Then Parzival spake
anew,
'No fiercer fight have I foughten, my brother's hand pressed
me sore 415

To defend me, no charm more potent than defence 'gainst
death's stroke I bore.
As this stranger, whom yet I knew well, I smote, my sword
brake in twain,
Yet no fear did he show, and 'vantage he scorned of
mischance to gain,
For afar did he cast his sword-blade, since he feared lest
'gainst me he sin,
Yet naught did he know when he spared me that we twain
were so near akin. 420
But now have I won his friendship, and his love, and with
right goodwill
Would I do to him faithful service as befitteth a brother still!'

Then Gawain spake, 'They brought me tidings of a dauntless
strife and bold,
In Château Merveil the country for six miles may ye well
behold,
The pillar within the watch-tower showeth all that within
that space 425
Doth chance,—and he spake, King Arthur, that *one* who
there strife did face,
Should be *thou* cousin mine of Kingrivals, now hast thou the
tidings brought,
And we know of a sooth the combat was even as we had
thought.
Now believe me, the truth I tell thee, for eight days here our
feast we'd hold

In great pomp, and await thy coming, shouldst thou seek us,
 thou hero bold. 430
 Now rest here, ye twain, from your combat—but methinks,
 since ye thus did fight,
 Ye shall each know the other better, and hatred shall own
 love's might.'

That eve would Gawain sup early, since his cousin of far
 Thasmé,
 Feirefis Angevin, and his brother, had tasted no food that
 day.
 And high and long were the cushions that they laid in a ring
 so wide, 435
 And many a costly covering of silk did their softness hide.
 And long, and wide, and silken, were the clothes that above
 them went,
 And the store of Klingsor's riches they spread forth within
 the tent.
 Then four costly carpets silken, and woven so fair to see,
 Did they hang one against the other, so the tale it was told
 to me; 440
 And beneath them, of down were the pillows, and each one
 was covered fair,
 And in such wise the costly couches for the guests would
 the squires prepare.

And so wide was the ring that within it six pavilions right
 well might stand
 Nor the tent ropes should touch each other—(Now wisdom
 doth fail mine hand,
 I will speak no more of these marvels). Then straightway
 Gawain he sent 445
 To King Arthur, he fain would tell him who abode here
 within his tent,
 He had come, the mighty heathen, of whom Ekuba erst did
 tell
 On Plimizöl's plain! And the tidings they rejoiced King
 Arthur well.

And he who should bear the tidings, he was Iofreit, and
 Idol's son;
 And he bade the king sup early, and so soon as the meal
 was done, 450
 With his knights and his host of ladies, to ride forth a train
 so fair,
 And a fit and worthy welcome for Gamuret's son prepare.

Quoth the king, 'All who here are worthy, of a sooth, will I
 bring with me.'
 Quoth Iofreit, 'Ye fain will see him, so courteous a knight is
 he,
 And a marvel is he to look on—From great riches he forth
 must fare, 455
 For the price of his coat emblazoned is such as no man
 might bear,
 And no hand might count its equal, not in Löver or Brittany,
 Or in England, or e'en from Paris to Wyzant beside the sea
 —
 Nay, all the rich lands between them, were their wealth in
 the balance weighed,
 Then the cost of his goodly raiment, I think me, were yet
 unpaid!' 460
 Then again came the knight Iofreit, when he to the king had
 told
 The guise that should best befit him when he greeted the
 heathen bold.
 And within the tent of Gawain the seats were ordered fair,
 In courteous rank and seemly, and the guests to the feast
 repair.
 And the vassals of Orgelusé, and the heroes within her train 465
 Who gladly for love had served her, they sate there beside
 Gawain.
 Their seats they were on his right hand, on his left were
 Klingsor's knights,
 And over against the heroes sat many a lady bright,
 All they who were Klingsor's captives, in sooth were they fair
 of face,
 And Parzival and his brother, by the maidens they took their
 place. 470
 Then the Turkowit, Sir Florant, and Sangivé, that noble
 queen,
 Sat over against each other, and in like wise, the board
 between,
 Sat Gowerzein's Duke, brave Lischois, and his wife, the fair
 Kondrie.
 Iofreit and Gawain forgat not each other's mate to be,
 As of old would they sit together, and together, as
 comrades, eat. 475
 The Duchess, with bright eyes shining, by Arnivé must find
 her seat,
 Nor forgat they to serve each other with courteous and
 kindly grace—

At the side sat fair Orgelusé, while Arnivé by Gawain found
place.

And all shame and discourteous bearing from the circle
must take their flight,
And courteous they bare the viands to each maid and each
gallant knight. 480
Then Feirefis looked on his brother, and he spake unto
Parzival;
'Now Jupiter ruled my journey so that bliss to my lot would
fall
Since his aid shall have brought me hither, and here mine
own folk I see,
And I praise the sire that I knew not, of a gallant race was
he!'

Quoth the Waleis, 'Ye yet shall see them, a folk ye right well
may love, 485
With Arthur their king and captain, brave knights who their
manhood prove.
So soon as this feast is ended, as methinks it will be ere
long,
Ye shall see them come in their glory, many valiant men and
strong.
Of the knights of the good Round Table there shall sit at this
board but three,
Our host, and the knight Iofreit, and such honour once fell
to me, 490
In the days that I showed me worthy, that they prayed me I
would be one
Of their band, nor was I unwilling, but e'en as they spake
'twas done,'

Now 'twas time, since all well had eaten, the covers to bear
away
From before both man and maiden, and this did the squires
straightway.
The host would no longer sit there; then the Duchess and
Arnivé spake, 495
And they prayed that the twain, Sangivé and Kondrie, they
with them might take;
And go to the strange-faced heathen, and entreat him in
courteous wise—
When Feirefis saw them near him, from his seat did the
prince arise,
And with Parzival, his brother, stepped forward the queens
to meet,

By his hand did the Duchess take him, and with fair words
 the knight would greet; 500
 And the ladies and knights who stood there she bade them
 be seated all—
 Then the king and his host came riding, with many a
 trumpet call;
 And they heard the sound of music, of tambour, and flute,
 and horn,
 With many a blast drew nearer the king of Arnivé born;
 And the heathen this pomp and rejoicing must hold for a
 worthy thing— 505
 And Guinevere rode with King Arthur, so came they to
 Gawain's ring;
 And goodly the train that followed of ladies and gallant
 knights,
 And Feirefis saw among them fair faces with youth's tints
 bright;
 And King Gramoflanz rode among them, for Arthur's guest
 was he,
 And Itonjé, his love so loyal, true lady, from falsehood free! 510

Then the gallant host dismounted, with many a lady sweet,
 And Guinevere bade Itonjé her nephew, the heathen, greet.
 Then the queen herself drew anear him, and she kissed the
 knight Feirefis,
 And Gramoflanz and King Arthur received him with friendly
 kiss;
 And in honour they proffered service unto him, those
 monarchs twain, 515
 And many a man of his kinsfolk to welcome the prince was
 fain.
 And many a faithful comrade Feirefis Angevin had found,
 Nor in sooth was he loth to own here that he stood upon
 friendly ground.

Down they sat them, both wife and husband, and many a
 gracious maid,
 And many a knight might find there (if in sooth he such
 treasure prayed,) 520
 From sweet lips sweet words of comfort—If for wooing such
 knight were fain,
 Then from many a maid who sat there no hatred his prayer
 would gain,
 No true woman shall e'er be wrathful if a true man for help
 shall pray,
 For ever the right she holdeth to yield, or to say him 'Nay,'

And if labour win joy for payment then such guerdon shall
 true love give— 525
 And I speak but as in my lifetime I have seen many true folk
 live—
 And service sat there by rewarding, for in sooth 'tis a
 gracious thing
 When a knight may his lady hearken, for joy shall such
 hearing bring.

And Feirefis sat by King Arthur, nor would either prince
 delay
 To the question each asked the other courteous answer to
 make straightway— 530
 Quoth King Arthur, 'May God be praised, for He honoureth
 us I ween,
 Since this day within our circle so gallant a guest is seen,
 No knight hath Christendom welcomed to her shores from a
 heathen land
 Whom, an he desired my service, I had served with such
 willing hand!'

Quoth Feirefis to King Arthur, 'Misfortune hath left my side, 535
 Since the day that my goddess Juno, with fair winds and a
 favouring tide,
 Led my sail to this Western kingdom! Methinks that thou
 bearest thee
 In such wise as he should of whose valour many tales have
 been told to me;
 If indeed thou art called King Arthur, then know that in
 many a land
 Thy name is both known and honoured, and thy fame o'er
 all knights doth stand.' 540

Quoth Arthur, 'Himself doth he honour who thus spake in
 my praise to thee
 And to other folk, since such counsel he won of his courtesy
 Far more than of my deserving—for he spake of his kindly
 will.
 Yea, in sooth shall my name be Arthur, and the tale would I
 hearken still
 Of how to this land thou camest, if for *love's* sake thou
 bearest shield, 545
 Then thy love must be fair, since to please her thou ridest so
 far afield!
 If her guerdon be not withholden then love's service shall
 wax more fair,

Else must many a maid win hatred from the knight who her
badge doth bear!

'Nay, 'twas otherwise,' quoth the heathen; 'Now learn how I
came to thee,

I led such a mighty army, they who guardians of Troy would
be, 550

And they who its walls besieged, the road to my hosts must
yield—

If both armies yet lived, and lusted to face me on open field,
Then ne'er might they win the victory, but shame and defeat
must know

From me and my host, of a surety their force would I
overthrow!—

And many a fight had I foughten, and knightly deeds had
done, 555

Till as guerdon at length the favour of Queen Sekundill' I
won.

