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THE WORKS OF
SIR THOMAS MALORY

THE WORKS OF SIR THOMAS MALORY

EDITED BY
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IN THREE VOLUMES
VOLUME I

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P R E F A C E

SIR Thomas Malory's Arthurian romances are a remarkable example of literary revival. 'Loved deeply, darkly understood' by English readers of to-day, they are in all essentials the product and the consummation of a movement initiated by early French writers. They transform the legacy of one nation into a cherished possession of another and by the same token effect the transition from the medieval to the modern conception of the novel—from early romance to a type of fiction able to carry its message to the modern world.

How this was achieved is a problem which to a large extent remains unsolved, but perhaps the chief obstacle to its solution is the state in which Malory's writings have been allowed to remain ever since they left his desk 'in the ninth year of the reign of King Edward IV'. Of his numerous editors none but the first, William Caxton, had access to his work in manuscript form, and all the editions that have appeared since Caxton's time are based—directly or indirectly—on his *Morte Darthur* published at Westminster in 1485. What is more, modern editors, while differing only in the degree of closeness with which they follow Caxton's text, have so far made no attempt at a critical treatment of it. Intent on presenting it in an 'accessible' form, they have in most cases made it superficially intelligible by modernizing the spelling, removing obsolete words, and occasionally rewriting obscure passages. An exception to this practice is H. O. Sommer's reprint, which, in the editor's own words, 'follows the original impression of Caxton with absolute fidelity, word for word, line for line, and page for page'. But 'fidelity' in a reprint, especially if it is 'absolute', can at best facilitate reference to an already existing printed version; it can throw no fresh light on the work itself.

In 1931 I was asked by the Delegates of the Clarendon Press to prepare a critical edition of Malory based on the two

¹ *Le Morte Darthur* by Syr Thomas Malory, the original edition of William Caxton novo reprinted and edited with an Introduction and Glossary by H. Oskar Sommer, London, Nutt, 1889-91, vol. ii, p. 17.

extant copies of Caxton's volume. My work was nearing completion when, in the early summer of 1934, a startling discovery was made in the Fellows' Library in Winchester College by the then Librarian, Mr. W. F. Oakeshott. While the contents of the library were being examined for another purpose, a fifteenth-century manuscript of Malory's romances unexpectedly came to light. It had lost a gathering of eight leaves at each end, and probably for this reason had remained unidentified for the best part of a century since its first definite entry in the catalogue of the library in 1839. Further inquiry showed that, while the manuscript was not that used by Caxton, it was in many respects more complete and authentic than Caxton's edition and had the first claim to the attention of any future editor of Malory. My task was thus clearly outlined for me. Without undue regret I abandoned my original project and undertook to edit Malory's works from the newly discovered text.

The most obvious merit of this text is that it brings us nearer to what Malory really wrote. Less obvious but no less vital is the fact that it enables us to see Malory's work in the making—not as a single book such as Caxton produced under the spurious and totally unrepresentative title of *Le Morte Darthur*, but as a series of separate romances each representing a distinct stage in the author's development, from his first timid attempts at imaginative narrative to the consummate mastery of his last great books. And as we observe not merely what he achieved but how he achieved it, we become aware that his methods bear a close relation to the processes operating in the whole field of early fiction. No such approach has so far been possible: the 'static' view which, thanks to Caxton, prevailed in all critical works on Malory (my own monograph of sixteen years ago is no exception) precluded any study of his evolution. In the Introduction to this volume I have made an attempt to suggest how the omission may be remedied. But the problem is vast, and my essay is but an outline of what in abler hands may yet form a new and revealing chapter of literary history.

The method I have adopted in establishing the text is described in another section of the Introduction. Suffice it to say here that I have endeavoured to treat the Winchester

MS. with all the care due to a copy whose original is no longer extant: not to reconstruct that original in its entirety by means of hypothetical readings, but merely to lessen as far as possible the damage done to the work by its copyists. To discard emendations which cannot be justified on objective grounds may seem, in theory, an obvious procedure. In practice it is surprisingly uncommon, for while it is easy enough to lay down the rule *conserver le plus possible, reparer le moins possible*, it is less easy to apply it at the expense of editorial initiative and to retain awkward readings when more attractive conjectural ones come to mind. The temptation to accept these is such that I may occasionally have yielded to it against my better judgement. But throughout my work, and in face of every doubtful passage, I have borne in mind that the proper attitude to a text should be that of an archaeologist to a monument of the past: an attitude of respect for every detail that may conceivably belong to the original structure.

There is a vital corollary to this view. Where emendation ends, interpretation must begin, and while punctuation, paragraphing, and the like are often its most effective means, no 'conservative' edition can safely dispense with a commentary. Hence the bulky sequel to the text in Volume I I I . It deals in the first place with textual problems; but it is also concerned with Malory's method of work as seen against the background of his sources: with his reactions to the texts he used, his rejections and selections, and the extent and character of his contribution. Like any *Quellenforschung* this type of annotation runs the risk of defeating its purpose, for it can make our reading of the text so thoroughly 'source-ridden' that we no longer see it as it is in itself, but only as it contrasts with its models. Against this error there is no safeguard beyond a sympathetic insight into the infinite complexities of assimilation and growth which make a product of the mind resemble a living organism. But given such an insight, a knowledge of the author's mind and method has an attraction all its own. There may be other ways of reading enjoyably, but none of reading constructively, of following the process and seeing its completion as a human achievement.

On my inability to do justice to my task I need not dwell at any length, but one of my handicaps should perhaps be made clear at the outset. My long acquaintance with Malory's Arthurian romances does not alter the fact that, as one of my most generous critics has pointed out, I came to him with a memory 'too full and too recent' of his French antecedents. *Nous ne voyons jamais qu'un seul cote des choses*, and my natural tendency has been to place Malory, not against his native English background, but against that of medieval French fiction. I have resigned myself to this inevitable one-sidedness with the less regret because I know that I leave whatever lies beyond my grasp in better hands than mine, and because the anomaly of an English classic being edited by a French scholar is in this case almost a necessary evil. For not only are most of Malory's works 'briefly drawn out of French', not only is their inspiration and texture essentially French, but the establishing of the text cannot be attempted without the aid of such records of Malory's sources as are found among the French Arthurian romances. Yet the anomaly remains, and the inevitable risk of misinterpretation. Nothing has been more welcome to me, therefore, than the help and advice I received in the early stages of this work from a scholar-friend, the late Professor E. V. Gordon, whose supreme competence was equalled only by his generosity to fellow workers and his selfless devotion to learning. His untimely death put an end to a collaboration which I valued above all else and to which this edition owes more than words can acknowledge. Fortunately his successor, Professor G. L. Brook, was good enough to step into the breach and lend me a helping hand at a time when I needed it most. He is the sole author of the Glossary—the only section of these volumes which I can unreservedly describe as being worthy of the text. For this and for his invaluable assistance in the clearing of numerous textual difficulties I cannot thank him enough.

It was my good fortune to find among my former pupils, who had already left their own mark in the province of French studies, as many willing helpers as I could reasonably ask for. I should like to record my especial gratitude to Dr. F. Whitehead for his important contribution to my

commentary on the *Tale of King Arthur* ; to Mr. E. S. Murrell for having collated with infinite care the two extant copies of Caxton's edition; to Dr. J. A. Noonan for valuable bibliographical information; to Mr. J. P. Collas for transcribing with extreme accuracy several sections of the Winchester manuscript; and to Dr. Gweneth Hutchings, who not only assisted me in the transcription of the text with the skill of an expert palaeographer, but supplied original material for the study of Malory's romances of Lancelot.

Several friends, including Sir Edmund Chambers, Professor M. K. Pope, and Professor T. B. W. Reid, were kind enough to read my Introduction in manuscript and give me the benefit of their advice on points of fact and interpretation. Of the libraries which provided me with the essential material I have incurred a particular obligation to the Winchester College Fellows' Library for generously allowing me to use and publish their newly discovered manuscript of Malory's text; to the Pierpont Morgan Library for permission to reproduce part of the unique complete copy of Caxton's edition; and to the John Rylands Library which in the person of its eminent Librarian, Dr. Henry Guppy, has done everything possible to facilitate my work at every stage.

The great institution under whose imprint this edition is privileged to appear is responsible for more than its outward form. To have seen a text of this magnitude through the press at a time of the greatest national emergency is in itself a unique achievement; but my debt to this self-effacing agency extends to every page of this book, to every detail of its presentation, and indeed to all the innumerable improvements which will, I hope, make it, in Caxton's phrase, 'for to pass the time pleasant to read in'.

As much of this work as belongs to me I dedicate to the memory of Joseph Bedier whose encouragement and example have been my lifelong inspiration. I wish for no higher reward than the knowledge that he would have recognized it as the work of a disciple.

December, 1945.

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INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

THE KNIGHT-PRISONER

EVER since 1485, when Malory's romances first appeared in print, the only clue to their authorship has been the following paragraph at the end of the book:

I praye you all Ientyl men and Ientyl wymmen that redeth this book of Arthur and his knyghtes from the begynnyng to the endyng praye for me whyle I am on lyue that god sende me good delyueraunce & whan I am deed I praye you all praye for my soule for this book was ended the ix yere of the reygne of kyng edward the fourth by syr Thomas Maleore knyght as Ihesu helpe hym for hys grete myght as he is the seruaunt of Ihesu bothe day and nyght.

Apart from the author's name, three points can be gathered from this passage: he was a knight; he completed his work in the ninth year of the reign of Edward IV, i.e. between 4 March 1469 and 3 March 1470; and he was then in prison: the 'deliverance' for which he asks his readers to pray can only mean deliverance from prison.¹ A Sir Thomas Malory,² knight, of Newbold Revell (Warwickshire) and Winwick (Northamptonshire), is known to have lived at that time:³ he was born in the first quarter of the century and died on 14 March 1471. But whether he was in prison in the ninth year of the reign of Edward IV remains uncertain.⁴ It is known that he was excluded from two successive general pardons granted by Edward IV to the Lancastrians in 1468,⁵ but exclusion from a general pardon is

¹ Cf. my *Malory*, p. 115.

² The variants of spelling are: *Ma/ore*, *Mallore*, *Mallere*, *Malery*, *Malorie*, *Malarie*, *Malorey*, *Malory*.

³ Cf. G. L. Kittredge, *Who was Sir Thomas Malory?* Boston, 1897. The discovery was first announced in *Johnson's Universal Cyclopaedia* in March 1894.

⁴ Surprising though it may seem, the fact of Malory's imprisonment in 1469 has so far been taken for granted. Cf. my *Malory*, p. 116.

⁵ On 24 August and 1 December (cf. *Liber Albus* ii, ff. 199-200, and iii, ff. 227-8). The pardon granted in December 1468 was first published by the Historical

in itself no evidence of imprisonment,¹ and even if the point could be conceded, a gap of at least three months would remain between the date of the second general pardon (1 December 1468) and the earliest possible date of the passage quoted above (4 March 1469). It is also known that in the course of an eventful life Sir Thomas Malory of Newbold Revell was imprisoned several times and that the length of his detention varied from a few days to three years;² but his last recorded imprisonment ended not later than November 1462, and there is no conclusive proof that he was arrested at any time after that date.

The newly discovered manuscript of Malory's romances helps to some extent to dispose of this difficulty. Two passages, neither of which appears in any printed version of the work, contain references to the author's imprisonment. One of them is an appeal for a speedy 'good deliverance':

And I pray you all that redyth this tale to pray for hym that this wrote that God sende hym good delyveraunce sone and hastely. Amen.³

These lines, obviously written in prison,⁴ occur at the end of the *Tale of Sir Gareth*, long before the end of the last book. On the most conservative estimate the writing of the intervening matter, which in the present edition covers some nine hundred pages, could not have taken less than a year. Hence at least a year before he concluded his work, i.e. in February 1469 at the latest, the author must have been a prisoner. Still more helpful is the statement found on f. 70 of the manuscript, at the end of the *Tale of King Arthur*:⁵

And this booke endyth whereas sir Launcelot and sir Trystrams com to courte. Who that woll make ony more lette hym seke other bookis of kynge Arthure or of sir Launcelot or sir Trystrams; for this

MSS. Commission and quoted by Sir Edmund Chambers in his essay on *Malory* (English Association, Pamphlet No. 51), 1922, p. 16.

¹ Sir Humphrey NeviU, similarly excluded, was not in prison at the time when the pardon was granted.

² Cf. E. Hicks, *Sir Thomas Malory, his Turbulent Career*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1928, and A. C. Baugh, 'Documenting Sir Thomas Malory', *Speculum*, vol. viii, pp. 3-29. ³ f. 148.

⁴ *The Book of Sir Tristram* (u. *infra*, p. 540) contains some remarks on the hardships of imprisonment, but it is not clear that they refer to the author's own experiences. ⁵ See facsimile facing this page.

stronge þæt þæt myght but fewe byrght stonde q̃nd a byffette
 a spere And at þæt nept feste for þæt lēad and for ayn q̃l
 were made byrght of þæt rōnde table. for þæt were .ij. begis
 wyde for .ij. byrght were slayne þæt .xij. mony. And grette
 Joy had byrght artymē of for þæt lēad and of for ayn q̃l
 te But þæt lēad loved new after for þæt wyne But ad
 ge spawed hym for þæt love of þæt byrght but of þæt tyme
 Justis at turnement. For þæt lēad quyte for þæt wyne
 for so q̃t referyt in t̃e booke of freust. So for þæt
 trand many daved after songht w̃ for ayn q̃l in a
 slande and þæt t̃e and a grette batayle. But þæt laste for
 þæt trand stow hym. So for þæt trand was þæt
 ded þæt tyme q̃e myght record and lay at a p̃mure
 q̃l a yere And for þæt lēad was a worþyffull
 byrght and was one of þæt .ij. þæt enq̃ered þæt t̃e grette
 and þæt t̃e of þæt laabe made by q̃er meand t̃e new
 q̃e had a do w̃ for l̃ancelot de laabe for w̃ere for l̃ance
 lot was at ony Justis or at ony turnement. q̃e wolde
 not suffir hym to be þæt t̃e day but yf q̃e were on þæt syde
 of for l̃ancelot q̃ere endyt t̃e tale ad þæt freust
 booke seyt for t̃e marriage of byrght by q̃er but byrght
 artymē t̃e regned after hym it ded many batayles
 And t̃e booke endyt w̃ere ad for l̃ancelot And
 for þæt trand com to comte. w̃e t̃e w̃olde make
 ony more lette hym fete of booke of byrght artymē
 or of for l̃ancelot or for þæt trand for t̃e was
 dwayn by a byrght presoner. For þæt t̃e w̃alcom
 t̃e q̃e fete hym good record d̃m̃st of

Ep̃le

was drawyn by a knyght presoner sir Thomas Malleorre, that God sende hym good recover. Amen, etc. EXPLICIT.

Here at last we have, instead of a mere allusion to the author's experiences, a plain admission that the *Tale of King Arthur*—the second in date of his romances¹—was written by a *knight-prisoner*. Scarcely less definite is the indication that when he finished writing it he had no intention of 'seeking any more books of Arthur, Lancelot, or Tristram'. Since at that time six of his romances were still unwritten, it stands to reason that between the passage just quoted and the resumption of the work there must have elapsed an interval of time long enough to enable him not only to change his mind but to lay his hand on a considerable amount of fresh material. He was, as he himself tells us, a prisoner *before* that interval; his captivity, whether continuous or intermittent, must, then, have preceded the writing of any of the remaining six romances by several months, if not years, and it seems reasonable to suppose that it began long before he wrote the concluding sentence of the *Tale of Sir Gareth* and at least a few years before he completed his last work.

The bearing of this on the author's identification is clear. Until now the only relevant passage in his work has been his appeal for deliverance written at least three months after the last exclusion from amnesty of Sir Thomas Malory of Newbold Revell and six or seven years after his last recorded imprisonment. The passages quoted above can be dated well within those years, if not earlier. No doubt the identification still remains a little less than certain, for it depends upon the likely, but not altogether impregnable, assumption that between 1460 and 1470 there could have been no other 'knight-prisoner' of the name of Thomas Malory. But such certainty as there is does not fall short of what can reasonably be expected from the records of a fifteenth-century character who was neither a professional writer nor a prominent public figure; and it is at all events

¹ Cf. *infra*, pp. xxxv-ix. *The Tale of Sir Launcelot*, *The Tale of Sir Gareth*, *The Book of Sir Tristram*, *The Tale of the Sankgreal*, *The Book of Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere* and *The Morte Arthur* were all produced after *The Tale of King Arthur*,

sufficient to call for some account of the few known facts of his life.¹

Sir Thomas Malory belonged to an old Warwickshire family. He was probably still in his early twenties when in 1433 or 1434 he succeeded to the ancestral estate. In 1436 he served in the train of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, at Calais, with one lance and two archers.² A few years later he married,³ and sometime between 1441 and 1449 acquired the estate of his sister's husband, Robert Vincent.⁴ So far, then, there was nothing unusual in his life, and the fact that as early as 1443 a Thomas Smythe charged him with the theft of goods and chattels is no proof that he committed any such offence. Nor is it necessary to assume with his latest biographer that 'in view of the orgy of lawlessness on which he is in full career when we next meet him', he must have been engaged in criminal activities for several years before the 'orgy' began.⁶ All we know is that in the year 1450, when he was over forty, from being a peaceable and presumably well-to-do citizen he became a law-breaker. In the course of eighteen months—from January 1450 to July 1451—he was charged with several major crimes, including a robbery, a theft, two cattle-raids, some extortions, a rape, and even an attempted murder. It would appear from the charges brought against him that on 4 January 1450 he lay in ambush with other malefactors for the purpose of murdering Humphrey, Duke of Buckingham; that on 23 May he 'feloniously raped' Joan Smyth and stole some property belonging to her husband, Hugh Smyth of Monks Kirby; that a week later he extorted money from Margaret Kyng and William

¹ Unless otherwise stated my narrative is based on the records published by G. L. Kittredge, E. Hicks, and A. C. Baugh, and on some of the materials contained in Appendix I of my *Malory*. I am also much indebted to Sir Edmund Chambers for numerous useful suggestions on the whole problem.

² According to Dugdale (*Antiquities of Warwickshire*, London, 1656, p. 56), this occurred *at the siege of Calais*, in Henry V's time. There was no siege of Calais under Henry V, but in 1436 Calais was threatened with siege, if not actually besieged, and Dugdale's *K.H.5 time* is probably a misprint for *K.H.6 time*. I owe this correction to Sir Edmund Chambers.

³ His wife Elizabeth bore him one son, Robert, who died in Sir Thomas's lifetime.

* Cf. my *Malory*, p. 121.

⁵ It is not known what came of this charge, but it seems probable that it fell through.

⁶ A. C. Baugh, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

Hales, and on 31 August dealt in like fashion with John Mylner. In the following year he is alleged to have continued his operations on a more extensive scale: to have extorted, on 4 June 1451, with the help of five other men, 7 cows, 2 calves, a cart, and 33 5 sheep from William Rowe and William Dowde of Shawell,¹ broken into a park at Caludon on 20 July, carried off 6 does, and inflicted considerable damage on the property.² On 23 July, before he could be charged with this last offence, he was arrested for some of his earlier felonies and kept in custody at Coleshill. Two days later he escaped by swimming across the moat, and on 28 July, so our records tell us, broke into the Abbey of the Blessed Mary of Coombe, opened two of the abbot's chests, and stole various *jocalia* and *ornamenta* as well as two bags of money. The next day, according to the same records, he repeated the assault with the help of numerous accomplices, broke eighteen doors in the abbey, insulted the abbot, and stole more money.³ With this the most eventful period of his life was, as far as we know, at an end. Soon after his alleged second attack on Coombe Abbey he was arrested again, and his detention lasted until May 1454, with a brief interval of freedom in 1452.⁴

On 5 May 1454 Malory was released on bail to Roger Chamburleyn and nine others for six months. He promptly took advantage of this to carry off some oxen from a manor

¹ All the charges so far mentioned were brought against Malory at an Inquisition held at Nuneaton on 23 August 1451. The relevant documents have been published by E. Hicks (op. cit., pp. 93-102), but in dating the events to which they refer I have taken into account the corrections proposed by A. C. Baugh in an article in the *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, xxix, pp. 452-7.

² Cf. Baugh, 'Documenting Sir Thomas Malory', *Speculum*, viii, pp. 20-2. The document referring to this offence is *Coram Rege Roll* 763, Hilary, 30 Hen. VI, m. 23 *dorso*. The plaintiffs are the Archbishop of Canterbury, Humphrey, Duke of Buckingham, and the Duke and Duchess of Norfolk. The damage done to the property is said to amount to 2500—clearly an impossible figure in the circumstances.

³ This is one of the items in the Nuneaton Inquisition. It gives the names of fourteen men who accompanied Malory on his second attack on the abbey and states that about a hundred others took part in it. Cf. Hicks, loc. cit.

⁴ He was certainly at liberty on 26 March 1452 when, according to an entry in the Patent Rolls, the Duke of Buckingham, Sir Edward Grey of Groby, and the Sheriffs of Warwick and Leicester were directed to arrest him 'to answer certain charges'. The date of this commission is wrongly given in my *Malory* (p. 6, note 3) as 1453.

belonging to Katherine Peyto in Northants,¹ and at the same time used his experience of cattle-raids to assist his friend and accomplice, John Aleyn, who on 21 May broke into the grounds and buildings of John Abot of Tilty at Great Easton in Essex to steal two horses; on 27 June Aleyn stole another horse from Richard Skott, vicar of Gosfield in the same county, and five days later carried off two more: one belonging to Thomas Bykenen and the other to Thomas Strete.² Malory is reported to have 'feloniously' given shelter to Aleyn a few days later at Thaxted and again at Braintree, and to have plotted with him an attack on the property of William Grene of Gosfield. The attack failed, but on 16 October Malory was committed to the custody of Thomas Cobham, keeper of the jail at Colchester, and so was unable to appear at the expiration of his bail (29 October). A writ was issued to the custodian of the jail to bring him to court, and although on the next day (30 October) Malory broke out of jail,³ the custodian succeeded in producing him on 18 November. Malory was then committed to the Marshal. For the year 1455 no records are available, but when in February 1456 Malory was produced in King's Bench by the Lieutenant of the Tower, he offered a royal patent of pardon granted on 24 November 1455, presumably by the Duke of York.⁴ On 3 July 1456 he was able to borrow money from Thomas Greswold, and in the same year served for his shire in the Parliament then held at Westminster.⁵ He was subsequently rearrested and detained in Ludgate (normally a prison for debtors), perhaps because of his failure to repay the debt, which could be regarded as a breach of the conditions of the pardon. On 19 October 1457

¹ The petition of Katherine Peyto was found by A. C. Baugh (op. cit., pp. 19-20) among the *Early Chancery Proceedings* (C/i/15/780). Its dating presents some difficulty, but of the alternatives suggested by Baugh the more likely seems the period 1452-6, not 1442-50.

² A full account of these offences is given in a record of the *Ancient Indictments*, K.B. 9/280 m. 43. Cf. Baugh, op. cit., pp. 22-5.

³ The record describing Malory's escape from Colchester prison (K.B. 9/280 m. 44) specifies that 'predictus Thomas Mallory . . . eandem gaolam sive prisonam domini Regis . . . vi et armis, videlicet gladiis, langodebeves et daggariis felonice fregerit et sic extra eandem gaolam felonice ad tunc et ibidem evaserit et ad largum exierit'.

* The king's incapacity lasted from 12 November 1455 to 25 February 1456, and during this period York acted as Protector. The pardon seems to have been disregarded in later proceedings.

⁵ Cf. Dugdale, loc. cit.

he was released on bail for two months,¹ and at the end of this time returned to the Marshal.

A year and three months later, at Easter 1459, he was reported at large in Warwickshire, and so far as can be ascertained remained free until the Hilary term of 1460, when he was committed to Newgate. We know neither the reason for this last arrest nor the exact length of the imprisonment, but at the end of 1462 Malory must have been free again, for his name occurs in a list of persons who went with Edward IV to Northumberland in November of that year.² There is reason to believe that, as a Warwickshire man, he followed the shifting policies of the Earl of Warwick whom he accompanied on this expedition. He was certainly with Warwick at the siege of Alnwick which ended on 30 January 1463.³ When, later on, the long pending breach between Warwick and Edward IV occurred and Warwick joined the Lancastrians Malory most probably did so too. Our next records are the two general pardons granted by Edward IV to the Lancastrians in 1468. The first is dated 24 August and states that the pardon shall not extend to 'Thomas Malorie, miles'; the second, similarly worded, is dated 1 December. We cannot be certain that Malory was in prison at the time when the pardons were issued; but if he was, he probably had to wait for his release until Henry VI's restoration on 9 October 1470. He died soon after, on 14 March 1471, and 'lyeth buryed under a marble in the chapel of St. Francis at the Grey Friars near Newegate in the suburbs of London'.⁴ The inscription on his tomb said simply: *Dominus Thomas Mallere valens miles obiit 14 Mar. 1470 de parochia Monkenkyrkby in comitatu Warwici.*⁵

Biographical interpretation has done so much harm to literary criticism that it is a relief to find how very little room there is for it in Malory's case. No one will seriously

¹ To William Neville, Lord of Fauconberg. The bail expired on 28 December 1457.

² *Brief Notes of Occurrences under Henry VI and Edward IV from MS. Lambeth 448, in Three Fifteenth-Century Chronicles, etc., ed. by James Gairdner, Camden Society, 1880, p. 157.*

³ He may also have been at the siege of Bamborough until its surrender on Christmas Eve 1462. The references to Bamborough and Alnwick in his last book (*infra*, p. 1257) are not without significance.

⁴ Dugdale, *loc. cit.*

⁵ *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica*, vol. iii, p. 287.

attempt to read his life into his works or associate these with any phase or aspect of his curious career. The danger lies the other way. To those who think that criticism has some relevance for biography it may seem hardly credible that a man whose behaviour showed so little respect for conventional morality should have written a book which, according to Caxton's Preface, was designed 'for our doctrine and for to beware that we fall not to vice or sin, but exercise and follow virtue'. The book, the Preface tells us, describes 'the renowned acts of humanity, gentleness, and chivalry'; and it may conceivably be felt that while a mere portrayal of such 'acts' need have no relation to the author's own record, the moral teaching, the 'doctrine' which they purport to illustrate makes singularly bad sense in the context of his life. This view, if carried to the point of denying the attribution of the book to the historical Thomas Malory, would be a complete perversion of method, for no interpretation of a work of fiction can be relied upon to that extent. But lest there be any temptation to question his authorship on such grounds, it might be worth while inquiring whether they exist; in other words, whether the notion that he wrote the 'noble histories of King Arthur and his knights' is in fact as incongruous as it seems. If on analysis the incongruity proves to be more apparent than real, the case for the identification will not, strictly speaking, be strengthened; but it will become more understandable and perhaps less likely to raise unreal problems.

The moral qualities of the 'noble histories' have been variously assessed by the critics. Ascham thought that 'the whole pleasure' of the book 'stood in two specyall poynts, in open manslaughter and bold bawdrye'; Tennyson found that Malory's work was 'touched by the adulterous finger of a time that hover'd between war and wantonness'; Sir Edward Strachey, while admitting that it exhibited 'a picture of a society far lower than our own in morals', was convinced that Malory had made a real effort to distinguish between vice and virtue and 'morally reprobate the former'.¹ This last view, with certain qualifications, has prevailed, and Malory has become associated in our minds with a doctrine

¹ *Le Morte Darthur*, ed. by Sir Edward Strachey, 1919, p. xxiii.

of 'humanity and gentleness*. Few critics have realized that the belief in his 'morality' is based not so much on his work as on Caxton's preface to it.¹ The confusion is the less excusable because Caxton clearly distinguishes between the purpose of the work and his own object in bringing it out. While insisting that his readers should learn the 'noble acts of chyvalrye' and the 'jentyll and vertuouse dedes that somme knyghtes used in tho dayes', he is truthful enough to admit that these are by no means the only 'dedes' recorded in the book: 'for herein may be seen noble chyvalrye, curtosye, humanity, frendlynnesse, hardynesse, love, frendshyp, cowrdyse, murdre, hate.* From this miscellaneous array of virtues and vices Caxton begs his readers to choose all that is good and reject the rest: 'doo after the good and leve the evyl, and it shal brynge you to good fame and renommee.* But he does not say that this choice is necessarily implied in the text or that Malory himself intended his 'noble histories' to serve as a means of moral improvement.

Nor would Malory's work, in so far as it is original, bear out this view. No doubt, as long as his sources vary in their moral outlook, and as long as he follows them indiscriminately, he cannot help reproducing certain passages which suggest an idealistic inspiration. The *Quest of the Holy Grail*—'the holiest that is in this world'—is a case in point. All that is 'holy' in Malory's version of it is translated from the French, and his own attitude to it shows itself mainly in the attempt to deprive the story of its religious significance. His *Book of Sir Tristram de Lyones*—by far the longest of his romances—is based on a different type of work. Its immediate source is a French prose romance which combines the original Tristan legend with a mass of thirteenth-century Arthurian material; in terms of French literary history it can be described as a mixture of pre-courtly motifs with a *roman courtois* and a *roman d'aventures*. Each of these elements has its background in contemporary thought and a certain 'morality' of its own; but they all seem to be equally foreign to Malory. When he stops to moralize or to enlarge on the curious adventures of his characters he almost

¹ The most recent example of this misconception is the chapter on *The Genius of Chivalry* in my monograph on Malory. See especially p. 59.

invariably points a moral or adds a detail which has no relation to the real meaning of the story. His Tristan complains of having abandoned for the sake of his beloved 'many lands and riches*'; his Guinevere gives her knights 'treasure enough for their expenses'; and on several occasions he makes King Arthur's knights acquire substantial sources of revenue 'through might of arms'. These and many other similar additions seem to reveal a highly realistic view of life, a firm belief in the importance of wealth, and an almost pathetic concern with material comforts. As Malory gains more independence in the treatment of his sources, this attitude becomes more obvious. His *Launcelot and Guinevere* includes a whole chapter of his own composition which Caxton has inaccurately entitled 'How true love is likened unto summer'. In reality Malory does not 'liken love unto summer', but elaborates in his own way the theme of the reawakening of nature. If, he remarks, 'every lusty heart beginneth to blossom and bring out fruit' in May, it is because 'all herbs and trees renewen a man and woman, and likewise lovers'. 'For winter', he explains further, 'with his rough winds and blasts causeth man and woman to cower and sit fast by the fire.' This is Malory's counterpart to the idealistic doctrine of courtly romance, and his most successful escape from the oppressive atmosphere of *courtoisie* into a world of comfortable realities.

The least 'moral' of his sources were doubtless those which he chose for his first attempt at 'reducing' French romances into English: the continuation of *Merlin* and some fragments of the last part of the prose *Lancelot*. Both these works belonged to the most advanced stage in the development of the French Arthurian tradition and preserved few traces of its original courtly inspiration. Their distinctive feature was the ingenious elaboration of fanciful adventures. King Arthur's habit of declining to eat at supper until he had heard of a new adventure and, regardless of its purpose, entrusted it to one of his knights may be taken as a humorous but accurate expression of the tendency which prevailed in works of this type. The fact that originally—in the early days of *courtoisie*—adventure had been a means to an end, a **vehicle** of refined sentiment, was forgotten, and the curiously

interwoven quests, pursuits, and battles became the real if not the only centre of interest. Knight-errantry, as treated by the prose writers of the thirteenth century, ceased to be a school of courtly service; it became primarily a peculiar mode of living, characterized by a constant search for new adventures of all kinds. The romances which Malory chose for his early adaptations¹ are good examples of this variety of fiction. Their main object is to relate on an ever-increasing scale the miscellaneous experiences of a group of fearless knights spurred to action by their indefatigable king. But what to a modern critic seems a mere succession of *creuses et monotones invraisemblance*² was to thirteenth-century readers a source of genuine delight, ^and to contemporary authors the foundation of their narrative art. Moreover, the type of mind that reacts favourably to such compositions has certainly existed at all times, although the changes of literary taste and fashion may have caused it to migrate from one category of readers to another and to descend sometimes from the highest to the lowest strata. It would not be surprising, therefore, if in fifteenth-century England a man whose moral and psychological outlook was very different from our own, and different also from that of the early courtly writers, had been attracted by the Arthurian novels of the 'adventurous' type. If any background of actual experience was needed to awaken interest in such works, it was not one of moral and sentimental refinement, and there is no real reason why a man totally unaffected by the accepted code of behaviour should not have been sensitive to their appeal. Nor does Malory's contribution to the narrative present any difficulty. What he seems to value above all at this stage of his work is the record of unusual and daring exploits, and his originality as a writer shows itself chiefly in the directness of exposition, in the substitution of simple manners for courtly etiquette, and in the elimination of the supernatural and the mysterious. He prefers straightforward speech to elaborate orations, human cunning to the inexplicable workings of supernatural forces, and a realistic setting to the conventional fairy-tale scenery of French romance.

¹ *The Tale of King Arthur and The Noble Tale of Sir Launcelot du Lake.*

² *Merlin*, ed. G. Paris et J. Ulrich, p. Ixix.

It may be argued that the fairest specimens of Malory's 'morality' are the remarks he occasionally inserts to describe the practice and the ideals of chivalry. Some of these remarks refer to principles of chivalric behaviour seemingly distinct from the mere art of fighting. A knight, he says, should be courteous and gentle, for then 'he has favour in every place'. Nor should he indulge in useless fighting: his bravery and skill are to be subordinate to his purpose, and those who abuse their physical superiority forfeit their claim to perfect knighthood. On the strength of such utterances Malory has been described by some as a belated but sincere exponent of the moral ideals of chivalry,¹ while others have suggested that he embodied these ideals 'in actual personages and so influenced the national character of his countrymen in the best way'.²

The text of Malory's writings preserved in the Winchester MS. throws new light on what chivalry really meant to him. The beginnings of his 'doctrine' are found in his earliest work, *The Tale of the Noble King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius*, of which the Winchester MS. alone gives a complete version. Caxton's rendering of it is a drastic abridgement. Puzzled by the archaic character of the *Tale*, Caxton, 'simple person', reduced it to less than half its size, with the result that until now it has not been possible to form an accurate idea either of the content of the story or of its position among Malory's romances. The narrative is based upon an English alliterative poem known as the *Morte Arthure*. While shortening his original and modernizing some of its vocabulary, Malory treats it with far more respect than his other sources. 'Its chief attraction for him lies in the record of Arthur's heroic exploits, which he expands and elaborates as best he can, so as to make Arthur appear as the true embodiment of heroic chivalry. Arthur is the 'Conqueror', the English counterpart of Charlemagne, and he claims by right the possession of the Roman Empire. He is the champion of the weak and the oppressed, witness his fight with the giant who had caused so much distress to the people of Brittany. But he has some of the characteristics of the primitive type of warrior. He does not shrink

¹ Cf. my *Malory*, pp. 55-69.

² Strachey, *op. cit.*, p. xxi.

from a wholesale massacre of the Romans, and his cruelty in battle is equalled only by his enormous strength. Malory is careful to emphasize, however, that in spite of this cruelty to the enemy Arthur has human qualities which endear him to his own people. The implacable conqueror of the Romans mourns the death of his own knights as an irreparable loss and forgets for a moment his grim and glorious task. The Roman Emperor's challenge grieves him because he cannot tolerate unnecessary bloodshed. He is wise and prudent, anxious to take counsel with his knights, and generous in rewarding them for their services. The noble king is thus shown in all his primitive, yet human glory: not as a mere abstract centre of the fellowship of the Round Table, but as a political and military leader, conscious of his responsibility for the welfare and the prestige of his kingdom.¹

This idealized portrait of Arthur may well be interpreted as a tribute to Henry V. As if to strengthen the analogy Malory adds several details which make Arthur's expedition against the Romans resemble Henry V's triumphant campaign in France. Just as Henry appointed two men to rule the country in his absence—Henry Beaufort and the Duke of Bedford—so in Malory's version of Arthur's campaign Arthur appoints two chieftains for the same purpose: Baudwen of Bretayne and Cadore of Cornwall. The king's itinerary through France is altered so as to resemble the route followed by Henry.² Just as the latter became virtually King of France after Agincourt (by the Treaty of Troyes Charles VI had agreed to let Henry succeed him on his death), so Malory's Arthur, after his victory over the Romans, is 'crowned Emperor by the Pope's hands, with all royalty in the world to weld forever'. Nor is it without significance that Malory brings his *Noble Tale* to an end at this point and dismisses for the time being the rest of the story which he found in the English poem: Mordred's treachery and Arthur's downfall. His intention is clear: he is anxious that the story of Arthur's triumph should remain uppermost in the reader's mind as a record of the greatest

¹ Cf. my article on 'Malory's Morte Darthur in the Light of a Recent Discovery' in the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, vol. xix, No. 2, July 1935.

² For details of these changes see the relevant section of the *Commentary*.