And e'en as her wish so my will is, and her love to my life is
guide,

She bade me to give with a free hand, and brave knights to
keep at my side,

And this must I do to please her; and I did even as she
would,

'Neath my shield have I won as vassals full many a warrior
good, 560

And her love it hath been my guerdon—An Ecidemon I bear
On my shield, even as she bade me, at her will I this token
wear.

Since then, came I e'er in peril, if but on my love I thought
She hath helped me, yea, Jupiter never such succour in need
hath brought!

Quoth Arthur, 'Thy gallant father, Gamuret, he hath left thee
heir 565

To the heart that on woman's service thus loveth afar to
fare.

Of such service I too can tell thee, for but seldom hath
greater deeds

Been done for a woman's honour, or to win of her love the
meed,

Than were done for the sake of the Duchess who sitteth
beside us here.

For her love many gallant heroes have splintered full many a
spear, 570

Yea, the spear-shafts were e'en as a forest! And many have
paid the cost

Of her service in bitter sorrow, and in joy and high courage
lost!

And then the tale he told him of the fame that Gawain had
found,
And the knights of the host of Klingsor, and the heroes who
sat around,
And of Parzival, his brother, how he fought fierce combats
twain,

575

For the sake of Gramoflanz' garland, on loflanz' grassy plain;
'And what other have been his ventures, who never himself
doth spare

As thro' the wide world he rideth, that shall he himself
declare;

For he seeketh a lofty guerdon, and he rideth to find the
Grail.

And here shall it be my pleasure that ye twain, without lack
or fail,

580

Shall tell me the lands and the peoples against whom ye
shall both have fought.'

Quoth the heathen, 'I'll name the princes whom I here as my
captives brought':

'King Papyrus of Trogodjenté, Count Behantins of
Kalomedenté,

Duke Farjelastis of Africk, and King Tridanz of Tinodent;
King Liddamus of Agrippé, of Schipelpjonte King
Amaspartins,

585

King Milon of Nomadjentesin, of Agremontein, Duke
Lippidins;

Gabarins of Assigarzionté, King Translapins of Rivigatas,
From Hiberborticon Count Filones, from Sotofeititon,
Amincas,

From Centrium, King Killicrates, Duke Tiridé of Elixodjon,
And beside him Count Lysander, from Ipopotiticon.

590

King Thoaris of Orastegentesein, from Satharjhonté Duke
Alamis,

And the Duke of Duscontemedon, and Count Astor of
Panfatis.

From Arabia King Zaroaster, and Count Possizonjus of Thiler,
The Duke Sennes of Narjoclin, and Nourjenté's Duke,
Acheinor,

Count Edison of Lanzesardin, Count Fristines of Janfusé,
Meiones of Atropfagenté, King Jetakranc of Ganpfassasché,
From Assagog and Zassamank princes, Count Jurans of
Blemunzîn.

595

And the last, I ween, shall a Duke be, Affinamus of
Amantasîn!

'Yet one thing for a shame I deemed it—In my kingdom
'twas told to me
Gamuret Angevin, my father, the best of all knights should
be 600

That ever bestrode a charger—Then so was my will and
mind,

That, afar from my kingdom faring, my father I thought to
find;

And since then strife hath been my portion, for forth from
my kingdoms twain

A mighty host and powerful 'neath my guidance hath
crossed the main,

And I lusted for deeds of knighthood; if I came to a goodly
land, 605

Then I rested not till its glory paid tribute into mine hand.

And thus ever I journeyed further—I won love from two
noble queens,

Olympia and Klauditté; Sekundillé the third hath been.

And well have I served fair women!—Now first must I learn
to-day

That my father is dead! My brother, the tale of thy ventures
say.' 610

And Parzival quoth, 'Since I seek it, The Grail, in full many a
fight,

Both far and near, have I striven, in such wise as beseems a
knight,

And my hand of their fame hath robbed them who never
before might fall—

If it please ye the tale to hearken, lo! here will I name them
all!'

'King Schirniel of Lirivoin, and his brother of Avendroin, King
Mirabel, 615

King Piblesun of Lorneparz, of Rozokarz, King Serabel,

Of Sirnegunz, King Senilgorz, and Strangedorz of

Villegarunz,

Rogedal the Count of Mirnetalle and Laudunal of Pleyedunz.

From Semblidag King Zyrolan, from Itolac Onipreiz,

From Zambron the Count Plenischanz, and Duke Jerneganz
of Jeropleis, 620

Count Longefiez of Teuteleunz, Duke Marangliess of

Privegarz,

From Lampregun Count Parfoyas, from Pictacon Duke
 Strennolas;
 Postefar of Laudundrehte, Askalon's fair king, Vergulacht,
 Duke Leidebron of Redunzehte, and from Pranzile Count
 Bogudaht,

Collevâl of Leterbé, Jovedast of Arl, a Provençal, 625
 Count Karfodyas of Tripparûn, all these 'neath my spear
 must fall.
 In knightly joust I o'erthrew them the while I the Grail must
 seek!
 Would I say those I felled in *battle*, methinks I o'er-long
 must speak,
 It were best that I here keep silence—Of those who were
 known to me,
 Methinks that the greater number I here shall have named
 to ye! 630

From his heart was he glad, the heathen, of his brother's
 mighty fame,
 That so many a gallant hero 'neath his hand had been put
 to shame,
 And he deemed in his brother's honour he himself should
 have honour won,
 And with many a word he thanked him for the deeds that
 he there had done.

Then Gawain bade his squires bear hither (yet e'en as he
 knew it not) 635
 The costly gear of the heathen, and they held it was fair I
 wot.
 And knights alike and ladies, they looked on its decking
 rare,
 Corslet, and shield, and helmet, and the coat that was
 blazoned fair.
 Nor narrow nor wide the helmet—And a marvel great they
 thought

The shine of the many jewels in the costly robe inwrought, 640
 And no man I ween shall ask me the power that in each did
 dwell,
 The light alike and the heavy, for I skill not the tale to tell;
 Far better might they have told it, Heraclius or Hercules
 And the Grecian Alexander; and better methinks than these
 Pythagoras, the wise man, for skilled in the stars was he, 645
 And so wise that no son of Adam I wot well might wiser be.

Then the women they spake, 'What woman so e'er thus
 hath decked this knight

If he be to her love unfaithful he hath done to his fame
 despite.'
 Yet some in such favour held him, they had been of his
 service fain—
 Methinks the unwonted colour of his face did their fancy
 gain! 650
 Then aside went the four, Gawain, Arthur, Gramoflanz, and
 Parzival,
 (And the women should care for the heathen, methinks it
 would please them well.)

And Arthur willed ere the morrow a banquet, rich and fair,
 On the grassy plain before him they should without fail
 prepare,
 That Feirefis they might welcome as befitting so brave a
 guest. 655
 'Now be ye in this task not slothful, but strive, as shall seem
 ye best,
 That henceforth he be one of our circle, of the Table Round,
 a knight.'
 And they spake, they would win that favour, if so be it
 should seem him right.
 Then Feirefis, the rich hero, he brotherhood with them
 sware;
 And they quaffed the cup of parting, and forth to their tents
 would fare. 660
 And joy it came with the morning, if here I the truth may
 say,
 And many were glad at the dawning of a sweet and a
 welcome day.

Then the son of Uther Pendragon, King Arthur, in this wise
 spake:
 For Round Table a silk so costly, Drianthasmé, he bade them
 take—
 Ye have heard how it once was ordered, afar on Plimizöl's
 plain, 665
 How they spread them there a Round Table, in such wise
 was it spread again—
 'Twas cut in a round, and costly it was, and right fair to see,
 And on the green turf around it the seats of the knights
 should be.
 It was even a goodly gallop from the seats to the Table
 Round,
 For the Table's self it was not, yet the likeness they there had
 found. 670

And a cowardly man might shame him to sit there with such
gallant knights,
And with sin would his food be tainted since he ate it not
there of right.

Thro' the summer night 'twas measured, the ring, both with
thought and care,
And from one end unto the other with pomp they the seats
prepare.

And the cost were too great for a poor king, as they saw it
in noontide light, 675
When the trappings, so gay and costly, shone fair in the
sun-rays bright.
Gramoflanz and Gawain would pay it, the cost, since within
their land
He was but a guest, King Arthur, tho' he dealt with a
generous hand.

And the night, it seldom cometh but, as it is wont, the sun
Bringeth back the day and the daylight when the hours of
the night are run; 680
And e'en so it befell, and the dawning was clear and calm
and bright,
And many a flowery chaplet crowned the locks of many a
knight;
And with cheeks and lips unpainted saw ye many a lovely
maid,
And, if Kiot the truth hath spoken, knight and lady they
were arrayed

In diverse garb and fashion, with head-gear both high and
low, 685
As each in their native country their faces were wont to
show—
'Twas a folk from far kingdoms gathered and diverse their
ways were found—
If to lady a knight were lacking she sat not at the Table
Round,

But if she for knightly service had promised a guerdon fair,
She might ride with her knight, but the others, they must to
their tents repair. 690

When Arthur the Mass had hearkened, then Gramoflanz did
they see
With Gowerzein's Duke and Florant; to the king came the
comrades three,
And each one a boon would crave here, for each of the
three was fain

To be one of the good Round Table, nor this grace did they
 fail to gain.
 And if lady or knight would ask me who was richest of all
 that band, 695
 Who sat as guests in the circle, and were gathered from
 every land,
 Then here will I speak the answer, 'twas Feirefis Angevin,
 But think not from my lips of his riches a further tale to win.