English victory of his age and that the reader should know *how* this victory was won. Caxton hits the mark when he says that in Malory's book his readers will see how those who 'used gentle and virtuous deeds' came to 'honour', but he mistakes—perhaps deliberately—Malory's practical intention for a moral one. *The Tale of Arthur and Lucius* is the first in date of Malory's extant works;¹ it was written at a time when the author's recollections of the great king were made particularly vivid by a dynastic dispute directed against Henry V's legitimate heir. Whether as a Lancastrian or as a follower of Warwick who had sworn allegiance to Henry VI while fighting his advisers and even resisted the Duke of York's attempt to assume the crown,² Malory had every reason to remember that Henry V had made the name of England glorious. His often quoted remark—'this is a great default of us Englishmen, for there may nothing please us no term'—may well be taken to refer to those who had forgotten not only the sanctity of the royal title³ but the illustrious deeds of the great English monarch they had once acclaimed as a victor. Malory's first 'noble history' is a clear reminder of those deeds. Conceived in the midst of the greatest political upheaval of the century, it was an attempt to show what had been and what could still be achieved 'through clean knighthood'.

Chivalry was, then, to Malory, at that initial stage of his work, *the faculte maitresse* of a brave warrior-king and of his faithful knights; it was man's heroic devotion to a great cause. As Malory's work advanced, and as he ventured deeper and deeper into the vast labyrinth of Arthurian fiction, he found himself following the tracks of innumerable 'warriors wrought in steely weeds', some of whom had distinguished themselves in Arthur's victorious campaign. But as their numbers grew their chivalric ambition, as Malory under-

¹ Cf. *infra*, pp. xxxvi-viii.

²

On 16 October 1460.

³ In the thirteenth-century French version of the Tristan romance which Malory followed very closely there is a story of a rebellion against King Mark. In trying to persuade the rebels to lay down their arms Mark says that the land they have invaded belongs to the Pope and that their action might jeopardize 'la sainte terre de Jerusalem'. In Malory's otherwise faithful rendering of this incident Mark offers, as a price of peace, to go to war against the infidels, for, he says, 'I trow that is fayrer warre than thus to areyse people agaynste youre kynge' (p. 680).

stood it, steadily decreased. They were no longer concerned with the practical business of warfare; they still wore their glittering armour and were eager to use their spears and swords; but their battles seemed to be fought in the void, and there was no discernible object in their exploits. Malory soon realized that the 'great books' of the French Arthurian Cycle failed to provide a worthy continuation of his first Arthurian work, and proceeded to supplement them with remarks on the art and meaning of chivalry. Faithful to his original conception of knighthood, he treated it not as a vague background of adventures but as the practical function of a well-established order—the 'High Order of Knighthood'—with its headquarters firmly fixed in the household of a great prince. Arthur naturally had to play the part of that prince. While in the French Arthurian romances Arthur's court had been but the conventional starting-point of knightly quests and Arthur himself a fantastic character, a king of Fairyland, Malory made him into the most accomplished and dignified champion of chivalry and the real founder of its great traditions. Under Arthur's leadership chivalry becomes a useful discipline which, if properly practised, can make its adherents into 'the sternest knights to their foes'. The technique of fighting, and more particularly of single combat, is Malory's favourite topic; he speaks of it with confidence and authority. If, in addition to this, chivalry is also a matter of good breeding, gentleness, and loyalty, it is because these qualities, as shown by the example of Arthur, equip the perfect knight for his task and produce a type of warrior ready for any sacrifice and conscious of the importance of his calling. This was what Malory must have learnt both from real life and from reflection, and what he endeavoured to convey in his early work, not as a doctrine, but as a rule of conduct, more vital than ever in times of stress and struggle. The issue as he saw it was essentially a practical, not a moral one, and so far as we can judge it was in the same earnest spirit of practical heroism that in his later writings he so often attempted to commemorate in terms of imaginary knight-errantry some of the great declining traditions of his own age.

How so small a life was graced with true poetic vision, what miraculous play of character and circumstance brought the obscure knight-prisoner to his high theme, we may never know. But when all is said, it is enough to realize that in its varied human aspects his work does not belie what little can be inferred from the records of his strange destiny. The biographer may be tempted to go further and look for positive links between the author and his writings; the critic will more readily abide by Caxton's dictum: 'For to passe the tyme thys book shal be pleasaunte to rede in, but for to gyve fayth and byleve that al is trewe that is conteyned herin, ye be at your lyberte'.

CHAPTER II

THE STORY OF THE BOOK

i. Caxton's '*Morte Darthur*'

AS long as Caxton's edition—'enprynted and fynnysshed in thabbey of Westmestre the last day of Juyl the yere of our Lord MCCCCLXXXV'—was the only available record of Malory's writings there could be little or no reliable evidence as to what Caxton did to Malory's text. That he was no mere printer, but the publisher and editor of most of his books, has never been doubted. But in the absence of any other version of his 'copy', his *Morte Darthur* has been tacitly accepted as a genuine reproduction of the original. 'I have', he writes in his Preface, 'after the symple connynge that God hath sente to me, under the favour and correctyon of al noble lordes and gentylmen, enprysed¹ to enprynte a book of the noble hystories of the sayd kynge Arthur and of certeyn of his knyghtes, after a cotype unto me delyverd, whyche cotype Syr Thomas Malorye dyd take oute of certeyn bookes of Frensshe and reduced it into Englysshe.' Some of the damage due to Caxton's 'symple connynge' can now be repaired.

The essential difference between Malory's treatment of the *Noble Histories* and Caxton's was the difference between the methods of a medieval author or scribe and those of a modern publisher. A medieval 'book' could vary indefinitely in size and in content; it could be either a treatise of any size or a collection of different treatises under one cover.² There is evidence to show that in their original form Malory's works were in keeping with this traditional medieval connotation of the term. The first indication to this effect occurs in Caxton's Preface immediately before the reference

¹ = 'undertaken*.

² Cf. *Oxford Eng. Diet.* s.v. 'book', *la* and *b*. The other possible meaning of the term was 'a mechanical or logical sub-division of a treatise*'. Both meanings were, however, often confused with that of 'volume*'. Cf. Horman (*Vulg.* 84): 'A whole boke is comenly called indifferentlye a volume, a boke, a coucher.' Horman attempts to distinguish between them by saying that 'a volume is lease than a boke, and a boke lesse than a coucher'. Caxton's reference to Malory's 'noble volumes' and to the fact that he made them into a 'book' is a good example of this distinction.

to his 'symple connynge'. Speaking of the various Arthurian romances known to him and of his own project, he remarks: ' And many noble volumes be made of hym and of his noble knyghtes in Frensshe, which I have seen and redd beyonde the see, which been not had in our maternal tongue; but in Walsshe ben many, and also in Frensshe, and somme in Englysshe, but nowher nygh alle. *Wherfore, suche as have¹ late ben drawen oute bryefly into Englysshe, I have . . . enprysed to enprynte* etc. If this description is correct, Caxton's copy must have consisted of *many noble volumes*. At no point does he refer to them otherwise than in the plural, and the conclusion naturally suggests itself that what he published was a collection of different works which had not previously been made into a single composition.

So much may be inferred from Caxton's own statement. But the inference can now be substantiated with the aid of the Winchester text. Although the manuscript is bound in one volume, it is clearly divided into several different works, and each work with the exception of the last, which lacks a gathering of eight leaves at the end, is concluded by an *explicit*. The first *explicit* is the most significant of all. In it the author bids farewell to the reader and disclaims any intention of writing another Arthurian romance: *Who that woll make any more lette hym seke other bookis of kynge Arthure or of sir Launcelot or sir Trystrams.*² The works which follow show that at some later date he resumed his task. But just as the texts he used were separate romances with few connecting links between them, so his adaptations of them as set out in the Winchester MS. claimed no continuity of narrative, still less of composition. The following remarks, mostly deleted by Caxton, make this abundantly clear:

(I) F. 70. (*The Tale of King Arthur*)'. And this booke endyth whereas sir Launcelot and sir Trystrams com to courte. Who that woll make any more lette hym seke other bookis of kynge Arthure or of sir Launcelot or sir Trystrams; for this was drawyn by a knyght presoner sir Thomas Malleorrd, that God sende hym good recover. Amen, etc. EXPLICIT.

¹ - 'in so far as they have'. ² See above, pp. xiv-xv.

and put by in almyces at Calysshury And anon Sir Bors seyde
to Sir launcelot Sir Galahad yowre done some salewed you by
me and after you my lorde kynge Arthure and all the hote comete
and so ded Sir Paval for I buryed yem both myne done handis
in the cite of Sarraus also Sir launcelot Sir Galahad prayde
you to remembre of thys buryed worlde as ye be byt hym And
ye dook to gydnis more yam half a yere Thys yowre seyde Sir launcelot
I truste to god hys prayer shall aduyle me Than Sir launcelot
told Sir Bors in hys armys and seyde forsyn ye ar ryt well and
to me for ye and I shall neu depte in synne And yowre
may laste Sir seyde he as ye woll so woll I. Thys endith þe tale
of the Sankyrall that was brefft drady oute of frensche
which ys a tale cronned for one of the tredest and of þe honest
that ys in thys worlde By Sir Thomas Maleore knyght.
O blessed ihu helpe him thowd hys myght. Amen.

- (2) F. 96. (*The Tale of the Noble King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius*¹): Explicit the Noble Tale betwyxtkyng Arthure and Lucius the Emperour of Rome.
- (3) F. 113. (*The Noble Tale of Sir Launcelot du Lake*)'. Explicit a noble tale of sir Launcelot du Lake.
- (4) F. 148. (*The Tale of Sir Gareth of Orkeney*): And I pray you all that redyth this tale to pray for hym that this wrote, that God sende hym good delyveraunce sone and hastely. Amen. Here endyth the tale of sir Gareth of Orkeney.
- (5) F. 346. (*The Book of Sir Tristram*): Here endyth the secunde boke off syr Trystram de Lyones whyche drawyn was oute of Freynshe by sir Thomas Malleorre, knyght, as Jesu be hys heipe. Amen.
- (6) F. 409. (*The Tale of the Sankgreal*): Thus endith the tale of the Sankgreal that was breffly drawy[n] oute of Freynshe, which ys a tale cronyclod for one of the trewyst and of the holyst that ys in thys worlde, by sir Thomas Maleorre, knyght. O, Blessed Jesu helpe hym thorow Hys myght! Amen.²
- (7) F. 449. (*The Book of Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere*): And bycause I have loste the very mater of Shevalere de Charyot I depart frome the tale of sir Launcelot and here I go unto the *Morte Arthur*, and that caused sir Aggravayne. And here on the othir syde folowyth the moste pyteuous tale of the *Morte Arthure Saun-z Gwerdon par le shyvalere sir Thomas Malleorre, knyght. Jesu, ayede*¹ ly par voutre bone mercy! Amen.

The last of these passages is in a category of its own: it forms a link with the work which follows (*The Morte Arthur*) and suggests no interruption in the process of writing. Nor are the second and third *explicit*s of any great significance, since they may well have been inserted in the course of continuous composition. The remaining four, however, have an unmistakable air of finality: two of them (1 and 4) contain an appeal for 'good deliverance' or 'good recovery'; in the other two (5 and 6) the author gives his name and appeals for God's mercy. No doubt the works to which these endings were attached may eventually have been combined—either by the author or by a scribe—into a composite 'book',

¹ Sec p. xxxix, footnote z.

² See facsimile facing p. xxx.

but each work must originally have been conceived and written as a distinct 'volume'.

It was probably for this reason that Malory's romances were allowed to retain certain peculiarities which would have been inadmissible in a continuous narrative. It has often been remarked that some of his characters appear as fully fledged knights before they are born, while some others reappear after their deaths. Tristram is an example of the former anomaly: he is a prominent character in Caxton's Book VII, although his birth is not related until Book VIII. Breunis Saunz Pity, on the other hand, is killed in Book V I I and returns to life in the subsequent books. Arthur's expedition to Rome is related twice: first, at great length, in Book V, and again, much more briefly and in a different context, in Book X X. The story of Lancelot is split into two groups of episodes—Book V I and Books X V I I I—X I X—but the first group refers to a later period of his life than the second. Similar incongruities occur throughout the collection; their most significant feature is that they are never found within any one of Malory's romances, but invariably between two different works separated by at least one of the *explicits*. Hence they are due not to any habit on Malory's part of contradicting himself, but to the fact that he regarded each of his works as an independent 'tale' or 'book' and did not think it necessary to make them consistent with one another.

When these 'noble volumes' fell into Caxton's hands he realized that, as a matter of practical expediency, he had to make them into a single 'book of King Arthur', not only for reasons of editorial economy, but because in such a form the work would best answer the demand of 'many noble and dyvers gentylmen of thys royaume of England' for a 'history of the moost renommed crysten kyng, fyrst and chyef of the thre best crysten and worthy, Kyng Arthur'. He was thus led by force of circumstance to attempt a 'book' in the modern sense, i.e. a homogeneous literary composition 'of sufficient length to make a volume'.¹ Malory's collection seemed at first sight uniform enough to lend itself to such an experiment, and when Caxton undertook to print it he probably

¹ Cf. E. Littré, *Dictionnaire de la langue franfaise*, s.v. 'livre*.

did not suspect the difficulties **he was to encounter**. His first stumbling-block must have **been the farewell to the reader** signed by the 'knight-prisoner Sir Thomas Malleorre'. Not only was the reference to imprisonment undesirable in a book intended for moral edification, but the passage in which it occurred betrayed the composite character of the series. Naturally enough Caxton deleted the whole passage and dealt in the same way with all subsequent *explicit*s except the very last which conveniently wound up the collection. It is, moreover, highly probable that the wording of this last *explicit* suggested to Caxton his most ingenious device: that of publishing the book under one general **title**. Malory clearly referred to the last of his romances: *here is the ende of the deth of Arthur*; and neither Caxton nor anyone who saw Malory's ending could think that it applied to any other work. Nothing daunted, Caxton added a colophon saying, *thus endeth this noble and joyous book entyled le morte Darthur*. That this was inappropriate as a general description of the various stories about Arthur **and** his knights he knew full well, and to make it more acceptable he composed his famous apology: 'Notwythstondyng it treateth of the byrth, lyf, and actes of the sayd kyng Arthur, of his noble knyghtes of the Round Table, theyr mervayllous enquestes and adventures, th'achyevyng of the Sangreal, and in th'ende the dolorous deth and departyng out of thys world of them al.'

The subterfuge proved successful. Ever since Caxton's time Malory's works have been published as a single work and considered not only 'long enough to make a volume', but continuous enough to claim a unity of design and structure. True, only nineteenth-century editors have allowed themselves to be misled by the title *Le Morte Darthur*: Wynkyn de Worde (1498 and 1529), Copland (1557), East (c. 1585), and Stansby (1634) had consistently rejected it, and the first to use it after Caxton was F. Haslewood in his 1816 reprint of Stansby's text. In the following year Southey had the good sense to describe the work by the list of contents which in Caxton's colophon **follows the word** *Notwythstondyng*, but **although** his **example** was **followed** in **Dent's** edition of 1893—4, **all the modern 'standard' texts**

(Wright, Strachey, Sommer, Gollancz, Pollard) have confidently adopted Caxton's fanciful heading with occasional attempts to correct its grammar. This in itself is immaterial. But it is an indication of the extent to which Caxton's stratagem has affected the modern conception of his 'noble book'. It has been assumed that the author of each of its component parts was responsible for the attempt to combine them into a single work, and on the strength of this he has been praised by some and blamed by others in a way which now seems totally irrelevant. In his admirable essay on Malory Sir Edmund Chambers points out some defects in the 'structure' of the *Morte Darthur* and suggests that Malory 'would have done better to have left the *Tristan* alone'.¹ The late R. W. Chambers, while admitting that much of the charm of Malory lies in the 'variety of ideals animating the different stories which he has taken over', remarks that 'this variety does not make for elaborate or consistent drawing of characters'.² At the other end of the scale Malory's readers have endeavoured, with varying degrees of success, to find in the *Morte Darthur* a dramatically developed plot³ and to credit Malory with the intention of producing an epic of Arthur—a vast composition commemorating the rise and fall of Arthur's kingdom and thus presenting, as Andrew Lang puts it, a 'very complete and composite picture of a strangely inherited ideal'.⁴ Saintsbury even goes so far as to say that although sometimes Malory 'may put in what we do not want' (*sic*), 'what is certain is that he, and he only in any language, makes of this vast assemblage of stories one story, and one book'.⁵

In writing this Saintsbury, 'Malory's keenest advocate',⁶ was far from realizing that he was paying a compliment to Caxton, not to Malory. Nor did it ever occur to him or to anyone else that if this view of the *Morte Darthur* were correct, most of what Malory wrote would be irrelevant

¹ Op. cit., p. 5.

² *On the Continuity of English Prose from Alfred to More and his School*, London (E.E.T.S.), 1932, p. clii.

³ Cf. my *Malory*, pp. 93-5.

⁴ *Le Morte Darthur*, ed. H. O. Sommer, vol. iii, p. xix.

⁵ *The English Novel*, London, 1913, p. 25.

⁶ R. W. Chambers, op. cit., p. cxxxviii.

and useless. For judged as a continuous composition, the work would have been 'better' not only without the *Tristan*, but without at least five of the eight romances. Their *raison d'être* is precisely what has been consistently denied them: the distinctive character of each romance. Caxton thought he could improve on them by using the 'simple cunning' of a practical-minded publisher, and it is only fair to say that the appearance of continuity which he gave them enhanced their popularity both in his own time and after. But what Malory's romances have gained from the lucky discovery at Winchester, though it might not have satisfied the 'noble and divers gentylmen of thys royaume' in Caxton's day, has for us an attraction of a higher order. For instead of a single work subordinate to an imaginary principle of 'structure', we now have before us a series of works reflecting in an ever-changing panorama of incident and character a genuine variety of narrative forms and fancies. And while this makes their 'assemblage' less harmonious, it brings out a diversity and richness of tone expressive of the author's design and true to the nature of each of his 'noble volumes'.

2. *The Sequence of Malory's 'volumes'*

The foregoing account of Caxton's part in the production of the *Morte Darthur*¹ raises a new problem: if there is neither unity nor continuity in the series of works which Caxton published under that title, there is no need to assume that they were all written in the order in which he placed them. True, the order is the same in Caxton and in the Winchester MS., and was presumably the same in their common source; but that source, as our textual data clearly show,² was not Malory's own manuscript: each of his works must have been transcribed more than once before any of them reached either Caxton or the Winchester scribe, and their arrangement in the two extant texts may easily be due to some

¹ The more detailed study of Caxton's treatment of Malory's text, which the discovery of the Winchester MS. now allows to be made, does not fall within the **scope** of this essay; but some of the essential material will be found in my critical apparatus.

² Cf. *infra*, pp. lxxxvi-xci.

intervening compiler.¹ What, then, was their original sequence?

A possible approach to the problem is suggested by Malory's habit of reproducing passages and scenes from his own work—a curious variety of *amplificatio*.² An example is found in an episode of the *Tale of King Arthur*. An earl offers hospitality to Marhalt and asks him to challenge a redoubtable giant who 'destroys all his lands'. Marhalt wonders whether the giant would fight on horseback or on foot. 'There may no horse bear him', says the earl, and Marhalt, leaving his own horse behind, sets out the next morning to fight the giant. Their battle is described thus:

So on the morne sir Marhaute prayde the erle that one of his men myght brynge hym where the gyaunte was, and so one brought hym where he syghe hym sytte undir a tre of hooly, and many clubbis of ironne and gysernes about hym. So this knyght dressed hym to the gyaunte and put his shyld before hym, and the gyaunte toke an ironne club in his honde, and at the fyrste stroke he clave syr Marhautis shelde. And there he was in grete perell, for the gyaunte was a sly fyghter. But at the laste sir Marhaute smote of his ryght arme aboven the elbow. Than the gyaunte fledde and the knyght affter hym, and so he drove hym into a watir.

All that Malory's French source can offer by way of parallel to this episode is a story of how Gaheriet fought with a giant to rescue a damsel. But the circumstances and the nature of the battle are entirely different: Gaheriet strikes the giant down, rides over his body crushing it with the horse's hoofs, and, finding that he is still alive, cuts off his head.³ To discover the real model of Malory's description

¹ This order is not confirmed by what we know of Malory's sources. To give but one example out of many, the story of Arthur's Roman expedition which *in* all Arthurian romances serves as a prelude to the concluding episodes of the Cycle—Mordred's treachery and Arthur's death—is more than 900 pages distant from its natural sequel.

² Cf. my *Malory*, pp. 39-41.

³ MS. B.N. fr. 112, f. 54V: 'Quant Gaheriet voit le jayant a la terre, il n'est pas esbais, ains met la main a l'espee et li court sus tout a cheval. Et la ou il se vouloit relever a quelque paine, il le fiert si du pis du cheval qu'il le fait revoler a terre, et li met le cheval tantes fois par dessus le corps que tout le debrise. Et cil se pisme de la grant angoisse qu'il sent, et est tel atornes qu'il ne puet traire a soy ne pie ne main. Et lors descent Gaheriet et li trenche les las du heaume, et trouve que cil estoit en poismoison. Et il pense qu'il en delivrera le pais maintenant. Si dresse l'espee contremont et fiert a deus mains si durement qu'il li fait la teste voler plus d'une lance loing du bu.'

we must turn from his 'French book' to his own work, the *Tale of the Noble King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius*, and the curious account of Arthur's fight with the giant:

'Now, felow,' seyde Arthure, 'wouldist thou ken me where that carle dwellys?' . . . 'Sir conquerroure', seyde the good man, 'beholde yondir two fyrys, for there shake thou fynde that carle.* . . . Than he paste forth to the creste of the hylle and syghe* where he sate at his soupere alone. . . . And therewith sturdely he sterte uppon his leggis and caughte a clubbe in his honde all of clene iron. Than he swappis at the kynge with that kyd² wepyn. He cruysshed downe with the club the coronal³ doune to the colde erthe. The kynge coverde hym with his shyld and rechis a boxe evyn infourmede⁴ in the myddis of his forehede, that the slypped blade unto the brayne rechis. Yet he shappis at sir Arthure, but the kynge shuntys⁵ a lytyll and rechis hym a dynte hyghe uppon the haunche. . . . With that the warlow⁶ wrath Arthure undir, and so they waltyrde and tumbylde over the craggis and busshys . . . and they never leffte tyll they fylle⁷ thereas the floode marked.

The analogies are obvious. They are found both in the general trend of the two passages and in every important detail, including the landmarks which help the hero to find the giant ('fyrys' in the second passage, 'holly tree' in the first) and the manner of the giant's death. Just as Arthur *coverde hym with his shyld*, so Marhalt *put his shyld before hym*, and although Marhalt puts his opponent to flight while Arthur drags him down the hill, in both cases the giant meets with his doom 'in a watir'. But perhaps the two most striking points in the first passage are the vision of *many clubbis of ironne*, a typically epic weapon which Malory could not have found mentioned in any French romance, but which figures prominently in his adaptation of the alliterative *Morte Arthure*, and the alliterative phrase *syghe hym sitte*, paralleled by *syghe where he sate* in the second passage.

Since the parallelism between the two descriptions cannot be accidental, either one must have been modelled on the other or both must have had the same source. Now the source of the second passage is known: it is the English alliterative *Morte Arthure*. If it were also the source or the first, it would be impossible to account for the fact that in both cases Malory has made exactly the same choice of

¹ = 'saw'. ² = a ³ = 'crown'. ⁴ = 'well-aimed'.
⁵ = 'steps aside', ⁶ = 'famous'. = 'traitor', ⁷ = 'fell',

words and phrases and has adapted them in the same way (cf. *where he syghe hym sytte* in the first passage, *syghe where he sate* in the second, and *the syghte had he rechide how unsemly pat soft satt sowpande* in the *Morte Arthure*). The only reasonable theory seems to be that the first passage was modelled on the second, i.e. on Malory's own version of the *Tale of Arthur and Lucius*. This work must, therefore, have been written *before* the *Tale of King Arthur*,

A similar test applied to Malory's other works will show that they were all written *after* the *Tale of King Arthur*. The *Noble Tale of Sir Launcelot* (Caxton's Book VI) refers to 'Sir Pelleas the good knight' as one of the three strongest knights, the other two being Tristram and Lancelot. The character of Sir Pelleas occurs in none of the extant branches of Arthurian romance except the *Suite du Merlin*¹ which Malory used for his *Tale of King Arthur*; until he had read it he could not have thought of the obscure 'chevalier Pellias' as being the equal of Tristram and Lancelot. In the *Tale of Gareth* the hero's mother is erroneously called Morgawse;² the error goes back to a passage peculiar to Malory's adaptation of the French *Merlin* (*The Tale of King Arthur*). He resorts to this work again in the *Book of Tristram*, in the *Grail*, and in the *Book of Launcelot and Guinevere*,³ As for his *Morte Arthure*, both the arrangement of the narrative and one of the *explicits* quoted above⁴ make it clear that it was a continuation of the *Book of Launcelot and Guinevere*.⁵

¹ The relevant portion of the *Suite* is found in MS. B.N. fr. 112. On Malory's treatment of it see the introductory remarks in the first section of my *Commentary* and Dr. F. Whitehead's article in *Medium Aevum*, ii, pp. 199 ff.

² In all French versions Gareth's mother (the wife of King Lot of Orcanie) is anonymous; *Morgans* is the name of her sister, wife of King Nentres of Sorhaut.

³ In the episode of the healing of Sir Urre which has no counterpart in Malory's sources.

⁴ The *explicit* of the *Book of Launcelot and Guinevere*, p. xxxi.

⁵ In using Malory's borrowings from his own works as indications of the chronological sequence of his romances I have attached no importance to the frequent enumerations of Arthur's knights which the scribes seem to have lengthened at will. A good example is the inclusion, in the Winchester version of the *Tale of Arthur and Lucius*, of Ector de Mares and Pelleas among the knights who fought on Arthur's side against the Roman Emperor (p. 221). Pelleas belongs to the *Tale of King Arthur*, Ector de Mares first appears in the *Tale of Sir Launcelot*. But if on the strength of this we put the passage in question later than these two works, we should be unable to explain either the story of the fight with the giant in the former or the reference

If, then, the *Tale of King Arthur* is later than the *Tale of Arthur and Lucius* and earlier than the rest of Malory's romances, the *Tale of Arthur and Lucius* must be his first extant work and the *Tale of King Arthur* his second. There is no means of ascertaining whether the next in order was the *Launcelot* or the *Gareth*, but it is clear that these were followed by the *Tristram* and the *Grail* and that the *Book of Launcelot and 'Guinevere* and the *Morte Arthur*, completed in 1469 or 1470, were written last.¹

These few facts added to the knowledge we now have of Malory's sources make it possible to see more clearly how he built up his collection. He began by adapting an English poem which appealed to him mainly because of its bearing on the events of his own time. He did not treat it as a branch of a cycle, but as material for a self-contained work, and as soon as he reached the heroic climax of the story—Arthur's victory over the Romans—he brought it to an end, dismissing the traditional unhappy ending. This was his *Tale of the Noble King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius*,² the least 'romantic' of his works and the least refined, but one which had a decisive influence both on the formation of his style and on his subsequent choice of material. There is every reason to believe that it induced him to 'seek other books of Arthur' and to 'draw from the French' part of the

to Arthur's Roman campaign in the latter (p. 253: 'Sone afir that kynge Arthure was com from Rome,' &c). The Winchester scribe who had the whole collection of Malory's works before him must have added these two names, as well as some others, of his own accord. The examples of 'self-imitation' quoted above are in a different category: they occur in Caxton as well as in the Winchester MS. and bear the unmistakable stamp of Malory's workmanship.

¹ As the Winchester MS. is incomplete at the end we have only Caxton's authority for the concluding lines of the *Morte Darthur*. The words *Here is the end of the booke of kyng Arthur & of his noble knyghtes of the rounde table that whan they were hole togyders there was euer an C and xl* may well have been inserted by Caxton. If, however, they belong to Malory, they must refer to his last two works. It is noteworthy that all the attempts hitherto made to analyse the 'dramatic structure' of the *Morte Darthur* bear almost exclusively on the *Book of Launcelot and Guinevere* (Caxton's Bks. XVIII-XIX) and the *Morte Arthur* (Bks. XX-XXI). That these two works form a coherent whole is obvious; but it is perhaps too often forgotten that they represent less than one sixth of the entire collection.

² I have adopted this title and its abbreviations in order to avoid confusion with the *Tale of King Arthur*. The title given in Malory's colophon is *the Tale of the noble kynge Arthure that was Emperoure hymself thorvw dygnytS of his hondys*. Cf. *infra*, p. 247.

Suite du Merlin, a voluminous collection of stories about Arthur, ranging from his coronation to the most fanciful exploits of his knights. Malory was clearly sensitive to the appeal of this type of *roman d'aventures* but he could not fully accept its 'cyclic' structure, and in his *Tale of King Arthur* he evolved, as it were by reaction, his own narrative technique. When, after an interval, he came back to his task with *The Noble Tale of Sir Launcelot* and *The Tale of Sir Gareth* he was able to apply that technique with great effect, though on a comparatively small scale. In the next stage he turned to the *Tristram* and the *Grail* and set out, as he himself tells us, to rewrite in English the French *Tristan de Leonois* and the *Queste del Saint Graal*. In extent this was his most ambitious enterprise; but in point of method it was less original than any of his previous adaptations from the French. Its chief importance lay in the fact that the very nature of the sources he had to use suggested to him a new approach to the art of writing. In spite of the vast amount of spurious episodic matter which had clustered round their basic themes, the French prose *Tristan* and the *Queste del Saint Graal* had preserved the essentials of the two greatest medieval stories and something of their original significance. Through these two romances, and with their aid, Malory was able to discover what he needed above all: his own method of conveying sentiment through fiction. And so his last two works—*The Book of Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere* and the *Morte Arthur*—could reach a degree of independence and convincingness unparalleled in his earlier books, or indeed in any earlier prose version of Arthurian romance, and retain their appeal long after their models had been forgotten.

CHAPTER III

THE WRITER'S PROGRESS

I. Style

PERHAPS the most significant conclusion to be drawn from the previous chapter is that Malory began his work with the *Tale of King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius*. It would be tempting to dwell at length on the implications of this change in the traditional idea of the order of his romances. For it suggests that, contrary to the generally accepted view, he first became familiar with the Arthurian legend not through 'Trench books' but through an English poem, the alliterative *Morte Arthure*. The epic mood of the fourteenth-century poet, so characteristic of the alliterative revival, his combination of stirring realism with heroic feeling, and above all the consistent archaism of metre, manner, and spirit—these were indeed worthy models for a writer who endeavoured to raise the romantic tales of Arthur to a heroic level. That Malory's whole conception of his theme was formed under the influence of the English epic of Arthur now seems certain, and it is a new and helpful sidelight on the continuity of the English tradition that by the time Malory came to 'reduce' his French books into English his attitude to Arthurian knighthood had been fixed in his mind by his reading of native poetry.

No less decisive was the effect of the alliterative poem on the formation of his style. Historians of English prose have put him 'out of the general line of progress', both as regards matter and form.¹ 'The world to which the *Morte Darthur* belongs', writes R. W. Chambers, 'had passed away before the book was finished', and 'there was little room for Arthurian knighthood in the England of the *Paston Letters*'.² And yet—'such is the power of style that Malory, at the eleventh hour, was able to go over the old ground, and make

¹ G. Saintsbury, *A First Book of English Literature*, 1914, p. 60.

² R. W. Chambers, *On the Continuity of English Prose from Alfred to More and his School*, 1932, p. cxxxix.

it live once more'. Is this revival of a long-forgotten world to be regarded simply as a miracle performed by a genius without antecedents, by a writer 'out of the general line of progress', who wrought his language in the void? Such a thought would be contrary to all we know of the history of prose, for whatever individual greatness it may achieve, literary prose, unlike poetry, is, in the noblest sense of the term, an 'institution', 'part of the equipment of a civilization, part of its heritable wealth, like its laws, or its system of schooling, or its tradition of skilled craftsmanship'.¹ This view has been corroborated by the emphasis recently placed on the continuous development of English prose from the earliest times to the Renaissance. Yet the critic to whom we owe the best account of the problem finds no room for Malory in the lineage of English writers and leaves him in complete, if enviable, isolation. The achievements of Peacock, of Fortescue, of Tyndale and Coverdale, and the succession of translations of the Bible closed by the Authorized Version of 1611 can all be properly understood 'when we see them against the continuous background of English devotional prose';² but no such background exists for Malory. Nor can he claim the universal heritage of Latin diction and syntax—the training-ground of most of his contemporaries. How, then, does he succeed in the solitary task of producing 'as finished an instrument in its way as any prose the sixteenth century can show, but with the freshness of the early world still upon it'?³

To this there was no answer as long as it was thought that Malory began his work with a translation from the French. But once it is realized that his first experience as a prose writer was an adaptation of an English poem, the possibility of accounting for what he did will appear far less remote. His object in adapting the *Morte Arthure* was to rewrite an alliterative poem in a form accessible to fifteenth-century readers. To do this it was not enough to reduce the amount of alliteration and modernize the vocabulary. The whole

¹ J. S. Phillimore, 'Blessed Thomas More and the Arrest of Humanism in England', *Dublin Review*, vol. cliii, p. 8.

² R. W. Chambers, *op. cit.*, p. cxxxv.

³ E. K. Chambers, *Sir Thomas Malory*, pp. 6-7.

texture of the poem had to undergo a radical change, similar to that which occurred in the transition from verse to prose romances in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century France. Of the numerous devices which facilitated this transition one was of particular importance: the reduction of rhetorical matter. It is perhaps best illustrated by the opening paragraph of the French prose romance entitled *Le Chevalier au Cygne*. The author states that he has unrhymed his verse original *for the sake of brevity*: poetry, he adds, is 'Very enjoyable and very beautiful, but very lengthy'.¹ At first one may wonder why he should blame poetry for its length' when it is well known that in nearly every case the prose renderings of early poems far exceeded them in volume. The answer is that by 'length' he means something other than volume. What he dislikes is not the size of the poem, but the rhetorical elaboration which had become an integral part of the art of poetry. To 'shorten* a work means to him and to his contemporaries to relieve it of such unnecessary burdens as ornaments of description, the artificial lengthening of speeches, and the inflated phraseology used in descriptions and speeches alike. The total length of the work need not be reduced; it may in fact be considerably increased by the addition of fresh narrative material, provided that the story is told, as another anonymous prose writer puts it, 'in clearer and more intelligible language'.²

Malory no doubt thought likewise, for his problem was similar to that which confronted all late medieval prose writers. The stylistic and narrative patterns of the *morte Arthure* must have appeared to him too ornate and too diffuse — 'too lengthy', as the author of *Le Chevalier au Cygne* would have said. This type pf 'length' could not have been remedied by sheer omission of complete passages. The simplification had to be both more radical and less mechanical: it had to be applied on a strictly selective principle to the entire text of the poem. And the most remarkable result of it was that the word-material of the alliterative epic aided by the author's instinctive choice produced a new and powerful prose style,

¹ 'moult plaisans et moult bele, mais moult est longue' (MS. B.N. fr. 781).

² 'en plus cler et entendible langaige' (*Maugis d'Aigremont*, Paris, Michel le Noir, 1518, f. LVIIr, col. A).

a style 'too straightforward to be archaic', and yet 'just old enough to allure and mark the age'.²

Placed side by side with its source, the newly discovered text of Malory's *Tale of King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius* reveals the nature of this process and the subtle working of the stylistic genius which directed its application. A few examples will suffice.³ As Arthur approaches the walls of a beleaguered city, 'without shield save his bare harness', he is warned by Sir Florence that it is folly to face the enemy unarmed. In Malory's version this is his reply:

⁴And thow be aferde', seyde kyng Arthure, 'I rede the faste fle, for they wyne no worship of me but to waste their toolys. For there shall never harlot⁴ have happe, by the helpe of oure Lord, to kille a crowned kynge that with creyme is anoynted.'

The 'longer' version—that of the poem—is as follows:

*'Ife thow be rade', quod the kyng, 'I rede thow ryde vttere,
Lesse pat pey rywe the with their rownnd wapyn.
Thow arte bot a fawntkyn, no ferly me thynkkys!
pou will be flayed for a flye, pat on thy flesche lyghttes.
I am nothyng agaste, so me Gode helpe!
pof siche gadlynges be greuede, it greues me bot lyttill;
Thay Wyn no wirchi of me bot wastys their takle;
They sail wante, or I weende, I wage myn hevede!
Sail neuer harlotte haue happe, thorowe helpe of my Lorde^
To kyll a corownde kynge, with krysom enoyntede!'*⁵

¹ *Cambridge History of English Literature*, ii. 337.

² Andrew Lang, *Le Morte Darthur* (Introduction to Sommer's edition), vol. iii, p. xxi.

³ In his *History of the English Prose Rhythm* (London, 1912) G. Saintsbury has given interesting examples of Malory's treatment of the stanzaic *Morte Arthur* and of the way in which 'out of the substance of verse he has woven quite a new rhythm, accompanying and modulating graceful and almost majestic prose of the best type*. But as Malory did not discover the stanzaic *Morte Arthur* until he had begun his very last work, comparisons with this poem are of little value for the study of the genesis of his style. The alliterative *Morte Arthure* and Malory's adaptation of it provide far more significant instances of his method of patching in' some of the bright stitches of his predecessor, 'not fearing but welcoming, and mustering them into a distinct prose rhythm—treating them, in fact, just as Ruskin does his doses of blank verse*.

⁴ = 'rascal'.

⁵ *Morte Arthure*, ed. Bjorkman, 2438-47. Here is a literal translation: 'If you are afraid', said the king, 'I advise you to ride away, lest they wound you with their round weapons. You are but a child and no wonder, as it seems to me. You would be afraid of a fly if it alighted on your flesh. I am not afraid, so may God help me! I do not mind if such worthless creatures come to grief. They will gain no honoyr

Out of the ten lines of the poem Malory has only taken four, but with what a remarkable sense of stylistic emphasis! The choice alone suffices for his purpose, and he need make no change in the lines he borrows: they fully convey the sense of the speech, and more. *And thow be aferde I rede the fastefle* does not only cover the meaning of the first six lines, but gains enormously from being relieved of epic ornamentation. Malory's Arthur need not say that he is 'nothyng agaste'; his fearlessness is brought home more forcibly by his proud retort to the coward. Nor is there any room in Malory's context for such nerveless phrases as *I wage myn hevede*. And while the last two lines of the speech, which bear the full weight of Arthur's unflinching faith in the sanctity of his crown, remain intact, they are thrown into greater relief: in the *Morte Arthure* they are but the tail end of a long discourse; in Malory they sound like a call to arms.

But the selection of complete lines is by no means Malory's only method of 'reduction'. Some of his sentences consist of words and phrases which in his source are scattered over long passages. When, after his victory over the giant, Arthur divides the spoils among his people he says: '*Looke that the goodys be skyffted,¹ that none playne of his parte*'—a perfect example of Malory's sentence-structure with its characteristic cadence and crisp idiom. And yet it is but a mosaic of words borrowed from half a dozen lines of the poem:

He somond pan pe schippemen scharpely peraftyre
To schake furthe with pe schyremen to *schifte pe gudez*:
'All pe myche tresour, pat traytour had wonnen,
To comouns of the contre, clergye and oper,
Luke it be done and delte to my dere pople,
That none pleyne of their parte, o peyne of 3our lyfez.'²

Used in this way the words and phrases lifted from the text cannot always preserve their original meaning, but from from me, but they will waste their weapons. I will wager my head that before I go away they will fail. The Lord will never allow a rascal to succeed in killing a crowned king who has been anointed with chrism.'

¹ = 'divided'.

² 'Thereupon he quickly summoned the sailors to go with the sheriffs to divide the treasure: "See to it that all this great treasure which that traitor gained is divided among my dear people, whether they be commoners, clergy, or others, so that no one complains of his share, on peril of your lives" * (11. 1212-17).

the prose writer's point of view this is not too high a price to pay for brevity. Malory's *doleful dragon* which Arthur sees in his dream is a contraction of two alliterative lines in which the two words stand far apart,¹ while the description of the 'careful widow' who 'sate sorowyng' is but an adaptation of a passage relating how the king greeted the widow with *sittande wordez*.² Such transpositions are, however, much less frequent than genuine abridgement, by means of which words and phrases selected from the poem are woven into the most astonishing tissue of pure and straightforward prose. *Than the kyng yode up to the creste of the cragge, and than he comforted hymself with the colde wynde*. Few masters of style have matched the descriptive force of this sentence. But to see how it was made we need but glance at the corresponding lines in the *Morte Arthure* :

*The kyng coueris pe cragge wyth cloughes full hye,
To the creste of the clyffe he clymbez on lofte;
Keste vpe hys vmbrere, and kenly he lukes,
Caughte of pe colde wynde, to comforte hym seluen.*

Every now and then, lulled by the cadence of the poem, Malory reproduces complete groups of three or four lines with few, if any, alterations; but he never abandons his real task for more than a brief spell. With a persistence amounting to genius he manufactures out of a somewhat commonplace web of alliterative verse a language endowed with a simplicity and power all its own. And when towards the

¹ ... a *dragone* engowschede, dredfull to schewe,
Deuorande a dolphyn with *dolefull* lates (*Morte Arthure*, 2054-5).

² = 'fitting words'. Further examples will be found in the *Commentary*. From this method of transcription there is but one step to another device which may be illustrated by the following parallels:

<i>Morte Arthure</i>	<i>Malory</i>
LAUGHTE hym vpe full louelyly (2292):	LYFFTE hym up lordely (p. 225)
sette thane appon oure SERE knyghttez (1847):	sette SORE on oure knyghtes
	(p. 216)

When Malory applies this device to his French sources the result is even more startling. On one occasion the French *entre* becomes *under*, and on another Balin and his companion 'stable their horsis' because the French has *la feste estoit par tel maniere establee*. The mysterious adjective *amyvestyall* which no commentator has yet been able to explain (p. 152: *his amyvestyall countenaunce*) is a compound of three French words totally meaningless outside their context: 'Nous n'aviens nes poissanche de metre fors nos alainnes, ains estions del tout aussi comme mors' (see *Commentary*, note 152. 4).

end of the *Tale* he abandons his source, his prose retains all the robust eloquence of epic and all the natural freshness of a living idiom:

'Ye say well', seyde the kynge, 'for inowghe is as good as a feste, for to attemte God overmuch I holde hit not wysedom. And therefore make you all redy and turne we into Ingelonde.' Than there was trussynge of harneyse with caryage full noble, and the kynge toke his leve of the holy fudir the Pope and patryarkys and cardynalys and senatoures full ryche, and leffte good governaunce in that noble cite and all the contrays of Rome for to warde and to kepe on payne of deth, that in no wyse his commaundement be brokyn.

It has been said of Goldsmith that he was 'Augustan and also sentimental and rural without discordance*', because he had 'the old and the new in such just proportion that there was no conflict'.¹ It is a similar kind of harmony that we find in Malory when by a judicious arrangement of word-material he creates the new out of the old.² The secret of it escapes analysis; but in the light of the new text of Malory we can at least observe the beginning and the end of the process, gauge the distance between them, and so approach, with a keener sense of its magnitude, the unexpounded miracle of style.³

¹ T. S. Eliot, Introduction to *London*, by Samuel Johnson.

² I have deliberately refrained from analysing the most elusive aspect of Malory's style, its rhythm. Saintsbury's attempt to reduce it to metrical patterns has led him to the unsatisfying conclusion that 'you may resolve sentence after sentence into iambs pure, iambs extended by a precedent short into anapaests and iambs, or curling over with a short suffix into amphibrachs, and so getting into the trochee' (*A History of English Prose Rhythm*, p. 90). This leaves singularly few metres into which Malory's prose could *not* be resolved. More helpful is the remark that 'the dominant of Malory's rhythm is mainly iambic, though he does not neglect the precious inheritance of the trochaic or amphibrachic ending' (*ibid.*). Malory's use of the alliterative *Morte Arthure* may well account for this. In the poem the metre most frequently used in the first half of the line is the amphibrach, and in a number of cases Malory either preserves it intact or shortens it to an iamb.

³ Of the numerous attempts to account for the survival of Malory's work the following is the most worthy of note: 'Le hasard voulut qu'il fût bon écrivain, si bon que sa prose n'a presque pas vieilli. Aussi cette ample composition, la *Morte d'Arthur*, comme il l'avait intitulé, imprimée d'abord en 1485 par les presses vénérables de Caxton, maintes fois réimprimée au temps d'Elisabeth et jusqu'en plein dix-septième siècle, et tout au long du dix-neuvième en des Editions sans nombre, demeure-t-elle un livre classique, l'un des joyaux du trésor qui forme, en Angleterre, le patrimoine spirituel de la nation. . . Mystérieux pouvoir du gofit, d'une langue saine, d'un bon style ! Ce Malory ne fut qu'un traducteur, un adaptateur: sans lui pourtant, dans l'Angleterre d'aujourd'hui, ni la poésie, ni la pensée, ni

2. Structure

Next after the *Tale of Arthur and Lucius* came the *Tale of King Arthur*—a retrospective account of the early history of Arthur's kingdom, *from the maryage of Kynge Uther unto Kyng Arthure that regned aftir hym and ded many batayles*. But when Malory opened his first 'French book' in the hope of finding some material for the story, he encountered difficulties for which the simple technique he had so far acquired offered no solution. His English source was, in spite of its 'length', a straightforward account of certain pseudo-historical episodes placed in their natural order, and it was comparatively easy, by a mere process of 'reduction', to quicken its pace and remove some of the ornaments of epic style. The problem Malory now had to face was of a totally different kind.

His French romance was a combination of the prose *Merlin* with its sequel, the *Suite du Merlin*.¹ Both were late compositions, the last in date of all the branches of the Arthurian prose Cycle. Their main attraction for Malory was that they supplied the natural beginning of the Arthur story by elaborating some of the episodes recorded in the chronicles of Wace and Geoffrey of Monmouth. But he soon found to his dismay that their treatment of the chronicle material was singularly unlike what he had seen in the *Morte Arthure*; for not only did they lengthen the pseudo-historical matter by the addition of episodes completely foreign to it, but their method of presenting these episodes was anything but normal. Adventures were piled up one upon the other without any apparent sequence or design, and innumerable personages, mostly anonymous, were introduced in a wild succession. Every now and then they stopped to lay lance in rest and overthrow one another, and then swore eternal friendship and rode away.² The purpose of their encounters and pursuits was vague, and their tasks were seldom fulfilled: they met and parted and met again, each intent at first on following his particular 'quest', and

I'art ne seraient tout a fait ce qu'ils sont' (Joseph Bedier, Preface aux *Romans de la Table Ronde nouvellement ridige's par Jacques Boulenger*, pp. iv-v).

¹ For details see the relevant section of the *Commentary*.

² Cf. E. K. Chambers, *Sir Thomas Malory*, p. 6.

yet prepared at any time to be diverted from it to other adventures and undertakings. As a result, 'the basic thought became subsidiary, the episode increasingly prominent, the slowing of the action defeated any attempt to reach an end, and the story lost all purpose*. In these words Gustav Grdber described half a century ago the methods used by medieval prose writers.¹ But there is reason to believe that at a much earlier date their methods were condemned on similar grounds, and the often quoted remark of the Canon of Toledo in *Don Quixote* remains to this day the most characteristic expression of the modern view: 'I have never yet', he says, 'seen a book of chivalry complete in all its parts, so that the middle agrees with the beginning and the end with the beginning and the middle; but they seem to construct their stories with such a multitude of members as though they meant to produce a monster rather than a well-proportioned figure.'²

Few readers of the French Arthurian Cycle would disagree with this criticism.³ Still fewer would wonder whether neglect of *structure* in the modern sense of the term necessarily implied the absence of a *method of composition*. Grober may have blamed the cyclic works for their lack of a *Grundgedanke*, and Cervantes may have thought them 'monstrous* because they formed no consistent whole; but it remains to be seen whether the criteria of a *Grundgedanke* or of a 'well-proportioned figure' are not in this case misleading, and whether behind the apparent deformity and incoherence of the prose romances there is not to be found an architectural design so unlike our own conception of a story that we inevitably fail to perceive it. One *a priori* reason for suspecting the existence of such a design is that if each branch of the Cycle were a mere collection of episodes haphazardly put together, the Cycle would naturally fall into as many

¹ *Grundriss der romanischen Philologie*, ii, p. 726.

² *Don Quixote*, Part I, ch. xlvii.

³ M. Jean Frappier, who has recently edited the French *Mort Artu* (Paris, 1936), enters a special plea for this work: 'Le judicieux chanoine de Toledé ne connaissait pas notre *Mort Artu*; sinon, il est permis de penser qu'il aurait volontiers donné l'absolution à ce livre de chevalerie en vertu de l'unité et de la robuste structure de son plan.' For a statement of the opposite view see F. Lot, *étude sur le Lancelot en prose*, pp. 268-76.

independent sections. In reality, the reverse is the case: none of the branches of the Cycle can be conveniently subdivided, and no subdivisions exist in the manuscripts. Apart from certain interpolations which can easily be detached from the main body of the work, few of the episodes, if any, appear as self-contained units. 'Aucune aventure', writes Ferdinand Lot, 'ne forme un tout se suffisant a lui-meme. D'une part, des Episodes anterieurs, laissent provisoirement de cote, y prolongent des ramifications; d'autre part, des episodes subsequents, proches ou lointains, y sont amorces.'¹ Judged by our standards this would seem to be a strange paradox. On the one hand, the prose romances are admittedly the very negation of the classical principle of composition: the beginning does not 'agree' with the middle, nor the middle with the end; on the other, they seem to obey the age-long rule that no part can be removed without affecting the whole. There must, then, be something which binds them together, invisible though it is to the modern eye: some peculiar device which, while making the various parts of the Cycle inseparable from one another, fails to weld them into a harmonious whole.

Perhaps the easiest way to discover the nature and the working of this device is to draw an analogy with the technique of tapestry. Just as in a tapestry each thread alternates with an endless variety of others, so in the early prose romances of the Arthurian group numerous seemingly independent episodes or 'motifs' are interwoven in a manner which makes it possible for each episode to be set aside at any moment and resumed later. No single stretch of such a narrative can be complete in itself any more than a stitch in a woven fabric; the sequel may appear at any moment, however long the interval. But the resemblance goes no further, for unlike the finished tapestry a branch of a prose romance has as a rule no natural conclusion; when the author brings it to a close he simply cuts the threads at arbitrarily chosen points, and anyone who chooses to pick them up and interweave them in a similar fashion can continue the work indefinitely. Hence the 'multitude of members' and the prodigious growth of the Arthurian tradition enlarged

¹ Ferdinand Lot, *Etude sur le Lancelot en prose*, Paris, 1918, p. 17.

at each stage of its progress by continuations of earlier works.

The origin of this process may be sought in the combination of two rules of literary composition laid down by contemporary theorists: the *ordo artificialis* and the *digressio*. The former goes back to classical rhetoric;¹ the latter is a characteristically medieval invention and has no exact parallel in classical treatises, Geoffroi de Vinsauf was one of the first to insist on its usefulness and to distinguish two kinds of *digressio*: *Unus modus digressions est quando digredimur in materia ad aliam partem materiae; alius modus, quando digredimur a materia ad aliud extra materiam.*² It is doubtful whether Geoffroi de Vinsauf or any other medieval rhetorician had in mind anything approaching the methods of thirteenth-century romance writers,³ but as long as theoretical precepts were applied literally, without much regard for their purpose,⁴ the advice to proceed both *ad aliam partem materiae* by way of anticipation, and *ad aliud extra materiam* by way of digression proper, combined as it was with the various prescriptions of the *ordo artificialis*,⁵ could well

¹ Cf. Horace, *Ars poetica* 42-5; Martianus Capella, *De Rhetorica*, 30 (ed. Halm, *Rhet. min.*, p. 472); Sulpicius Victor, *Institutiones oratoriae*, 14 (Halm, p. 320). For the medieval treatment of *ordo artificialis* see *Scholia vindobonensia ad Horatii artem poeticam*, ed. Zechmeister (1877)5 Mathieu de Venddme, *Ars Versificatoria* (ed. Faral, *Les Arts poetiques duxiet du xiii^e siecle*), i. 3-13; Geoffroi de Vinsauf, *Poetria Nova*, 101-25.

² *Documentum de modo et arte dictandi et versificandi* (ed. Faral, op. cit.), ii. 2, 17. The first kind of digression is further explained as follows: 'A materia ad aliam partem materiae, quando omittimus illam partem materiae quae proxima est et aliam quae sequitur primam assumimus.*'

³ The second kind of digression—*ad aliud extra materiam*—was primarily intended for purposes of comparison or simile (cf. loc. cit. ii. 2, 21: 'Digredimur etiam a materia ad aliud extra materiam, quando scilicet inducimus comparationes sive similitudines, ut eas aptemus materiae'), but it was applied on a larger and more varied scale. Its extreme form was, and still is, 'the story in the story*.'

⁴ Cf. Faral, op. cit., p. 60: 'L'enseignement des arts poetiques, qui ne brille pas par l'envergure des conceptions, parait avoir agi precisement par ce qu'il contenait de plus superficiel et de plus mecaniquej mais c'a ete une action tres reelle, dont la litterature porte les marques.'

⁵ Cf. Geoffroi de Vinsauf, *Poetria Nova*, 101 ff.:

Ordinis est primus sterilis, ramusque secundus
Fertilis et mira succrescit origine ramus
In ramos, solus in plures, unus in octo.
Circiter hanc artem fortasse videtur et aer
Nubilus, et limes salebrosus, et ostia clausa,
Et res nodosa. Quocirca sequentia verba

induce the romance writers to build up their narrative in such a way that each episode appeared to be a digression from the previous one and at the same time a sequel to some earlier unfinished story. There are good examples of this technique in the poems of Chrestien de Troyes; in the works of his successors—particularly in the continuations of his *Conte del Graal*—it assumes still greater importance; and with the romances centring on the *Lancelot-Graal* it asserts itself as the dominating feature of the *genre*.}

Malory's handling of his sources shows how strongly he disliked this type of composition. With varying degrees of success, but with remarkable consistency, he endeavoured to do two things: to reduce the bulk of the stories and to alter their arrangement. Of the processes he employed the simplest was mechanical reduction: he seldom reproduced an episode in full and frequently omitted entire sections of his source.² More elaborate was the device of 'telescoping*': whereas the French prose writers deliberately complicated their material by duplicating episodes and inventing new characters, Malory often simplified his by making either two different scenes or two characters into one.³ But his most successful and historically most significant contribution to the technique of the prose tale was his attempt to substitute for the method of interweaving* a more modern treatment of narrative.

The source of his *Tale of King Arthur* contained three main groups of episodes interspersed with various adventures of Arthur's knights: Arthur's wars against the enemies of his kingdom, the life and death of Merlin the enchanter, and the treacherous machinations of Morgan le Fay, Arthur's half-sister. How these three themes were interwoven with

Sunt hujus morbi medici: speculeris in illis;
Invenietur ibi qua purges luce tenebras,
Quo pede transcurras salebras, qua clave recludas
Ostia, quo digito solvas nodosa. Patentem
Ecce viam!

¹ Cf. F. Lot, loc. cit.: 'De ce procede de rentrelacement les exemples se pressent sous la plume. lis sont si nombreux qu'a les vouloir enumerer on raconterait le *Lancelot* d'un bout a l'autre.'

² The rate of condensation varies from x : 2 to 1 : 8. Cf. my *Malory*, pp. 30-1.

³ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 34-8. Numerous other illustrations will be found in the *Commentary*.

one another may be seen from the following brief summary of the middle portion of the story (*Huth Merlin*, ff. 184-220):

While Merlin and Nivene—'la damoisele chaceresse', with whom Merlin is in love—are visiting the land of King Ban of Benoic, they discover the Lake of Diana. Merlin tells Nivene how the great huntress disposed of her unfortunate lover Faunus by shutting him up in a tomb, and how she was afterwards punished for it. He also tells Nivene that Arthur is in imminent danger from his foes. Nivene urges him to return to Great Britain and rescue the king. Meanwhile Arthur repulses the attack of five hostile kings who have invaded his lands and massacred his men. One day he goes hunting in the forest of Camelot with Urience and Accolon; as they are busy quartering the stag by the side of a river, they see a beautifully decorated ship approaching the bank. Twelve damsels welcome them on board and offer them hospitality. The next morning the three hunters find themselves transported by enchantment to three different places: Urience to his own bed, Arthur to a prison, and Accolon to a meadow, where he is met by a dwarf who brings him Arthur's sword, Excalibur. Arthur's fellow prisoners tell him that their captor, Domas, would release them if he could find among them a champion ready to fight his brother. Arthur takes up the challenge. Nivene having rid herself of Merlin by shutting him up in a rock, 'qu'il ne fu puis nus qui peust veoir Merlin ne mort ne vif, goes to watch Arthur's battle with Domas's brother. But Morgan le Fay has in the meantime substituted Accolon for Arthur's original opponent. Armed with Arthur's sword, Accolon at first proves the stronger, but Nivene casts a spell upon him and makes him drop the magic weapon. Arthur picks it up and defeats Accolon with a few strokes. Morgan then attempts to murder in their sleep first her husband Urience, then Arthur. The former is saved by Morgan's own son, Ivain, while the latter escapes by waking up. Morgan and her men are put to flight, and Ivain is banished from the court: 'Car certes', says Arthur, 'je ne porroie pas cuidier que vous peussies estre preudom ne loial, pour le dyable dont vous estes issus.' This is the beginning of a new series of adventures in which Ivain, Gauvain, and Morhout play the leading parts.

It will be observed that the three basic themes alternate here in the following order: Merlin and Nivene (a^1), Arthurs wars (b), Morgan le Fay (c^1), Merlin and Nivene (a^2), Morgan le Fay (c^2). Now in Malory's account these themes, instead of being interwoven, are separated from one another and related in strict sequence. The order of events

is not $a^1 b c^1 a^2 c^2$, but $a^1 a^2 b c^1 c^2$; the three threads of the narrative are unravelled and straightened out so as to form in each case a consistent and self-contained set of adventures. The same process is applied on a smaller scale in each important subdivision of the story. After the story of the magic ship the French source gives a brief account of the situation of the three hunters, Urience, Arthur, and Accolon, on their awakening, and then deals with their particular adventures in the reverse order: Accolon, Arthur, Urience. Malory, on the other hand, first disposes of Urience, then combines two series of Arthur's adventures into one (the awakening and the resolve to fight for Domas), and lastly deals in a similar fashion with Accolon. Thus a simple narrative, with each sequence of events beginning when the other is at an end, is substituted for the elaborate chain of interlocked episodes.

The unravelling of a fabric such as that of the French romance is, however, no easy process, and every now and then, having failed to disentangle the full length of the thread at the proper time, Malory finds himself with the loose end of it on his hands. The story of Morgan le Fay may again be used as an example. In the French version Morgan's attempt to murder Urience is a natural sequel to the adventure of the magic ship. In Malory the connexion is broken, and the scene of the attempted murder is introduced without any reference to its antecedent:

The meanewhyle Morgan le Fay had wente kynge Arthure had bene ded. So on a day she aspyed kynge Uryence lay on slepe on his bedde; than she callyd unto hir a mayden of her counseyle and sayde, *Go fecche me my lordes swerde, for I saw never bettir tyme to sle hym than now'.

Malory was well aware that in the original story Morgan le Fay did not discover Urience in his bed by chance 'on a day', but caused him to be brought there from the ship in order to murder him. The deliberate removal of the connecting link between the adventure of the ship and the attempted murder shows how anxious Malory was to avoid what the French romance writers valued above all: the impression that each episode either anticipated or continued *aliam partem materiae* with long intervals of extraneous

matter between them. When this had not been achieved by means of a rearrangement of material, that is to say, when one or more elements of a sequence still remained separated from the rest, Malory either omitted them altogether or presented them as independent episodes: the pattern $a^1 b c^1 a^1 c^2$, if not already simplified by a consistent grouping of its component parts, was reduced to either $a^1 b c^1$ or $a^1 b c^1 d e$, thus closely approximating to the modern type of narrative.

The *Tale of King Arthur* was but the first attempt in this direction, highly characteristic of Malory's attitude to his task, yet hardly comparable to his ultimate achievement. His next two 'tales'—the *Noble Tale of Sir Launcelot du Lake* and the *Tale of Sir Gareth of Orkeney*—reveal a real mastery of technique. In the opening chapters of the *Noble Tale* Lancelot, accompanied by Lionel, starts on his quest of adventures. As they lie asleep under a tree on a hot day there begin two distinct series of episodes: Lionel is captured by Tarquyn, and Lancelot by four queens who keep him prisoner in one of their castles. There Lancelot finds himself faced with the choice of either remaining a prisoner to the end of his days or becoming a paramour of one of the queens. Aided by a damsel he escapes, and to reward her for her service goes to a tournament and defeats the opponents of her father, King Bagdemagus. At this point the French romance introduces a digression equal in length to 500 pages of our text. Malory boldly dismisses it and, determined as he is to keep to the initial episode of his *Tale*, passes straight on to Lancelot's quest of Lionel: Lancelot kills Lionel's captor, Tarquyn, releases the other prisoners, and to reward another damsel for her assistance disposes of Perys de Foreste Savage, an enemy of knights-errant. Finally he rids the people of the Castle of Tintagel of the tyranny of two giants by cleaving the head of one and cutting the other in two. All this forms a consistent account, with 'a beginning, a middle and an end'. Some traces of 'interweavings' still remain, for Malory cannot altogether dismiss all the allusions, anticipations, and 'cross-links' which abound in his source; but he succeeds in disentangling from the mass of "material which it contains the outline of a continuous narrative without depriving it of its essentially adventurous

character. The result is a *roman d'aventures* rebuilt in accordance with a new principle of composition, and more palatable to the modern reader than any part of the original *Lancelot-Graal*.

A similar result was sometimes achieved by the French writers themselves. As the threads of the narrative lengthened and its pattern grew both in size and in complexity, the tendency arose to isolate certain episodes from their context and to treat them as 'stories in a story'. This was primarily the result of an excessively elaborate use of the 'tapestry' technique; but it was also the beginning of a new *genre*. Each composition as a whole became more and more unwieldy, but its various parts gradually acquired more shape and sequence; and the cohesion which was no longer discernible in the larger works occasionally reappeared in what remained of their component elements. And so by a mere process of internal multiplication the over-developed varieties of medieval romantic fiction gave rise, and eventually yielded their place, to simpler and more enduring forms of narrative art.

There is reason to believe that the source of Malory's *Tale of Gareth* was an example of this process. It formed a branch of the prose *Tristan*,¹ but was virtually independent of it. Like Malory's *Tale of Gareth*, it was to all intents and purposes a self-contained account of the progress of a young nobleman who on his arrival at Arthur's court was ridiculed by Kay, the traditional jester, entered Arthur's service as an obscure page, soon distinguished himself by a series of daring exploits, and finally achieved a degree of fame equalled only by Lancelot and Tristram. In the development of prose fiction this was a transition type inasmuch as it still retained some connexion with the romance of which it was a branch. By separating it from the *Tristan* and giving it an independent place Malory merely went a step farther in the direction suggested by his French models. But the result was a story with a well-circumscribed plot, a real sense of completeness, and a harmonious working out of the central theme; a story which can serve as a genuine

¹ Cf. my article on the 'Romance of Gaheret' in *Medium Aevutn*, vol. i, pp. 157-67 and the relevant section of the *Commentary*.

example of the technique of a modern tale applied to medieval romance.

From these three works—the *Tale of King Arthur*, the *Noble Tale of Sir Launcelot du Lake*, and the *Tale of Sir Gareth of Orkeney*—Malory's role in literary history would thus appear to be the very opposite of that which has hitherto been assigned to him. His contribution would seem to consist not in making one story out of a 'Vast assemblage' of stories, but in breaking up the complicated structure of earlier fiction and in using its fragments for smaller narrative patterns. He no doubt had, as Saintsbury aptly puts it, 'the sense of *grasp*, the power to put his finger and to keep it on the central pulse and nerve of the story'.¹ But the 'story' should not be taken to mean the entire collection of his works, for neither he nor anyone else familiar with the structural peculiarities of Arthurian romances could have conceived of them as a single whole or attempted to put them together in sufficient shape. What was uppermost in the minds of their authors and readers was not their general design but the opportunity they offered of following innumerable diverging tracks of narrative one after another.² Little could have been gained by reducing these to a carefully balanced structure with a strict subordination of all its parts to a single *leitmotiv*, Malory's conception of his task was more realistic. He did not try, as others have done since, to fuse all his French books into a single Arthurian epic. What he endeavoured to do was to extract from them a series of short and well-defined tales. In so far as he succeeded he found himself in harmony with the general trend of prose fiction. For in the history of prose the natural outcome of cyclic romances was not the long novel of to-day but the *nouvelle*,³ or the short novel, of the last centuries of the Middle Ages.³ Even at a later period the *romans a tiroirs*—that curious

¹ *History of the English Novel*, p. 27.

² In Rilke's words, 'wie ein Mädchen das Blumen bindet, nachdenklich Blume um Blume probt, und doch nicht weiss was aus dem Ganzen wird' (*Die Weise von Liebe und Tod des Cornets Christoph Rilke*, Leipzig, 1899, p. 9).

³ Cf. C. S. Baldwin, *Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic*, p. 268: 'Such singleness as the middle age cultivated in romance must be sought in the parts considered as separate stories, and will be found oftener in the shorter romances that remained by themselves.'

modern replica of **the** medieval prose cycles¹—did not themselves become novels in the modern sense of the term, but produced, by a process of differentiation, short prose works, each centring on a particular theme or episode.² The fact that Malory anticipated this development ensured the survival of his rendering of Arthurian romances, just as the inability of French writers to turn the Cycle into a series of *nouvelles* was one of the causes of its eclipse in France. 'Au XV^e siècle', writes Paul Morand, 'avec Sir Thomas Malory, dans la *Morte d'Arthur*, la nouvelle sert à traduire, sous une forme portative, ces traditions celtiques et chevaleresques dont l'influence devait être si grande sur Tennyson et les Preraphaelites.'³ Barring the erroneous and somewhat contradictory reference to 'Celtic chivalric traditions', this remark aptly sums up Malory's position, much more accurately, it may be said, than does Professor E. A. Baker's elaborate account of the 'growth of Arthurian romance, from its hazy beginnings in myth and folk-lore to its embodiment in a single orderly narrative by Malory'.⁴ Like Thomas Nash in his *Unfortunate Traveller*,⁵ Malory gives us mere *disiectae membra novellae*, and for this very reason stands in a direct line of descent from the 'cyclic' technique of his medieval predecessors to the individualized *nouvelle*—the real, if unacknowledged, starting-point of modern fiction.

¹ Hence their inordinate size and the absence of proper endings. 'Le roman s'est donné pour loi, pendant tout le XVII^e siècle et une partie du XVIII^e, de n'avoir aucune loi de composition... C'est pour cela que les romans paraissent en six, dix, douze volumes, dont la publication s'espace sur un certain nombre d'années et parfois (comme pour *l'Astree*, la *Marianne* de Marivaux, etc.) ne s'achève pas. Personne n'est pressé de connaître la fin, puisqu'il n'y a pas de fin' (Daniel Mornet, *Histoire de la littérature française*, p. 135).

* Perhaps the most famous example is *Manon Lescaut*, originally the seventh volume of Prevost's *Memoires et Aventures d'un homme de qualité*.

³ *L'Heure qu'il est*, Paris, 1938, p. 21 x.

* *The History of the English Novel*, vol. 1, p. 304.

⁵ Cf. J. J. Jusserand, *Le Roman au temps de Shakespeare* (Paris, 1887), pp. 123-4:

⁶ 'Il a le défaut de tous les romans du temps, aussi bien en Angleterre qu'ailleurs: il est incohérent et mal composé. Mais il présente des fragments excellents, deux ou trois bons portraits d'individus bien observés et quelques scènes, comme la vengeance de Cutwolfe, solidement construites, qui permettent de prévoir qu'un jour la puissance dramatique du génie anglais, étouffée sans doute par une longue carrière sur le théâtre, pourra, au lieu de s'éteindre, revivre dans le roman.'

3. Interpretation

'Make use of the emotions. Relate the familiar manifestations of them.

. . . 'These details carry conviction.' Aristotle, *Rhetorica*, iii. 16.

It is a commonplace of literary history to describe medieval romance as the prototype of the modern novel. Courtly romance writers, we are told, introduced into the realm of fiction the analysis of the mental reactions of the characters to the story and by so doing laid the foundations of the story of 'Character and motive'. "There is little incident", writes W. P. Ker, 'sensibility has its own way, in monologues by the actors and digressions by the author on the nature of love. It is rather the sentiment than the passions that is here expressed in the "language of the heart", but however that may be, there are both delicacy and eloquence in the language. The pensive Fenice who debates with herself for nearly two hundred lines in one place (Chrestien de Troyes' *Cliges*, 4410—4574) is the ancestress of many late heroines.'¹ Gaston Paris states the case less enthusiastically but no less strongly. Referring to the immediate successors of Chrestien de Troyes in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries he remarks: 'L'analyse psychologique parfois tres fine a laquelle, d'apres rexemple de Chretien, ils soumettent les sentiments et surtout les conflits de sentiments de leurs personmages, ils l'expriment dans des monologues, souvent d'une subtilite fatigante, d'une forme recherchee et d'une fastidieuse longueur, mais qui souvent aussi joignent a une certaine profondeur une vraie naivete. Par la ces romans sont les veritables precurseurs du roman moderne.'² And a more recent critic, Alfons Hilka, asserts with equal conviction that Chrestien's method of characterization through reflective monologues is identical with that used in the modern novel.³

¹ *Epic and Romance*, p. 358.

² *Histoire Utteraire de la France*, t. xxx, p. 16.

³ Cf. *Die direkte Rede als stilistisches Kunstmittel in den Romanen des Kristian von Troyes* (Halle, 1903), p. 64: 'Im Volksepos bestehen sie (die Reflexionen) in der kurzen Andeutung der Gedanken der vor einem schnellen Entschlusse stehenden Person, so recht passend zur reflexionslosen Plastik des alten Liederstils; bei Kristian aber haben wir lang fortgesponnene, in spitzfindigen Betrachtungen des eigenen Ich sich gefallende und zugleich kunstvoll durchgebildete, nicht selten sogar dramatisch gestaltete Monologe. Bei ihm sind die Monologe immer ein beliebtes

If there is any truth in these statements, two cardinal questions come to mind: how did the poets of the courtly-school, with no background of narrative literature other than the epic, come so near the modern conception of the novel? And if the similarity is no mere accident, if one *genre* is descended from the other, what were the stages of its descent? Neither question can be answered here fully; but as Malory's contribution to the 'story of character and motive*' can only be seen against the background of these wider issues, it seems necessary to give some account of them, even at the risk of a digression *ad aliud extra materiam*.

(a) *The origins of 'sentiment'*

Perhaps the most obvious difference between Old French epic and romance is that the latter, not content to *narrate* events, endeavours to *interpret* them.¹ That this procedure should have been adopted in what was essentially a 'learned' type of work—and French courtly romance was primarily *un genre savant*—is not in itself unnatural, but what made it inevitable was the peculiar intellectual background of courtly poets.² The search for the unexpressed meaning was perhaps the principal feature of twelfth-century thought, almost equally noticeable in all spheres of learning. It may have been considered by some a waste of time to indulge in such subtleties as the attempt to find in the statement that Hyllus was the son of Hercules the inner meaning that a valid argument comes from a bold and vigorous disputant, or

Kunstmittel, um uns neben seinen subjektiven (oft gleichfalls sehr ausgedehnten) Reflexionen einen Einblick in das Innere seiner Personen zu geben, die selbst ihre innersten Gedanken zergliedern und sich von ihrem qualenden Zustande voll auf- und abwogender Gedanken Rechnung ablegen, gerade wie dies in den modernen Romanen geschieht.'

¹ Cf. Joseph Bedier, *Les Ligendes epiques*, t. iii, p. 418: 'Un romancier a le droit d'intervenir pour expliquer ses intentions. Homere, Virgile interviennent sans cesse; non pas Turol. Son art, sobre, elliptique, s'interdit toute glose.'

² The theory which holds the field at present is that the 'explanatory' lyrical monologue came from Ovid. Suggested by Gaston Paris (*Journal des Savants*, 1902) and adopted by A. Hilka (op. cit., pp. 62 and 71 ff.), this view has been substantiated with reference to the *En/as* by M. Edmond Faral (*Recherches sur les sources latines des contes et rontons courtois du moyen dge*, pp. 150-4). The influence of Ovid is undeniable, but it does not suffice to account for the complex processes involved in the technique of courtly narrative. What follows is but a brief summary of some of the salient points which have not so far received enough attention and with which I hope to deal more fully in a forthcoming study.

in the five vowels the five pleas of the crown, the names of which happened each to have a different vowel in the second syllable;¹ interpretation remained none the less the most widely recognized intellectual pursuit. Excellent practice in it was provided by *grammatical* the first member of the Trivium, which had pride of place in the schools of Gaul from the seventh century to the eleventh and reigned supreme in the heyday of the school of Chartres, from 1050 to 1150. According to the definition given in the fourth century by Donatus (*scientia interpretandi poetas atque historicos et recte scribendi loquendique ratio*), repeated almost word for word in the ninth century by Rabanus,² and amplified by John of Salisbury in the twelfth, *grammatica* was primarily concerned with the elucidation of ancient authors; the proper use of language, both spoken and written, was a means to this end. John of Salisbury's famous chapter *De usu legendi et prelegendi* shows how the subject was taught at Chartres. Pupils were encouraged above all to develop and perfect the crude substance (*rudem materiam*) of a story or an argument 'with such abundance of learning and such elegance of composition and ornament that the work, brought to the highest perfection, seemed as it were the image of all arts'.³ The practice of *grammatical dulcis secretorum comes*, thus instilled in the pupils' minds what few, if any, French epic poets possessed: the habit of expounding and elaborating a narrative or a discourse, of bringing out its significance, and so giving it new weight and attraction.⁴ This was at first a habit of mind; but it soon became a habit of conception, equally prominent in religious and secular writings. The

¹ John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon*, ed. C. C. J. Webb, 829 a (p. 10): 'Ylum esse ab Hercule, ualidum scilicet argumentum a forti et robusto argumentatore, potestates uocalium quinque iura regnorum, et in hunc modum docere omnia, studium illius etatis erat.'