Thus in festive guise, and gaily, they rode to the circle wide,
 And often to maid had it chanced (so closely the guests
 must ride) 700
 Were her steed not well girthed she had fallen—with
 banners waving high
 From every side of the meadow to each other the groups
 drew nigh;
 And a Buhurd fair was ridden without the Table Round,
 And in courtly guise and skilful no man rode *within* its
 bound;
 There was space without for the chargers, and they handled
 their steeds with skill, 705
 And rode each one against the other till the ladies had
 looked their fill.

Then in order fair they seat them when 'twas time for the
 guests to eat,
 And cup-bearer, steward, and butler, they bethink them as
 shall be meet,
 How, courteous, to do their office—No lack of food had
 they,
 And many a maid was honoured as she sat by her knight
 that day. 710
 And many thro' fond heart's counsel had been served by
 knightly deed—
 And Feirefis, and the Walesis, to the maidens they gave good
 heed,
 And they looked on the one and the other, and a fair choice
 was theirs, I ween,
 For never on field or meadow may the eye of man have
 seen
 So many sweet lips and fair faces as shone there at the
 Table Round, 715
 And the heathen was glad for their beauty, and the joy that
 his heart had found.
 Now hail to the hour that cometh, and the tidings they soon
 shall hear

From the welcome lips of a maiden who draweth the host
 anear;
 For a maiden came towards them, and her raiment was fair
 to see,
 And e'en as in France the custom so 'twas fashioned right
 cunningly. 720
 Her mantle was costly velvet, and blacker, I ween, its hue
 Than the coat of a sable jennet; and with gold was it woven
 thro'
 With turtle-doves, all shining, the badge of the Grail were
 they.
 And they looked and they marvelled at her as toward them
 she made her way,
 For swiftly she came, and her head-gear was high and white,
 her face 725
 With many a veil was shrouded, and her features no man
 might trace.

Then with even pace and seemly she rode o'er the turf so
 green,
 And saddle and reins and trappings were costly enow I
 ween;
 And they let her within the circle—Now she who would
 tidings bring
 No fool was she, but wise maiden—So rode she around the
 ring, 730
 And they showed her where sat King Arthur, nor her
 greeting should fail that day,
 In French was her speech, and in this wise the monarch she
 fain would pray;
 They should wreak not on her their vengeance for the words
 that she spake of yore,
 But hearken unto her message since welcome the news she
 bore.
 And the king and the queen she pleaded to give unto her
 their aid, 735
 That she failed not to win from the hero the grace that she
 fain had prayed.

Then to Parzival she turned her, since his place by the king's
 was found,
 And she stayed not, but down from her charger she sprang
 swiftly unto the ground,
 And with courteous mien, as beseemed her, fell low at the
 hero's feet,
 And, weeping, she prayed that in friendship her coming he
 now would greet, 740

And forget his wrath against her, and forgive her without a
 kiss.
 And they joined to her prayer their pleadings, King Arthur
 and Feirefis.
 Of a sooth Parzival must hate her, yet he hearkened to
 friendship's prayer,
 And of true heart and free forgave her—Tho' I say not the
 maid was fair,
 Yet methinks she was honour-worthy—Then swiftly she
 sprang upright, 745
 And thanked those who had won her pardon for the wrong
 she had done the knight.
 Then she raised her hand to her head-gear, were it wimple
 or veil, no less
 Was it cast on the ground, and all men knew Kondrie, the
 sorceress.
 And they knew of the Grail the token and the badge that
 the maiden bare,
 And all men I ween must marvel—Her face it was e'en as fair
 As man and maiden saw it when to Plimizöl's banks she 750
 came,
 Of her countenance have I told ye, and to-day was it still the
 same,
 And yellow her eyes as the topaz, long her teeth, and her
 lips in hue
 Were even as is a violet, that man seeth not *red* but *blue*!

 Yet methinks had her will been evil she had borne not the
 head-gear rare 755
 That aforetime, on Plimizöl's meadow, it had pleased the
 maid to wear.
 The sun it had worked no evil, if its rays thro' her hair might
 win
 Yet scarce had they shone so fiercely as to darken one whit
 her skin.

 Then courteous she stood, and she spake thus, and good
 were her words to hear,
 In the self-same hour her tidings came thus to the listening
 ear; 760
 'Oh! well is thee, thou hero, thou Gamuret's son so fair,
 Since God showeth favour to thee whom Herzeleide of old
 did bear.
 And welcome is he, thy brother, Feirefis, the strange of hue,
 For the sake of my Queen Sekundillé, and the tidings that
 erst I knew

Of the gallant deeds of knighthood that his valiant hand
 hath done, 765
 For e'en from the days of his childhood great fame for
 himself he won!

And to Parzival she spake thus, 'Now rejoice with a humble
 heart,
 Since the crown of all earthly blessings henceforward shall
 be thy part,
 For read is the mystic writing—The Grail, It doth hail thee
 king,
 And Kondwiramur, thy true wife, thou shalt to thy kingdom
 bring, 770
 For the Grail, It hath called her thither—Yea, and Lohengrin,
 thy son,
 For e'en as thou left her kingdom twin babes thou by her
 hadst won.
 And Kardeiss, he shall have in that kingdom a heritage rich I
 trow!
 And were no other bliss thy portion than that which I tell
 thee now—
 That with true lips and pure, thou shalt greet him, Anfortas
 the king, again, 775
 And thy mouth thro' the mystic question shall rid him of all
 his pain,
 For sorrow hath been his portion—If joy's light thro' thy
 deed shall shine
 On his life, then of all earth's children whose bliss shall be
 like to thine?'

Seven stars did she name unto him in Arabic, and their
 might,
 Right well Feirefis should know it, who sat there, both black
 and white. 780
 And she spake, 'Sir Parzival, mark well the names that I tell
 to thee,
 There is Zevâl the highest planet, and the swift star Almustri;
 Almarek and the shining Samsi, great bliss unto thee they
 bring,
 Alligafir is fifth, and Alketer stands sixth in the stary ring;
 And the nearest to us is Alkamer; and no dream shall it be,
 my rede, 785
 For the bridle of heaven are they, to guide and to check its
 speed,
 'Gainst its swiftness their power, it warreth—Now thy sorrow
 is passed away,

For far as shall be their journey, and far as shall shine their
 ray.
 So wide is the goal of thy riches and the glory thine hand
 shall win,
 And thy sorrow shall wane and vanish—Yet this thing It
 holds for sin, 790
 The Grail and Its power, It forbids thee unlawful desire to
 know,
 And the company of sinners henceforth must thou shun, I
 trow;
 And riches are thine, and honour, but from these shall thy
 life be free—
 Now thy youth was by sorrow cherished, and her lesson she
 taught to thee,
 But by joy she afar is driven, for thou hast thy soul's rest
 won, 795
 And in grief thou o'er-long hast waited for the joy that is
 now begun.'

Nor seemed ill to the knight her tidings—Thro' joy must his
 eyelids know
 A rain of crystal tear-drops from a true heart's overflow.
 And he quoth, 'If thou speakest, Lady, the thing that indeed
 shall be,
 If God as his knight doth claim me, and they are elect with
 me, 800
 My wife and my child, then I wot well, tho' a sinful man am I,
 God looketh with favour on me, and hath dealt with me
 wondrously!
 Of a sooth hast thou here repaid me for the grief thou on
 me hast brought,
 Yet I deem well thy wrath had spared me save that evil
 myself had wrought,
 Nor to bliss was I then predestined—but thou bringest such
 tidings fair 805
 That my sorrow hath found an ending—And these arms do
 thy truth declare,
 For when by the sad Anfortas I sat in Monsalväsch' hall,
 Full many a shield I looked on that hung fair on the castle
 wall,
 And with turtle-doves all were blazoned, such as shine on
 thy robe to-day.
 But say, to the joy that awaits me, when and how may I take
 my way, 810
 For I would not there were delaying?' Then she quoth, 'Lord
 and master dear,

But *one* knight alone shall ride with thee; choose thou from
 these warriors here
 And trust thou to my skill and knowledge to guide thee
 upon thy way,
 For thy succour Anfortas waiteth, wouldst thou help him,
 make no delay!'

Then they heard, all they who sat there, how Kondrie had
 come again 815
 And the tidings she bare; and teardrops fell soft like a
 summer's rain
 From the bright eyes of Orgelusé, since Parzival should
 speak
 The words that should heal Anfortas, nor that healing be
 long to seek.
 Then Arthur, the fame-desirous, spake to Kondrie in
 courtesy,
 'Now, Lady, wilt ride to thy lodging? Say, how may we care
 for thee?' 820
 And she quoth, 'Is she here, Arnivé, what lodging she shall
 prepare,
 That lodging shall well content me till hence with my lord I
 fare;
 If a captive she be no longer, then fain would I see them all,
 The queen, and the other ladies, whom Klingsor, in magic
 thrall,
 For many a year hath fettered'—Then they lifted her on her
 steed, 825
 Two knights, and unto Arnivé did the faithful maiden speed.

Now the feast drew nigh to its ending—By his brother sat
 Parzival,
 And he prayed him to be his comrade, nor his words did
 unheeded fall,
 For Feirefis spake him ready to Monsalväsch' Burg to ride—
 In the self-same hour upstood they, the guests, o'er the ring
 so wide, 830
 And Feirefis prayed this favour from Gramoflanz, the king,
 If in sooth he should love his cousin of that love he would
 token bring;
 'Both thou and Gawain, ye must help me, whether princes or
 kings they be,
 Or barons, or knights, none betake them from this field till
 my gifts they see.
 Myself had I shamed if I rode hence and never a gift should
 leave, 835

And the minstrel-folk they shall wait here till they gifts from
my hand receive.
And Arthur, this thing would I pray thee, seek that none of
these knights disdain,
Tho' lofty their birth, a token of friendship from me to gain;
For the shame, on thyself shalt thou take it—one so rich
shall they ne'er have known—
Give me messengers unto the haven that the presents to all
be shown!' 840

Then they sware them unto the heathen that no man of
them should depart
From the field till four days were ended, and the heathen
was glad at heart,
And wise messengers Arthur gave him, who should forth to
the haven fare—
Feirefis took him ink and parchment, and a letter he bade
them bear,
Nor the writing, I ween, lacked tokens of his hand from
whom it came, 845
And seldom methinks a letter such goodly return might
claim!