² *De Clericorum Institutione*, in. xviii, in Migne, *Patrologia latina*, vol. cvii, col. 395 b.

³ *Metalogicon*, ed. C. C. J. Webb, 854 a-b, p. 54: 'Illi enim per diacrisim, quam nos illustrationem siue picturationem possumus appellare, cum rudem materiam historie aut argumenti aut fabule aliamue quamlibet suscepissent, earn tanta disciplinarum copia et tanta compositionis et condimenti gratia excolebant, ut opus consummatum omnium artium quodammodo uideretur imago.'

⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, 856 d, pp. 58-9: 'Ne quis tamquam parua fastidiat grammatices elementa; non quia magne sit opere discemere a uocalibus consonantes, easque ipsas in semiuocalium numerum mutarumque partiri, sed quia interiora uelut sacri huius

'otherworldliness' of medieval preaching was not an attitude of indifference to physical facts, but a call to see through them: in St. Bernard's words, to conceive of the visible world as 'full of supernal mysteries, abounding each in its special sweetness, if the eye that beholds be but attentive' ;¹ and in the opening lines of the twelfth-century *Livres des Rots* the promise of a similar benefit was held out to readers of any 'simple' story:

' Servants of God, listen to the story: it is very simple and seems unadorned, but it is full of meaning {*sens*) and matter. The story is chaff, the meaning wheat; the meaning is the fruit, the story the branch. This book is as a chest in which are locked the hidden things of God.'²

Applied to narrative poetry, this attitude of mind produced at first a strangely inflated form of explanatory digression such as is found in the early *romans d'antiquite*. Ovid's story of Pyramus and Thisbe became in its twelfth-century French adaptation a series of redundant soliloquies; and in the French *Roman de Troie* Achilles, the silent lover of Polyxena, was made to describe at unnecessarily great length the devastating effects of his passion.³ But less than two decades later, in the romances of Chrestien de Troyes, the same method led to some truly remarkable results: in recording their reactions to each important turn of events the characters of Chrestien's stories were able to display a subtlety of thought and feeling far beyond any earlier attempts at characterization. The 'hidden things', once skilfully revealed, ceased to be a mere subject of school exercises; they became a vital element of a new form of narrative art.

But it is doubtful whether the literary *genre* thus created would have prospered as it did if it had not inherited at an

aduentibus apparebit rerum multa subtilitas, que non modo acuerie ingenia puerilia sed exercere altissimam quoque eruditionem ac scientiam possit.'

¹ *De Laudibus Virginis Matris*, in Migne, *Patrologia latina*, vol. clxxxiii, col. 56.

² 'Fedeil deu, entend l'estorie: asez est clere e semble nue, mais pleine est de sens et de meule. L'estorie est paille, le sen est grains; le sen est fruit, l'estorie raims. Cist livres est cum armarie des secreiz Deu' (*Livre des Rois*, ed. Curtius, p. 5). Cf. Professor W. A. Nitze's comment on this passage in his article on 'Sens et Matiere', *Romania*, xlv, pp. 25-6.

³ *Le Roman de Troie par Benoît de Sainte Maure*, ed. L. Constans, vol. iii, pp. 151 ff., ll. 17638-746.

early stage another feature of contemporary learning. If *grammatica* can be said to have shown how a given set of incidents could be explained and expanded, *retorica*, the second part of the Trivium, taught poets and story-tellers the proper use of imagination. The discipline which in the later Middle Ages was to be largely reduced to mere stylistic ornamentation¹ had not at that time lost its original composing function. In a number of important works embodying the doctrine of the rhetoricians from Quintilian onwards the term *colores rhetoricae* refers, as in Cicero, not so much to formal elaboration as to the 'treatment of the matter' from the speaker's or the writer's point of view. There is a significant agreement in this respect between Quintilian and the three great medieval scholars closely connected with the Gallic tradition of rhetoric: Sidonius Apollinaris, Martianus Capella, and John of Salisbury. Sidonius Apollinaris insists on the use of 'colours' because they 'provide boys' themes with pieces to weave in' and enable the orator to display his talent despite the meagreness of his case.² Martianus Capella in his allegorical description of the seven arts speaks of rhetoric as *rerum omnium regina* who has shown 'the power to move men whither she pleases, or whence, to bow them to tears, to incite them to rage, to transform the mien and feeling'.³ And John of Salisbury goes so far as to attribute to rhetoric the function normally assumed by *dialectical* he uses the term *probandi colores* in the sense of 'amplification of proof, and looks to rhetoric not only for brilliance of style but for means of persuasion'.⁴

¹ Cf. Brunetto Latini, *Tresor*, ed. Chabaille, p. 486: 'Tout ce que l'om porroit en iii moz ou a moult po de paroles dire il (*le aornement*) les acroist par autres paroles plus longues et plus avenans qui dient ce meisme.' For less humorous definitions of rhetorical amplification see *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, iv. 28, and Edmond Faral, *Les Arts poetiques du XII^e et du XIII^e siecle*, pp. 61-85 et *passim*.

² 'Sic adulescentum declamatiunculas pannis textilibus comparantes intellegebant eloquia iuvenum laboriosius brevia produci quam porrecta succidi' (ed. Mohr, 1. iv. 3). 'Sic et magnus orator, si negotium aggrediatur angustum, tunc amplum plausibilis manifestat ingenium' (ibid. viii. x. 3).

³ 'Nam ueluti potens rerum omnium regina et impellere quo uellet et unde uellet deducere, et in lacrimas flectere et in rabiem concitare, et in alios etiam uultus sensusque conuertere tarn urbes quam exercitus proeliantes, quaecumque poterat agmina populorum' (*De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*, ed. Dick, v. 426-7).

⁴ 'Siquidem Gramatica Poeticaque se totas infundunt, et eius quod exponitur totam superficiem occupant. Huic, ut dici solet, campo Logica, probandi colores

In their school practices prospective romance writers could learn how to apply these precepts. First they were shown how to paraphrase some speeches in the *Aeneid* (*loci Vergiliani*); next came the *dictiones ethicae*, or soliloquies with which persons in history or mythology could be credited on certain occasions.¹ The third and most advanced stage of rhetorical training was reached in the *controversiae*, or disquisitions on general subjects, of which there are many striking examples in the letters of Sidonius Apollinaris.² All this was, of course, originally intended for use in discourses, not in works of fiction, but the common confusion between the notion of *narratio* ('statement of facts in a discourse') and 'narrative',³ which can be traced as far back as Quintilian, helped to transfer to imaginative literature what was in reality a method of declamation, and the process was further facilitated by the fact that, as some passages in Sidonius clearly suggest, *declamatio* was itself treated as a literary form alongside with the *epos tragoediarum*, the *comoedia*, and the *satira*.⁴ Nothing seems more natural, therefore, than that rhetorical devices should have been used for purposes of original composition. And so, after having been trained by the grammarians to react in an articulate manner to works of Latin antiquity, romance writers were able to discover from the rhetoricians a still more vital principle of the art they were to practise: the habit of expressing through a *fabula* or a *historia* a point of view of their own.

This habit soon became the very essence of courtly

afferens, suas immittit rationes in fulgore auri; et Rethorica in locis persuasionum et nitore eloquii candorem argenteum emulatur' (*Metalogicon*, ed. C. C. J. Webb, 854 b, p. 54).

¹ e.g. Juno's words when she saw Antaeus matched with Hercules or Thetis before the body of Achilles. Ennodius (*Dictiones* xxvii) gives as examples of this type of exercise *Verba Didonis cum abeuntem videret Aeneam*, *Verba Menelai cum Troiam inderet inustamy* etc. A similar purpose was served by *sermocinatio*, one of the nineteen *colores sententiarum*, which is given considerable prominence by Geoffroi de Vinsauf in his *Poetria Nova* (1210), ll. 1265-6 and 1305-24.

² See also Ennodius, *op. cit.*, xx.

³ Johannes de Garlandia places *fabula* and *historia* among the kinds of *narratio* 'remote from legal pleading' (ed. G. Mari, *Romanische Forschungen* xiii, p. 926).

⁴ Et nunc inflat epos tragoediarum,
Nunc comoedia temperat iocosa,
Nunc flammant satirae et tyrannicarum
Declamatio controversiarum (VTI. xi. 3).

romance. Whatever the subject of the narrative, its primary function as conceived by twelfth- and thirteenth-century poets was to serve as an expression of the thoughts and emotions inspired by courtly idealism, to translate in terms of actions and characters the subtle varieties of courtly sentiment and the highly sophisticated code of courtly behaviour. A romance might recall the legendary exploits of King Arthur's knights, or some imaginary event at the court of Byzantium, or again some episode placed in a contemporary French setting; what it primarily endeavoured to do was not to give an impression of life in the lands and the times to which its subject-matter ostensibly belonged, but to use this subject-matter as a means of conveying a new philosophy. Hence its inherent duality and the marked opposition of thought and matter so clearly expressed in the opening passage of Chrestien's *Conte de la Charrete*:

Matiere et san Tan done et livre
La contesse, et il s'antremet
De panser si que rien n'i met
Fors sa painne et s'antancion.¹

With a modesty characteristic of contemporary etiquette Chrestien here credits his patroness, Marie de Champagne, with both the matter (*matiere*) and the spirit (*sen*) of the work. *Matiere* and *sen* are to him the two distinct constituent elements of courtly fiction. *Sen* is no longer used in the sense in which it is found in the extract from the *Livres des Rois* quoted above: it is not 'meaning' or *signification*, but the 'theme', or 'purpose', or 'intention*' of the work;² not part of a given matter, or a sense inherent in the story, but an idea brought in as it were from outside and expressed through the story, or the way in which the story has been

¹ 'The countess having given him (= the poet) both the matter and the spirit [of the work], he undertakes to proceed with it adding nothing but his own labour and exertion.*

² *Grundidee*, according to the editor of the text, W. Foerster; *la nature de la these*, according to M. Gustave Cohen: 'la these qui consacre le pouvoir absolu, despotique, tyrannique de la dame sur l'amant' (*Chrestien de Troyes, sa vie et son oeuvre*, pp. 226 and 276). In the Prologue to her *Lais* Marie de France says that 'it was the custom of the ancients to speak obscurely so that those who came after them and were to study them might construe their writing (*gloser la letre*) and add to it as they thought fit (*de lur sen le surplus metre*)'. The two processes correspond to the two varieties of *sen* noted above: the meaning implicit in the matter, and such fresh meaning or thoughts as may be added to it by the author or the *remanieur*.

remodelled by the poet to suit his purpose. Just as the colours of rhetoric were a means of developing and conveying the orator's conception of a case,¹ so *sen* stands here for the intellectual, emotional, and sometimes material content added by the author in accordance with his own interpretation of the original matter.

This conception of narrative had a far-reaching effect on its evolution. Superimposed as it was on the *matiere*, the *sen* was naturally regarded as something extraneous to it and therefore easily replaceable. A further consequence was this typical medieval phenomenon: the frequent recurrence of the same narrative theme with varying and sometimes conflicting 'colours' supplied by individual *remanieurs*. There is in the French twelfth- and thirteenth-centuries romances a striking contrast between the continuity in the transmission of the *matiere* and the corresponding degree of instability in the position of the *sen*, Lancelot's sacrifice of his knightly honour in the attempt to save Guinevere from captivity, as described in Chrestien's *Conte de la Charrete*, has a clear and unequivocal motivation: the service of love must come before all else. When Lancelot has to choose between being driven in a cart like a convict and failing to rescue his lady, he does not hesitate for more than 'two steps'; but even this momentary hesitation is enough to arouse Guinevere's anger: after rescuing her from Meleagant, Lancelot finds himself rebuked by her in spite of all the humiliations and trials he has faced for her sake, and his grief is the greater because for a long time he does not know, and cannot even guess, the cause of her displeasure. It was only natural that Chrestien's successors should have found this somewhat far-fetched; but while they objected to Chrestien's highly artificial *sen*, they found his *matiere* attractive enough to be used again. And so in the next version of the story—the thirteenth-century prose *Lancelot*—the *matiere* was reproduced and expanded, while the *sen* was altered beyond recognition. The Guinevere of the

¹ Gaston Boissier defines them as 'la façon dont l'orateur comprend la cause qu'il va plaider et le tour qu'il lui donne, sa manière de présenter les événements, l'attitude qu'il attribue aux personnages' ('Les Ecoles de declamation à Rome', *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1902, t. xi .p. 491).

prose romance still rebukes Lancelot: this is part of the *matiere*. But she rebukes him for a very different reason. She is no longer the haughty lady of Chrestien's story with a logic that makes her actions seem unreal. Instead of blaming Lancelot for his would-be offence against the courtly code, she sends him away because she thinks that she has reason to be jealous. The readers of the prose romance no doubt preferred this simple motive to the one which had prompted Guinevere's action in Chrestien; but judged impartially, it does not blend with the narrative any more effectively than did the original theme. In nearly every important instance the same essential weaknesss can be observed: the *sen*, this cherished product of learning, appears as a superstructure, often attractive and significant in itself, but invariably detachable from its foundation.

If, in spite of this, courtly poetry, through its survivals and adaptations, became the ancestor of the psychological hovel, it was because the cardinal elements of psychological fiction were there, even though they were lacking in cohesion and unity of purpose, as were the non-harmonized voices before the discovery of plural melody; and perhaps the main importance of Malory's work lies in the fact that it is an example of their gradual harmonization. It was in writing his two longest romances—the *Tristram* and the *Grail*—that he discovered and learned the medieval art of reinter-pretation and began to discover his own way of blending matter and sentiment; and it was in his last two works—the *Book of Launcelot and Guinevere* and the *Morte Arthur*—that he was able to make the component elements of early fiction into an organic whole. This was not only, as Saintsbury and other historians of the novel have described it, a transition 'from the story of incident to the story of character and motive'; it was a new and significant attempt to overcome an aesthetic anomaly inherent in the very foundations of medieval romance. All that made it possible is part of a process which is well worth our understanding, for it affects the whole development of imaginative literature. **In these** pages we can do little more than notice its bare outline, and that only so far as it is visible in Malory's great books of *Tristram*, of the *Grail*, of *Lancelot*, and **of Arthur**.

(b) *Experiments in the use of 'sen'*

Caxton's remark that Malory took his 'copy' out of 'certain books of French' and 'reduced it into English' is a paraphrase of two passages from Malory's book, neither of which was intended to refer to the entire collection of his romances. At the end of the *Book of Sir Tristram* Malory says that it was 'drawyn oute of Freynshe'; and he concludes the *Tale of the Sankgreal* by the words 'Thus endith the Tale of the Sankgreal that was breffly drawy[n] oute of Freynshe'.¹ The fact that the author himself only uses the phrase 'drawn out of French' in reference to these two works is no mere accident: none of his other compositions is as fully accounted for by its sources, and none can provide a better illustration of the twofold principle of condensed translation.² This is not to say that in 'reducing' his *Tristram* and his *Tale of the Sankgreal* from the French Malory abandons the narrative technique which he evolved in his earlier works; if anything, he uses more consistently, and on a larger scale, the devices which he had occasion to practise before, such as the telescoping of scenes and characters, the unravelling of interwoven motifs, and the division of large compositions into smaller narrative units. But on the whole he seems to be more inclined than ever before—with the possible exception of the *Tale of Arthur and Lucius*—to treat his sources as material for translation. His additions are timid in character and few in number. Never in the whole of the *Book of Tristram* or, for that matter, in the *Tale of the Sankgreal* does he use his inventive powers as freely as he did at the end of the *Tale of King Arthur*; nor does he ever select his material with as little respect for the original as he showed in the *Tale of Sir Launcelot*. Patiently and consistently he 'draws briefly' upon the French prose *Tristan* and the *Queste del Saint Graal*. Scott's remark that 'the collection called the *Morte Arthur*' was 'extracted at hazard, and without much art or combination, from the

¹ See facsimile facing p. xxx. Caxton adds in each case : *in to Englysshe*.

² Caxton's 'to reduce' is obviously a synonym of Malory's 'to draw briefly', and this alone should suffice to dispose of E. Brugger's suggestion that the former must be taken to mean, in Caxton's context, 'to bring into another language without any idea of shortening' (*Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur*, vol. li, pp. 133-69)-

various French prose folios',¹ is as true of these two works as it is inapplicable to the others.

But while doing a translator's work, Malory had neither the attitude of mind nor the temperament of a translator. However slight his alterations and additions may appear compared to the bulk of the narrative, they are enough to show that he read his sources with the inquisitiveness of an artist, and that in the process of 'reducing' them he was not merely observing their manner: he was gradually and consistently fashioning his own.

One peculiarity of the French *Tristan* and of the *Queste* seems to have made a particularly strong and lasting impression on his mind. Practically the whole of the *Queste* was a series of seemingly simple incidents which served as illustrations of a theological doctrine, and most such incidents were followed, with remarkable regularity, by a discussion of their significance. The prose *Tristan* was less consistent and correspondingly less monotonous. Its author was on the whole more concerned with the stories he had to tell than with any significance they might possess. But he could neither ignore nor indeed escape the tradition which lay immediately behind his work, the tradition of courtly romance with its characteristic use of direct speech and digression as a means of organizing and elucidating the narrative matter. And so the vast store of material which Malory found in the principal branches of the Arthurian Cycle and in the prose *Tristan* brought him face to face with the main issue of narrative art: the relation between matter and meaning. In reading the French *Tristan* and the *Queste* he realized—perhaps for the first time—that a story was incomplete without some account of its human motives or some emotional content; he also realized that neither the 'glosses' nor the themes contained in those two works were necessarily the most appropriate or the most acceptable that could be found. When his English predecessors—the poets who wrote *Twain and Gawain* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*—were faced with similar difficulties they generally took the line of least resistance and dismissed the comments which they thought unsuitable without replacing them by their

¹ Introduction to *Sir Tristrem*, 4th edition, Edinburgh, 1819, p. lxxxi.

own.¹ They were, as W. P. Ker rightly remarks, 'plainly unable to follow the French in all the effusive passages'.² Malory must have experienced the same difficulty. But what he disagreed with was not the Effusiveness* of the French romances, nor indeed their insistence on sentiment; his quarrel was with the content and orientation of some of the 'effusive passages' and with the treatment of some of the traditional romantic themes. And so he proceeded, at first very tentatively, but in the end with a genuine sense of purpose, to remodel their *sen* and amend what Villon would have called their *mesfait*. The most striking example of his endeavour to reinterpret the story of Tristan and Iseult is his account of how their love began. It will be remembered that in the earliest version of the legend the lovers were the victims of a magic potion which they drank by mistake on their journey from Ireland to Cornwall, where Iseult was to marry King Mark.³ A later and more rationalistically minded poet, Thomas, seeking to avoid this purely supernatural explanation, added a new beginning: once, while Tristan was still at the court of the King of Ireland, 'Iseult beheld him with enamoured eyes'; and, in the words of Thomas's German *remanieur*, Gottfried von Strassburg, 'everything

¹ The following parallel is an instance in point:

Chrestien's (2639-50)	Yvain	Ywain and Gawain (1551 ff.)
Mes sire Yvains mout a anviz S'est de la dame departiz Einsi, que li cuers ne s'an muet. Li rois le cors mener an puet, Mes del cuer n'an manra il point; Car si se tient et si se joint Au cuer celi, qui se remaint, Qu'il n'a pooir, que il l'an maint. Des que li cors est sanz le cuer, Done ne puet il vivre a nul fuer; Et se li cors sanz le cuer vit, Tel mervoille nus hon ne vit.		No lenger wald syr Ywayne byde, On his stede sone gan he stride, And Pus he has his leue tane.

² *English Literature: Mediaeval* (Home University Library), p. 108.

³ When the hermit urges the lovers to repent Tristan says:

'Sire, par foi,
Que ele m'aime en bone foi,
Vos n'entendez pas la raison:
Q'el m'aime, e'est par la poison.
Ge ne me pus de lie" partir,
N'ele de moi, n'en quier mentir' (Beroul, *Tristan*, 11. 1381-6).

about him pleased her well, and she approved of him in her heart'.¹

The author of the French prose romance of Tristan knew both these versions, but adopted neither. In order to account for the love motif he resorted to an expedient which was in keeping with the 'adventurous* spirit of his work, but singularly incongruous in the context of a Tristan romance: as Tristan was about to take part in the tournament of the *Chateau de la Lande* he realized, according to the prose writer, that another knight, Palomides (*Palamedes*), was in love with Iseult. Out of sheer love of rivalry he promptly decided to become Iseult's knight.² The same story reappears in Malory who knew no other version of it, but with a curious difference: Tristram's rivalry with Palomides, instead of being the motive which prompts Tristram's decision, becomes a mere consequence of his love for Iseult. In a passage which *precedes* the description of the tournament Malory remarks that Tristram 'cast great love to La Beale Isode',

for she was at that tyme the fayrest lady and maydyn of the worlde. And there Tramtryste lerned hir to harpe, and she began to have a grete fantasy unto hym.³

It is not until the next paragraph that we are told how Palomides 'drew unto La Beale Isode and proffered her many gifts', and how Tristram 'espied' him:

And wete you well sir Tramtryste had grete despyte at sir Palomydes, for La Beale Isode tolde Tramtryste that Palomydes was in wyll to

¹ '...gevfel ir allez an im wol und lobte ez in ir muote' (Gottfried von Strassburg, *Tristan*, ed. R. Bechstein, ll. 10006-7). The Norse Saga (*Tristrams Saga ok Isondar*, ed. E. Kolbing) describes the scene in similar terms: 'leit hun *pa* a hit fria andlit hans meo astsamligum augum' (ch. xliii). Thomas's own rendering of this scene is not extant, but it can be reconstructed with tolerable certainty from these two adaptations.

² Tant regarde Palamedes Yseult que Tristan s'en aperchoit a son semblant qu'il rayme de tout son cuer. Tristan si l'avoit par maintes fois regardee, maiz ce n'estoit pas pour amour qu'il y eust. Et puis qu'il vist que Palomedes la regardoit si merveilleusement, il dit qu'il l'avra ou qu'il mourra, ne ja Palamedes pour povoir qu'il ait n'y advendra' (MS. B.N. fr. 103, f. 39^{'''}, col. 1). Paraphrasing this passage, E. Ldseth (*Le Roman en prose de Tristan, analyse critique J'apris les manuscrits de Paris*, p. 22) writes: 'Tristan, qui jusque-la n'avait guere e'prouve' de sentiments pour elle, s'eprend slrieusement en voyant l'amour de Palamede.'

³ *Infra*, p. 385.

be crystynde for hir sake. Thus was there grete envy betwyxte Tramtryste and sir Palomydes.

In this way the normal sequence of incidents is re-established and the true 'Colour' restored. The love motif, instead of being a mere adjunct to chivalric contests, becomes once more the dominating theme. Nor is this the only instance of Malory's preference for emotional motivation. The first parting of the lovers,¹ Tristram's madness, his life in the wilderness,² his recognition by Isode in the garden of Tintagel, when she begs him to leave her and 'grant King Mark his will' in order to save his own life,³ all these and other similar episodes acquire in Malory's rendering a new significance. They are among his finest contributions to the otherwise uninspired matter of his *Book of Sir Tristram*, and they do much to relieve its tedium.⁴

But perhaps the type of 'colour' that Malory uses most effectively is the half-humorous dialogue—his favourite form of narrative ornamentation. Its purpose is the same as that of a digression or a monologue, namely to give the narrative some human interest. Here is one example out of many. Tristram tells Isode that they must both attend a

* *Infra*, p. 392.

² *Infra*, p. 496: 'So thys lady and damesell brought hym mete and drynke, but he ete lityll thereof. Than uppon a nyght he put hys horse frome hym and unlaced hys armour, and so yeode unto the wyldirnes and braste downe the treys and bowis. And othirwhyle, whan he founde the harpe that the lady sente hym, than wolde he harpe and play thereuppon and wepe togydirs. And somtyme, whan he was in the wood, the lady wyst nat where he was. Than wolde she sette hir downe and play uppon the harpe, and anone sir Trystramys wolde com to the harpe and harkyn thereto, and somtyme he wolde harpe hymselff. Thus he there endured a quarter off a yere, and so at the laste he ran hys way and she wyst nat where he was becom.' Cf. *Commentary*, note 495-501.

³ *Infra*, p. 502. Isode ends by saying 'And ever whan I may I shall sende unto you, and whan ye lyst ye may com unto me, and at all tymes early and late I woll be at youre commaundement, to lyve as poore a lyff as ever ded quylene or lady'.

⁴ It is of course possible to set against these passages a number of equally 'effusive' ones which Malory has mercilessly cut out. In describing the days when the lovers were free from suspicion and restraint the French prose-writer says: 'oncques mes ne furent tant aise com si sont orendroit, car, quant il vont ore recordant les maux et les paines que chascun a souffert endroit soi, et il se voient ensemble, que il poent fere toute lor volenti, il dient que il fussent buer nes s'il peussent toz jor mes vivre et mener tel joie et tel feste.' Malory writes instead: 'Than sir Trystram used dayly and nyghtely to go to quene Isode whan he myght.' But this only goes to show that while adopting the French author's method Malory used it in his own way and for his own purposes. For further examples see *Commentary*, notes 592₄₋₁₄ and 77916-18.

gathering at Arthur's court 'at Pentecost nexte folowyng'. ' "Sir", seyde dame Isode, "and hyt please you, I woll nat be there, for thorow me ye bene marked of many good knyghtes, and that causyth you for to have much more laboure for my sake than nedyth you to have" '—a surprising thought for a courtly lady: instead of encouraging her knight to perform feats of prowess on her behalf she seems to object to any excess of 'labour for her sake'; she is clearly more concerned about Tristram's safety than about his fighting record. But she is by no means indifferent to his reputation, and when Tristram refuses to go without her ('Than woll I nat be there but yf ye be there') she urges him to do his social duty:

'God deffende', seyde La Beall Isode, 'for than shall I be spokyn of shame amonge all quenys and ladyes of astate; for ye that ar called one of the nobelyste knyghtys of the worlde and a knyght of the Rounde Table, how may ye be myssed at the feste? For what shall be sayde of you amonge all knyghtes? "A! se how sir Trystram huntyth and hawkyth, and cowryth within a castell wyth hys lady, and forsakyth us. Alas!*" shall som sey, "hyt ys pyte" that ever he was knyght, or ever he shulde have the love of a lady." Also, what shall quenys and ladyes say of me? "Hyte ys pyte" that I have my lyff, that I wolde holde so noble a knyght as ye ar frome hys worshyp."

'So God me helpe', seyde sir Trystram unto La Beall Isode, 'hyt ys passyngly well seyde of you and nobely counceyled. And now I well undirstonde that ye love me.'¹

Chrestien de Troyes uses a very similar 'colour' in his *Erec et Enide*² to motivate the subsequent adventures of his hero. Here it has no such purpose. The dialogue is designed merely to throw some light on Isode's character. She is neither the 'Iseut douloureuse et forte' of the old poems, nor the sophisticated courtly queen of the French prose romance, but an affectionate and ingenious *amie*, devoted enough to put Tristram's comfort and safety before excessive bravery, and yet thoughtful enough to protect his and her good name. It is she who begs Tristram, on another

¹ *Infra*, pp. 839-40.

² Cf. lines 2561-5: Blasmee an sui, ce poise moi,
Et d'fent tuit reison por quoi,
Que si vos ai lacie et pris
Que tot an perdez vostre pris,
Ne ne querez a el antandre.

occasion, to carry arms when he goes hunting in the forest, a precaution which in the French romance he takes of his own accord.¹ Such details are few and far between; but they suggest important possibilities.

As for the *Book of Sir Tristram* as a whole, it remains true that in reinterpreting the story in his own way, as each medieval writer had done before him, Malory failed to give it a meaning, a *sen*, capable of supporting its complex and delicate narrative frame. He failed above all to grasp and bring out the tragic theme, essential to any coherent form of the Tristan legend and still discernible in its prose version.² Mark is Tristan's overlord whom he respects, as he respects the bond of feudal service. 'I I ne conteste pas', writes Joseph Bedier, 'la loi de Thonneur vassalique, il la viole et, la violant, il souffre.' Without this notion of an involuntary breach of a sacred tie the traditional *donntes* of the legend cannot survive. Already in the French prose romance an important change takes place: love, instead of being the cause of an insoluble conflict, becomes the sacred obligation of a knight-errant; from being *un pechie* (the word in Old French characteristically combines the meanings of 'sin' and 'misfortune') it becomes a virtue, and the story of Tristan and Iseult degenerates into a much protracted heroic comedy, in which the heroes successfully outwit the villains. Mark, instead of being an intensely human and almost likeable character, turns into a traitor, and the whole moral weight of Arthurian knighthood is thrown against him. In opposing him Tristan violates no sacred trust; he merely upholds his own honour and the rights of 'true love'. In all this Malory whole-heartedly follows his source; it is with genuine delight that he relates the blissful retirement of the lovers to Joyous Gard and leaves them there at the close of the romance so that, in his favourite phrase, they may live 'cheerfully' for ever after. The happy ending is achieved here as in the *Tale of King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius* by the omission of

¹ Cf. *infra*, p. 757, and MS. B.N. fr. 99, f. 409", col. 1.

² Cf. the remarks on the love potion (MS. B.N. fr. 103, f. 56V, col. 1): 'Yseut boit. Ha 1 Dieu! Quel boire! Or sont entrez en la rote qui ja mais ne leur fauldra jour de leur vies, car ilz ont bed leur destruction et leur mort. Cil boire leur a semble bon et moult doulz, mais oncques doulceur ne fu si chier achetec comment ceste sera.'

the concluding portion of the original: 'Here endyth the secunde boke off Syr Trystram de Lyones whyche drawyn was oute of Freynshe by Sir Thomas Malleorre, knyght, as Jesu be hys helpe. Amen. But here ys no rehersall of the thirde booke.' The 'thirde booke' contained, among other things, the story of the death of the lovers,¹ but Malory prefers to end the work with a picture of their happiness in their peaceful abode: 'And than sir Trystram returned unto Joyous Garde, and sir Palomydes folowed after the questynge beste.' In all essentials, then, Malory's *Tristram* is but another example of a medieval romance in which the author's *sen* fails to harmonize with the *matiere*, and the fairest approach to it is to regard it not as an achievement, but as an experiment: as the first and necessarily timid attempt at reinterpreting a traditional narrative.

When, after the *Tristan*, Malory turned to the *Queste del Saint Graal* he found himself more out of his element than ever before. With the *Tristan* he may have occasionally disagreed, but the story was not in itself alien to his tastes and tendencies: it belonged to a world in which he could live and move freely, even though it was not his own. With the *Queste* he entered a totally unfamiliar sphere. It was not merely a work of religious inspiration: it was a dogmatic exposition of a doctrine. In a long series of sermons to which the characters patiently listened in the intervals of their monotonous wanderings, it put forward and illustrated the notion that the coming of the Grail was the final and irrevocable test of good and evil and the triumph, of heavenly over earthly chivalry. For this kind of 'interpretation' Malory had little use; but instead of replacing it by his own, he simply 'reduced' all doctrinal comment, shifted the emphasis from theological disquisitions to poetical representation, and so made the Grail quest appear as a mere

¹ That Malory knew this ending is shown by his reference to it in the *Healing of Sir Urry* (p. 1149): 'Also that traytoure kynge slew the noble knyght sir Trystram as he sate harpyng afore hys lady, La Beall Isode, with a trenchaunte glayve, for whos dethe was the moste waylynge of ony knyght that ever was in kynge Arthurs dayes.' This is not, of course, the 'pathetic and imaginative story of the black sail', but a reminiscence of its somewhat crude rendering in the French prose romance. On the prose writer's attitude and method see my *Etudes sur le Tristan en prose*, pp. 17-10.

pageant of picturesque visions. Such at least is the immediate impression one gets from a comparison of his work with the French *Queste*, and to some readers it may be a relief to find that Malory spares them the unnecessary elaboration of 'symbolic adventures and still more symbolic visions, with a hermit waiting at every road-side to expound the symbolism in the bitterest detail'.¹ 'Do not our hearts,' asks Sir Edmund Chambers, 'in these long books, sometimes go down the hill with Gawain?' There is, perhaps, more to it than that.² It may well be, as Mr. C. S. Lewis has pointed out in a memorable essay,³ that Malory is not simply *for* the Round Table and *against* the Grail, that he has 'a three-storeyed mind—a scale of bad-good-best (Mark—Lancelot—Galahad)'. The fact remains that while he is perfectly serious about the nobility of Lancelot and of Arthurian chivalry, he is simply not concerned with the yet higher law which cuts across the courtly world in the Grail books. In the French *Queste* Lancelot appears as a sinner who has offended God in his earlier life by adopting the standards of *courtoisie*: if he is more favourably treated than some other sinners, it is not because his former life was better than theirs, but because he is willing to repent. He is a clear illustration of a dichotomy of worldly and spiritual, pointing 'from the way of earthly achievement to the way of spiritual illumination'.⁴ With this point of view Malory has little sympathy. He reproduces both the condemnation and the contrition of Lancelot, but sets them against the background of Lancelot's glorious deeds in the days before the Quest, so that his former fame may be constantly borne in mind. When Lancelot is told that he will 'never see of the Sankgreall more than he has seen', his answer is, 'Now I thanke God for Hys grete mercy of that I have sene, for hit suffisith me. For, as I suppose, no man in thys worlde have lyved bettir than I have done to enchyve that I have done.' This does not mean that a triple scale of values is introduced where the

¹ E. K. Chambers, *Sir Thomas Wyatt and Some Collected Essays*, p. 32.

² Possibly more than I imagined when I wrote in my monograph on Malory that 'faced with two main themes and forced to subordinate one, Malory made Corbenic a province of Camelot' (*Malory*, p. 84).

³ Review of *Sir Thomas Wyatt*, etc., in *Medium Aevum*, vol. iii (1934), pp- 238-9.

⁴ E. K. Chambers, *loc. cit.*

French author is using only a double one;¹ it means that if there were a conflict, it would be between 'good' and 'best', not between 'good' and 'bad*'. But no such conflict exists in Lancelot's mind. He is not seen in Malory, as he so often is in the French *Queste*, in an attitude of abject humiliation. He knows that his former life was 'good'; and it matters little to him that because it was not 'best' the supreme reward of the Grail is denied him. Hence a significant misrepresentation of the theological issue, and a new treatment of the character of the protagonist. The author of the *Queste*, imbued with Cistercian mysticism, would no doubt have severely censured Malory's frequent confusion of *chevalerie celestienne* with 'virtuous living',² and denounced as sacrilegious the scene in which the sick knight goes on his hands and knees 'so nyghe that he towched the holy vessel and kyst hit'.³ But all this helps to place the action on a human level. While in the French the singing of the birds is but a means of bringing home to Lancelot his sense of wretchedness,⁴ in Malory the same experience 'comforts' him: 'So thus he sorowed tyll hit was day, and harde the fowlys synge; than somewhat he was comforted.'s And when in the adventure of the magic ship he achieves what by the standards of the *Queste* is a state of grace, Malory sends him off 'to play by the watirs syde, for he was somewhat wery of the shippe',⁶ The most striking 'colour' in Malory's treatment of Lancelot is, however, the concluding passage of the *Tale*, deliberately added to make him appear in all his human greatness, undiminished by his experiences in the course of the Grail-quest:

. . . than sir Launcelot tolde the adventures of the Sangreall that he had sene. And all thys was made in the grete bookes and put up in almyres at Salysbury. And anone sir Bors seyde to sir Launcelot,

¹ I cannot follow Mr. C. S. Lewis in his attempt to attribute the triple scale of values to 'mediaeval writers' generally (loc. cit.). There is certainly no such thing in the French *Queste*. Cf. A. Pauphilet, *Etudes sur la Queste del Saint Graal*, p. 17.

² Cf. *Commentary*, notes 886¹⁸ and 891₃₈₋₄.

³ Cf. *infra*, p. 894. According to the *Queste*, no one can touch the Grail, and the sick knight only touches the table on which the Grail stands: 'fait tant qu'il baise la table d'argent et touche a sesyeulx.' The bright spring morning and the sunshine make the Sire s'est courroucies a lui\

⁵ *Infra*, p. 896.

⁶ *Infra*, pp. 1011-12.

*Sir Galahad, youre owne sonne, salewed you by me, and aftir you my lorde kynge Arthure and all the hole courte. And so ded sir Percivale. For I buryed them both myne owne hondis in the cite of Sarras. Also, sir Launcelot, sir Galahad prayde you to remembir of thys unsyker worlde, as ye behyght hym whan ye were togydirs more than halffe a yere.' 'Thys ys trew', seyde sir Launcelot, 'now I truste to God hys prayer shall avayle me.' Than sir Launcelot toke sir Bors in hys armys and seyde, 'Cousyn, ye ar ryght wellcom to me! For all that ever I may do for you and for yours, ye shall fynde my poure body redy atte all tymes whyle the spyryte is in hit, and that I promyse you feythfully, and never to fayle. And wete ye well, gentyl cousin sir Bors, that ye and I shall never departe in sundir whylis oure lyves may laste.'¹

This, like most of Malory's additions, contradicts both the letter and the spirit of the French. Not only does the *Queste* omit to mention Lancelot at this point, but the part which it assigns to him throughout the story would preclude him from joining the Grail knights—Galahad, Perceval, and Bors—and placing on record the events of the holy quest. No such obstacle exists in Malory's version: Lancelot remains to the end the dominating figure, and because he is spared the impersonal fate of a condemned sinner, he develops into something approaching a living character. No doubt, he speaks like a man who knows the significance of the mysteries which have been revealed to him. But his last promise to Bors—'never to depart in sundir' while their lives last—comes primarily from a faithful friend, from a true champion of all the good and noble knights of King Arthur, more conscious than ever of the bond which unites him to the other heroes of the great adventure, 'redy atte all tymes' while the spirit lives in his 'poure body*. These may be but occasional glimpses of character; but the rudiments of the art are there, and the sentiments brought into play are sufficiently true and delicate to remain attached to the story and its protagonist. They are of the order of those 'familiar manifestations of emotions' which, in Aristotle's words, 'carry conviction*.

(c) *The Tragic Conception*

If Malory's rejection of the theology of the *Queste* set him free to attempt a delineation of character, it led to an even

¹ *Infra*, pp. 1036-7.

more striking result in his adaptation of the next and last branch of the Cycle, the *Mort Artu*. The decisive factor in his approach to this work was his drastic simplification of the spiritual tangle in which the traditional story of Arthur had become involved. In the chronicles of Geoffrey of Monmouth and of Wace the downfall of Arthur's kingdom had no relation to any religious or moral doctrine: it was a typical epic story of the 'defence of a narrow place against odds'. But when in the second quarter of the thirteenth century French prose writers introduced it in the Arthurian Cycle and placed it immediately after the *Queste* they found it necessary to read a new meaning into it. The *Queste* condemned the Round Table in no uncertain terms: 'In this quest your knighthood will avail you nothing if the Holy Ghost does not open the way for you in all your adventures.' The knights destined to achieve the holy quest—li" *encerchemenz des grans secrez et des privetez Nostre Seignor*¹—were those who had hitherto had little or no part in the adventures of the Round Table: Galahad, Bors, and Perceval. The great heroes of Arthurian chivalry were disqualified either wholly, like Gawain, or partly, like Lancelot, who was permitted to enter the Grail castle, but not to see the Grail or even cross the threshold of the sanctuary. It was only natural, therefore, that the compilers of the Cycle should have imagined that in the end the Round Table perished because it had offended God. Thus a link was established between the religious teaching of the *Queste* and the events related in the *Mort Artu*. The issue was complicated rather than clarified by the addition of the 'wheel of Fortune' motif. To this the author of the *Mort Artu* gave considerable prominence. The idea of the relentless motion of the fatal wheel causing the downfall of those who rise too high—a christianized conception of *Fortuna*—had been common enough throughout the Middle Ages,² but it was quite distinct from the doctrine of the *Queste*. As, however, it provided an additional reason for the fall of Arthur it was

¹ 'The seeking out of the high secrets and hidden things of our Lord.'

² "On its diffusion see R. Patch, *The Goddess Fortune in Mediaeval Literature*, Harvard University Press, 1927. On the treatment of the theme in the *Mort Artu* see Jean Frappier, *Etude sur la Mortle Roi Artu*, pp. 258 ff.

tacked on to the story with the result that in the *Mort Artu* the disaster was interpreted partly as a retribution for the sins of Arthur's knights and partly as a sequel to their rise: 'Tel sont li orgueil terrien qu'il n'i a nul si haut assiz qu'il ne le conviegne cheoir de la poeste" del monde.'¹

Of this elaborate attempt to give the story of Arthur's death a spiritual background nothing of importance remains in Malory's version.² Despite the French Cycle he treats the *Queste* and the *Mort Artu* as self-contained works and suppresses every link between them.³ To understand his account of the tragedy of Lancelot and of the destruction of the Round Table it is enough to read his last two romances, *The Book of Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere* and the *Morte Arthur*—the only two that form together a coherent whole.⁴ The *Morte Arthur* is built round a theme which is suggested in the seemingly disconnected episodes of the *Book of Launcelot and Guinevere*: in the opening dialogue between Lancelot and Guinevere, in the story of the maid of Astolat, and in the adventure of the Knight of the Cart. On the familiar bright landscape with its smiling meadows, on the glittering armour of knights riding in search of adventure, dark and ominous shadows begin to fall. We no longer see Arthur's

¹ *La Mort le Roi Artu*, ed. Frappier, p. 201. Cf. also the editor's remark in his *Etude*, etc., p. 288: 'L'auteur a repris a sa facon l'idée de la fatalité antique: il ne pouvait guère l'envisager que dans les limites de la religion. Mais cette contrainte relative n'a peut-être pas nui à la richesse psychologique de son œuvre, car elle ajoute des nuances chrétiennes au vieux thème du Destin.'

² The description of the wheel of Fortune seen by Arthur in his dream is reproduced, but all comment is omitted, and no attempt is made to relate the symbolism of the wheel to Arthur's fate.

³ Mr. C. S. Lewis (loc. cit.) thinks that 'it is an essential part of the tragedy of Launcelot that he should be given the chance of escaping from this human level on which tragedy is foredoomed, and should have failed to take it'. This is probably true of the French Cycle, but there is no evidence that Malory held any such view or that he regarded Lancelot's return to Guinevere as a 'relapse'. Rightly or wrongly he refrained from relating the tragedy of Lancelot to his condemnation in the *Queste*, and the references to the *Tale of the Sanhgreal* in the opening paragraphs of the *Book of Launcelot and Guinevere* have no 'moral' significance.

⁴ This is partly the effect of Malory's choice and arrangement of the material he found in his sources. The *Book of Launcelot and Guinevere* is based on two French romances: the *Mort Artu*, and a still undiscovered version of the prose *Lancelot*. The *Morte Arthur* is derived partly from the French *Mort Artu* and partly from the English stanzaic *Le Morte Arthur*; but instead of using these two sources one after the other, Malory uses them simultaneously, with a degree of freedom and independence unparalleled in his earlier works.

companions perform endless feats of bravery; we hear less of their glorious record, of their ultimate reward. Lancelot is still the greatest of all knights; but with each new episode he seems to lose something of his early enthusiasm, of his faith in the glory of knight-errantry.¹ 'Do ye forthynke yourselff of youre dedis?' Guinevere asks him. There is a strange foreboding in these simple words. The last adventure in the *Book of Launcelot and Guinevere* shows Lancelot at the height of his knightly renown. Of all the knights of the Round Table he alone is privileged to heal the wounds of Sir Urry. But when the adventure is over, *Sir Launcelot wepte as he had bene a chyld that had bene betyn'. The peripety, the 'tragic reversal of fortunes', is now upon us.² It is brought to its climax in the terms of the traditional story of the downfall of Arthur's kingdom, reinterpreted and reshaped in accordance with Malory's own *sen*.³ Geoffrey of Monmouth had been the first to describe how Arthur, having subdued the peoples of the British Isles, was crowned in Caerleon upon Usk, how he then extended his sway to Norway, to Gaul, and to Rome, how during the Roman campaign his nephew Mordred started a rebellion, and how on his return to England Arthur fell in the final contest with the traitor. French prose writers had endeavoured to give this story a deeper significance by complicating both its narrative content and its motivation, and above all by linking it up with the spiritual doctrine of the Grail and with the symbolism of the 'wheel of Fortune'. Malory went further. Externally, his *Most Piteous Tale of the Morte Arthur Sanz Gwerdon* may seem to be a mere abridgement of the French

¹ There is a similar development in the *Mort Artu*, but it is treated as a consequence of Lancelot's experiences in the quest of the Grail. 'II n'ose pas recommencer au su de tous ses exploits chevaleresques ni se montrer publiquement soucieux de cette gloire mondaine si contraire a l'esprit de la Quite. Amour-propre, pudeur morale, scrupule religieux peut-etre, Lancelot eprouve a la fois tous ces sentiments' (Jean Frappier, *Etude sur la Mort le Rot Artu*, p. 230).

² E. K. Chambers, loc. cit.

³ In my monograph on Malory (Oxford, 1929) I took the view that Malory merely disengaged the dramatic curve from unnecessary ramifications and by so doing produced his *New Arthuriad' (pp. 95 ff.). This no longer seems to me to do him justice. Mere condensation of narrative is too mechanical a process to account for what appears to be, in the light of a more detailed study, the essential quality of his rendering. The difference between him and his predecessors is not in the *mature* alone; it lies predominantly in the *sen*.

Mort Artu, supplemented by drafts on the English stanzaic *Le Morte Arthur*; in actual fact it is a work of striking originality. Its dominating theme is neither a mere accident of warfare as in the Arthurian chronicles, nor a somewhat forced conclusion of a confused moral issue as in the French Cycle; it is primarily a conflict of two loyalties, both deeply rooted in the medieval conception of knightly service: on the one hand, the heroic loyalty of man to man, 'the mutual love of warriors who die together fighting against odds', a loyalty *more passionate and less ideal than our patriotism',¹ more sacred even than the ties of nature;² on the other, the blind devotion of the knight-lover to his lady, the romantic self-denial imposed by the courtly tradition and inseparable from any form of courtly romance. The clash between these conceptions of human love and service is neither an accident nor a caprice of destiny; it is inherent in the very structure of medieval idealism. And in Malory's rendering of the story of Arthur's death it brings about, for the first time in the history of the legend, a clear and convincing interplay of emotions, infinitely more significant than any encounter with chance.

This result is achieved by subtle, though simple, means. The essential *motif*—the breach of one sacred trust through a whole-hearted acceptance of another—was already implicit in the French *Mort Artu* and in the English *Le Morte Arthur*. But each of the two conflicting forces—the power of the love of man for man and the power of courtly devotion—had to be brought out more convincingly. It was not enough that in rescuing Guinevere Lancelot should have unwittingly killed Gawain's half-anonymous brothers as he does in Malory's sources; one of his victims had to be Gareth, the noble knight, who loved Lancelot 'bettir than all hys brethirn and the kynge bothe'.³ This is part of Malory's own narrative design, of a *sen* unknown to his models, as original as Lancelot's premonition of the coming disaster: 'And peradventure I shall there destroy som of my beste fryndis, and that shold moche repente me. And peradventure there be

¹ C. S. Lewis, *Allegory of Love*, p. 10.

² Cf. A. J. Carlyle, *Mediaeval Political Theory in the West*, vol. iii, p. 25.

³ *Infra*, p. 1185.

som, and they coude wel brynge it aboute, or disobeye my lord kyng Arthur, they wold sone come to me, the which I were loth to hurte.'¹ But Lancelot's duty is clear, even though 'that ys hard for to do'.² When the news is brought to Gawain that his brothers Gaheris and Gareth have been killed by Lancelot, he at first refuses to believe it. He is bound to Lancelot by ties of friendship and comradeship which have so far stood the hardest tests. He has forgiven him the deaths of Agravain, of Florens, and of Lovell, even though Arthur had told him that he had 'no cause to love Lancelot'. But when he knows for certain that his two beloved brothers, Gaheris and Gareth, are dead he makes a vow upon which eventually the fortunes of the whole of Arthur's kingdom will break: 'From thys day forewarde I shall never fayle sir Launcelot untyll that one of us have slayne the othir.'³ The fratricidal struggle then begins, with each opponent keenly conscious of his profound attachment to the other. 'I requyre and beseche you', says Lancelot,⁴ 'syttyn that I am thus requyred and conjoured to ryde into the fylde, that neyther you, my lorde kyng Arthur, nother you, sir Gawayne, com nat into the fylde.' And when he is forced to fight his dearest friend, Gawain, to throw him off his horse and wound him, he still refuses to put him to death, for it is shame 'to smite a wounded man that may not stand'.⁵ But the harm is done. Gawain dies of his old wound, repenting on his death-bed of his 'hastiness and wilfulness': 'For I am smyten upon the old wounde the whiche sir Launcelot gave me, on the which I fele well I muste dye. And had sir Launcelot bene with you, as he was, this unhappy werre had never begonne, and of all thys I am causer.' The 'unhappy war' is not at an end, and the 'piteous tale' goes on until the Round Table becomes a mere memory. Early in the day Arthur knows that disaster is at hand: 'Wyte you wel, my herte was never so hevy as hit ys now. And much more I am

¹ *Infra*, p. 1172.

² *Infra*, p. 1173.

³ *Infra*, p. 1186.

⁴ There is no counterpart to this speech in Malory's sources.

⁵ The reason given in the French *Mort Artu* is slightly different: 'De ce est Lancelos trop dolenz, car il ne volsist en nule maniere que mesaire Gauvains moreust par lui; car il l'avoit tant esprouve qu'il ne cuidoit pas au matin qu'il etlst en li tant de proesce comme il i avoit le jor trovee; et ce fu li hom del monde qui plus ama bons chevaliers que Lancelos' (ed. Frappier, pp. 176-7).

soryar for my good knyghtes losse than for the losse of my fayre queen; for quenys I myght have inow, but such felyship of good knyghtes shall never be togydirs in no company.' Only Malory's Arthur can say with such characteristic abruptness, 'quenys I myght have inow'; but perhaps for this very reason only Malory's Arthur can gauge the full depth of his grief at the destruction of his fellowship, the equal of which has not been seen in any Christian land, and the significance of his own defeat by the traitor Mordred in that last of all battles when 'of all the good knights are left no more alive but two', and a hundred thousand lie dead upon the down. The action which leads to this ending is swift, inevitable, relentless; the tragic circle of fear and pity is complete. And the aftermath brings home the profound humanity of it. When Lancelot comes to avenge the King and the Queen he finds that the Queen has retired from the world. To share her fate he becomes a hermit; not for the love of God, but for the love of the Queen: 'And therefore, lady, sithen you have taken you to perfection I must needs take me to perfection of right.' A year later he is allowed to bury her. And although it may be as a hermit that at first 'he wepte not gretelye, but syghed', it is as her faithful lover that 'when she was put in the erth syr Launcelot swouned and laye longe style'. To the hermit who reproves him for thus displeasing God he replies:

'My sorow may never have ende, for whan I remembre of his beaulte and of hir noblesse that was bothe wyth hyr Kyng and wyth hyr, so whan I sawe his corps and hir corps so lye togyders, truly myn herte wold not serve to susteyne my careful body. Also whan I remembre me how by my defaute and myn orgule and my pryde that they were bothe layed ful lowe that were pereles that ever was lyvyng of Cristen people, wyt you wel,' sayd syr Launcelot, 'this remembred of there kyndenes and myn unkyndenes sanke so to myn herte that I myght not susteyne myself.'

He repents not of the sins he has committed against God, but of the griefs he has caused his lady and King Arthur. And so there is no relief to his pain: 'Ever he was lyeng groveling on the tombe of kyng Arthur and queen Guenever, and there was no comforte that the bysshop nor syr Bors nor none of his felowes coude make hym, it avaylled not.' Death

alone brings him comfort, and as he lay on his death-bed it seemed as though 'he had smyled, and the sweetest savour aboute hym\ In the earlier scene of Arthur's last farewell there is the same sense of unrelieved loneliness. ' Comfort thyself, Arthur says to Bedwere, 'and doo as wel as thou mayst, for in me is no truste for to truste in. For I wyl to the vale of Avylyon to hele me of my grievous wounds.' There is no remedy for Arthur's wounds, and no truth in the belief in his eventual return. 'I wyl not say that it shal be so.' And when night falls on the plain of Salisbury there is no 'trust left to trust in', no comfort to be found in religious explanations; all doctrine shrivels before the conflict of 'two goods' and the desolation it brings. It is not through sin or weakness of heart that this comes about, but through the devotion of the truest friend and the truest lover, through a tragic greatness which fixes for ever the complex and delicate meaning of Arthur's epic. And in the noble close of Malory's final chapter, in the threnody of Hector over Lancelot's dead body, the pure and passionate chord is struck again, enriched and sustained by harmonies unknown to lesser writers: 'Thou, sir Launcelot, there thou lvest, that thou were never matched of erthely knyghtes handel And thou were the curtest knyght that ever bare shelde, and thou were the truest frende to thy lover that ever bestrade hors, and thou were the trewest lover of a synful man that ever loved woman, and thou were the kyndest man that ever strake wyth swerde.'

CHAPTER IV

THE METHOD OF EDITING

i. *The Texts*

FOR four and a half centuries the nearest any reader could get to Malory's text was Caxton's edition 'enprynted and fynnysshed in thabbey of Westmestre the last day of Juyl the yere of our Lord MCCCCLXXXV'. The edition was based on a 'cotype' which Sir Thomas Malory had 'taken out of certeyn bookes of Frensshe and reduced into Englysshe'. In his Preface, where this remark occurs, Caxton does not say that he received the 'cotype' direct from Malory, and the chronological gap between Malory's death in 1471 and the publication of the work in 1485 would seem to suggest that he did not. Nor does it follow from Caxton's statement that the 'cotype' he used was Malory's original manuscript. But as until recently no manuscript of Malory has been known to exist, all the editions published from the fifteenth century to the present day had to depend either directly or indirectly on Caxton's. Their history is uneventful. Only two copies of Caxton's print are extant: one in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York, the other, wanting eleven leaves,¹ in the John Rylands Library in Manchester. Each of these, however, represents a slightly different 'state' of the text: corrections at Caxton's printing house were not limited to proofs, but were made in the formes after printing off had begun, with the result that in the two extant copies of the *Morte Darthur* there are four folios in which conflicting readings occur in practically every line.² In addition to this, there are thirty-two minor variants elsewhere, mostly in small batches. It was some such 'state' of the work that Caxton's disciple and successor Wynkyn de Worde used for his 1498 edition of the *Booke of the Noble Kyng, Kyng Arthur*. In 1529 he issued another, which was used by the two subsequent editors, William Copland (1557) and

¹ Sig. li, rvi, rvii, Nii, Nvii, Tiiij, Tv, eeiij-vi. These have been replaced by Whittaker's somewhat imperfect facsimiles. See *Bibliography*.

* For a fuller account of the problem see *Bibliography*.

Thomas East (c. 1585). A 'newly refined' version of Thomas East's text appeared in 1634 at William Stansby's press. This was the last of the black-letter editions, and in spite of its obvious remoteness from the original it held the field until the second half of the last century¹ as 'the latest of the old prints', 'with the sprinkling of obsolete words, not sufficiently numerous to be embarrassing'.² A radical change in editorial practice was made in 1868 by Edward Strachey.³ Realizing that 'nothing could justify the reprinting of the most corrupt of all the old editions when the first and the best was within reach', he went back to Caxton, and his example was soon followed by H. Oskar Sommer. The word-for-word reprint of the Rylands (then Spencer) copy which appeared in Sommer's monumental work on the *Morte "uarthur* (1889—90) has since been used by the vast majority of Malory's editors.⁴ Their return to Caxton was certainly welcome in that it helped to remove from the text the alterations introduced by Wynkyn de Worde and his successors. But the text still provided no answer to these vital questions: How different was Caxton's 'cotype' from Malory's? And how far did Caxton alter it when he prepared it for the press?

Such was the position until 23 July 1934 when Mr. W. F. Oakeshott announced in *The Times* the discovery of a hitherto unidentified paper manuscript of Malory's writings belonging to the Fellows* Library of Winchester College. In an article published a month later (*The Times*, 27 August 1934) Mr. Oakeshott stated that the manuscript contained no indication of early ownership, its binding being comparatively modern, that the 1630 catalogue of the college library made no mention of it, and that the first entry was found in the catalogue of 1839. Palaeographical evidence suggested, however, that the manuscript was roughly contemporary with Caxton's edition, if not a little earlier. As our facsimiles show, it is in the handwriting of two different scribes.⁵ The

¹ The only exception is Southey's edition (1817) based partly on Caxton and partly on Wynkyn de Worde.

² Cf. *La Mort d'Arthure*, etc., ed. Thomas Wright (1856 and 1866), Introduction.

³ *Morte Darthur*, &c, ed. Edward Strachey, p. xxxiv.

* A reprint of Wynkyn de Worde's first edition was published by the Shakespeare Head Press in 1933.

* Mr. Oakeshott has pointed out (*The Times Literary Supplement*, 27 September

finer of the two hands (see Facsimile 2) is similar to that from which some English type of the late fifteenth century was designed*¹ Both hands show affinities with the Chancery hand of the period,² and one of the watermarks is identical in design and almost identical in size with that on a document dated 1475.³ More important still is the fact that while the manuscript is neither Malory's own 'copy' nor the one used by Caxton, it is at least as reliable as Caxton's text and quite independent of it.⁴ It supplies some of Caxton's obvious omissions, particularly in the *Tale of Arthur and Lucius*⁵ and often agrees with Malory's sources where Caxton is at variance with them*⁵ On the other hand, there are numerous readings in Caxton which, on the evidence of Malory's sources, appear to be more authentic than the corresponding readings in the Winchester MS.⁶ The two texts are, then, collateral versions of a common original, and each contains at least some elements of it which are not otherwise extant. Thus Malory's '*bole of the tree*' becomes *body* in the Winchester MS. and *hoole* in Caxton;⁷ of the phrase *launcis and sferes* the former preserves *launch*, the latter *speres*;⁸ and *a ryver that hyght Mortays* (Tiaue grant que on apeloit

1934) that 'hand A was probably in charge of this job, for in two instances he has started off hand B on a new book, and hand B has taken over after six lines or so'. The two instances are ff. 35^r (Facsimile 3) and 45^r. Facsimile 1 (facing p. xiv) is another example of hand B. Apart from ff. 35^r and 45^r the text is divided between the two hands as follows: ff. 9^r-44^v, i9i^v-229^r, 349^r-484^v are in hand A, ff. 45[^]-191*, 229^r-346^r in hand B. Ff. 1-8, 32-3, 347-8, and 485-492 are missing.

¹ e.g. that used by Machlinia in London about 1486. Cf. W. F. Oakeshott, 'Caxton and Malory's Morte Darthur', *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch*, 1935, pp. 113-14.

² This has been established by J. A. Collins (of. *Times Lit. Sup.*, loc. cit.), who also read a phrase in blind scratches twice repeated at the top of one page as 'Know all men by these presents'. It seems likely that the manuscript came from a scriptorium where legal documents were familiar.

³ Cf. *The Times*, 27 August 1934. Another detail of some interest is that a vellum fragment used to repair a tear in the manuscript has on the gummed side part of an indulgence granted by Innocent VIII in 1489 and printed by Caxton. This suggests that the manuscript was at one time, probably somewhere about 1500, in the hands of a London binder.

⁴ See my article on 'Malory's Morte Darthur in the Light of a Recent Discovery' in the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, vol. lxix, No. 2, July 1935.

⁵ Cf. *supra*, p. xxiv. In my critical apparatus Cs readings inconsistent with the evidence supplied by Malory's sources are marked with a dagger (Cf).

⁶ For examples see, in my critical apparatus, any of the readings introduced by the sign C* and followed by references to Malory's sources.

⁷ Cf. *infra*, p. 255, line 7.

⁸ Cf. *infra*, p. 229, line 17.

In the beginning of Arthur. For he was chosen King
 by adventure and by grace for the moste pty of the barons. And nat he was
 Eithur Wendragon son. But as ther was made hit openly. And nat
 yet many kynge and lordis sholde hym grete wyse for that cause. And nat
 Arthur on com hem all the moste pty dayes of his lyff he was ruled by y conncile
 of ther was. So hit felle on a tyme King Arthur sende unto ayalion ayn la
 idones. Woll let me have no wiste hit. And nat I myghte take a wyff. I wolle none
 take hit by thy conncile and adice. But ye well done sende ther was that
 ye take a wyff. For a man of yowre bonite and nobles sholde
 not be wthoute a wyff. & low is y any seide. And nat you that
 ye love more than a noy. ye seide King Arthur. I love Gwe
 nyvere the kyngs daughter of lodegrian of p^rlonde of Cam
 berde the wyf of goldyng. In this cause the table rounde that ye
 tolde me he had hit of my fadir. Utter. And the daimessell is the
 moste valyante and fayrest that I knowe bydyng or yet that I
 I conde fynde. Sentis seide. And nat you as off her beaute and fayre
 nesse she is one of the fayrest on hye. But and ye loved her not
 so well as ye do I sholde fynde you a daimessell of beaute and
 of goodnesse that sholde byde you and please you and yowre
 herte were nat sette. But toware as mannes herte is sette
 he wolle be lott to retorne. that is trouth the seide King Arthur.
 And nat you warned the kyng covertly that Gweinyver was nat
 golson for hym to take to wyff. For he warned hym that lare
 celot sholde love her and seke hym a gayne. And so he turned his
 tale to the adventures of the Sankyreal. And nat he desired of
 the kyng for to have men wth hym p^r sholde enquire of Gweinyver
 and so the kyng granted hym and so. And nat you wente forth
 unto King lodegrian of Camberde and tolde hym of the desire
 of the kyng p^r he wolde have unto this wyff. Gweinyver this doug
 that is to me seide King lodegrian the beste tydyng that
 I have. that so worthy a kyng of probesse and noblesse wolde
 my doug. And as for my lordis I wolde geff her hym yf I wyse

Marcoise') becomes *a ryver and an mortays* in the manuscript and *a ryuer and an hyhe montayn* in the printed text.¹

There is reason to believe, however, that neither Caxton nor the Winchester scribes had access to the original form of Malory's work. The following sentence in Caxton—totally unintelligible as it stands, but reproduced without comment by all modern editors—should suffice to prove this:

And the mean whyle word came vnto sir Launcelot and to sir Trystram that sire Carados the myghty kynge that was made lyke a gyaunt that fought with sir Gawayn and gaf hym suche strokes that he swouned in his sadel (VIII. 28).

This reading is the result of two mistranscriptions: the words *made lyke a gyaunt that* are clearly a corruption of some such phrase as *made lyke a gyaunt whyght* (or *whycht*); some early scribe, mistaking the final t for e, made *whyght* (or *whycht*) into *whyche*, and a later redactor, probably Caxton himself, changed *whyche* to *that*. The first of these two errors is found in the Winchester MS.; hence it must have occurred in the common source of our texts, and this source (X) could not, therefore, have been Malory's own manuscript.

The same conclusion is suggested by the remarkable story of Maris de la Roche who after being killed in battle reappears unscathed. 'Sir Lucas', writes the Winchester scribe, 'saw kynge Angwysshaunce that nyght had slayne Maris de la Roche.' Finding some such remark in his original, Caxton, in an attempt to improve its grammar, replaced *nyght* by *late* and printed: 'Thenne lucas sawe kyng Agwysaunce that late hadde slayne Morys de la roche.'² Malory's reading was obviously *nyghe* ('almost'),³ mistaken for *nyght* by one of his copyists. This error, like *gyaunt whyche*, was, then, one of the features which distinguished the common source of C and W from the primitive text. The following stemma would account for the filiation of variants in both these cases:

¹ Cf. *infra*, p. 934, line 27.

² Book I, ch. 15.

³ In Malory's French source Maris is nearly killed, but escapes thanks to the timely assistance of Lucas the Butler. Cf. *Commentary*, note 30.,.

Malory: *nyghe*; *whyght* (or *whycht*)

X: *nyght*; *whyche*

W: *nyght*; *C*: *late*;
whyche *that*

Needless to say, the straight lines connecting *X* and *W* on one side and *X* and *C* on the other do not imply that *X* was the *immediate* model of either *C* or *W*. There is, in fact, good reason to believe that it was not. A number of passages in *W*, such as the one analysed on p. xcvi, can only be accounted for as a result of two or more successive scribal errors. When, for instance, the two texts offer these two readings:

C(=X)

anon sire Tristram *redde them and*
wete ye well he was gladdfor theryn
was many a pyteous complaynte
Thenne sir Tristram said lady Bran-
gwayne ye shalle ryde with me

W

anone seyde lady dame Bran-
gwayne ye shall ryde with me

the discrepancy between them can best be explained if two successive transcriptions are assumed: one in which the recurrence of *sire Tristram* caused the omission of the italicized words, and the other in which *anon sire Tristram said* was contracted to *anon said*,¹ As the second of these errors swept away the very words which had caused the first, the two could not have occurred simultaneously. Hence the first error belongs neither to *X* nor to *W* but to some state of the text (*Y*) intermediate between the two.

There are equally strong grounds for assuming at least one intermediary between *X* and *C*. In the episode of the 'dolorous stroke' *C* describes the collapse of King Pellam's castle in very strange terms: the castle, we are told, 'that was fall doune through that dolorous stroke lay vpon Pellam and balyn for thre dayes'. *C* then remarks that at the end of the third day Pellam still suffered from some

¹ This type of error, induced by the recurrence of the initial letter, only occurs between words standing close to each other. It could not have occurred until *sire* and *said* had been brought close together by the omission of the italicized words.

minor injuries while Balin recovered. This incredible story, like so many of C's incoherences, has reappeared in all the modern editions of the *Morte Darthur*, and no editor or critic has so far questioned its cogency. Fortunately, with the aid of W) we can discover what Malory—and X—really wrote. *For the moste party of that castell*^ writes W, *was dede thorow the dolorouse stroke, Ryght so lay kynge Pellam and Balyne three dayes*. In other words, Pellam and Balin did not lie buried under the castle, but were injured by its fall and lay wounded for three days. To make this simple statement into C's preposterous account at least two, possibly three, successive copyists must have been at work. Thus the same scribe may have omitted the words *Ryght so* and inserted *upon* between *lay* and *kynge Pellam*; but it was not until this was done that some grammatically minded reviser, probably Caxton himself, could have wished to make the previous sentence into a subordinate clause by adding *that* after *castell*. We must, then, assume at least three stages of transcription:

X:... castell was dede thorow the dolorouse stroke *Ryght so lay kynge Pellam*
Z: . . . castell was dede thorow the dolorouse stroke lay upon kynge Pellam
C:... castell *that* was fall doune through that dolorous stroke lay upon Pellam

Z and Y may, for all we know, each represent several states of the text along the lines connecting X with W and X with C respectively. With this qualification the foregoing conclusions may be graphically expressed thus:

Malory

X

W

C

2. *The Principles of Reconstruction*

Since the primary aim of any critical edition is a text which would approach as closely as the extant material allows to the original form of the work, the real question before us is how far the material now available for the study of Malory's text will allow us to go in this direction. It stands to reason that whatever is common to *C* and *W* can and must be credited to *X*, but *X* is not, after all, Malory's own text, and even if we were content to edit *X* instead of Malory, we should still have to decide what we should do with the numerous passages in which its two derivatives differ.

The problem is similar to that which confronts a critic attempting to edit a text from two different families of manuscripts—a common, if distressing, occurrence in textual criticism. The traditional method consists in selecting from each of the two texts or groups of texts the 'best' readings they can offer so as to produce what is often inappropriately called a 'critical' text. Admittedly the value of such a text depends on the clear understanding that what is 'best' is not what seems best to the critic, but what is attributable to the author. And it so happens that it is not humanly possible for any critic, however cautious and competent, to maintain this distinction. For the more he is bent on his task, the less he can conceive of himself and the author as two distinct individuals whose ways of thinking and writing are inevitably unlike, who are both liable to err, each in his own unaccountable way, just as they are capable of choosing two equally 'good', but conflicting, forms of expression. There may be various degrees of skill in the handling of the situation, and various degrees of accuracy in the results; but the procedure proves in the end just as disastrous in the case of, say, Wendelin Foerster compiling from several manuscripts, with his unique knowledge of twelfth-century French, a composite and totally unreal text of Chrestien de Troyes, as it did in the case of Pope who took from the various Quartos any readings which pleased him and inserted them into his edition of Shakespeare; for the fault lies not with individual editors, but with certain habits of mind inseparable **from** any practical application of the method, habits which

broadly speaking amount to the belief that whatever satisfies one's taste and judgement must be 'good', and that whatever is 'good' belongs to the author.

The growing realization of this inevitable fallacy has induced some of the leading scholars of our time to adopt a totally sceptical attitude towards any attempt at editing and indeed to condemn any critical treatment of manuscript material beyond a mere reproduction of the extant tradition or of one of its representatives. The reaction has been a beneficial one in that it has helped to save a number of texts from unwelcome interference. But its real importance lies in the fact that it suggests a different attitude to criticism and imposes new and vital tasks upon the critic. The line of least resistance in textual studies is to declare a reading corrupt and substitute one's own. Refusal to emend the extant tradition on mere grounds of preference carries with it the obligation to spare no effort in interpreting each unemended reading. Now interpretation may mean two things: the elucidation of what is there, and the explanation of how it came to be what it is. And should what is there defeat all attempts at understanding, it might still be possible to explain how it came about, in other words, to detail the processes which have produced it. The problem of editing, far from being brushed away as it often is by the less thoughtful followers of the 'Conservative' school, would then arise in a new form. Instead of the unanswerable question, 'What is the author, as we know him, likely to have said?' we should ask ourselves, in the first place, 'What does the extant reading mean?' and if no satisfactory answer is forthcoming, go on to ask: 'Can it be shown to be a scribal error?' Answers to this last question may not, and most probably will not, yield a complete reconstruction of any single text preserved in copied manuscripts; but only such answers can serve the true purpose of textual criticism: they alone can lessen the damage done to the text by its copyists and so produce a result similar to that recognized as the aim of restoration in the realm of the fine arts, namely a *partial* reconstruction of the lost original from what is extant. Our task so defined may appear to be unduly limited. It may be more pleasing to the mind to aim higher, more tempting

to borrow **the** author's pen and profess to speak for him. But as long as our respect for the work is greater than our power of guessing the truth, we can but adopt the humbler course.

(a) *Textual evidence (IT)*

To the question, 'Can this reading be shown to be a scribal error?' there is often no answer, for there is no general rule as to how a scribe should behave in any given circumstances, and the most important type of scribal error is the unaccountable one, that which occurs through one word coming into a scribe's mind and being written down in place of another. But there are, on the other hand, 'definable' and, consequently, emendable errors—those which are typical of the process of copying as distinct from that of original writing. The reading of the text, the passage of the eye from the text to the copy, and the passage of the eye from the copy back to the text—these are the actions which constitute the technique of copying, and emendable errors are those which occur as a result of their imperfect performance. In an empirical fashion such errors have long been known to critics; but they cannot be properly dealt with, and sometimes cannot even be recognized, without a clear understanding of their nature and origin.¹

Reading of the text. A scribe may either inadvertently or deliberately misread his text. Examples of unintentional misreadings have been quoted in another connexion in the previous section of this chapter (*nyght* for *nyghe* and *whyche* for *whyght*). Mistaken contractions account for such misspellings of proper names as *Barcias* for *Bracias* (in C) and *Traqyn* for *Tarquyn* (in W), while failure to notice a contraction in a manuscript no doubt explains C's utterly unintelligible remark in Book XX, ch. 7: 'the lawe was suche in the dayes that what someuer they were of what estate or degree yf they were fonde gylty of treson there shold be none other remedy but dethe and *outhur the men or the takynge with the dede* shold be causer of their hasty Iugement.'

¹ For a more detailed analysis see my 'Principles of Textual Emendation' in *Studies in French Language and Literature presented to Professor M. K. Pope*, Manchester, 1939, pp. 351-69.

The original reading was, of course, not *men*, but *menour* (= behaviour), as in W.¹

The Winchester scribes copy their text mechanically and seldom, if ever, attempt to correct it. Caxtoh, on the other hand, is an editor rather than a scribe. He often tries to improve on his original where the latter seems to him to be deficient, although, as has already been shown, Re is rather apt to be content with a mere appearance of sense.² His more sweeping corrections are prompted either by his sense of editorial economy or by his general conception of the form and structure of the book (v. *supra*, pp. xxix—xxxiii) or occasionally by his peculiar moral bias. The curiously expurgated version of the oath taken by Arthur's knights may be an example of this last variety:³

W

and allwayes to do ladyes, damesels,
and jantilwomen and wydowes
[socour]: strengthe hem in hir
ryghtes, and never to enforce them
uppon payne of dethe

C

and alweyes to doo ladyes,
damoyseles and gentylwym-
men socour vpon payne of
dethe

From the copy to the text. After writing down a word or a group of words (sometimes only a letter or a group of letters) the scribe has to go back to the original and find the 'right place'. To do this he must carry in his mind the last letter, word, or words he has written down, or sometimes the letter or word that he has to copy next. If, as is often the case, the word or letter he is looking for occurs more than once within a comparatively small space, he may easily pick up his text at some later point and omit the intervening matter. In W such omissions (*sauts du mime au meme* or *homoeoteleutd*) occur at the slightest provocation: sometimes the mere recurrence of the final *e* is sufficient to cause them. In the extract from W quoted at the end of the previous paragraph the recurrence of the initial *s* in two neighbouring words—*socour strengthe*—caused the disappearance of the first. Nor is it necessary that the recurrent element should be a word or

¹ v. *infra*, p. 1174.