Then soon must the messengers ride hence—Parzival stood
the host before,
And in French did he tell the story from Trevezent learnt of
yore,
How the Grail, throughout all ages, may never by man be
known,
Save by him whom God calleth to It, whose name God doth
know alone. 850
And the tale shall be told in all lands; no conflict may win
that prize,
And 'tis vain on that Quest to spend them, since 'tis hidden
from mortal eyes!'

And for Parzival and his brother the maidens must mourn
that day,
Farewell they were loth to bid them—Ere the heroes rode
on their way
Thro' the armies four they gat them, and they prayed leave
from each and all, 855
And joyful, they took their journey, well armed 'gainst what
might befall.
And the third day hence to Ioflanz from the heathen's host
they brought

Great gifts, so rich and costly, men ne'er on such wealth had
thought.

Did a king take of them, his kingdom was rich for evermore

—

And to each as beseemed his station the precious gifts they
bore,

860

And the ladies, they had rich presents, from Triant and
Nouriente—

How the others rode I know not, but the twain, they with
Kondrie went!

BOOK XVI LOHENGRIN

ARGUMENT

Book XVI. tells of the sorrow of Anfortas and his knights; how he prayed them to kill him, and how he would fain have withheld his eyes from the light of the Grail; of the coming of Parzival and Feirefis, and of the healing of Anfortas.

How Parzival set forth to meet his wife on the shores of Plimizöl; and how Trevezent confessed to having spoken falsely in order to withhold him from the Quest.

Of the joyful meeting of Parzival and Kondwiramur; and how Kardeiss was proclaimed king of Brobarz, Wales, Norgals, and Anjou; and how Parzival with Kondwiramur and Lohengrin rode to Monsalväsich. How on their way they found Siguné dead, and buried her by her lover.

Of the great feast at Monsalväsich; and how Feirefis failed to behold the Grail, and of his love for Répanse de Schoie. How Feirefis was baptized, and wedded Répanse de Schoie; how the twain set forth for Feirefis' kingdom, and of their son, Prester John. Of Lohengrin and the Duchess of Brabant; how he was sent to her aid from Monsalväsich, and dwelt with her in peace till she asked the question which drove him forth.

The poet blames Chrétien de Troyes for having done the tale a wrong; it was Kiot who taught the song aright, to its very end. He, Wolfram of Eschenbach, will speak no more of it, but he prays that all good and gracious women will praise him for his song, since he sang it to pleasure a woman.

BOOK XVI LOHENGRIN



Now Anfortas and his Templars they suffered sore grief
and pain,

And their true love in bondage held him, since he prayed
them for death in vain;

And in sooth death had been his portion, save they
wrought that the Grail he saw—

From the might of its mystic virtue fresh life must he ever
draw.

Then he spake to the knights of Monsalväsich, 'Of a sooth,
 were ye true of heart, 5
 Ye had pitied ere this my sorrow, how long shall pain be my
 part?
 If reward ye would have as deserving, then God give ye
 payment fair,
 For ever was I your servant since the days that I harness
 bare.
 Atonement in full have I made here for aught I have done of
 wrong
 To ye, e'en tho' none had known it, and my penance
 endureth long! 10
 If ye would not be held unfaithful, by the helmet and shield
 I bore,
 And the bond of our common knighthood, release me from
 bondage sore!
 For this of a truth must ye grant me, if ye do not the truth
 disdain,
 I bare *both* as a knight undaunted, and fame thro' my deeds
 did gain.
 For hill and vale have I ridden, and many a joust have run, 15
 And with sword-play good from my foemen much hatred
 methinks, I won.
 Yet with ye doth that count for little! Bereft of all joy am I;
 Yet, cometh the Day of Judgment, my voice would I lift on
 high,
 And in God's sight, I, one man only, at the last will accuse ye
 all,
 If freedom ye fail to give me, and to Hell shall ye surely fall! 20
 For in sooth ye should mourn my sorrow—From the first
 have ye seen the thing,
 And ye know how it came upon me—Now I profit ye not as
 king,
 And all too soon will ye think so, when thro' me ye have lost
 your soul—
 Alas! why thus ill-entreat me? Ere this had I been made
 whole!'

And the knights from his grief had freed him, save they
 hope from the word must draw 25
 That Trevrezent spake of aforetime, and that writ on the
 Grail he saw.
 And once more would they wait his coming whose joy there
 had waxen weak,
 And the hour that should bring them healing from the
 question his lips should speak.

Then the king of a wile bethought him, and fast would he
close his eyes,
And four days long so he held them, when the knights, in
their 'customedwise, 30
Before the Grail would bear him, if he said them or yea, or
nay;
But his weakness so wrought upon him, as before the shrine
he lay,
That his eyelids he needs must open, and against his will
must live,
For the Grail held death far from him and fresh life must
Its vision give.

And so was it with Anfortas till the day when Parzival 35
And Feirefis his brother, rode swift to Monsalväsich' hall;
And the time was near when the planet, its course in high
heaven run,
Mars or Jupiter, glowing wrathful, its station had well-nigh
won,
And the spot whence it took its journey—Ah! then was an
evil day
That wrought ill to the wound of Anfortas, and the torment
would have its way; 40
And maiden and knight must hearken as the palace rang
with his cries,
And the help that no man might give him he besought with
despairing eyes,
For past all aid was he wounded, and his knights could but
share his grief—
Yet the tale saith he drew ever nearer who should bring him
alone relief.

Then oft as the bitter anguish in its bondage the hero held, 45
The taint of the wound to banish, the hall was with
sweetness filled,
For before him they spread on the carpet Terebinth, and
odours fair
Of aromatic spices and sweet woods filled the scented air.
Teriak and precious Ambra, and methinks that their smell
was sweet—
Cardamom, Jeroffel, Muscat, lay broken beneath the feet 50
Where'er one set foot on the carpet; and e'en as each
footstep fell
Their perfume arose, and their freshness, of the venom
o'ercame the smell.
And his fire was of Lignum aloe, as methinks ye have heard
afore—

Of the horny skin of the viper had they fashioned the pillars
 four
 That stood 'neath his couch—'Gainst the venom must his
 knights on the cushions strew 55
 Powder of roots so precious, whose healing scent they
 knew.
 Well stuffed, but unsewed, was the covering against which
 the monarch leant,
 And the silk and the mattress 'neath it were of Palmât of
 Nouriente.
 And the couch itself was yet richer, with many a precious
 stone
 Was it decked, nor were others found there save the rarest
 of jewels alone; 60
 And by Salamanders woven were the cords which the bed
 did bind,
 Yea even the fastening 'neath it—Yet no joy might Anfortas
 find.
 The couch on all sides was costly, (no man shall contend I
 ween
 That he in the days of his lifetime a richer shall e'er have
 seen,)
 'Twas precious alone from the virtue of the jewels and their
 magic power, 65
 Would ye learn their names, then hearken, for we know
 them unto this hour.

Carbuncle and Balas ruby, Silenite, and Chalcedony,
 Gagatromeus, Onyx, Coral, and Bestion, fair to see.
 And there too were Pearl and Opal, Ceraunius and Epistites,
 Jerachites, Heliotropia, Panterus, Agate, and Emathites. 70
 Antrodragma, Praseme, and Saddae, Dionisia and Celidon,
 Sardonyx and red Cornelian, Jasper and Calcofon.
 Echites, Iris, Gagates, and Lyncurium, with many more,
 Asbestos and Cecolithus, and Jacinth, that rich couch bore.
 Galactida, Orites, Enydrus, and Emerald, glowing green, 75
 Absist and Alabanda, and Chrysolect had ye seen.
 Hiennia, Sapphire, Pyrites, and beside them, here and there,
 Turquoise, and Lipparèa, Chrysolite, and Ruby fair—
 Paleisen, Sardius, Diamond, Chrysoprasis, and Malachite,
 Diadoch, Peanite, and Medus with Beryl and Topaze bright. 80

And many they taught high courage, and others such virtue
 knew
 That healing skill they taught men, and fresh life from their
 power they drew.

And many their strength won from them, if aright they
 might use their art,
 And therewith would they tend Anfortas whom they loved
 with a faithful heart—
 And great grief had he brought his people, yet joy soon his
 lot shall be— 85
 To Terre de Salväsch from Ioflanz he rideth to speak him
 free,
 Parzival, with the maid and his brother, nor in truth did I
 ever hear
 The distance these three had journeyed ere they drew to
 the Burg anear;
 But conflict had been their portion had Kondrie not been
 their guide,
 But afar from all strife did she hold them, and in peace on
 their way they ride. 90

So came they at length to an outpost—Then swiftly towards
 them sped
 Many Templars well armed and mounted, and right soon
 they the truth had read,
 And they knew by the guide that succour at last to their
 walls should draw,
 And the Captain he spake out gladly as the Turtle-doves he
 saw
 Gleam fair on Kondrie's vesture, 'Now an end hath it found,
 our grief, 95
 With the sign of the Grail he cometh who shall bring to our
 king relief,
 The knight we have looked and have longed for since the
 dawn of our sorrow's day—
 Stand ye still, for great gladness cometh, and our mourning
 is past away!'

Feirefis Angevin would urge him, his brother, to joust to
 ride,
 But Kondrie, she grasped his bridle, lest conflict should
 there betide, 100
 And the maiden, true but unlovely, spake thus unto Parzival,
 'Shield and banner, thou sure shouldst know them, of the
 Grail are these heroes all,
 And ready to do thee service.' Then out spake the heathen
 bold,
 'If so it shall be, from battle mine hand may I well withhold.'
 Then Parzival prayed that Kondrie would ride forward, the
 knights to meet, 105

And she rode, and she spake of the gladness that neared
them with flying feet.
And, one and all, the Templars sprang straightway unto the
ground,
And from off their head the helmet in the self-same hour
unbound,
And Parzival they greeted, and they were in his greeting
blest,
And Feirefis they welcomed as befitted a noble guest. 110
And then with the twain to Monsalväsch the Templars they
took their way;
Though they wept, yet methinks that gladness was the fount
of their tears that day.

And a countless folk they found there, many grey-haired
knights and old,
And pages of noble bearing, and of servants, a host untold.
And sad were the folk and mournful, whom their coming
might well rejoice, 115
And Parzival and his brother they welcomed with friendly
voice,
And kindly did they receive them, without, in the palace
court,
At the foot of the noble stairway, and the knights to the hall
they brought.

And, e'en as was there the custom, a hundred carpets
round,
Each one with a couch upon it, were spread there upon the
ground; 120
And each couch bare a velvet covering, and methinks, if the
twain had wit,
The while that the squires disarmed them 'twould pleasure
them there to sit.
And a chamberlain came towards them, and he brought to
them vesture fair,
And each should be clad as the other, and many a knight
sat there.
And they bare many precious vessels of gold, (none I ween
was glass,) 125
And the twain they drank, and upstood them to get them to
Anfortas.

And this have ye heard of aforetime, how he lay, for he
scarce might sit,
And the couch and its goodly decking, forsooth have ye
read of it.

And the twain did Anfortas welcome with gladness, and yet
 with grief,
 And he spake, 'O'er-long have I waited tho' I win from thine
 hand relief; 130
 But a while ago didst thou leave me in such wise, art thou
 true of heart,
 And thinkest to aid my sorrow, thou must have in
 repentance part.
 If e'er men have praised thy valour, then be thou to my woe
 a friend,
 And pray of these knights and maidens that death may my
 torment end;
 If *Parzival* men shall call thee, then forbid me the Grail to
 see 135
 Seven nights and eight days, and I wot well my wailing shall
 silenced be!
 Nor further I dare to warn thee—Well for thee if thou help
 canst bring!
 A stranger shall be thy comrade, and I think it an evil thing
 That thus he doth stand before me, say wherefore no
 thought dost take
 For his comfort, and bid him seat him?' Then *Parzival*,
 weeping, spake: 140

'Now say where the Grail it lieth? If God's mercy He think to
 show,
 And it be o'er His wrath the victor, this folk, they shall surely
 know!
 Then three times on his knee he bowed him in the Name of
 the Trinity,
 And three times he prayed that the sorrow of Anfortas
 should ended be,
 Then he stood upright, and he turned him to the monarch,
 and thus he spake: 145
 '*What aileth thee here, mine uncle?*' He who Lazarus from
 death did wake,
 And by the mouth of His saint, Sylvester, a dead beast to life
 did bring,
 Wrought healing and strength on Anfortas—and all men
 beheld the king,
 And what French folk shall know as '*Florie*' it shone on his
 face so fair,
 And *Parzival*'s manly beauty was but as the empty air! 150
 Yea, Vergulacht, Askalon's monarch, and Absalom, David's
 son,
 And all who the dower of beauty as their birthright shall e'er
 have won—

E'en Gamuret, as men saw him draw near unto Kanvoleis,
So wondrous fair to look on—they were naught unto all
men's eyes
When matched with the radiant beauty that forth from his
bitter woe 155
He bare, the King Anfortas—such skill God doth surely
know!

No choice was there for the Templars since the writing upon
the Grail
Had named unto them their ruler, and Parzival did they hail
Their king and their lord henceforward; and I ween ye in
vain would seek
Would ye find two men as wealthy, if of riches I here may
speak, 160
As Parzival and his brother, Feirefis Angevin—
And many a proffered service the host and his guest did
win.

I know not how many stages queen Kondwiramur had made
On her journey towards Monsalväsch, nor, joyful, her steps
delayed,
For already the truth had been told her, and a messenger
tidings bare, 165
And she knew that her grief was ended and her gladness
had blossomed fair.
And led by her uncle, Kiot, and by many a hero bold,
Had she come unto Terre de Salväsch and the wood where
they fought of old;
Where in joust Segramor had fallen, and her lord did her
likeness know
In the threefold blood-drops mystic, on the white of the
drifted snow. 170
And there should Parzival seek her, and tho' toilsome and
rough the way
Yet never a gladder journey had he ridden than he rode that
day!

Then a Templar tidings brought him, 'E'en as doth her rank
beseem
Full many a knight so courteous rideth hither beside the
queen.'
Then Parzival bethought him, with the knights of the Holy
Grail 175
To Trevrezent did he ride first, and he told him the
wondrous tale;

From his heart was the hermit joyful that it thus with
Anfortas stood,
Nor death was his lot, but the question brought rest to the
hero good.
And he quoth, 'Yea, God's power is mighty—Who doth at
His Council sit?
Who hath known of His strength the limit? What Angel hath
fathomed it? 180
God is Man, and the Word of His Father; God is Father at
once and Son,
And I wot thro' His Spirit's working may succour and aid be
won!'

Then Trevrezent quoth to his nephew, 'Greater marvel I
ne'er may see
Than that thou by thy wrath hast won blessing, and th'
Eternal Trinity
Hath given thee thy desiring! Yet aforetime in sooth I lied, 185
For I thought from the Grail to bring thee, and the truth I
from thee would hide.

Do thou for my sin give me pardon, henceforth I thy hand
obey,
O my king, and son of my sister!—Methinks that I once did
say
That the spirits cast forth from Heaven thereafter the Grail
did tend
By God's will, and besought His favour, till their penance at
last did end. 190

But God to Himself is faithful, and ne'er doth He changing
know,
Nor to them whom I named as forgiven did He ever
forgiveness show.
For they who refuse His service, He Himself will, I ween,
refuse,
And I wot they are lost for ever, and that fate they
themselves did choose.

And I mourned for thy fruitless labour, for ne'er did the
story stand 195
That the Grail might by man be conquered, and I fain had
withheld thine hand;
But with *thee* hath the chance been other, and thy prize
shall the highest be,
But since God's Hand doth give It to thee, turn thine heart
to humility.'

Quoth Parzival to his uncle, 'I would see her I ne'er might
see

For well-nigh five years—When together we dwelt she was
 dear to me, 200
 And no whit less dear shall she now be! Yet thy counsel I
 fain would hear
 So long as death fail to part us, thou didst help me in need
 so drear!
 Now I ride to my wife, since she cometh to meet me upon
 my way,
 By Plimizöl's banks doth she wait me, and leave I from thee
 would pray.'

And the good man bade 'God speed him,' and he rode thro'
 the dusky night, 205
 And his men knew the woodland pathways—In the early
 morning light
 He found that which brought him gladness; full many a tent
 stood fair,
 From out the kingdom of Brobarz many banners were
 planted there,
 With many a shield beneath them—there lay princes from
 out his land,
 And Parzival fain would ask them where the tent of the
 queen might stand? 210
 If her camp lay apart from the others? Then they showed
 him where she should be,
 And a goodly ring around her of tents did the hero see.
 And Duke Kiot of Katelangen, he had risen ere dawn of day,
 And he looked on the band of riders who came by the
 woodland way.

And tho' grey was the light of the morning, yet, as the host
 nearer drew, 215
 Kiot saw the Dove on their armour, and the arms of the Grail
 he knew;
 And the old man sighed as he thought him of Schoysiané,
 his lovely bride,
 How he won her in bliss at Monsalväsch, and how she
 untimely died.
 Towards Parzival he stepped him, and he bade him a
 greeting fair;
 By a page he bade the queen's Marshal a lodging meet
 prepare 220
 For the knights who had there drawn bridle—in sooth 'twas
 a gallant band—
 Then to the queen's dressing-chamber he led Parzival by
 the hand,

('Twas a small tent made of buckram,) and there, in the
waxing light,
His harness they take from off him ere he pass to his lady's
sight.

And the queen she knew naught of his coming—her twin
sons beside her lay, 225
Lohengrin and Kardeiss; and their father, methinks he was
glad that day!

There he found them slumbering sweetly, in a tent both
high and wide,
And many a lovely lady lay sleeping on either side.
Then Kiot, he drew the covering from the queen, and he
bade her wake,

And look, and laugh, and be joyful, and her love to her arms
to take; 230
And she looked up and saw her husband; and naught but
her smock she bare,

The covering she wrapt around her, and sprang swift on the
carpet fair,
Kondwiramur, the lovely lady—and Parzival held her tight,
And they say that they kissed each other, the queen and her
faithful knight.

'Thou joy of my heart! Good Fortune hath sent thee again to
me,' 235

She quoth, and she bade him welcome, 'Now in sooth I
should wrathful be,
Yet have I no heart for anger! Ah! blest be the dawn and the
day

That this dear embrace hath brought me, which all sorrow
must drive away.

For now at last have I found thee, whom my heart hath
desired so long,
And grief in my heart is vanquished, and sighing is turned
to song.' 240

And now from their sleep they wakened, both Lohengrin
and Kardeiss,
Naked they lay on their pillows, and fair in their father's
eyes,
And, joyful, Parzival kissed them whom he never had seen
before—

Then at Kiot's courteous bidding the babes from the tent
they bore,
And Kiot, he bade the maidens to get them from out the
tent, 245

And they greeted their lord, long absent, ere yet on their
way they went.
Then he bade the queen care for her husband, and the
maidens from thence he led,
And the curtains they drew together, for as yet was the
night scarce sped.