^a His attempt to 'correct' the description of the death of Maris de la Roche (v. *supra*, p. lxxxix) is an instance in point.

³ v. *infra*, p. 120.

a letter. It may be any feature of the text that the scribe happens to use as a *point de repère*. He may, for example, remember that to find the right place he must look for the beginning or the end of a line, or he may have a rough recollection of having copied say half or three-quarters of a line and look for the remaining half or quarter as the case may be. He would then be in danger of omitting a passage equal in length to one or several complete lines of his original.¹ In *C homoeoteleuta* are not only less frequent, but less easily detectable than in *W*, and therefore more treacherous. *C*'s remark that 'syre Bellangere reuenged the deth of his fader Alysaunder and syr *Tristram slewe Kynge Marke*' has so far been taken on its face value, and critics, including myself,² have tried to reconcile it with the traditional prose version of the Tristan story by making 'syr Tristram' the direct object of 'slewe'—an ingenious, but highly unsatisfactory interpretation. The real explanation is found in the corresponding place in *W*: 'Sir Bellyngere revenged the dethe of hys fadir sir Alysaundir and sir Trystram, for *he* (i.e. Sir Bellyngere) slewe kynge Marke', Misled by the close resemblance between the *f* of *for* and the long *s* (*f*) of *slewe*, the printer's eye must have travelled straight from *Trystram* to *slewe*, and the vital words *for he* were lost in the process.³

The recurrence of similar or identical elements within a comparatively short space may cause yet another type of error. This may be described by the formula $MN O NP > M N O N O N P$. Having copied *M N O* the scribe would return to the first *N* instead of going on to the second, and in this way would duplicate *N O*. A curious instance of a duplication complicated by a *homoeoteleuton* occurs in the following extract from the *Tale of the Sankgreall* (the duplicated passage is reproduced in italics, and the passage affected by the *homoeoteleuton* in square brackets):

And there kynge Hurlaine was discomfite and hys men slayne. And he was aferde to be dede and fledde to thys shippe. And there founde this swerde and drew hit, and cam oute and founde kynge

¹ Cf. *infra*, p. 76, line 19.

² Cf. my *Roman de Tristan et Iseut dans l'œuvre de Thomas Malory*, p. 220.

³ By the same process 'Joseph[e], the son of Joseph of Arimathea' has become in *C* 'Joseph of Arimathea' (Book XVII, ch. 22; v. *infra*, p. 1034, line 33).

Labor, the man of the worlde of all Crystyn in whom there is the grettist faythe. And whan kynge Hurlaine was *discomfite and hys menne slayne and he was aferde to be dede and fiedde to thys shippe and there founde thys swerde and drew hit and* [cam oute . . . And whan kynge Hurlaine saw kynge Labor he dressid this swerde and] smote hym upon the helme.¹

The scribe's eye may occasionally wander off the line and so bring into the copy parasitic elements from any neighbouring part of the original, thus producing what may be called *contamination*. The strange remark in *W* to the effect that 'sir Bagdemagus tyll another tyme was wondirly wrothe that sir Tor was avaunced afore hym'² is an example of such an error: it is due to the fact that four lines above King Arthur declares that he will 'leve sir Bagdemagus tyll anothir tyme'. Similarly in the question put to Lancelot by the people of the castle of Corbenic—'Why have ye sene?'—the scribe substituted *Why* for *What* because the previous paragraph, which accidentally came into his field of vision, began with the words: 'Why have ye awaked me?'³ Sometimes—though comparatively rarely—contamination may result from a purely mental confusion, as in the compound *corealme*—a mixture of *country* and *realme*.⁴

From the text to the copy. Part of the process of transcription consists in transmitting from the mind to the hand each word and letter of the text. A slight acceleration in the movement of the hand or a slight slowing down of the transmission can easily upset their co-ordination and produce what is known as *dittography*; a letter, a syllable, or a word, or even a whole group of words, would then appear twice in the copy. Conversely, a slowing down of the movement of the hand or an acceleration in the transmission may cause part of the text to drop out. The omission of monosyllabic words, frequent in *W*, is a good example of this variety of *arrhythmia*.⁵

Combined errors. Most editors tacitly—perhaps unconsciously—assume that if they are dealing with one manuscript they are concerned with one scribe only. In reality, however,

¹ i p. 987.

² 3 p. 1017.

³ Cf., in this volume, pp. 33₁₆, 138²₇, 277,, 278_{1t}, 281_{ie}, 285,, 326,, 339«» 360₇, 406₁₃, 408_{1?} 4ii₁₇.

917.16

* pp. 131-2.

⁴ P. 866.

most of the manuscripts which have come down to us from medieval times were copied not from the originals but from earlier copies, and contain therefore numerous readings resulting from two or more successive mistranscriptions of the same passage. The discovery of such readings or 'combined errors' has already helped us to establish the degree of proximity of our two texts to Malory's original manuscript. But it can also help us to establish the text. An instructive example, with which I have dealt at some length elsewhere,¹ occurs in one of the early sections of Malory's *Book of Sir Tristram*, Blamor, having been defeated by Tristram, says that he prefers death to dishonour and asks Tristram to kill him. Tristram appeals against this request to the kings who act as judges. The kings, however, refer him to Blamor's brother, Bleoberis who, much to their dismay, declares that Blamor must die. In *W* his reply is as follows:

My lordys seyde sir Bleoberys thoughe my brother be beatyn and have the worse in his body thorow myght of armys he hath nat beatyn his hearte.

In *C* the same speech reads thus:

My lordes said Bleoberys though my broder be beten and hath the wers thorow myghte of armes I dare saye though syre Trystram hath beten his body he hath not beten his herte.

If we place the two readings side by side *his body* will appear in *W* roughly a line above the same words in *C*, and most of the intervening matter will be found missing in *W*. This suggests that originally *his body* occurred twice (once as in *W* and again as in *C*) and that its recurrence caused a *homoeoteleutoty* i.e. the omission of the words *thorow myght of armys I dare saye though syre Trystram hath beten his body*. How, then, is it that the first four of these—*thorow myght of armys*—still occur in *W*? The only reasonable explanation seems to be that at the time when the *homoeoteleuton* occurred they stood outside its sphere of action, and that the reading of *X* was: . . . the worse thorow myght of armys in his body / *dare saye though syre Trystram hath beten his body*, &c.

In the next copy the italicized words dropped out, but it was not until the third stage of transcription that the order of

¹ *Principles of Textual Emendation*, pp. 363-4.

words could have been changed and the two phrases, *thorow myght of armys* and *in his body*, placed in reverse order, as in W. In C, on the other hand, the original reading appears to be intact except for the omission of 'in his body' before '/dare'—another case of *a sautdu meme au meme*. The real interest of this example lies in the fact that neither C nor W offers here any apparent difficulty: both "seem to give readings which any 'rational' critic would accept without a murmur, but which on our present showing turn out to be corrupt.

All the processes outlined above may in the course of the transmission of a text contribute to 'combined errors'. These may either be distributed over two or more successive copies as in the example just given, or occur simultaneously in one. In the former case their discovery supplies the missing links in the evolution of variants: sometimes a *homoeoteleuton* can only be traced if the 'key-word', lost at some subsequent stage of transcription, is restored to its proper place; or again, a hopelessly corrupt reading may turn out to be the result of a 'duplication' superimposed upon a *homoeoteleuton** More obvious but no less vital are the 'simultaneous' combined errors such as the curious omission of the direct object in W's remark: *the Pope called unto hym a noble clerke . . . and the Pope gaff undir leade and sente hem unto the kynge*.¹ Here a plural noun is clearly missing after *gaff*, but it can be restored once it is realized that in fifteenth-century manuscripts the word *bulles*, written with a stroke across the two /'s and an abbreviated *es*, looked very much like *buff* and was therefore apt to be omitted by any copyist after a word ending in *ff*. To make *gaff bulles undir* (or, as in C, *gaff hym bulles undir*) into *gaff undir* the scribe had to commit an 'unconscious misreading' and a *homoeoteleuton*, and both these errors must have occurred simultaneously.

(b) External evidence (F)

The preceding observations apply to almost any text preserved in copied manuscripts. But Malory's works offer yet another, much less common, approach to the problem. Among the great prose writers of all time he is perhaps the

¹v. *infra*, p. 1194.

one who 'invented' least. He may sometimes disagree with the very spirit of his 'French books', alter their character and purpose, and introduce an atmosphere and a manner of his own; for all that, the greater part of his narrative is made of the material 'drawn briefly out of French'. In so far as this material is extant, it can, therefore, provide useful clues; for, barring accident, whatever either of our two texts has in common with the French must have reached it through Malory and can be safely ascribed to him. The following examples are among the simplest cases of this kind:

C	W	F (Malory's source)
(the asterisk denotes the correct reading)		
*he shotte hym thorou the sholder <i>with an arovo</i>	he shotte hym thorow the sholdir ¹	cil le fiert <i>d'une saiette</i> envenimee
*toke his <i>hors</i> aboue the hede	toke hys swerde ² *abovyn the <i>bed</i> ³	vient a son <i>chevalet</i> monte en milieu du <i>lit</i>
I am passyng heuy for your sake For ye wil not byleue that swerd shall be youre destruction	*I am passynge hevy for youre sake for <i>and ye woll</i> <i>not lewe</i> that swerde hit shall be youre destruccion*	Et je vous di fait elle que <i>se vous Vemportds</i> qu'il vous en mal averra

The more closely Malory follows his source the more often such cases appear in our texts and the easier it becomes to use the evidence of *F*. Nor can it be said that *F* merely confirms the validity of readings which would be recognized as genuine on other grounds: indeed the choice it suggests is sometimes contrary to most critics' 'rational' preference. In describing preparations for a tournament *C* remarks (Book VI, ch. 6) that *there were scaffoldis and holes that lordes and ladyes myghte beholde*. This has usually been taken as a hopelessly corrupt passage, and when Mr. Oakeshott first disclosed some of the features of the Winchester MS. he claimed to have found the correct reading of it: *scaffoldis and towrys* instead of *scaffoldis and holes*.⁵ *Towrys* may indeed seem preferable to *holes* in this context, although on further reflection the building of towers for the benefit of spectators at a tournament would probably strike the reader as an odd

¹ v. *infra*, p. 433.

² v. *infra*, p. 1004.

³ v. *infra*, p. 990.

⁴ v. *infra*, p. 64. As a result of the substitution of *ye wil not byleue* for *and ye woll not lewe* the sense of the speech has undergone a radical change. In *W* the damsel expresses her concern about Balin (*hevy* = worried) because unless he abandons his sword it will cause his death; in *C* she is displeased with him (*hevy* = angry) because he refuses to believe that the sword can do him any harm.

⁵ The Text of Malory*, *Times Literary Supplement*, 27 September 1934.

proceeding. All 'rational* conjectures as to this, however, are made unnecessary by the reading found in *F*, The French prose writer states that on the occasion of the tournament stands were erected and windows (*fenestres*) made (presumably in the woodwork) so as to enable the ladies to watch the fighting: *Celui jour firent li doy roy drechier loges en mi les pres, ou il avoit fenestres as dames et as damoiseles*.¹ That *C*'s *holes* is Malory's rendering of *fenestres* is evident; and this is confirmed by the fact that the *Catholicon Anglicon* gives *holes* as an equivalent of *fenestra*. The seemingly corrupt reading thus turns out to be Malory's, and the seemingly 'better' one a corruption.

But the formulae $C+F = M$ (Malory) and $W+F == M$ are subject to one important qualification: they cannot be applied where there is a reasonable possibility of an *accidental* agreement between *C* and *F* or *W* and *F*. We can be certain, for instance, that in the following passage² *F*'s reading could have reached *C* only through Malory:

W	C	F
he behylde sir Lyonell that wolde have slayne hys brothir sir Bors which he loved ryght well	he beheld Lyonel wold haue slayne his broder <i>and</i> <i>knewe</i> syre Bors whiche he loued ry3t wel	si <i>congnoist</i> main tenant que ce est Boors que il amoit de moult grant amour

But when *C* gives the variant *euensonge tyme*, *W* *evynsonge* and *F* *heure de vespres*, the possibility of *heure* dropping out in Malory and reappearing by accident in *C* cannot altogether be ignored.³ Much less uncertain is the series: *chemise blanche* (*F*) > *whyte shert* (*C*) > *whyght sheete* (*W*).⁴ Some notion of where the boundary between certainty and uncertainty should lie may perhaps be derived from a comparison of two groups of quotations, in the first of which the evidence of *F* is just enough to tip the scales in favour of *C*, while in the second an emendation of *W* would fall just below the 'safety line':

W	C	F
that one way defendith the that thou ne go <i>that day</i> ⁵	. . . <i>that way</i>	. . . que tu <i>n'y entres</i>
I charge the that . . . ye hyre masse dayly and ye may <i>com thereto</i> ⁶	I charge you that . . . ye here masse dayly and ye may <i>doo hit</i>	. . . se vous <i>estes en lieu</i> que vous le puissies faire

¹ MS. Add. 10293, f. 284 a. ² v. *infra*, p. 971.

⁴ *v. *infra*, p. 925.

¹ v. *infra*, loc. cit.

³ v. *infra*, p. 927.

⁶ v. *infra*, p. 833.

Our two main witnesses, then, are *n* (textual evidence) and *F* (Malory's sources). In the examples quoted so far each has appeared independently and has sufficed for the reconstruction of the text. But it may happen that while neither is strong enough in itself to supply an emendation, their concurrence would clinch the evidence and change a mere hypothesis into a virtual certainty. To take a simple example, Lady Columbe's reproach to Balin ('whan she aspyed that Launceor was slayne): *two hodyes thou haste slayne one herte and two hertes in one body*, can be conjecturally emended, on textual grounds, by the insertion of *in* after *slayne*, for it is probable that in some earlier copy *slayne* was spelt *slain*, and *in* fell out by *homoeoteleuton*. But this is a mere conjecture; what makes it acceptable and, indeed; worthy of inclusion in the text, is the fact that in the corresponding place *F* gives the exact equivalent of the reconstructed reading:

F: *deus cuers aves ochis en un et deus cors en un*

M: *two bodyes thou haste slain in one and two hertes in one body*¹

Another interesting case is the remark *thou hast resembled in to thynges*,² alleged to have been made by Josephe, son of Joseph of Arimathea, to Galahad. The sense clearly requires the insertion of *me* after *resembled*, and it is arguable that the word may have dropped out before *in* owing to the likeness between *m* and *in*. But the emendation would not be certain without the support of the corresponding reading in *F*: *tu m's resemble en deus choses*. On similar grounds, when *W* writes *ye ar ryght wyse of thes workes*, we can safely replace *workes* by *wordes* because the French has *cesteparolle*.³

The formula $TT + F = M$ can yield even more striking results: it can help to restore readings absent from both our texts, as in the following two cases:

¹ v. *infra*, p. 69. The meaning of the remark is slightly different in *F*: 'by killing one heart you have killed two, and by killing one body you have killed two.* In *M* Lady Columbe says, in substance, that her body must die with her lover's, and so must **her heart**. From the textual point of view, however, all that matters is that the words *ochis en un* could induce Malory to write *slain in one*.

² v. *infra*, p. 1035.

³ v. *infra*, p. 989.

C	W	F	M
so these threfelawes and they thre were there no mo	so thes three knyght and these three elles were no mo	etavecquescestroiz <i>demourerent</i> lez trois compaignons	so (<i>there abode</i>) thes three knyght(es) and these three; elles were no mo ¹
in suche payne and in suche anguysshe I haue ben longe	in such payne and in such angwysh as I have suffird longe	en telle paine et en telle angoisse que <i>nus aultres horns ne</i> <i>la pourroit souffrir</i> longuement fird	in such payne and in such angwysh as I nave (<i>no man elles</i> <i>myght have</i>) suf- longe ²

In the first of these two passages *F* supplies the verb *demourerent* for which there is only one normal equivalent in *M*: *abode*. *ir_y* on the other hand, suggests a reason for its disappearance: the word *abode* would most easily be lost if it belonged to a phrase the first three letters of which were identical with the first three letters of the next word (*thes*). Hence the reconstructed reading: *so there abode thes three*, &c. In the second passage there is a characteristic discrepancy between *C* and *W* while the latter accurately reproduces an incomplete sentence, the former tries to restore the sense by deleting the word *as*. *F* shows, however, that *as* belongs to the original construction, and that a vital phrase corresponding to *nus aultres horns ne porroit* must have dropped out after the word *have*. But since on grounds of *n* it is reasonable to assume that that phrase disappeared because it ended with the word *have*, the conclusion naturally suggests itself that it read *no man elles myght have*.

A sentence already referred to in passing³ may be quoted as a last example. In relating Lancelot's adventures in the quest of the Holy Grail, Caxton tells us (Book XV) that as Lancelot rode through a deep valley he saw a *ryuer and an hyhe montayn*. *W*'s reading is *a ryver and an mortays*.^{*} *C*, as usual, seems more plausible, but only superficially so, for while 'high mountain' may be more intelligible than *mortays*, there is no justification for it in the context, and the sudden appearance of a mountain at this point is totally inexplicable. *F* again provides the clue. It says: *Et lors regarda devant lui et voit Viaue grant que on apeloit Marcoise, qui la forest departoit en deus parties*.⁵ The whole process at once becomes clear:

¹ v. *infra*, p. 1028.
4- 1/. *infra*, p. 934.

^a v. *infra*, loc. cit.

³ v. *supra*, pp. lxxxviii-ix.

^{*} MS. B.N. fr. 120, f. 545^r col. r.

Malory must have written *a ryver that hyght Mortays* ; one of his early copyists misread *that hyght* as *& an hyghe*, and the resulting phrase *& an hyghe mortays* was contracted in *W to & an mortays*, Caxton, unable as he was to understand the word *mortays*, ingeniously replaced it by the only palaeographical equivalent that could go with the adjective *hyghe*. Thanks to *F* we can at long last get rid of that adjective, of the misplaced mountain, and of the mysterious object called *mortays*—hitherto one of the unsolved puzzles of the Grail.

3. *The Present Edition*

Since we do not profess to be able to reconstruct the original work in its entirety, but merely to do the best we can with one of its extant copies, the choice of our base text will imply no outright recognition of its excellence. The principles which should govern such a choice have been admirably formulated by Joseph Bedier in the Introduction to his edition of the *Lai de V Ombre*:

Nous avons choisi, entre nos sept manuscrits, le manuscrit A, pour servir de «base» a notre Edition. Ce n'est nullement que nous le tenions pour le plus voisin de l'original, puisque, comme nous l'avons vu, il se peut fort bien que D, ou E, represente le dernier etat du texte, tel qu'il plut a Jean Renart de le constituer. Si nous avons choisi le manuscrit A, le precieux manuscrit 837 de la Bibliotheque nationale, c'est de facon tout empirique, et simplement parce que, off rant d'ailleurs un texte a Pordinaire tres sene" et tres" coherent, et des formes grammaticales tres francaises (a part quelques « picardismes »), et une orthographe tres simple et tres reguliere, il est, entre nos sept manuscrits, celui qui presente le moins souvent des lecons individuelles, celui par consequent qu'on est le moins souvent tente" de corriger. L'ayant une fois choisi, nous avons pris le parti d'en respecter autant que possible les lecons.

It is on similar grounds that the Winchester M S. has been adopted for the present edition of Malory's works: not because it is in every respect the nearest to the original, but because it is so in some parts, and because as long as absolute truthfulness* is not aimed at, the less well known of the two versions, which is at least as reliable as the other, is as fair as any choice can be.

Uayant une fois choisi, nous avons pris le -parti den respecter autant que possible les legons. This again is largely true of the present edition, though I may have placed on the words *autant que possible* a somewhat wider interpretation than that which B&Edier had in mind. The principle I have endeavoured to follow resolves itself into two simple propositions: (a) that readings which can be shown to result from scribal errors or those which are condemned on grounds of external evidence must be emended; and (b) that all the rest, good or bad, probable' or improbable' must be retained and, as far as possible, elucidated. The astonishing fewness of what in the last analysis may be termed *loci desperati* in a text established in this fashion is another indication that the conservative use of the editor's 'discriminating faculty' does little injustice to the author and imposes no undue burden on the reader.

To enable the reader to see at a glance the emendations I have made, I have distinguished them from the body of the text by placing in square brackets the readings borrowed from Caxton without the support of F, in half brackets (*f* 1) Caxton's readings confirmed by F, and in caret brackets « » the words and letters which occur neither in Caxton nor in the Winchester text. Square brackets have also been used for the *lacunae* in W (ff. i—8, 32—2, 347—8, and 485—92) supplied from C, and for matter borrowed from C to fill the gaps in some of the torn pages. Wherever the emendations are not self-explanatory, the reasons for them will generally be found either in the critical apparatus or in the *Commentary*,

The critical apparatus is the product of a collation of the Winchester MS. with Caxton's edition, of both these texts with Malory's sources, of the two copies of Caxton's edition with one another, and of H. O. Sommer's edition with the Rylands copy. The material it contains falls into four main categories: (a) readings from the Winchester MS. not included in the text; (F) Caxton's readings, exclusive of minor differences of spelling and wording; (c) readings from Malory's sources which have a bearing upon the reconstruction of his text; and (d) variants of the two extant copies of Caxton's edition. Some of Sommer's misprints and all the

errors in Whittaker's facsimiles have also been recorded.¹ Caxton's readings which are either clearly preferable to those of the base text or likely to throw some light upon it are marked with an asterisk (*). The dagger (†) is used to denote corrupt variants. All quotations are introduced by line-numbers and by the following abbreviated references:

C = Caxton's edition.

F = Malory's French sources as represented by the extant MSS.

MA = The alliterative *Morte Arthure* (Thornton MS.).

P = The Pierpont Morgan copy of *C*

R = The John Rylands copy of *C*.

S = Sommer's edition of *R*.

W = The Winchester MS.

Wh = Whittaker's facsimiles in *R*.

The present edition is the first attempt to produce Malory's text in the old spelling with modern punctuation and word-division. Certain features of fifteenth-century orthography which have no interest except a purely palaeographical one have, however, been removed: the modern use of *iy-jy u, v*, and of capitals has been adopted throughout,² contractions and numerals have been expanded, «'s occasionally interpreted as *yy's* and vice versa, *p* has been transcribed as *thy* and *^* as *y_y gh*, or *z_y* according to its position in the word. The expansions, like the emended readings based on Caxton, follow as far as possible the normal spelling of the manuscript, but where the latter is inconsistent the convenience of the modern reader has been taken into account. Thus the sign *f* has been interpreted as *es* and the sign *ⁿ* as *er_y*³ despite the fact that the scribes of the Winchester MS. prefer as a rule *is* and *ir*. The acute accent has been used in polysyllabic words to distinguish the vocal *e* from the mute.

Contrary to the practice which used to prevail in editions of old texts, light punctuation has been adopted, particularly

¹ The variants are quoted with as much of the context as is necessary to find the corresponding reading in the text. For example, if the text reads *longe hit inas or he myght nuelde hymselff* and Caxton has in addition the word *every* his variant is quoted as *or ever he*. The words *see note* refer to the *Commentary*.

² Except in such words as *sir*, *kynge*, and *queue*.

³ Except in the word *sir*.

in the case of noun or adjective clauses introduced by *who*, *which*, *that*, *what*, *where*, and the like. But wherever punctuation could clarify the construction it has been resorted to liberally, and no commas have been spared before adverb-clauses introduced by conjunctions signifying cause or purpose (e.g. *that* — 'so that', *for*, *because*, & c). ^

In a text such as Malory's, punctuation can do more than clarify his meaning: it can help to bring out the rhythm and movement of his prose. The frequent occurrence of compound sentences strung together by innumerable *and*'s is apt to obscure the fact that Malory's favourite period is a short one, falling into not more than three parts, and that, although he sometimes uses a wider pattern, his natural preference is for crisp and compact construction. Punctuation can make this apparent and so reveal the real cadence of Malory's sentences, a cadence which achieves point and appeal and escapes the tendency to * watering down', so prominent in medieval prose:

Than they fewtred their spearis in their restis and com togidirs as muche as their horsis myght dryve. And the Irysh knyght smote Balyn on the shyld that all wente to shyvers of hys spere. And Balyne smote hym agayne thorow the shyld, and the hawbirk perysshed, and so bore hym thorow the body and over the horse crowper; and anone turned hys horse fersely and drew oute hys swerde, and wyst nat that he had slayne hym. (p. 69.)

Than sir Launcelot unbarred the dore, and with hys lyfhte honde he hylde hit opyn a lytyll, that but one man myght com in at onys. And so there cam strydyng a good knyght, a much man and a large, and hys name was called sir Collgrevaunce of Goore. And he wyth a swerde streke at sir Launcelot myghtyly, and so he put asyde the streke, and gaff hym such a buffette uppon the helmet that he felle grovelyng dede wythin the chambir dore. (p. 1167.)

Another characteristic of Malory's style—the substitution of dialogue for narrative—can be displayed by the even simpler method of paragraphing. The unfortunate habit of printing Malory's text in solid blocks of prose with scarcely more than one fresh line on each page has caused modern readers to lose sight of this vital aspect of his work. For my part I had no hesitation in giving it, as far as possible, the appearance of a modern novel and avoiding at all costs that

of a learned treatise. How else, indeed, could one adequately render the brisk exchange of repartees in such passages as the dialogue between Sir Gareth and the haughty lady who resents his acts of heroism,¹ or the well-known scene of Gawain's despair at the discovery of his brothers' death?

'But where are my brethir?' seyde sir Gawayne, 'I mervayle that I se nat of them.'

Than seyde that man, "Truly, sir Gaherys and sir Gareth be slayne\ *Jesu deffende,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'for all thys worlde I wolde nat that they were slayne, and in especiall my good brothir sir Gareth.'

'Sir,' seyde the man, 'he ys slayne, and that ys grete piteV

'Who slew hym V seyde sir Gawayne.

'Sir Launcelot,' seyde the man, 'slew hem both.'

'That may I nat believe,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'that ever he slew my good brother sir Gareth, for I dare say my brothir loved hym bettir than me and all hys brethir and the kynge bothe. Also I dare sey, an sir Launcelot had desyred my brothir sir Gareth with hym, he wolde have ben with hym ayenste the kynge and us all. And therefore I may never belyeve that sir Launcelot slew my brethern.'

'Veryly, sir,' seyde the man, 'hit ys noysed that he slew hym.'

'Alas,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'now ys my joy gone!'

For reasons explained above² I have abandoned the traditional general heading of Malory's works—*he Morte Darthur*—and have given each work the title which Malory himself has assigned to it in his colophon. As a result, the present edition, unlike all previous ones, appears in the form of eight separate romances. I have not, however, thought it necessary to follow their chronological sequence, and have placed them in the order in which they are found in Caxton's edition and in the Winchester MS.

I have naturally ignored Caxton's division into books and chapters, but have divided Malory's five longest romances—*The Tale of King Arthur*, *The Book of Sir Tristram*, *The Tale of the Sankgreal*, *The Book of Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere*, and *The Morte Arthur*—into sections which in most cases correspond to subdivisions indicated in the text. Caxton's *Table of Rubrysshe* has been split accordingly and used as a substitute for the table of contents at the beginning of each section. To facilitate reference to Caxton's edition

¹ *v. *infra*, pp. 305-6.

² v. *supra*, pp. xxix-xxxv.

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his book-numbers appear at the top of each page, and his chapter-numbers are given in brackets in the outer margin.

Caxton's Preface is reproduced here in full: not merely as the finest and in many ways the soundest essay ever written on the *Morte Darthur*, but as a fitting and indeed indispensable prelude to the noble and 'joyous' book.

CAXTON'S PREFACE

AFTER that I had accompysshed and fynysshed dyvers [sig. Aij]
/ J L hystories as wel of contemplacyon as of other hystorial
and worldly actes of grete conquerours and prynces, and
also certeyn bookes of ensamples and doctryne, many
noble and dyvers gentylmen of-thys royaume of Englonde
camen and demaunded me many ana oftymes wherfore that
I have not do made and enprynte the noble hystorie of the
Saynt Greal and of the moost renommed Crysten kyng, fyrst
and chyef of the thre best Crysten, and worthy, kyng
Arthur, whyche ought moost to be remembred emonge us xo
Englysshemen tofore al other Crysten kynges.

For it is notoyrly knowen thorough the unyversal world
that there been nine worthy and the best that ever were,
that is to wete, thre Paynyms, thre Jewes, and thre Crysten
men. As for the Paynyms, they were tofore the Incarnacyon 15
of Cryst, whiche were named, the fyrst Hector of Troye, of
whome th'ystorye is comen bothe in balade and in prose,
the second Alysander the Grete, and the thyrd Julyus
Cezar, Emperour of Rome, of whome th'ystories ben wel
knownen and had. And as for the thre Jewes whyche also 20
were tofore th'Yncarnacyon of our Lord, of whome the
fyrst was Due Josue* whyche brought the chyldren of Israhel
into the londe of byheste, the second Davyd, kyng of
Jerusalem, and the thyrd Judas Machabeus, of these thre
the Byble reherceth al theyr noble hystories and actes. And 25
sythe the sayd Incarnacyon have ben thre noble Crysten
men stalled and admytted thorough the unyversal world into
the nombre of the nine beste and worthy, of whome was
fyrst the noble Arthur, whos noble actes I purpose to wryte
in thys present book here folowyng. The second was 30
Charlemayn, or Charles the Grete, of whome th'ystorye is
had in many places, bothe in Frensshe and Englysshe; and
the thyrd and last was Godefray of Boloyne, of whos actes
and lyi I made a book unto th'excellent prynce and kyng of
noble memorye, kyng Edward the Fourth. 35

The sayd noble jentylmen instantly requyred me t'em-
 prynte th'ystorye of the sayd noble kyng and conquerour
 kyng Arthur and of his knyghtes, wyth th'ystorye of the
 Saynt Greal and of the deth and endyng of the sayd Arthur,
 5 affermyng that I ought rather t'enprynte his actes and noble
 feates than of Godefroye of Boloyne or ony of the other eyght,
 consydering that he was a man borne wythin this royame and
 kyng and emperour of the same, and that there ben in
 Frensshe dyvers and many noble volumes of his actes, and
 io also of his knyghtes.

To whome I answerd that dyvers men holde oppynyon
 that there was no suche Arthur and that alle suche bookes
 as been maad of hym ben but fayned and fables, bycause
 that somme cronycles make of hym no mencyon ne remembre
 15 hym noothyng, ne of his knyghtes.

Wherto they answerd, and one in specyal sayd, that in
 hym that shold say or thynke that there was never suche a
 kyng callyd Arthur myght wel be aretted grete folye and
 blyndenesse, for he sayd that there were many evydences of
 *° the contrarye. Fyrst, ye may see his sepulture in the
 monasterye of Glastyngburye; and also in Polycronycon, in
 the fifth book, the syxte chappytre, and in the seventh book,
 the twenty-thyrd chappytre, where his body was buryed, and
 after founden and translated into the sayd monasterye. Ye
 *5 shal se also in th'ystorye of Bochas, in his book DE CASU
 PRINCIPUM, parte of his noble actes, and also of his falle.
 Also Galfrydus, in his Brutyshe book, recounteth his lyf.
 And in dyvers places of Englund many remembraunces ben
 yet of hym and shall remayne perpetuely, and also of his
 30 knyghtes: fyrst, in the abbey of Westmestre, at Saynt
 Edwardes shryne, remayneth the prynte of his seal in reed
 waxe, closed in beryll, in whych is wryton PATRICIUS
 ARTHURUS BRITANNIE GALLIE GERMANIE DACIE IMPERATOR;
 item, in the castel of Dover ye may see Gauwayns skulle and
 35 Cradoks mantel; at Wynchester, the Rounde Table; in
 other places Launcelottes swerde and many other thynges.

Thenne, al these thynges consydered, there can no man
 resonably gaynsaye but there was a kyng of thys lande named

Arthur. For in al places, Crysten and hethen, he is reputed and taken for one of the nine worthy, and the fyrst of the thre Crysten men. And also he is more spoken of beyonde the see, moo bookes made of his noble actes, than there be in Englund; as wel in Duche, Ytalyen, Spaynysshe, and 5 Grekysshe, as in Frensshe. And yet of record remayne in wytnesse of hym in Wales, in the toun of Camelot, the grete stones and mervayllous werkys of yron lyeng under the grounde, and ryal vautes, [*sig. Atij*] which dyvers now lyvyng hath seen. Wherfor it is a mervayl why he is no more re- *^o nomed in his owne contreye, sauf onelye it accordeth to the word of God, whyche sayth that no man is accept for a prophete in his owne contreye.

Thenne, al these thynges forsayd aledged, I coude not wel denye but that there was suche a noble kyng named *5 Arthur, and reputed one of the nine worthy, and fyrst and chyef of the Cristen men. And many noble volumes be made of hym and of his noble knyghtes in Frensshe, which I have seen and redde beyonde the see, which been not had in our maternal tongue. But in Walsse ben many, and also 20 in Frensshe, and somme in Englysshe, but nowher nygh alle. Wherfore, suche as have late ben drawen oute bryefly into Englysshe, I have, after the symple connyng that God hath sente to me, under the favour and correctyon of al noble lordes and gentylmen, enprysed to enprynte a book of *5 the noble hystories of the sayd kyng Arthur and of certeyn of his knyghtes, after a cople unto me delyverd, whyche cople syr Thomas Malorye dyd take oute of certeyn bookes of Frensshe and reduced it into Englysshe.

And I, accordyng to my cople, have doon sette it in 30 enprynte to the entente that noble men may see and lerne the noble actes of chyvalrye, the jentyl and vertuous dedes that somme knyghtes used in tho dayes, by whyche they came to honour, and how they that were vicious were punysshed and ofte put to shame and rebuke; humbly 35 bysechyng al noble lordes and ladyes wyth al other estates, of what estate or degree they been of, that shal see and rede in this sayd book and werke, that they take the good and honest actes in their remembraunce, and to folowe the same;

wherin they shalle fynde many joyous and playsaunt hystories and noble and renommed actes of humanyte, gentylnesse, and chyvalryes. For herein may be seen noble chyvalrye, curtosye, humanyti, frendlynnesse, hardynesse, love, frendshyp, cowardyse, murdre, hate, vertue, and synne. Doo after the good and leve the evyl, and it shal brynge you to good fame and renommee.

And for to passe the tyme thys book shal be plesaunte to rede in, but for to gyve fayth and byleve that at is trewe io that is conteyned herin, ye be at your lyberte\ But al is wryton for our doctryne, and for to beware that we falle not to vyce ne synne, but t'exersyse and folowe vertu, by whyche we may come and atteyne to good fame and renomme in thys lyf, and after thys shorte and transytorye lyf to come unto 15 everlastyng blysse in heven; the whyche He graunte us that reyneth in heven, the Blessyd Trynyte. AMEN.

Thenne, to procede forth in thys sayd book, whyche I dyrecte unto alle noble prynces, lordes, and ladyes, gentylmen or gentylwymmen, that desyre to rede or here redde of ao the noble and joyous hystorie of the grete conquerour and excellent kyng, kyng Arthur, somtyme kyng of thys noble royalme thenne callyd Brytaygne, I, Wyllyam Caxton, symple persone, present thys book folowyng whyche I have enprysed t'enprynte: and treateth of the noble actes, feates 25 of armes of chyvalrye, prowessse, hardynesse, humanyte, love, curtosye, and veray gentylnesse, wyth many wonderful hystories and adventures.

And for to understonde bryefly the contente of thys volume I have devyded it into twenty-one bookes, and every 30 book chapytred, as hereafter shal by Goddes grace folowe:

The fyrst book shal treate how Utherpendragon gate the noble conquerour kyng Arthur, and conteyneth xxviii chappytres.

The second book treateth of Balyn, the noble knyght, and conteyneth xix chappytres.

35 The thyrd book treateth of the maryage of kyng Arthur to Quene Guenever, wyth other maters, and conteyneth fyftene chappytres.

The fourth book, how Merlyn was assotted, and of warre maad to kyng Arthur, and conteyneth xxix chappytres.

The fyfthe book treateth of the conqueste of Lucius th'emperour and conteyneth xii chappytres.

The syxthe book treateth of syr Launcelot and syr Lyonel and mervayllous adventures and conteyneth xviii chapytres.

The seventh book treateth of a noble knyght called syr Gareth 5 and named by syr Kaye 'Beaumayns' and conteyneth xxxvi chapytres.

The eyght book treateth of the byrthe of syr Trystram, the noble knyght, and of hys actes and conteyneth xli chapytres.

The ix book treateth of a knyght named by syr Kaye 'Le Cote 10 Male Taylle' and also of syr Trystram and conteyneth xliiij [sig. Jiiij] chapytres.

The x book treateth of syr Trystram and other mervayllous adventures and conteyneth lxxxviii chappytres.

The xi book treateth of syr Launcelot and syr Galahad and 15 conteyneth xiiij chappytres.

The xii book treateth of syr Launcelot and his madnesse and conteyneth xiiij chappytres.

The xiii book treateth how Galahad came fyrst to kyng Arthurs courte, and the quest, how the Sangreall was begonne, and conteyneth 20 xx chapytres.

The xiiij book treateth of the queste of the Sangreal and conteyneth x chapytres.

The xv book treateth of syr Launcelot and conteyneth vi chapytres. *5

The xvi book treateth of syr Bors and syr Lyonel, his brother, and conteyneth xvii chapytres.

The xvii book treateth of the Sangreal and conteyneth xxiii chapytres.

The xviii book treateth of syr Launcelot and the quene and con- 3° teyneth xxv chapytres.

The xix book treateth of quene Guenever and Launcelot and conteyneth xiii chapytres.

The xx book treateth of the pyteous deth of Arthur and conteyneth xxii chapytres. 35

The xxi book treateth of his last departyng, and how syr Launcelot came to revenge his dethe, and conteyneth xiii chapytres.

The somme is twenty-one bookes whyche conteyne the somme of fyve hondred and seven chapytres, as more playnly shal folowe hereafter. 4°

THE TALE OF K;ING ARTHUR

*[Winchester MS., ff^o g^r-70^vi
Caxtont Books I-IV]*

I

MERLIN

*[Winchester MS., $tf^{\circ} g^r-22^r_f$
Caxton, Book I]*

CAXTON'S RUBRICS

- Ch. I. Fyrst, how Uther Pendragon sente for the duke of Cornewayl and Igrayne his wyf, and of their departyng sodeynly* ageyn.
- „ 2. How Uther Pendragon made warre on the duke of Cornewayl and how by the moyane of Merlyn he laye by the duchesse and gate Arthur.
- „ 3, 4, and 5. Of the byrthe of kyng Arthur and of his nourytur, and of the deth of kyng Uter Pendragon, and how Arthur was chosen kyng, and of wondres and mervaylles of a swerde taken out of a stone by the sayd Arthur.
- „ 6. How kyng Arthur pulled oute the swerde dyvers tymes.
- „ 7. How kyng Arthur was crowned and how he made offycers.
- j, 8. How kyng Arthur helde in Wales at a Pentecost a grete feest and what kynges and lordes came to his feste.
- „ 9. Of the fyrst warre that kyng Arthur had and how he wanne the felde.
- „ 10. How Merlyn counceyllid kyng Arthur to sende for kyng Ban and kyng Bors, and of theyr counceyl taken for the warre.
- „ 11. Of a grete tornoye made by kynge Arthur and the two kynges Ban and Bors, and how they wente over the see.
- „ 12. How eleven kynges gadredf a grete hoost ayenst kyng Arthur.
- „ 13. Of a dreame of the Kyng wyth the Hondred Knyghtes.
- „ 14. How the eleven kynges wyth theyr hoost fought ayenst Arthur and his hoost, and many grete feates of the warre.
- „ 15. Yet of the same batayll.
- „ i74 Yet more of the said batayll, and how it was ended by Merlyn.
- „ 18. How kyng Arthur, kyng Ban and kyng Bors rescowed kyng Leodegraunce, and other incydentes.
- „ 19. How kyng Arthur rode to Garlyon [*sic*] and of his dreame, and how he sawe the questyng beest.
- „ 20. How kyng Pellynore took Arthurs hors and folowed the questyng beest, and how Merlyn mette wyth Arthur.
- „ 21. How Ulfyus apeched quene Igrayne, Arthurs moder, of treason, and how a knyght came and desyred to have the deth of hys mayster revengyd.
- „ 22. How Gryflet was made knyght and justed with a knyght.
- „ 23. How twelve knyghtes came from Rome and axed truage for thys londe of Arthur, and how Arthur faught wyth a knyght.

- Ch. 24. How Merlyn saved Arthurs lyf and threwe an enchaunte-
ment upon kyng Pellynore and made hym to slepe.**
- „ **25. How Arthur by the meane of Merlyn gate Excalybur, hys
swerde, of the Lady of the Lake.**
- „ **27*How tydynges cam to Arthur that kyng Ryons had
overcome eleven kynges, and how he desyred Arthus berde
to purfyl his mantel.**
- „ **28. How al the chyldren were sente fore that were borne on
May day, and how Mordred was saved.**

** C omits 26*

[H] IT befel in the dayes of Uther Pendragon, when he was *Caxtott*,

H kynge of all Englonde and so regned, that there was a I (i)
myghty duke in Cornewaill that helde warre ageynst hym
long tyme, and the duke was called the duke of Tyntagil.
And so by meanes kynge Uther send for this duk chargyng 5
hym to brynge his wyf with hym, for she was called a fair
lady and a passyng wyse, and her name was called Igrayne.

So whan the duke and his wyf were comyn unto the
kynge, by the meanes of grete lordes they were accorded
bothe. The kynge lyked and loved this lady wel, and he 10
made them grete chere out of mesure and desyred to have
lyen by her, but she was a passyng good woman and wold
not assente unto the kynge. And thenne she told the duke her
husband and said,

'I suppose that we were sente for that I shold be dis- 15
honoured. Wherfor, husband, I counceille yow that we
departe from hens sodenly, that we maye ryde all nyghte
unto oure owne castell.'

And in lyke wyse as she saide so they departed, that
neyther the kynge nor none of his counceill were ware of 20
their departyng. Also soone as kyng Uther knewe of their
departyng soo sodenly, he was wonderly wrothe; thenne he
called to hym his pryvy counceille and told them of the
sodeyne departyng of the duke and his wyf. Thenne they
avysed the kynge to send for the duke and his wyf by a z\$
grete charge: 'And yf he wille not come at your somons,
thenne may ye do your best; thenne have ye cause to make
myghty werre upon hym',

Soo that was done, and the messagers hadde their ansuers;
and that was thys, shortly, that neyther he nor his wyf wold 30
not come at hym. Thenne was the kyng wonderly wroth;
and thenne the kyng sente hym playne word ageyne and
badde hym be redy and stuffe hym and garnysse hym, for
within forty dayes he wold fetch hym oute of the byggest
castell that he hath. 35

Whanne the duke hadde thys warnyng anone he wente
and furnysshed and garnysshed two stronge castels of his,
of the whiche the one hyght Tyntagil and the other castel

hyght Terrabyl. So his wyf dame Igrayne he putte in the
 castell of Tyntagil, and hymself he putte in the castel of
 Terrabyl, the whiche had many yssues and posternes oute.
 Thenne in all haste came Uther with a grete hoost and leyde
 5 a syege aboute the castel of Terrabil, and ther he pyght
 many pavelions. And there was grete warre made on bothe
 partyes and moche peple slayne.

Thenne for pure angre and for grete love of fayr Igrayne
 the kyng Uther felle seke. So came to the kynge Uther syre
 10 Ulfius, a noble knyght, and asked the kynge why he was seke.

'I shall telle the,' said the kynge. 'I am seke for angre and
 for love of fayre Igrayne, that I may not be hool.'

'Wei, my lord,' said syre Ulfius, 'I shal seke Merlyn and
 he shalle do yow remedy, that youre herte shal be pleasyd.'
 15 So Ulfius departed and by adventure he mette Merlyn
 in a beggars aray, and ther Merlyn asked Ulfius whome he
 soughte, and he said he had lytyl ado to telle hym.

'Well,' saide Merlyn, 'I knowe whome thou sekest, for thou
 sekest Merlyn; therefore seke no ferther, for I am he. And
 20 yf kynge Uther wille wel rewarde me and be sworne unto
 me to fulfille my desyre, that shall be his honour and profite
 more than myn, for I shalle cause hym to have alle his desyre.'

'Alle this wyll I undertake,' said Ulfius, 'that ther shalle
 be nothyng resonable but thou shalt have thy desyre.'

25 'Well,' said Merlyn, 'he shall have his entente and desyre,
 and therefore,' saide Merlyn, 'ryde on your wey, for I wille not
 be long behynde.'

(2) Thenne Ulfius was glad and rode on more than a paas
 tyll that he came to kynge Uther Pendragon and told hym
 30 he had met with Merlyn.

'Where is he?' said the kyng.

'Sir,' said Ulfius, 'he wille not dwelle long.'

Therwithal Ulfius was ware where Merlyn stood at the
 porche of the pavelions dore, and thenne Merlyn was
 35 bounde to come to the kynge. Whan kyng Uther sawe hym
 he said he was welcome.

'Syr,' said Merlyn, 'I knowe al your hert every dele. So
 ye wil be sworn unto me, as ye be a true kynge enoynted, to
 fulfille my desyre, ye shal have your desyre.'

40 Thenne the kyng was sworne upon the four Evangelistes.

'Syre,' said Merlyn, 'this is my desyre: the first nyght that ye shal lye by Igrayne ye shal gete a child on her; and whan that is borne, that it shall be delyverd to me for to nourisshe thereas I wille have it, for it shal be your worship and the childis availle as mykel as the child is worth.*' 5

'I wylle wel,' said the kynge, 'as thow wilt have it.'

'Now make you redy,' said Merlyn. 'This nyght ye shalle lye with Igrayne iri the castel of Tyntigayll. And ye shalle be lyke the duke her husband, Ulfyus shal be lyke syre Brastias, a knyghte of the dukes, and I will be lyke a knyghte 10 that hyghte syr Jordanus, a knyghte of the dukes. But wayte ye make not many questions with her nor her men, but saye ye are diseased, and soo hye yow to bedde and ryse not on the morne tyll I come to yow, for the castel of Tyntygaill is but ten myle hens.' 15

Soo this was done as they devysed. But the duke of Tyntigail aspyed hou the kyng rode fro the syege of Tarabil. And therfor that nyghte he yssued oute of the castel at a posterne for to have distressid the kynges hooste, and so thorowe his owne yssue the duke hymself was slayne or 20 ever the kynge cam at the castel of Tyntigail. So after the deth of the duke kyng Uther lay with Igrayne, more than thre houres after his deth, and begat on her that nygh(t) Arthur; and or day cam, Merlyn cam to the kyng and bad hym make hym redy, and so he kist the lady Igrayne and 25 departed in all hast. But whan the lady herd telle of the duke her husband, and by all record he was dede or ever kynge Uther came to her, thenne she mervailed who that myghte be that laye with her in lykenes of her lord. So she mourned pryvely and held hir pees. 30

Thenne alle the barons by one assent prayd the kyng of accord betwixe the lady Igrayne and hym. The kyng gaf hem leve, for fayne wold he have ben accorded with her; soo the kyng put alle the trust in Ulfyus to entrete bitwene them. So by the entrete' at the last the kyng and she met togyder. 35

'Now wille we doo wel,' said Ulfyus; 'our kyng is a lusty knyghte and wyveles, and my lady Igrayne is a passynge fair lady; it were grete joye unto us all and hit myghte please the kyng to make her his quene.'

Unto that they all well accordyd and meved it to the kyng.
And anone lyke a lusty knyghte he assentid therto with good
wille, and so in alle haste they were maryed in a mornynge
with grete myrthe and joye.

5 And kyng Lott of Lowthean and of Orkenay thenne
wedded Margawse that was Gaweyns moder, and kyng
Nentres of the land of Garlot wedded Elayne: al this was
done at the request of kyng Uther, And the thyrd syster,
Morgan le Fey, was put to scole in a nonnery, and ther she
io lerned so moche that she was a grete clerke of nygromancye.
And after she was wedded to kyng Uryens of the lond of
Gore that was syre Ewayns le Blaunche Maynys fader.

5) Thenne quene Igrayne waxid dayly gretter and gretter.
So it befel after within half a yere, as kyng Uther lay by his
15 quene, he asked hir by the feith she ought to hym whos was
the child within her body. Thenne was she sore abashed
to yeve ansuer.

'Desmaye you not,' said the kyng, 'but telle me the trouthe,
and I shall love you the better, by the feythe of my body!'

20 'Syre,' saide she, 'I shalle telle you the trouthe. The same
nyghte that my lord was dede, the houre of his deth as his
knyghtes record, ther came into my castel of Tyntigaill a
man lyke my lord in speche and in countenaunce, and two
knyghtes with hym in lykenes of his two knyghtes Barcias
25 and Jordans, and soo I went unto bed with hym as I ought
to do with my lord; and the same nyght, as I shal ansuer
unto God, this child was begoten upon me.'

'That is trouthe,' saide the kyng, 'as ye say, for it was I my-
self that cam in the lykenesse. And therfor desmay you not,
30 for I am fader to the child,' and ther he told her alle the cause
how it was by Merlyns counceil. Thenne the quene made
grete joye whan she knewe who was the fader of her child.

Sone come Merlyn unto the kyng and said, 'Syr, ye must
purvey yow for the nourisshyng of your child.'

35 'As thou wilt,' said the kyng, 'be it.'

'Wei,' said Merlyn, 'I knowe a lord of yours in this land
that is a passyng true man and a feithful, and he shal have
the nourysshyng of your child; and his name is sir Ector,
and he is a lord of fair lyvelode in many partyes in Englond
40 and Walys. And this lord, sir Ector, lete hym be sent for

for to come and speke with you, and desyre hym yourself as he loveth you that he will put his owne child to nourisshynge to another woman and that his wyf nourisshe yours. And whan the child is borne lete it be delyverd to me at yonder pryvy posterne uncrystned.' 5

So like as Merlyn devysed it was done. And whan syre Ector was come he made fyaunce to the kyng for to nourisshe the child lyke as the kynge desyred, and there the kyng graunted syr Ector grete rewardys. Thenne when the lady was delyverd the kynge commaunded two knyghtes and two 10 ladyes to take the child bound in a cloth of gold, 'and that ye delyver hym to what poure man ye mete at the posterne yate of the castel.' So the child was delyverd unto Merlyn, and so he bare it forth unto syre Ector and made an holy man to crysten hym and named hym Arthur. And so sir 15 Ectors wyf nourysshed hym with her owne pappe.

Thenne within two yeres kyng Uther felle seke of a grete maladye. And in the meanewhyle hys enemyes usurpped upon hym and dyd a grete bataylle upon his men and slewe many of his peple. 20

'Sir,* said Merlyn, 'ye may not lye so as ye doo, for ye must to the feld, though ye ryde on an hors-lyttar. For ye shall never have the better of your enemyes but yf your persone be there, and thenne shall ye have the vycory.'

So it was done as Merlyn had devysed, and they caryed 25 the kynge forth in an hors-lyttar with a grete hooste toward his enemyes, and at Saynt Albons ther mette with the kynge a grete hoost of the North. And that day syre Ulfyus and sir Bracias dyd grete dedes of armes, and kyng Uthers men overcome the northeryn bataylle and slewe many peple and 30 putt the remenaunt to flight; and thenne the kyng retorned unto London and made grete joye of his vycory.

And thenne he fyll passynge sore seke so that thre dayes and thre nyghtes he was specheles; wherfore alle the barons made grete sorow and asked Merlyn what counceill were best. 35

'There nys none other remedye,' said Merlyn, 'but God wil have his wille. But loke ye al barons be bifore kynge Uther to-morne, and God and I shalle make hym to speke.'

So on the morne alle the barons with Merlyn came tofore the kyng. Thenne Merlyn said aloud unto kyng Uther, 40

'Syre, shall your sone Arthur be kyng after your dayes of this realme with all the appertenaunce ?'

Thenne Uther Pendragon torned hym and said in herynge of them alle,

5 'I gyv hye Gods blissyng and myne, and byd hym pray for my soule, and righteously and worshipfully that he clayme the croune upon forfeiture of my blessing,' and therwith he yelde up the ghost. And thenne was he enterid as longed to a kyng, wherfor the quene, fayre Igrayne, made
10 grete sorowe and alle the barons.

Thenne stood the reame in grete jeopardy long whyle, for every lord that was myghty of men maade hym stronge, and many wende to have ben kyng. Thenne Merlyn wente to the Archebisshop of Caunterbury and counceilled hym
15 for to sende for all the lordes of the reame and alle the gentilmen of armes that they shold to London come by Cristmas upon payne of cursynge, and for this cause, that Jesu, that was borne on that nyghte, that He wold of His grete mercy shewe some myracle, as He was come to be
20 Kynge of mankynde, for to shewe somme myracle who shold be rightwys kynge of this reame. So the Archebisshop by the advys of Merlyn send for alle the lordes and gentilmen of armes that they shold come by Crystmasse even unto London, and many of hem made hem clene of her lyf, that
25 her prayer myghte be the more acceptable unto God.

Soo in the grettest chirch of London—whether it were Powlis or not the Frensshe booke maketh no mencyon—alle the estates were longe or day in the chirche for to praye. And whan matyns and the first masse was done there was
30 sene in the chircheyard ayenst the hyhe aulter a grete stone four square lyke unto a marbel stone, and in myddes therof was lyke an anylde of stele a foot on hyghe, and theryn stack a fayre swerd naked by the poynt, and letters there were wryten in gold aboute the swerd that saiden thus:
3s 'WHOSO PULLETH OUTE THIS SWERD OF THIS STONE AND ANVYLD IS RIGHTWYS KYNGE BORNE OF ALL EN(G)LOND.' Thenne the peple merveilled and told it to the Archebisshop.

'I commande,' said th'Archebisshop, 'that ye kepe yow within your chirche and pray unto God still; that no man
40 touche the swerd tyll the hyhe masse be all done.'

So whan all masses were done all the lordes wente to beholde the stone and the swerd. And whan they sawe the scripture som assayed suche as wold have ben kyng, but none myght sterve the swerd nor meve hit.

'He is not here,' said the Archebisshop, 'that shall 5 encheve the swerd, but doubte not, God will make hym knowen. But this is my counceill,' said the Archebisshop, 'that we lete purvey ten knyghtes, men of good fame, and they to kepe this swerd.'

So it was ordeyned, and thenne ther was made a crye that 10 every man shold assay that wold for to wynne the swerd. And upon Newe Yeers day the barons lete maake a justes and a tournament, that alle knyghtes that wold juste or tourneye there myght playe. And all this was ordeyned for to kepe the lordes togyders and the comyns, for the Archebisshop 15 trusted that God wold make hym knowe that shold wynne the swerd.

So upon New Yeres day, whan the servyce was done, the barons rode unto the feld, some to juste and som to torney. And so it happed that syre Ector that had grete lyvelode 20 aboute London rode unto the justes, and with hym rode syr Kaynus, his sone, and yong Arthur that was hys nourished broder; and syr Kay was made knyght at Alhalowmas afore. So as they rode to the justes ward sir Kay had lost his suerd, for he had lefte it at his faders lodgyng, and so he 25 prayd yong Arthur for to ryde for his swerd.

'I wyll wel,' said Arthur, and rode fast after the swerd.

And whan he cam home the lady and al were out to see the joustyng. Thenne was Arthur wroth and saide to hymself, 'I will ryde to the chircheyard and take the swerd with me 30 that stycketh in the stone, for my broder sir Kay shal not be without a swerd this day.' So whan he cam to the chircheyard sir Arthur alight and tayed his hors to the style, and so he wente to the tent and found no knyghtes there, for they were atte justyng. And so he handled the swerd by the 35 handels, and lightly and fiersly pulled it out of the stone, and took his hors and rode his way untill he came to his broder sir Kay and delyverd hym the swerd.

And as sone as sir Kay saw the swerd he wist wel it was the swerd of the stone, and so he rode to his fader syr Ector 40

and said, 'Sire, loo here is the swerd of the stone, wherfor I must be kyng of thys land.'

When syre Ector beheld the swerd he retorned ageyne and cam to the chirche, and there they alighte al thre and
5 wente into the chirche, and anon he made sir Kay to swere upon a book how he came to that swerd.

'Syr,' said sir Kay, 'by my broder Arthur, for he brought it to me.'

'How gate ye this swerd?' said sir Ector to Arthur.

10 'Sir, I will telle you. When I cam home for my broders swerd I fond nobody at home to delyver me his swerd, and so I thought my broder syr Kay shold not be swerdles, and so I cam hyder egerly and pulled it out of the stone withoute ony payn.'

15 'Found ye ony knyghtes about this swerd?' seid sir Ector.

'Nay,' said Arthur.

'Now,' said sir Ector to Arthur, 'I understande ye must be kynge of this land.'

'Wherfore I?' sayd Arthur, 'and for what cause?'

20 'Sire,' saide Ector, 'for God wille have hit soo, for ther shold never man have drawn oute this swerde but he that shal be rightwys kyng of this land. Now lete me see whether ye can putte the swerd theras it was and pulle hit oute ageyne.'

25 'That is no maystry,' said Arthur, and soo he put it in the stone. Therwithalle sir Ector assayed to pulle oute the swerd and faylled.

(6) 'Now assay', said syre Ector unto syre Kay. And anon he pulled at the swerd with alle his myghte, but it wold not be.

30 'Now shal ye assay,' said syre Ector to Arthur.

'I wyll wel,' said Arthur, and pulled it out easily.

And therwithalle syre Ector knelyd doune to the erthe and syre Kay.

'Alias!' said Arthur, 'myne own dere fader and broder,
35 why knele ye to me?'

'Nay, nay, my lord Arthur, it is not so. I was never your fader nor of your blood, but I wote wel ye are of an hyher blood than I wende ye were,' and thenne syre Ector told hym all how he was bitaken hym for to nourisshe hym and
40 by whoos commandement, and by Merlyns delyveraunce.

Thenne Arthur made grete doole whan he understood that syre Ector was not his fader.

⁴ Sir/ said Ector unto Arthur, 'woll ye be my good and gracious lord when ye are kyng?'

'Els were I to blame,* said Arthur, 'for ye are the man 5 in the world that I am most beholdyng to, and my good lady and moder your wyf that as wel as her owne hath fostred me and kepte. And yf ever hit be Goddes will that I be kynge as ye say, ye shall desyre of me what I may doo and I shalle not faille yow. God forbede I shold 10 faille yow.'

'Sir,' said sire Ector, 'I will aske no more of yow but that ye wille make my sone, your foster-broder syre Kay, se(n)ceall of alle your landes.'

'That shalle be done/ said Arthur, 'and more, by the feith 15 of my body, that never man shalle have that office but he whyle he and I lyve.'

Therewithall they wente unto the Archebisshop and told hym how the swerd was encheved and by whome. And on twelfth day alle the barons cam thyder and to assay to take 20 the swerd who that wold assay, but there afore hem alle ther myghte none take it out but Arthur. Wherfor ther were many lordes wroth and saide it was grete shame unto them all and the reame to be overgovernyd with a boye of no hyghe blood borne. And so they fell oute at that tyme, that z\$ it was put of tyll Candelmas, and thenne all the barons shold mete there ageyne, but alwey the ten knyghtes were ordeyned to watche the swerd day and nyght, and so they sette a pavelione over the stone and the swerd, and fyve alwayes watched. 30

Soo at Candalmasse many moo grete lordes came .thyder for to have wonne the swerde, but there myghte none pre-vaile. And right as Arthur dyd at Cristmasse he dyd at Candelmasse and pulled oute the swerde easely, wherof the barons were sore agreved and put it of in delay till the hyghe 35 feste of Eester. And as Arthur sped afore so dyd he at Eester. Yet there were some of the grete lordes had indignacion that Arthur shold be kynge, and put it of in a delay tyll the feest of Pentecoste. Thenne the Archebisshop of Caunterbury by Merlyns provydenge lete purveye thenne of the 40

best knyghtes that they myghte gete, and suche knyghtes as Uther Pendragon loved best and moost trusted in his dayes. And suche knyghtes were put aboute Arthur as syr Bawdewyn of Bretayn, syre Kaynes, syre Ulfyus, syre Barsias; all
 5 these with many other were alweyes about Arthur day and nyghte till the teste of Pentecost.

(7) And at the feste of Pentecost alle maner of men assayed to pulle at the swerde that wold assay, but none myghte prevaille but Arthur, and he pulled it oute afore all the
 10 lordes and comyns that were there. Wherfore alle the comyns cryed at ones,

* We wille have Arthur unto our kyng! We wille put hym no more in delay, for we all see that it is Goddes wille that he shalle be our kynge, and who that holdeth ageynst it
 15 we wille slee hym.' And therewithall they knelyd at ones both ryche and poure and cryed Arthur mercy bycause they had delayed hym so longe. And Arthur foryaf hem and took the swerd bitwene both his handes and offred it upon the aulter where the Archebisshop was, and so was he made
 20 knyghte of the best man that was there.

And so anon was the coronacyon made, and ther was he sworne unto his lordes and the comyns for to be a true kyng, to stand with true justyce fro thens forth the dayes of this lyf. Also thenne he made alle lordes that helde of the croune
 5 to come in and to do servyce as they oughte to doo. And many complayntes were made unto sir Arthur of grete wronges that were done syn the dethe of kyng Uther, of many londes that were bereved lordes, knyghtes, ladyes, and gentilmen; wherfor kynge Arthur maade the londes to
 30 be yeven ageyne unto them that oughte hem.

Whanne this was done that the kyng had stablissed alle the countreyes aboute London, thenne he lete make syr Kay sencial of Englonde, and sir Baudewyn of Bretayne was made constable, and sir Ulfyus was made chamberlayn, and sire
 35 Brastias was maade wardeyn to wayte upon the Northe fro Trent forwardes, for it was that tyme the most party the kynges enemyes. But within fewe yeres after Arthur wan alle the North, Scotland and alle that were under their obeis-
 40 he overcam hem al as **he** dyd **the** remenaunt thurgh the

noble prowess of hymself and his knyghtes of the Round Table.

Thenne the kyng remeved into Walys and lete crye a (8)
grete feste, that it shold be holdyn at Pentecost after the
incoronacion of hym at the cyte* of Carlyon. Unto the fest 5
come kyng Lott of Lowthean and of Orkeney with fyve
hondred knyghtes with hym; also ther come to the feste
kyng Uryens of Gore with four hondred knyghtes with
hym; also ther come to that feeste kyng Nayntres of Garloth
with seven hundred knyghtes with hym; also ther came to the 10
feest the kyng of Scotland with sixe honderd knyghtes with
hym, and he was but a yong man. Also ther came to the feste
a kyng that was called the Kyng with the Honderd Knyghtes,
but he and his men were passyng wel bisene at al poyntes;
also ther cam the kyng of Cardos with fyve honderd knyghtes. 15

And kyng Arthur was glad of their comynge, for he
wende that al the kynges and knyghtes had come for grete
love and to have done hym worship at his feste, wherfor the
kyng made grete joye and sente the kynges and knyghtes
grete presentes. But the kynges wold none receyve, but 20
rebuked the messagers shamefully and said they had no
joye to receyve no yeftes of a berdles boye that was come of
lowe blood, and sente hym word they wold none of his yeftes,
but that they were come to gyve hym yeftes with hard
swerdys betwixt the neck and the sholders; and therefore 25
they came thyder, so they told to the messagers playnly, for
it was grete shame to all them to see suche a boye to have a
rule of soo noble a reaume as this land was. With this
ansuer the messagers departed and told to kyng Arthur
this ansuer, wherfor by the advys of his barons he took hym 30
to a strong towre with fyve hondred good men with hym.
And all the kynges aforesaid in a maner leyde a syege tofore
hym, but kyng Arthur was well vytailed.

And within fyftene dayes ther came Merlyn amonge hem
into the cyte of Carlyon. Thenne all the kynges were 35
passyng gladde of Merlyn and asked hym,

'For what cause is that boye Arthur made your kyng?'

'Syres,' said Merlyn, 'I shalle telle yow the cause, for he
is kyng Uther Pendragons sone borne in wedlok, goten on
Igrayne, the dukes wyf of Tyntigail.'

40

'Thenne is he a bastard,' they said al.

'Nay,' said Merlyn, 'after the deth of the duke more than thre houres was Arthur begoten, and thirtene dayes after kyng Uther wedded Igrayne, and therfor I preve hym he
5 is no bastard. And, who saith nay, he shal be kyng and overcome alle his enemyes, and or he deye he shalle be long kynge of all Englund and have under his obeyssaunce Walys, Yrland, and Scotland, and moo reames than I will now reherce.'

10 Some of the kynges had merveyl of Merlyns wordes and demed well that it shold be as he said, and som of hem lough hym to scorne, as kyng Lot, and mo other called hym a wytche. But thenne were they accorded with Merlyn that kynge Arthur shold come oute and speke with the kynges,
15 and to come sauf and to goo sauf, suche suraunce ther was made. So Merlyn went unto kynge Arthur and told hym how he had done and badde hym, 'Fere not, but come oute boldly and speke with hem; and spare hem not, but ansuere them as their kynge and chyvetayn, for ye shal overcome
20 hem all, whether they wille or nylle.'

(9) Thenne kynge Arthur came oute of his tour and had under his gowne a jesseraunte of double maylle, and ther wente with hym the Archebisshop of Caunterbury, and syr Baudewyn of Bretayne, and syr Kay, and syre Brastias; these
25 were the men of moost worship that were with hym. And whan they were mette there was no mekenes but stoute wordes on bothe sydes, but alweyes kynge Arthur ansuerd them and said he wold make them to bowe and he lyved, wherfore they departed with wrath. And kynge Arthur
30 badde kepe hem wel, and they bad the kynge kepe hym wel. Soo the kynge retornyd hym to the toure ageyne and armed hym and alle his knyghtes.

'What will ye do ?' said Merlyn to the kynges. 'Ye were better for to stynte, for ye shalle not here prevaille, though
35 ye were ten so many.'

'Be we wel avysed to be aferd of a dreame-reder ?' said kyng Lot.

With that Merlyn vanysshed awaye and came to kynge Arthur and bad hym set on hem fiersly. And in the mene-
40 whyle there were thre honderd good men of the best that

were with the kynges that wente streyghte unto kyng Arthur, and that comforted hym gretely.

'Syr/ said Merlyn to Arthur, 'fyghte not with the swerde that ye had by myracle til that ye see ye go unto the wers; thenne drawe it out and do your best.' 5

So forthwithalle kyng Arthur sette upon hem in their lodgyng, and syre Bawdewyn, syre Kay, and syr Brastias slewe on the right hand and on the lyfte hand, that it was merveylle; and alweyes kyng Arthur on horsback leyd on with a swerd and dyd merveillous dedes of armes, that many 10 of the kynges had grete joye of his dedes and hardynesse. Thenne kyng Lot brake out on the bak syde, and the Kyng with the Honderd Knyghtes and kyng Carados, and sette on Arthur fiersly behynde hym.

With that syre Arthur torned with his knyghtes and 15 smote behynd and before, and ever sir Arthur was in the formest prees tyl his hors was slayne undernethe hym. And therwith kyng Lot smote doune kyng Arthur. With that his four knyghtes receyved hym and set hym on horsback; thenne he drewe his swerd Excalibur, but it was so bryght 20 in his enemyes eyen that it gaf light lyke thirty torchys, and therwith he put hem on bak and slewe moche peple. And thenne the comyns of Carlyon aroos with clubbis and stavys and slewe many knyghtes, but alle the kynges helde them togyders with her knyghtes that were lefte on lyve, and so 25 fled and departed; and Merlyn come unto Arthur and counceilled hym to folowe hem no further.

So after the feste and journeye kyng Arthur drewe hym (10) unto London. And soo by the counceill of Merlyn the kyng lete calle his barons to counceill, for Merlyn had told the 30 kyng that the sixe kynges that made warre upon hym wold in al haste be awroke on hym and on his landys; wherfor the kyng asked counceill at hem al. They coude no counceill gyve, but said they were bygge ynough.

'Ye saye well/ said Arthur, 'I thanke you for your good 35 courage; but wil ye al that loveth me speke with Merlyn? Ye knowe wel that he hath done moche for me, and he knowefh many thynges. And whan he is afore you I wold that ye prayd hym hertely of his best avyse.'

Alle the barons sayd they wold pray hym and desyre hym. 40

Soo Merlyn was sente for and fair desyred of al the barons to gyve them best counceil.

I shall say you,' said Merlyn, 'I warne yow al, your enemyes are passyng strong for yow, and they are good men
5 of armes as ben on lyve. And by thys tyme they have goten to them four kynges mo and a myghty duke, and onlesse that our kyng have more chyvalry with hym than he may make within the boundys of his own reame, and he fyghte with hem in batail, he shal be overcome and slayn.'

10 'What were best to doo in this cause ?' said al the barons.

'I shal telle you,' said Merlyn, 'myne advys. There ar two bretheren beyond the see, and they be kynges bothe and merveillous good men of her handes: and that one hyghte kyng Ban of Benwic, and that other hyght kyng Bors of
15 Gaule, that is Fraunce. And on these two kynges warrith a myghty man of men, the kyng Claudas, and stryveth with hem for a castel; and grete werre is betwixt them. But this Claudas is so myghty of goodes wherof he geteth good knyghtes that he putteth these two kynges moost parte
20 (t)o the werse. Wherfor this is my counceil: that our kyng and soverayne lord sende unto the kynges Ban and Bors by two trusty knyghtes with letters wel devysed, that and they wil
W begins, [come and see] kyng Arthur and his courte and helpe hym
f° 9^r in hys warrys, that he wolde be sworne unto them to helpe
25 hem in their warrys agaynst kyng Claudas. Now what sey ye unto thys counceyle ?' seyde Merlyon.

'Thys ys well councelde,' seyde the kyng.

And in all haste two barownes ryght so were ordayned to go on thys message unto thes two kyngis, and lettirs were
3° made in the moste plesauntist wyse accordynge unto kyng Arthurs desyre, and Ulphuns and Brastias were made the messyngers; and so rode forth well horsed and well i-armed and as the gyse was that tyme, and so passed the see and rode towarde the cite of Benwyk. And there besydes were
35 eyght knyghtes that aspyed hem, and at a strayte passage they mette with Ulphuns and Brastias and wolde a takyn

20 C do the

23 *W begins* (kyng Arthur etc.)

23 *W* to helpe C 80 helpe

24 C he wil

27-9 C the kyng & alle the Barons right \$0 in alle haste ther were ordeyned to goo two knyghtes on the message

30 C in the plesaunt

31 C Vlffys

36 C hane taken S haue taken

them presoners. So they preyde them that they myght passe, for they were messyngers unto kyng Ban and Bors isente frome kynge Arthure.

'Therefore,' seyde the knyghtes, ye shall dey othir be presoners, for we be knyghtes of kynge Claudas. 5

And therewith two of them dressed their sperys unto Ulphuns and Brastias, and they dressed their sperys and ran togydir with grete random. And Claudas his knyghtes brake their spearis, and Ulphuns and Brastias bare the two knyghtes oute of their sadils to the erth and so lefte them 10 lyyng and rode their wayes. And the other six knyghtes rode before to a passage to mete with them ayen, and so Ulphuns and Brastias othir two smote downe and so paste on hir wayes. And at the fourthe passage there mette two for two and bothe were leyde unto the erthe. So there was none of 15 the eyght knyghtes but he was hurte sore othir brused.

And whan they com to Benwyke hit fortunede both the kynges be there, Ban and Bors. Than was hit tolde the two kyngis how there were com two messyngers. And anone there was sente unto them two knyghtes of worshyp, that 20 one hyght Lyonses, lorde of the contrey of nPayarne¹, and sir Pharyaunce, a worshipfull knyght; and anone asked them frome whens they com, and they seyde frome kyng Arthure, kynge of Ingelonde. And so they toke them in their armys and made grete joy eche of othir. But anone as they wyste 25 they were messyngers of Arthurs there was made no taryng, but forthwith they spake with the kyngis. And they welcommed them in the most faythfullyst wyse and seyde they were moste welcom unto them before all the kynges men lyyng. And therewith they kyssed the lettirs and 30 delyvird them. And whan kyng Ban and Bors undirstoode them and the lettirs, than were they more welcom than they were tofore.

And aft[er] the haste of the lettirs they gaff hem thys 9

4 C said the viii knyghtes 6-7 C their sperys and Vlfius and Brastias dresstd
 their speres and ranne 8 C Claudas knyghtes 9 C sperms and ther to hylde
 and baref 13 c Brastias smote other two down 18 C And whan it was
 18 two *not in C* 19 And anone *not in C* 20 C were x\ W Bayarne
 C* payarne F (MS. Harl. 6340,/. 67*) palerne 22 C phariaunce 22-3 C
 they asked from 25 C as the ii kynges wist 27 C with the knyghtesf
 28 most *not in C* 30 men *not in C* 31 kyng *not in C* 33 C were before

answere that they wolde fulfille th[e] desire of kyng Arthurs
 wrytynge, and bade sir Ulphuns and sir Brastias tarry there
 as longe as they wolde, for they shulde have such chere as
 myght be made for them in thys marchis. Than Ulphuns
 5 and Brastias tolde the kyng of their adventure at the pas-
 sagis for the eyght knyghtes. 'A ha,' seyde Ban and Bors,
 'they were oure good frendis. I wolde I had wyste of them,
 and they sholde nat so [have] ascaped.' So thes two
 knyghtes had good chere and grete gyfftis as much as they
 10 myght bere away, and had their answer by mowth and by
 wrytynge that the two kynges wolde com unto Arthure in
 all the haste that they myght.