Now if blood and snow had robbed him of his senses and
wit of yore,
(In this self-same spot its message the snow to his true
heart bore,) 250
For such sorrow she well repaid him, Kondwiramur, his wife
—

Nor elsewhere had he sought love's solace in payment for
love's fierce strife,
Tho' many their love had proffered—I ween that in bliss he
lay,
And converse sweet, till morning drew nigh to the middle
day.

And the army, they rode together, on the Templars had they
gazed, 255
And their shields in jousts were piercèd, and with many a
sword-blow grazed;
And each knight he wore a surcoat of silk or of velvet rare,
And their feet were shod with iron, nor harness beside they
bare.

Nor longer they cared to slumber—Then the queen alike
and king
Arose, and e'en as they bade him, a priest the Mass would
sing; 260
And closely they thronged together, that army, brave and
good,
Who in their queen's day of peril her shield 'gainst Klamidé
stood.
Then, the benediction given, his men greeted Parzival,
Many gallant knights and worthy, their true words from true
lips must fall.

From the tent they take the hangings, and the king spake,
'Say which is he, 265
Of my boys, who henceforward ruler of your folk and your
land shall be?'
And further he spake to the princes, 'Both Waleis and
Norgal's land,

And their towns, Kingrivals and Kanvoleis, by his birthright
 shall serve his hand,
 With Béalzenan and Anjou, should he grow unto man's
 estate;
 And thither shall ye fare with him, and shall there on his
 bidding wait. 270
 Gamuret was he called, my father, and he left them to me,
 his heir,
 But I, by God's grace, have won me an heritage yet more
 fair!
 Since the Grail shall be mine, I bid ye your fealty to swear
 anew
 To my child, ere this hour be ended, if your hearts shall to
 me be true!
 And of right goodwill they did this—Ye saw many proud
 banners wave, 275
 And two little hands the tenure of many a wide land gave.
 And there did they crown Kardeiss king; and, when many a
 year had flown,
 Kanvoleis, and Gamuret's kingdom they needs must his
 lordship own—
 And then by Plimizöl's water did they measure a circle wide
 That there a feast might be holden ere again on their way
 they ride. 280
 Nor long at the board they tarried; no longer the host might
 stay,
 The tents were struck, with their child-king they wended
 their homeward way.

And many a maid and vassal must bid to their queen
 Farewell
 In such wise that they made loud mourning, and many a
 teardrop fell.
 And Lohengrin and his mother did the Templars take in their
 care, 285
 And with them to the Burg of Monsalväsch again on their
 journey fare.
 Quoth Parzival, 'Once in this woodland an hermitage did I
 see,
 And thro' it a rippling brooklet flowed swift on its way so
 free;
 If ye know where it stands ye shall show me.' His comrades
 swift answer gave,
 They knew one; 'There dwells a maiden, and she weeps o'er
 her true love's grave; 290
 A shrine of all goodness is she—Our road it doth lead that
 way,

And her heart is ne'er free from sorrow.' 'That maid will we
see to-day,'
Quoth Parzival, and the others, as he willed, so they thought
it good,
And onward they spurred their chargers, and rode thro' the
lonely wood.

And they found, in the dusk of the evening, on her knees
Siguné dead, 295
And the queen wept for bitter sorrow—Then they brake
thro' unto the maid;
Parzival, for the sake of his cousin, bade them raise of the
tomb the stone,
There, embalmed lay Schionatulander, nor long should he
lie alone,
For beside him they laid the maiden, who in life to him true
love gave
In such wise as beseemed a maiden, and they closed o'er
the twain the grave. 300
And she wept for her uncle's daughter, the queen, with a
faithful heart;
Schoysiané, the dead maid's mother, had shown her a
mother's part,
And had cared for her in her childhood, and therefore she
sorrow knew:
And Parzival's aunt, too, was she, if the tale Kiot read be
true.

Kiot knew not the death of his daughter, he was guardian to
King Kardeiss— 305
(Nor my tale like the bow shall be bended, but straight as an
arrow flies,)
They delayed not upon their journey, to Monsalväscht they
came by night,
And the hours Feirefis must wait them sped swift in their
joyful flight.
And they lighted many a taper, 'twas as flamed all the
woodland wide,
And a Templar of Patrigalt, armèd, by the queen's bridle rein
did ride; 310
And broad and wide was the courtyard, and many a host
stood there,
And they welcomed the queen, and a greeting to their lord
and his son they bare;
And they bore Lohengrin to his uncle, Feirefis, who was
black and white,

And the babe turned aside nor would kiss him—as children
oft do from fright!

But gaily he laughed, the heathen—Then they gat them
from out the court, 315

When first the queen had dismounted, who joy with her
coming brought—

And they led the guests so noble, where, with many a lady
fair,

Both Feirefis and Anfortas awaited them on the stair.
Répanse de Schoie, and from Greenland, Garschiloie, the fair
of face,

Florie of Lünel, the bright-eyed, rich were they in maiden
grace. 320

There she stood, than a reed more graceful, to whom
beauty nor truth should fail,

The daughter of Reil's lord, Jernis, as Anflisé the maid they
hail;

And of Tenabroc, maid Clarischanz, sweet was she, and
bright to see,

And so slender her shape, I think me, an ant's scarce might
slighter be.

Feirefis stepped toward his hostess, and he kissed her e'en
as she bade, 325

And a kiss did she give Anfortas, for she joyed that his woe
was stayed.

Feirefis by the hand must lead her where her husband's
aunt she found,

Répanse de Schoie, and she kissed her, and the maidens
who stood around,

And her lips that were red aforetime thro' kissing grew yet
more red,

(And sorely I ween doth it grieve me, that this labour, I, in
her stead, 330

Might not here have taken on me, for weary in sooth was
she;)

Then her maids by the hand they take her, and they lead her
in courteously.

And the knights, in the hall they waited, that with countless
tapers bright

Was decked, on the walls they sparkled, and burnt with a
steady light,

For a solemn feast they made ready, when the Grail should
be shown to all; 335

For it was not on every feast-day, that they bare It thro' the
 hall,
 But on high festivals only—When nearer their aid should
 draw,
 On that even when joy forsook them, and the bleeding
 spear they saw,
 'Twas then, that the Grail might help them, that It thus thro'
 the hall was borne—
 Yet Parzival asked no question, and left them of joy forlorn
 — 340
 But now, in joy and gladness, might they look on the Grail
 again,
 For at last was their mourning ended, and their sorrow was
 pierced and slain!

When the queen her riding garment had put off, and
 decked her hair,
 She came in such garb as beseemed her, in the light of the
 tapers fair;
 And Feirefis stepped to meet her, and he took her by the
 hand, 345
 And no man gainsaid his fellow, that in this, or in other land,
 None might speak of a fairer woman! And rich was the garb
 she wore,
 A silk by a skilled hand woven, such as Sarant had wrought
 of yore,
 And with cunning and skill had fashioned in Thasmé, the
 paynim town—
 Feirefis Angevin, he led her thro' the palace hall adown, 350
 And the three great fires they burnt there with Lignum aloé
 sweet;
 And more there were by forty, both carpets alike and seats,
 Than the time when Parzival sat there and looked on the
 wondrous Grail,
 But one seat above all was costly, nor the host to his place
 should fail.
 And Feirefis, and Anfortas, they should sit there beside the
 king— 355
 And, courteous, they did them service, who the Grail to the
 hall should bring.

Aforetime methinks ye heard it, how they to Anfortas bare
 The Grail, even so would they do now 'fore the child of King
 Tampentäre,
 And Gamuret's son—The maidens, no longer they make
 delay,

Five-and-twenty in rightful order they wend thro' the hall
 their way. 360
 And Feirefis gazed on the first maid, with her sweet face and
 waving hair,
 And she pleased him well, yet the others who followed were
 yet more fair;
 And costly and rich their garments, and lovely each
 maiden's face,
 But Répanse de Schoie, who followed, was first in her
 maiden grace,
 And the Grail, so men have told me, might be borne by her
 hands alone; 365
 Pure was her heart, and radiant as sunlight her fair face
 shone.

Did I tell ye of all the service—how many did water pour,
 And the tables they bare, (I wot well far more than they had
 of yore.)
 How discord fled from the palace; how the cars on their
 circuit rolled,
 With their freight of golden vessels, 'twere long ere the tale
 were told. 370
 For the sake of speed would I hasten—with reverence from
 the Grail
 Each took of the fowl of the forest, wild or tame, nor their
 drink should fail;
 Each took wine or mead as it pleased him, Claret, Morass, or
 Sinopel;
 At Pelrapär 'twas far other, as Gamuret's son might tell!

Then the heathen would know the wonder—What hands
 did these gold cups fill 375
 That stood empty here before him? The wonder, it pleased
 him still!
 Then answered the fair Anfortas, who sat by the heathen's
 side,
 'Seest thou not the Grail before thee?' But Feirefis replied,
 'Naught I see but a green Achmardi, that my Lady but now
 did bear,
 I mean her who stands before us with the crown on her
 flowing hair, 380
 And her look to mine heart hath piercèd—I deemed I so
 strong should be
 That never a wife nor a maiden my gladness should take
 from me;
 But now doth it sore displease me, the love I may call mine
 own—

Discourteous indeed I think me to make unto thee my moan
When I never have done thee service! What profits my
wealth, I trow, 385
Or the deeds I have done for fair women, or the gifts that I
gave but now,
Since here I must live in anguish! Nay, Jupiter, thou wast
fain
I should ride here, didst hither send me to torment of grief
and pain?'

And the strength of his love, and his sorrow, turned him
pale where he erst was light—
Kondwiramur, she had found a rival in this maiden's beauty
bright— 390
In her love-meshes did she hold him, Feirefis, the noble
guest,
And the love that he erst had cherished he cast it from out
his breast.

What recked he of Sekundillé, her love, and her land so fair,
Since she wrought on him woe so bitter, this maiden
beyond compare?
Klauditté, and Sekundillé, Olympia, and many more, 395
Who in distant lands had repaid him with love for his deeds
of yore,
What cared he now for their kindness? It seemed but a
worthless thing
To Gamuret's son, the heathen, great Zassamank's noble
king!

Then he saw, the fair Anfortas, his comrade in pain so sore,
(For the spots in his skin waxed pallid, and heavy the heart
he bore,) 400
And he spake, 'Sir Knight, it doth grieve me if thou dost for
my sister mourn,
No man for her sake hath sorrowed since the day that the
maid was born.

No knight for her joust hath ridden; to none doth she favour
show;
But with me did she dwell at Monsalväsich, and hath shared
in my bitter woe,
And it somewhat hath dimmed her beauty, since she
seldom hath joyful been— 405
Thy brother is son to her sister, he may help thee in this I
ween.'

'If that maiden shall be thy sister,' quoth Feirefis Angevin,

'Who the crown on her loose locks weareth, then help me
her love to win.
'Tis she that my heart desireth—What honour mine hand
hath won
With shield and spear in Tourney, for her sake hath it all
been done, 410
And I would she might now reward me! The Tourney hath
fashions five,
And well known unto me is each one, nor against knightly
rule I strive.
Spear in rest 'gainst the foe have I ridden; I have smitten
him from the side;
His onslaught have I avoided; nor to fair joust have failed to
ride
In gallop, as should beseem me; I have followed the flying
foe— 415
Since the shield, it hath been my safeguard, such sorrow I
ne'er may know
As that which to-day besets me—I have fought with a fiery
knight
At Agremontein, I bare then a shield of Asbestos bright,
And a surcoat of Salamander, else sure had I there been
burned;
And in sooth my life have I perilled, and my fame have I
dearly earned. 420
Ah! would but thy sister send me to battle for love's reward,
In strife would I do her bidding, and her fame and mine own
would guard.
And ever my heart fierce hatred to my god Jupiter shall
bear,
If he make not an end of my sorrow, and give me this
maiden fair!'

Of the twain, Frimutel was the father, and therefore Anfortas
bore 425
E'en such face and such form as his sister—Then the
heathen, he looked once more
On the maiden and then on her brother—What they bare
him of drink or meat
No morsel he ate, yet he sat there as one who made feint to
eat.

Then to Parzival spake Anfortas, 'Sir King, it doth seem to
me
That thy brother, who sitteth by me, he faileth the Grail to
see!' 430

And Feirefis spake that he saw naught, nor knew what It was
 'the Grail';
And they hearkened his words, the Templars, and a marvel
 they deemed the tale.
And Titurel needs must hear it, in his chamber the old king
 lay,
And he quoth, 'If he be a heathen, then such thought shall
 he put away
As that eyes unbaptized may win them the power to behold
 the Grail! 435
Such barriers are built around It, his sight to the task shall
 fail.'

Then they bare to the hall these tidings, and the host and
 Anfortas told
How that which the folk did nourish, Feirefis, he might ne'er
 behold,
Since from heathen eyes It was hidden, and they prayed him
 to seek the grace
Of Baptism, by its virtue he should win him in Heaven a
 place. 440

'If I, for your sake, be baptized, will that help me to win my
 love?'
Spake Gamuret's son, the heathen—'As a wind shall all
 sorrows prove,
That wooing or war shall have brought me, to the grief that
 I now must feel!
If long or short the time be since I first felt the touch of
 steel,
And fought 'neath a shield, such anguish ne'er hath fallen
 unto my share, 445
And tho' love should, I ween, be hidden, yet my heart would
 its grief declare!'

'Of whom dost thou speak?' quoth the Waleis, 'Of none but
 that lady bright,
Who is sister to this, thy comrade—If thou, as a faithful
 knight,
Wilt help me to win the maiden, I will give her with kingly
 hand
Great riches, and men shall hail her as queen over many a
 land!' 450
'If to Baptism thou wilt yield thee,' spake the host, 'then her
 love is thine,
(And as *thou* I right well may hail thee, since the Grail and Its
 realm are mine,

And our riches methinks are equal)'—Quoth Feirefis
 Angevin,
 'Then help me to bliss, my brother, that the love of thine
 aunt I win.
 And, if Baptism be won by battle, then help me to strife I
 pray, 455
 That I, for sweet love's rewarding, may do service without
 delay.
 And mine ear well doth love the music when the spear-
 shafts in splinters break,
 And the helmet rings clear 'neath the sword-thrust, and the
 war-cry the echo wakes.'

Then Parzival laughed out gaily, and Anfortas, he laughed
 yet more,
 'Nay, nay,' quoth the host, 'such blessing is no guerdon for
 deeds of war. 460
 I will give unto thee the maiden, by true Baptism's grace
 and power,
 But the god and the love of a heathen shalt thou leave in
 the self-same hour;
 And to-morrow, at early dawning, will I give to thee counsel
 true,
 Whose fruit shall be seen in the crowning of thy life with a
 blessing new!'

Now Anfortas, before his sickness, in many a distant land 465
 Had won him fair fame, for Love's sake, by the deeds of his
 knightly hand.
 And the thoughts of his heart were gentle, and generous he
 was and free,
 And his right hand had won full often the guerdon of
 victory;
 So they sat in the wondrous presence of the Grail, three
 heroes true,
 The best of their day, and the bravest that sword-blade in
 battle drew. 470

An ye will, they enough had eaten—They, courteous, the
 tables bare
 From the hall, and as serving-maidens, low bent they, those
 maidens fair.
 And Feirefis Angevin saw them as forth from the hall they
 passed,
 And in sorrow and deeper anguish I ween was the hero cast.
 And she who his heart held captive, she bare from the hall
 the Grail, 475

And leave did they crave of their monarch, nor his will to
their will should fail.

How the queen, herself, she passed hence; how men did
their task begin;
Of the bedding soft they brought him who for love's pain
no rest might win;
How one and all, the Templars, with kindness would put
away
His grief, 'twere too long to tell ye—speak we now of the
dawning day.

480

In the light of the early morning came his brother, Parzival,
With the noble knight Anfortas, and in this wise the tale
they tell;
This knight who to love was captive, proud Zassamank's
lord and king,
They prayed, of true heart, to follow, and they would to the
Temple bring,
And before the Grail they led him—And there had they
bidden stand
The wisest men of the Templars—knights and servants, a
goodly band,
Were there ere the heathen entered: the Font was a ruby
rare,
And it stood on a rounded pillar that of Jasper was
fashioned fair,
And of old Titurel, he gave it, and the cost was great I ween
—

485

Then Parzival spake to his brother, 'This maid wouldst thou
have for queen,
Then the gods thou hast served henceforward thou shalt for
her sake forswear,
And ever thine arms, as a true knight, 'gainst the foes of the
true God bear,
And, faithful, still do His bidding'—'Yea, aught that may win
my love,'
Quoth the heathen, 'I'll do right gladly, and my deeds shall
my truth approve.'

490

Now the Font, toward the Grail had they turned it, filled with
water, nor hot nor cold,
And a priest by its side did wait them, and grey-haired he
was, and old;
He had plunged 'neath baptismal waters full many a paynim
child,
And he spake to the noble heathen, and gentle his speech
and mild—

495

'If thy soul thou wouldst wrest from the Devil, thou shalt
 serve Him who reigns on high,
 And Threefold is He, yet but One God for aye is the Trinity. 500
 God is Man, and the Word of His Father, God is Father at
 once and Son,
 And alike shall the twain be honoured, and the Spirit with
 them is One!
 In the Threefold Name shall it cleanse thee, this water, with
 Threefold might,
 And from shadow of heathen darkness shalt thou pass into
 Christian light.
 In water was He baptized, in Whose likeness was Adam
 made, 505
 And each tree from the water draweth its sap, and its leafy
 shade.
 By water all flesh is nourished, and all that on earth doth
 live,
 And the eyes of man are quickened, such virtue doth water
 give;
 And many a soul it cleanseth, till it shineth so pure and
 white
 That the angels themselves in heaven methinks shall be
 scarce so bright!' 510

To the priest then he spake, the heathen, 'If it bringeth me
 ease for woe
 I will swear whatsoe'er thou biddest—If reward in her love I
 know,
 Then gladly I'll do His bidding—Yea, brother, I here believe
 In the God of my love, and for her sake all other gods I'll
 leave,
 (For such sorrow as she hath brought me I never have
 known before,) 515
 And it profiteth naught Sekundillé the love that to me she
 bore,
 And the honour that she hath done me—All that shall have
 passed away—
 In the Name of the God of my father would I fain be
 baptized to-day!'

Then the priest laid his hands upon him, and the blessing
 baptismal gave,
 And he did on the chrisom vesture, and he won what his
 soul did crave, 520
 For e'en as he was baptized they made ready the maiden
 mild,

And for christening gift they gave him King Frimutel's lovely
child.

From his eyes had the Grail been hidden ere baptismal
waters bright
Had passed o'er his head, but henceforward, 'twas unveiled
to his wondering sight,
And, e'en as the rite was over, on the Grail they this writing
read; 525
'The Templar whom God henceforward to a strange folk
should send as head,
Must forbid all word or question of his country, or name, or
race,
If they willed he aright should help them, and they would in
his sight find grace.
For the day that they ask the question that folk must he
leave straightway'—
Since the time that their king, Anfortas, so long in his
anguish lay, 530
And the question o'er-long awaited, all questions but please
them ill,
The knights of the Grail, and no man doth question them
with their will.

Then, baptized, Feirefis the Christian to Anfortas made
urgent prayer,
He should ride with him to his kingdom, and his riches with
him should share;
But, with courtesy, Anfortas to the knight and his prayer said
'Nay, 535
Naught shall hinder the willing service that to God I would
give always;
'Tis a goodly crown, the Grail crown, thro' pride was it lost
to me,
Henceforth do I choose as my portion a life of humility,
And riches and love of women shall be strangers unto my
heart—
Thou ledest with thee a fair wife, henceforth shall it be her
part 540
With true love to reward thy service, as to women is fit and
fair,
But I for the love of mine Order henceforward mine arms
will bear;
For the Grail and Its service only I many a joust will ride,
But I fight never more for women—thro' a woman did ill
betide!

Yet no hatred I bear to women, high courage and joy they
give 545
Unto men, tho' / won but sorrow while I did in their service
live.'

But yet, for the sake of his sister, Feirefis rested not to pray
That Anfortas should journey with them, but ever he said
them nay.
Then he prayed Lohengrin should fare with him, but the
mother, she willed it not;
And King Parzival spake, 'In the service of the Grail hath he
part and lot, 550
And my son, he is pledged to the Order, and a faithful heart
and true
Must he bear in the holy service—God grant him the will
thereto!'

Then in joy and in fair diversion, till eleven days were o'er,
Feirefis abode at Monsalväsch, on the twelfth would he ride
once-more,
He would lead his wife, this rich man, to his army that yet
did wait 555
His coming, and Parzival sorrowed for the brother he won
so late,
And mourned sore when he heard the tidings—Then
counsel he took straightway,
And a goodly force of the Templars did he send with them
on their way,
Thro' the woodland paths should they guide them—
Anfortas, the gallant knight,
Himself fain would be their escort—sore wept many
maidens bright. 560

And new pathways they needs must cut them to Karkobra's
city fair—
Then Anfortas, he sent a message to him who was Burg-
grave there;
And he bade him, if aye of aforetime rich gifts from his hand
he won
To bethink him, that so this service of true heart by him be
done;
His brother-in-law with his lady, the king's sister, he now
must guide 565
Thro' the wood Lœhprisein, where the haven afar lieth wild
and wide—
For now 'twas the hour of parting, nor further the knights
must fare,

But Anfortas, he spake to Kondrie, and he bade her the
message bear.
Then from Feirefis, the rich man, the Templars leave did
pray,
And the courteous knight and noble rode hence on his
homeward way. 570

And the Burg-grave no whit delayed him, but he did e'en at
Kondrie's word,
And gave welcome fair and knightly to the folk and their
noble lord.
Nor might Feirefis grow weary of his stay, at the dawn of
day,
With many a knight as escort, they guided him on his way.
But I know not how far he had ridden, nor the countries his
eyes had seen 575
Ere he came once more to loflanz, and its meadow, so fair
and green.

And some of the folk yet abode there—and Feirefis fain had
known,
In the self-same hour, the tidings of whither the host had
flown;
For each one had sought his country, and the road that full
well he knew—

King Arthur to Camelot journeyed with many a hero true— 580
Then he of Tribalibot hastened, and his army he sought
once more,
For his ships lay yet in the haven, and they grieved for their
lord full sore
And his coming brought joy and courage to many a hero
bold—

The Burg-grave and his knights from Karkobra he rewarded
with gifts and gold—
And strange news did they tell unto Kondrie, for
messengers sought the host, 585
Sekundillé was dead; with the tidings they many a sea had
crossed.

Then first in her distant journey did Répanse de Schoie find
joy,
And in India's realm hereafter did she bear to the king a
boy;
And *Prester John* they called him, and he won to himself
such fame
That henceforward all kings of his country were known by
no other name. 590

And Feirefis sent a writing thro' the kingdoms whose crown
he bore,
And the Christian Faith was honoured as it never had been
of yore.
(And Tribalbot was that country which as *India* here we
know.)
Then Feirefis spake to Kondrie, and he bade her his brother
show
(Who reigneth in far Monsalväsich) what had chanced unto
him, the king, 595
And the death of Queen Sekundillé—and the tidings the
maid did bring;
And Anfortas was glad and joyful to think that his sister fair,
Without or strife or conflict, the crown of those lands might
bear.

Now aright have ye heard the story of the children of
Frimutel,
Five they were, and three are living, and death unto two
befell. 600
And the one was Schoysiané, who was pure in the sight of
God,
And the other was Herzeleide, and falsehood her soul
abhorred;
And the sword and the life of knighthood, Trevrezent, he
had laid them down
For the love of God, and His service, and the hope of a
deathless crown.
And the gallant knight, Anfortas, pure heart and strong
hand he bore, 605
And well for the Grail he joustèd, but for women he fought
no more.
And Lohengrin grew to manhood, and cowardice from him
flew,
And his heart yearned for deeds of knighthood, to the Grail
he did service true.

Would ye further hear the story? A maiden, in days of yore,
Whose heart was free from falsehood, the crown of a fair
land bore— 610
Her heirdom was rich and noble, and lowly and pure her
heart,
And no taint of earthly longing had found in her soul a part.
And wooers she had in plenty, of crownèd kings, I ween,
And princes, whose race and kingdom fit mate for her own
had been.

Yet so humble she was, the maiden, she thought not of
 earthly love— 615
 And the counts of her realm waxed wrathful, since no
 pleading her soul could move,
 And their anger raged hot against her that she gave not her
 maiden hand
 To one who should be fit ruler o'er her folk, and her goodly
 land.
 In God was her trust, whatever men might in their anger
 speak,
 And guiltless, she bare the vengeance her folk on her head
 would wreak. 620
 But she called of her land the princes, and they journeyed
 from far and near,
 From many a distant country, the will of their queen to hear.
 And she sware she would have no husband, and no man as
 her lord would own
 Save him whom God's Hand should send her, his love would
 she wait alone.

Of the land of Brabant was she princess—From
 Monsalväsch he came, the knight 625
 Whom God at His will should send her, and his guide was a
 swan so white.
 He set foot in her land at Antwerp, and she knew that her
 heart spake true,
 And gallant was he to look on, and all men the hero knew
 For a noble knight and manly, and his face, it was wondrous
 fair,
 And his fame was in every kingdom where men did his
 deeds declare. 630
 And a wise man he was, free-handed, with never a doubting
 heart,
 And faithful and true, and falsehood it found in his life no
 part.

A fair welcome the princess gave him—now list ye unto his
 rede,
 Rich and poor stood there around him, and they gave to his
 words good heed,
 And he spake thus, 'My Lady Duchess, if thou wilt not mine
 hand refuse, 635
 But wilt have me for lord and husband, for thy sake I a
 kingdom lose—
 But hearken to what I pray thee, ask thou never who I may
 be,

And seek not to know my country, for so may I abide with
 thee.
 In the day thou dost ask the question of my love shalt thou
 be bereft—
 Take thou warning, lest God recall me to the land which
 erewhile I left.' 640
 Then she pledged her faith as a woman that her love, it
 should ne'er wax less,
 She would do e'en as he should bid her, and never his will
 transgress
 So long as God wit should give her—Her love did he win
 that night,
 And Lord of Brabant and its Duchess they hailed him with
 morning light.

And the marriage feast was costly, and many a knight the
 land 645
 That of right should be his, as vassal, must take from his
 princely hand.
 For he gave ever righteous judgment, and many a gallant
 deed
 Of knighthood he did, and, valiant, he won of fair fame his
 meed.
 Fair children were born unto them—The folk of Brabant yet
 know
 Of the twain, how he came unto them, and wherefore he
 thence must go, 650
 And how long he dwelt among them ere her question broke
 the spell,
 And drove him forth, unwilling, for so shall the story tell.
 The friendly swan, it sought him, and a little boat did bring,
 And he sailed thence, and left as tokens his sword, and his
 horn, and ring.

So *Lohengrin* passed from among them, for in sooth this
 gallant knight 655
 Was Parzival's son, and none other, if the tale ye would
 know aright.
 By water-ways he sought it, the home of the Grail, again—
 And what of the lovely duchess who longed for her lord in
 vain?
 Why drove she hence her true love? since he bade her be
 warned of yore,
 And forbade her to ask the question when he landed on
 Brabant's shore— 660
 Here Herr Erec should speak, for, I think me, he knoweth the
 tale to tell

Of revenging for broken pledges, and the fate that such
speech befell!

If Chrétien of Troyes, the master, hath done to this tale a
wrong,
Then *Kiot* may well be wrathful, for he taught us aright the
song,
To the end the Provençal told it—How Herzeleide's son the
Grail

665

Did win, as was fore-ordainèd when Anfortas thereto did
fail.
And thus, from Provence, the story to the German land was
brought,
And aright was it told, and the story doth lack in its ending
naught.

I, Wolfram of Eschenbach, think me that here-of will I speak
no more—

Of Parzival's race, and his kindred, of that have I told afore;
To the goal of his bliss have I brought him—he whose life
such an end shall gain,
That his soul doth not forfeit Heaven for sins that his flesh
shall stain,

670

And yet, as true man and worthy, the world's favour and
grace doth keep
Hath done well, nor hath lost his labour, nor his fame shall
hereafter sleep!

And if good and gracious women shall think I be worthy
praise,

675

Since I tell to its end my story, then joyful shall be my days.
And since for the love of a woman I have sung it, this song
of old,

I would that, in sweet words gentle, my guerdon by her be
told!

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