So thes two knyghtes rode on afore and passed the see
 and com to their lorde and tolde hym how they had spedde,
 15 wherefore kyng Arthure was passyng glad and seyde, 'How
 suppose you, at what tyme woll thes two kynges be here?'

'Sir,' they seyde, 'before Allhalowmasse.'

Than the kyng lette purvey a grete feste, and also he
 lette cry both turnementis and justis thorowoute all his
 20 realme, and the day appoynted and sette at Allhalowmasse.
 And so the tyme drove on and all thynges redy ipurveyed.
 Thes two noble kynges were entirde the londe and comyn
 ovir the see with three hondred knyghtes full well arayed
 both for the pees and also for the werre. And so royally they
 25 were resceyved and brought toward the cite* of London.
 And so Arthure mette them ten myle oute of London, and
 there was grete joy made as cputhe be thought.

And on Allhalowmasse day at the grete feste sate in the
 hall the three kynges, and sir Kay the Senesciall served in
 30 the halle, and sir Lucas the Butler that was Duke Corneus
 son, and sir Gryfflet that was the son of God of Cardal: thes
 three knyghtes had the rule of all the servyse that served
 the kyngis. And anone as they were redy and wayshe[n], all

1 W thy desire 3 for *not in C* 5-6 C of the adueture at their passages of the
 7 C were my fgood 8-9 C not haue escaped so So Vlfius & Brastias had
 13 C So the two knytes 15-16 C gladd At what tyme suppose ye the ij
 Kynges wol be here 18-23 Cfeeste and lete crye a grete Iustes And by all halow-
 massethe two kynges were come ouer the see with thre honderd kny3tes wel arayed f
 24 also *not in C* 24-5 And so royally . . . London *not in Cf* 27-8 C ioye
 as coude be thou3t or made And on 29-30 C syre kay sencial . . . lucas the
 bottelere 31 of God *not in Cf* F (MS. Hart. 6340, f. 68, col. 2) girflis le
 filz dou de carduel 33 W washer C they had wasshen & rysen al knytes

the knyghtes that wolde juste made hem redy. And be than they were redy on horsebak there was seven hondred knyghtes. And kynge Arthure, Ban, and Bors, with the Archebyssshop of Caunterbyry, and sir Ector, Kays fadir, they were in a place covirde with clothys of golde lyke unto 5 an halle, with ladyes and jantillwomen for to beholde who dud beste and thereon to gyff a jugemente.

And kyng Arthure with the two kyngis lette departe the (11) seven hondred knyghtes in two partyes. And there were three hondred knyghtes of the realme of Benwyke and Gaule 10 that turned on the othir syde. And they dressed their shyldis and began to couche hir sperys, many good knyghtes. 10^r So sir Gryfflet was the firste that sette oute, and to hym com a knyght, hys name was sir Ladynas, and they com so egirly togydir that all men had wondir, and they so sore 15 fought that hir shyldis felle on pecis and both horse and man felle to the erthe, and both the French knyght and the Englysh knyght lay so longe that all men wente they had bene dede. Whan Lucas the Butler saw sir Gryfflet ly so longe, he horsed hym agayne anone, and they too ded many 20 marvelous dedis of armys with many bachelers.

Also sir Kay com oute of a bushement with fyve knyghtes with hym, and they six smote othir six downe. But sir Kay dud that day many mervaylous dedis of armys, that there was none that dud so welle as he that day. Than there com 25 Ladynas and Grastian, two knyghtes of Fraunse, and dud passynge well, that all men praysed them. Than com in sir Placidus, a good knyght, that mette with sir Kay and smote hym downe horse and man, wherefore sir Gryfflet was wroth and mette with sir Placidus so harde that horse and man 30 felle to the erthe. But whan the fyve knyghtes wyst that sir Kay had a falle they were wroth oute of mesure and therewithal! ech of them fyve bare downe a knyght.

Whan kynge Arthur and the two kynges saw hem begynne wexe wroth on bothe partyes, they leped on smale 35 hakeneyes and lette cry that all men sholde departe unto their lodgyng. And so they wente home and unarmed

13-15 C that mette with a knyghte one ladynas and they mett so egerly that al 15 sore *not in C* i'9-20C Gryffletsoolye 24 many *not in C* 27 C come there Syre 32-3 Coutof wyt And therwith eche 37 C*vnarmed XT unharmed

them, and so to evynsonge and sduper. And aftir souper the three kynges went into a gardyne and gaff the pryce unto sir Kay and unto sir Lucas the Butler and unto sir Gryfflet. And than they wente unto councyle, and with
 5 hem Gwenbaus, brothir unto kynge Ban and Bors, a wyse clerke; and thidir wente Ulphuns, Brastias and Merlion. And aftir they had [ben] in her councyle they wente unto bedde. And on the morne they harde masse, and to dyner and so to their councyle, and made many argumentes what were
 io beste to do.

So at the laste they were concluded that M[erlion] sholde go with a tokyn of kynge Ban, that was a rynge, unto hys men and kynge Bors; Gracian and Placidus sholde go agayne and kepe their castels and their contreyes; and
 15 as for kynge Ban of Benwyke and kynge Bors of Gaule, (they) had ordayned them all thyng. And so (they) passed the see and com to Benwyke. And whan the people sawe kynge Bannys rynge, and Gracian and Placidus, they were glad and asked how their kynge fared and made grete joy of
 20 their welfare. And accordyng unto their soveraigne lordis desire, the m[e]n of warre made hem redy in all haste possible, so that they were fyftene thousand on horsebacke and foote, and they had grete plente* of vitayle by Merlions provisions. But Gracian and Placidus were lefte at home to
 »5 furnysh and garnysh the castell for drede of kyng Claudas.

Ryght so Merlion passed the see well vitayled bothe by watir and by londe. And whan he com to the see he sente home the footemen agayne, and toke no mo with hym but ten thousand men on horsebake, the moste party of men of
 30 armys; and s(c)hipped and passed the see into Inglonde and loded at Dovor. And thorow the wytte of Merlion he ledde the oste northwarde the pryv^yst wey that coude be thought, unto the foreste of Bedgrayne, and there in a valey

i-z C after the 5 C syr Ban 7 C had ben in counceill 12 C Ban
 and that was 14-16 C countreyes as for kynge Ban of Ben wick and kynge
 Bors of Gaules had ordeyned hem and so passed Both W and C seem incomplete,
 and F (MS. Harl. 6340, f. 7r, col. 1) throws no light on this passage. 19 C
 how the kynges ferd 20 C welfare and cordyng and accordyng vnto the
 souerayne 21 W desire and the man C desyre the men 22 C on hors
 23-4 C vytaylle with hem by Merlyns prouysyon 24 at home not in C 25 C
 the castels 29 C mooste parte men of 30 W so shipped C so shipped
 31-2 Of he had the hoost

lodged hym secretly. Than rode Merlion to Arthure and to the two kynges, and tolde hem how he had spedde, whereof they had grete mervayle that ony man on erthe myght spede so sone to go and com. So Merlion tolde them how ten thousande were in the forest of Bedgrayne well 5 armed at all poyntis.

Than was there, no more to sey, but to horsebak wente all the oste as Arthure had before provyded. So with twenty thousand he passed by nyght and day. Bu[t] there was made such an ordinaunce afore by Merlyon that there sholde no 10 man of warre ryde nothir go in no contrey on this syde Trente watir but if he had a tokyn frome kynge Arthure, wherethorow the kynges enemyes durst nat ryde as they dud tofore to aspye.

And so wythin a litill whyle the three kyngis com to the 15 forest of Bedgrayne and founde there a passyng fayre felyship and well besene, whereof they had grete joy, and vitayle they wanted none.

Thys was the causis of the northir hoste, that they were rered for the despite and rebuke that the ^rsix¹ kyngis had 20 at Carlyon. And tho six kyngis by hir meanys gate unto them fyve othir kyngis; and thus they began to gadir hir people, and (now) they swore nother for welle nothyr wo they sholde nat lyve tyll they had destroyed Arthure.

And than they made an othe, and the first that began the 25 othe was the deuke of Canfbenet, that he wolde brynge with hym [r]fyve[] thousand men of armys, the which were redy on horsebakke. Than swore kynge Brandegoris of Strangore that he wolde brynge with hym fyve thousand men of armys on horsebacke. Than swore kynge Clarivaus 30 of Northumbirlonde wolde brynge [three] thousand men of armys with hym. Than swore the Kynge with the Hon-dred Knyghtes that was a passyng good man and a yonge,

1 C lodged hem 3 C merneylle (S merueylle) that man 4 Csoone and goo
5 C Bedgrayne 8 C afore purueyed So 15-16 C lytel space the thre kynges
came vnto the Castel of Bedgrayne *In Fthe armies gather en la.praerie de bedingran
and stay dessoubz le chastel de Bedingran (MS. Harl. 6340,/.f73^v, col. x)* 19 C
the cause of 20 W vii C syx 23 W, C how 23-4 Csware that sor wele
nor woo they shold not leue other tyl 26 W Candebentl (cf. p. 28,1.1) 27 W
vi M C v M F (loc. cit.) cinq mille hommes 31 W in M men C* thre
thousand men F(loc. cit.) trois mille hommes 32 wyth hym not in C

11^r that he wold brynge four thousand good men of armys on horsebacke. Than there swore kynge Lott, a passyng good knyght and fadir unto sir Gawayne, that he wolde brynge fyve thousand good men of armys on horsebak. Also the[r]
 5 swore kynge Uryen⁶ that was sir Uwaynes fadir of the londe of Goore, and he wolde brynge six thousand men of armys on horsebak. Also there swore kynge Idres of Cornuwaile that he wolde brynge fyve thousand men of armys on horsebake. Also there swore kynge Cradilmans to brynge fyve
 10 thousand men on horsebacke. Also there swore kyng Angwyssshauns of Irelande to brynge fyve thousand men of armys on horsebak. Also there swore kynge Nentres to brynge fyve thousand men on horsebak. Also there swore kynge Carados to brynge fyve thousand men of armys on
 15 horsebak. So hir hole oste was of clene men of armys: on horsebacke was fully fyffty thousand, and on foote ten thousand of good mennes bodyes.

Than they were sone redy and mounted uppon horsebacke, and sente forthe before the foreryders. For thes a
 20 eleven kynges in hir wayes leyde a sege unto the castell of Bedgrayne; and so they departed and drew towarde Arthure, and leffte a fewe to byde at the sege, for the castell of Bedgrayne was an holde of kynge Arthurs and the men that were within were kynge Arthurs men all.

25 So by Merlyons advice there were sente foreryders to skymme the contrey; and they mette with the foreryders of the Northe and made hem to telle which way the oste com. And than they tolde kynge Arthure, and by kynge Ban and Bors his counceile they lette brenne and destroy all the
 30 contrey before them there they sholde ryde.

The Kynge of the Hondred Knyghtis that tyme mette a wondir dreame two nyghtes before the batayle: that there blew a grete wynde and blew downe hir castels and hir townys, and aftir that com a watir and bare hit all away.
 35 And all that herde of that swevyn seyde hit was a tokyn of

1 good *not in C* 3 C and syre Gawayns fader 4 good *not in C* \$ C
 Vryence 6 C gore 9 C cardelmans n C Agwysaunce 13 C men
 of armes on 16 was fully *not in C* 18-19 C vpon hors and sente forth
 their fore rydars 19 thes a *not in C* 22 C lefte fewe 23 C was
 holden of kynge Arthure 24-5 C were theryn were Arthurs so by 28 C
 told it to Arthur 29 his *not in C* 31 that tyme *not in C*

grete batayle. Than by counceile of Merlion, whan they wyst which wey the an eleven kynges wolde ryde and lodge that nyght, at mydnyght they sette uppon them as they were in their pavilions. But the scowte-wacche by hir oste cryed: 'Lordis, to ^rarmes¹! for here be oure enemyes at youre hondeP 5

Than kynge Arthure and kynge Ban and Bors with hir (14) good and trusty l[^]nyghtes sette uppon them so fersely that he made them overthrowe hir pavilions on hir hedis. But 11^v the eleven kynges by manly prouesse of armys toke a fayre champion, but there was slayne that morow tyde ten thou- 10 sand good mennes bodyes. And so they had before hem a stronge passage; yet were there fyffty thousand of hardy men.

Than hit drew toward day. 'Now shall ye do by myne advice,' seyde Merlyon unto the three kyngis, and seyde: 'I 15 wolde kynge Ban and Bors with hir felyship of ten thousand men were put in a woode here besyde in an inbusshement and kept them prevy, and that they be leyde or the lyght of the day com, and that they stire nat tyll that ye and youre knyghtes [have] fought with hem longe. And whan hit ys 20 daylyght, dresse youre batayle evyn before them and the passage, that they may se all youre oste, for than woll they be the more hardy whan they se you but aboute twenty thousande, and cause hem to be the gladder to suffir you and youre oste to com over the passage.' 25

All the three kynges and the hole barownes seyde how Merlion devised passynge well, and so hit was done.

So on the morn whan aythir oste saw othir, they of the Northe were well comforted. Than Ulphuns and Brastias were delyvirde three thousand men of armys, and they sette 30 on them fersely in the passage, and slew on the ryght honde and on the lyffte honde that hit was wondir to telle. But whan the eleven kynges saw that there was so few a felyship that dud such dedis of armys, they were ashamed and sette on hem agayne fersely. And there was sir Ulphuns horse 35 slayne, but he dud mervelously on foote. But the duke

2 C the xj kynges 5 W to harneys C* to armes F as armes 12 S
passaye 15 and seyde *not in C* 18 Cf and kepe hem 20 W knyghtes
and fought 26-7 C sayde that Merlyn said passyngly wel and it was done anone
as Merlyn had deuysed Soo 28-9 C other the hoost of the north was well
29 Cto Vlflyus 36 C slayne vnder hym but he dyd merueyllously well on foote

Es a n s e of Canr[benet] and kynge Glarivaunce of Northe-
 humbirlonde were allwey greuously set on Ulphuns. Than
 sir Brastias saw his felow yfared so withall, he smote the
 duke with a spere, that horse and man felle downe. That
 5 saw kyng Claryvauns, and returne[d] unto sir Brastias, and
 eythir smote othir so that horse and man wente to the erthe.
 And so they lay longe astoned, and their horse knees braste
 to the harde bone.

Than com sir Kay the Senesciall with six felowis with
 10 hym and dud passyng well. So with that com the eleven
 kyngis, and there was Gryfflette put to the erth horse and
 man, and Lucas the Butler horse and man, [by] kynge
 Brandegoris and kynge Idres and kynge Angwyschaunce.

Than wexed the medlee passyng harde on both parties.
 15 Whan sir Kay saw sir Gryfflet on foote, he rode unto kynge
 Nentres and smote hym downe, and ledde his horse unto
 sir Gryfflette and horsed hym agayne. Also sir Kay with
 12^r the same spere smote downe kynge Lotte and hurte hym
 passyng sore. That saw the Kynge with the Hondred
 20 Knyghtes and ran unto sir Kay and smote hym downe, and
 toke hys horse and gaff hym kynge Lotte, whereof he seyde
 gramercy. Whan sir Gryfflet saw sir Kay and sir Lucas de
 Butler on foote, he with a sherpe spere grete and square rode
 to Pynnel, a good man of armys, and smote horse and man
 25 downe, and than he toke hys horse and gaff hym unto sir
 Kay.

Than kynge Lotte saw kynge Nentres on foote, he ran
 unto Meliot de la Roche and smote hym downe horse and
 man, and gaff hym (to kynge Nentres) the horse and horsed
 30 hym agayne. Also the Kynge with the Hondred Knyghtes
 saw kynge Idres on foote, he ran unto Gwyniarde de Bloy
 and smote hym downe horse and main, and gaff kynge Idres
 the horse and horsed hym agayne. Than kynge Lotte smote
 downe Clarinaus de la Foreyste Saveage and gaff the horse
 35 unto duke Estans. And so whan they had horsed the kyngis

1 C Eustace of Cambenet W Eskance of Candebenet F (MS. Harl. 6340, f. 76",
 col. z) Estams de Cambenit (cf. p. 31, line 1) C Claryaunce 2 C alweye greuouse
 on Vlfyus 3 C felawe ferd so 5 C returned 12 C man by kynge
 10 W and hurte repeated 23 C he tooke a sharp spere grete and square and rode
 28 C Melot 29 hym to not in C 31 C Gwymyartf F (MS. cit., f. 74*,
 col. 2) Guynas 33 W That kynge C & kyng 35 C Eustace (see note 1).

agayne, they drew hem all eleven kynges togydir, and seyde they wolde be revenged of the damage that they had takyn that day.

The meanewhyle com in kyng Arthure with an egir countenans, and founde Ulphuns and Brastias on foote, in grete 5 perell of dethe, that were fowle defoyled undir the horse feete. Than Arthure as a lyon ran unto kyng Cradilmont of North Walis and smote hym thorow the lyttle syde, that horse and man felle downe. Than he toke the horse by the reygne and led hym unto Ulphine and seyde, 'Have this 10 horse, myne olde frende, for grete nede hast thou of an horse/ 'Gramercy,' seyde Ulphuns.

Than kyng Arthure dud so mervaylesly in armys that all men had wondir. Whan the Kyng with the Hondred Knyghtes saw kyng Cradilmente on foote, he ran unto sir 15 Ector, sir Kayes fadir, that was well ihorsed and smote horse and man downe, and gaff the horse unto the kyng and horsed hym agayne. And whan kyng Arthure saw that kyng ryde on sir Ectors horse he was wrothe, and with hys swerde he smote the kyng on the helme, that a quarter of 20 the helme and shelde clave downe; and so the swerde carve downe unto the horse necke, and so man and horse felle downe to the grounde. Than sir Kay com unto kyng Morganoure, senesciall with the Kyng of the Hondred Knyghtes, and smote hym downe horse and man, and ledde 25 the horse unto hys fadir, sir Ector.

Than sir Ector ran unto a knyght that hyght Lardans and 12^v smote horse and man downe, and lad the horse unto sir Brastias, that grete nede had of an horse and was gretly defoyled. Whan Brastias behelde Lucas the Butler that lay 30 lyke a dede man undir the horse feete—and ever sir Gryflet dud mercyfully for to reskow hym, and there were allwayes fourtene knyghtes upon sir Lucas—and than sir Brastias smote one or them on the helme, that hit wente unto his tethe; and he rode unto another and smote hym, that hys arme flow 35 into the felde; than he wente to the thirde and smote hym on

4 C cam in syr Ectorf *F* (*ibid.*,/. 79", col. 1) Le rois Artus 6-7 C vnder horsfeet
7 C Cradelmont 8-9 C that the hors and the kyng fyll 13 C syre Arthur
16 C Ector that was wel horsed syr kayes fader and smote 18-19 C sawe the kyng
zi Cshelde fyll doune zz Cand so the kyng & the hors 23-4 C syr Morganore.
Cf. p. 33, L12. 32 C dyd merueillously for 33 C lncas S lucas 35 C the arme

the shulder, that sholdir and arme flow unto the felde. And whan Gryfflet saw rescowis he smote a knyght on the templis, that hede and helme wente of to the erthe; and Gryfflet toke that horse and lad hym unto sir Lucas, and bade hym
 5 mownte uppon that horse and * revenge his hurtis—for sir Brastias had slayne a knyght tofore—and horsed sir Lucas.

- (15) Than sir Lucas saw kynge Angwysschaunce that nyghre¹ had slayne Maris de la Roche; and Lucas ran to hym with
 10 a sherpe spere that was grete, and he gaff hym suche a falle that the horse felle downe to the erthe. Also Lucas founde there on foote Bloyas de la Fla[un]dres and sir Gwynas, two hardy knyghtes; and in that woodnes that Lucas was in, he slew two bachelers and horsed them agayne. Than
 15 wexed the batayle passynge harde one bothe partyes. But kynge Arthure was glad that hys knyghtes were horsed agayne. And than they fought togidres, that the noyse and the sowne range by the watir and woode. Wherefore kynge Ban and Bors made hem redy and dressed their shyldis and
 20 harneysse, and were so currageous that their enemyes shooke and byverd for egrinesse.

All thys whyle sir Lucas, Gwynas, Bryaunte, and Bellias of Flaundres helde stronge medle* agaynste six kynges, which were kynge Lott, kynge Nentres, kynge Brandegoris, kynge
 25 Idres, kyng Uriens and kynge Angwysschauns. So with the helpe of sir Kay and of sir Gryfflet they helde thes six kyngis harde, that unneth they had.ony power to deffende them. But whan kynge Arthure saw the batayle wolde nat be ended by no maner, he fared woode as a lyon and stirred his horse
 30 here and there on the ryght honde and on the lyffte honde, that he stynted nat tylle he had slayne twenty knyghtes. Also he wounded kynge Lotte sore on the shulder, and made hym to leve that grownde, for sir Kay with sir Gryfflet
 13^r dud with kynge Arthure grete dedis of armys there.

35 Than sir Ulphuns, Brastias and sir Ector encountirde

3 0\$ not in C 4 C took the how of that knyght & lad 6-7 C horsed Gryfflet 8-9 W that nyght had Cf that late hadde In F Maris is attacked but not hilled 8-9 W (sidenote): The dethe of Marys de la Roche 9 C Morys 10 C a shortf spere 10 C grete that he 12 W Flaundres C* flaundres F Flaundres 20 C that many knyghtes shoke 24 W kyng kynge Lott 33 C kay & gryfflet 34 W armys dud there C there grete dedes of armes

agaynste the duke Estans and kynge Cradilmante and kynge Clarivauns of Northhumbirlonde and kynge Carados and the Kynge with the Hondred Knyghtes. So thes kynges encountird with thes knyghtes, that they made them to avoyde the grounde. Than kynge Lotte made grete dole 5 for his damagis and his felowis, and seyde unto the kyngis,

'But if we woll dp as I have devised, we all shall be slayne and destroyed. Lette me have the Kynge with the Hondred Knyghtes, and kynge Angwysshaunce, and kynge Idres, and the duke of Canrbenet]. And we fyve kyngis woll have 10 ten thousand men of armys with us, and we woll go on one party whyle the six kynges holde the medle* with twelve thousand. And whan we se that ye have foughtyn with hem longe, than woll we com on freyssly; and ellis shall we never macche them,' seyde kynge Lotte, 'but by thys means', 15 So they departed as they here devised, and thes six kyngis made their party stronge agaynste kyng Arthure and made grete warre longe in the meanwhyle.

Than brake the bushement of kynge Banne and Bors; and Lionse and Phariaunce had that advaunte-garde, and 20 they two knyghtes mette with kynge Idres that was nere discomfited. That saw kynge Angwysshaunce, and put Lyonses and Phariaunce in poynte of dethe, for the duke^r of Canbenet¹ com on with a grete felyship. So thes two knyghtes were in grete daungere of their lyves, that they 25 were fayne to returne; but allweyes they rescowed hemselff and hir felyship mervelously. Whan kynge Bors saw tho knyghtes put on bak hit greved hym sore. Than he com on so faste that his felyship semed as blak as inde.

1 Cf Eustace (*F* Estams) 1-2 C Cradelment & kyng Cradelmat and kynge Clary-
aunce 2-3 C Carados & ageynst the kyng with 3-4 C thes kny3tes encountred
with these kynges 6-7 C the x kynges but yf ye wil do as I deuyse we shalle
beslayn 9 Cf Agwysaunce F Anguins 10 W Candebenet C*Canbenec
F Cambenit 10-n Cf haue xv M men *F* is silent on this point but seems to
support W. Cf. the remark', en firent six eschielles et en mirent en chascune deux mille
hommes (*MS. Harl. 6340*,/. y8', col. 1). 11-12 C go on partef 12-13 C
holde medle with XII M & we see 14 C com on fyersly 16 thes not in C
18-19 C Iⁿ the meane whyle brake 20 C Lyonses and Pharyaunce had the
aduant 21-2 C kyng Idres and his felauship and there began a grete medele of
brekyng of speres and smytyng of swerdys with sleynge of men and horses And
kynge Idres was nere at discomforture That sawe (*homoeoteleuton in W?*) 22 C
sawe Agwysaunce the kyng 23-4 W duke Candebenet C duke of Canbenek
F due de Cambenit 24 C on with all with a grete

Whan kynge Lotte had aspyed kynge Bors, he knew hym well, and seyde,

'Jesu defende us from dethe and horryble maymes, for I se well we be in grete perell of dethe; for I se yondir a kynge,
5 one of the moste worshipfullst^r men, and the^{"1} best knyghtes of the worlde be inclyned unto his felyship.'

'What ys he?*' seyde the Kynge with the Hu[n]dirde Knyghtes.

'Hit ys,' he seyde, 'kynge Bors of Gaule. I mervayle,'
io seyde he, 'how they com unto this contrey withoute wetyng of us all.'

'Hit was by Merlions advice,' seyde a knyght.

'As for me,' seyde kynge Carados, 'I woll encountir with kynge Bors, and ye woll rescow me whan myster ys.'

15 'Go on,' seyde they, 'for we woll all that we may.'

Than kynge Carados and hys oste rode on a soffte pace tyll they com as nyghe kynge Bors as a bowe-draught. Than
13^v eythir lette theire horsys renne as faste as they myght. And Bleobris that was godson unto kynge Bors, he bare his
20 chyeff standard; that was a passyng good knyght. 'Now shall we se,' seyde kynge Bors, 'how thes northirne Bretons can bere theire armys!' So kynge Bors encountird with a
knyght and smote hym throwoute with a spere, that he felle dede unto the erthe; and aftirwarde drew hys swerde and
25 dud mervaylous dedis of armys, that all partyes had grete wondir thereof. And his knyght[es] fayled nat but dud hir parte. And kynge Carados was smytten to the erthe. With that com the Kynge with the Hondred Knyghtes and rescowed kynge Carados myghtyly by force of armys, for
30 he was a passyng good knyght and but a yonge man.

(16) Be than com into the felde kynge Ban as ferse as a lyon, with bondis of grene and thereuppon golde. 'A ha,' seyde
kynge Lott, 'we muste be discomfite, for yondir I se the moste valiante knyght of the worlde, and the man of moste
35 renowne, for such two brethirne as ys kynge Ban and kynge Bors ar nat lyvyng. Wherefore we muste nedis voyde or

2-3 C thenne he said O Ihesu

9 C is said kyng Lot kyng

13 C As for hym sayd kynge

eyther bataill lete Chors

Bors 26 W his knyght

5 W and of the C men & one of the (see note)

10 seyde he *not in C*

15 C said they al we wil do all that

19 CBleoberys 22 C bere the armes 8c kyng

Chis kny3tes .30 C knyght of a kynge & but

12 C said the knyghte

18 C

dye, and but if we avoyde manly and wysely there ys but dethe.' So wan thes two kyngis, Ban and Bors, com into the batayle, they com in so fersely that the strokis re[d]ounded agayne fro the woode and the watir. Wherefore kynge Lotte wepte for pite* and dole that he saw so many good knyghtes 5 take their ende. But thorow the grete force of kynge Ban they made bothe the northirne batayles that were parted hurteled togidirs for grete drede. And the three kynges and their knyghtes slew on ever, that hit was pite* to se and to beholde the multitude of peple that fledde. 10

But kyng Lott and the Kynge with the Hundred Knyghtes and kynge Morganoure gadred the peple togydir passy[n]ge knyghtly, and dud grete proues of armys, and helde the batayle all the day lyke harde. Whan the Kynge with the Hundred Knyghtes behelde the grete damage that kynge 15 Ban [dyd] he threste unto hym with his horse and smote hym an hyghe on the helme a grete stroke and stoned hym sore. Than kynge Ban was wood wrothe with hym and folowed on hym fersely. The othir saw that and caste up hys shelde and spored hys horse forewarde, but the stroke 20 of kynge Ban downe felle and carve a cantell of the shelde, and the swerde sloode downe by the hawbirke byhynde hys backe and kut thorow the trappoure of stele and the horse evyn in two pecis, that the swerde felle to the erth. Than the 14^r Kynge of the Hundred Knyghtes voyded the horse lyghtly, 25 and with hys swerde he broched the horse of kynge Ban thorow and thorow. With that kynge Ban voyded lyghtly from the dede horse and smote at that othir so egirly on the helme that he felle to the erthe. Also in that ire he felde kynge Morganoure, and there was grete slawghtir of good 30 knyghtes and mucche peple.

Be that tyme com into the prees kynge Arthure and founde kynge Ban stondynge amonge the dede men and dede horse, fyghtynge on foote as a wood lyon, that there com none nyghe hym as farre as he myght reche with hys 35

2 C whanne kynge Ban came 3-4 C he cam W rebounded agayne
 C* redounded ageyne 7 C were departed 9-10 C p[^]te on to behold that
 multitude of the people 12 W passyge Cpaasygn 15-16 C kynge Ban
 dyd 18 wood *not in C* 21 C felle downe and 24 C the swerd felte the
 erth 28-9 Chors and thenne kynge Ban smote at the other so egrely and smote
 hym on the helme 31-2 C peple by than come

swerde; but he caught a grevous buffette, whereof kynge
 Arthure had grete pite\ And kynge Arthure was so bloody
 that by hys shyldde there myght no man know hym, for all
 was blode and brayne that stake on his swerde and on hys
 5 shyldde. And as kynge Arthure loked besyde hym he sawe
 a knyght that was passyngely well horsed. And therewith
 kynge Arthure ran to hym and smote hym on the helme,
 that hys swerde wente unto his teeth, and the knyght sanke
 downe to the erthe dede. And anone kynge Arthure toke
 io hys horse by the rayne and ladde hym unto kynge Ban and
 seyde, 'Fayre brothir, have ye thys horse, for ye have grete
 myster thereof, and me repentys sore of youre grete damage.*

'Hit shall be sone revenged/ seyde kynge Ban, 'for I
 truste in God myne hurte ys none suche but som of them
 15 may sore repente thys.'

'I woll welle,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'for I se youre dedys
 full actual; nevertheless I myght nat com to you at that
 tyme.'

But whan kynge Ban was mounted on horsebak, than
 ao there began a new batayle whych was sore and harde, and
 passynge grete slaughtir. And so thorow grete force kyng
 Arthure, kynge Ban, and kynge Bors made hir knyghtes
 alyght to wythdraw hem to a lytyll wood, and so over a
 litill ryvir; and there they rested hem, for on the nyght
 25 before they had no grete reste in the felde. And than the
 eleven kyngis put hem on an hepe all togydirs, as men adrad
 and oute of all comforte. But there was no man that myght
 passe them; they helde hem so harde togydirs bothe behynde
 and before that kynge Arthure had mervayle of their dedis
 30 of armys and was passynge wrothe.

'A, sir Arthure,' seyde kynge Ban and kynge Bors, 'blame
 14^v hem nat, for they do as good men ought to do. For be my
 fayth,' seyde kynge Ban, 'they ar the beste fyghtynge men
 and knyghtes of moste prouesse that ever y saw other herde
 35 off speke. And tho eleven kyngis ar men of grete worship;

4-5 C braynes on his swerd And as Arthur loked by hym he sawe 7 C syre
 Arthur 9-10 C tooke the hors 11 C haue this 14 C myn eure is
 not suche 17 C come at yow 20 C beganne newe 22-3 C knyghtes
 a litelf to with drawe them But alwey the xi kynges with her chyualrye neuer
 torned back and so withdrewe hem to a lytil woode and so ouer (possibly a
 homoeoteUuton in W) 34-5 C herd speke of

and if they were longyng to you, there were no kyng undir hevyn that had suche eleven kyngis nother off suche worship.'

'I may nat love hem,' seyde kyng Arthure, 'for they wolde destroy me.'

5

'That know we well,' seyde kyng Ban and kyng Bors, 'for they ar your mortall enemyes, and that hathe bene preved befbrehoride. And thys day they have done their parte, and that ys grete pite" of their wylfulness.'

Than all the eleven kynges drew hem togydir. And than seyde Lott, 'Lordis, ye muste do othirwyse than ye do, othir ellis the grete losses ys behynde: for ye may se what peple we have loste and what good men we lese because we wayte allweyes on thes footemen; and ever in savyng of one of thes footemen we lese ten horsemen for hym. Therefore thys ys myne advise: lette us putte oure footemen frome us, for hit ys nere nyght. For thys noble kyng Arthure woll nat tarry on the footemen, for they may save hemselff: the woode ys nerehonde. And whan we horsemen be togydirs, looke every of you kyngis lat make such ordinaunce that none breke uppon payne of deth. And who that seeth any man dresse hym to fle lyghtly, that he be slayne; for hit ys bettir we sle a cowarde than thorow a coward all we be slayne. How sey ye?' seyde kyng Lotte. 'Answer me, all ye kynges!'

25

'Ye say well,' seyde kyng Nentres. So seyde the Kyng with the Hondred Knyghtes; the same seyde kyng Carados and kyng Uryens; so seyde kyng Idres and kyng Brandegoris; so dud kyng Cradilmasse and the duke or Can[benet;] the same seyde kyng Claryaunce, and so dud kyng Angwysshaunce, and swore they wolde never fayle other for lyff nothir for dethe. And whoso that fledde all they sholde be slayne. Than they amended their harneyse and ryghted their sheldis, and toke newe speris and sette hem on their thyghes, and stode styll as hit had be a plumpe of woode.

35

a C suche xj knyghtes and of suche 4 for not in C 6 C that wote we
wel 11 C kyng Lott 12 C the grete losse is behynde ye may 17 W
for for hit ys 17 C For the noble Arthur 18 Chym self 20 C looke
eueryche of yow 23-4 C we to be slayne 26 C it is wel said quod kyng
Nentres 28 C so dyd kyng Idres 29 C Cradulmas W Candebenet.
Cf. p. 28, note 1 32-3 C fledde but did as they dyd shold be slayne

- (17) Whan kyng Arthure and kyng Ban and Bors behelde them and all hir knyghtes, they preyed them much for their noble chere of chevalry, fo[r] the hardyeste fyghters that ever they herde other saw. So furthwith there dressed
 5 a fourty knyghtes, and seyde unto the three kynges they wolde breke their batayle. And thes were their namys:
 15^r Lyones, Phariaunce, Ulphuns, Brastias, Ector, Kayus, Lucas de Butler, Gryfflet la Fyse de Deu, Marrys de la Roche, Gwynas de Bloy, Bryaunte de la Foreyste Saveage,
 10 Bellaus, Morians of the Castel Maydyns, Flaundreus of the Castel of Ladyes, Annecians that was kyng Bors godson, a noble knyght, and Ladinus de la Rouse, Emerause, Caulas, Graciens le Castilion, Bloyse de la Case, and sir Colgrevaunce de Goore.
- 15 All thes knyghtes rode on before with sperys on their thyghes and spurred their horses myghtly. And the eleven kyngis with parte of hir knyghtes rushed furthe as faste as they myght with hir sperys, and there they dud on bothe partyes merveylous dedes of armys. So there com into the
 20 thycke of the prees Arthure, Ban, and Bors, and slew downe-ryght on bothe hondis, that hir horses wente in blood up to the fittlockys. But ever the eleven kyngis and the oste was ever in the visage of Arthure. Wherefore kyng Ban and Bors had grete mervayle consydering the grete slaughter
 25 that there was; but at the laste they were dryven abacke over a litill ryver.

With that com Merlion on .a grete blacke horse and seyde unto kyng Arthure, 'Thou hast never done. Hast thou nat done inow ? Of three score thousande thys day hast thou
 30 lefFte on lyve but fyftene thousand! Therefore hit ys tyme to sey "Who 1" for God ys wroth with the for thou woll never have done. For yondir a eleven kynges at thys tyme woll nat be overthrowyn, but and thou tary on them ony lenger thy fortune woll turne and they shall encres. And therefore

1 C syre Arthur 2 C the mand all 3 W fo the C for the 4-5 C sawe
 with that there dressyd hem a xl noble knyghtes 8-9 C marietf de la roche
 10 C flandreus 13-14 C Gracyens le castelyn one bloyse de la caase ... gorre
 16-17 C myghtely as the horses my3te renne And the xj kynges with parte of her
 kny3htes russched with their horses as fast 20 W thes prees C the prees
 22 C and their hooste 28 kyng not in C 30 C x v M and it is tyme
 31 C saye ho for god is wrothe with the that thow 32 a not in C

withdraw you unto youre lodgyng and reste you us sone as ye may, and rewarde youre good knyghtes wiygolde and with sylver, for they have well deserved hit. *Tnerc* may no ryches be to dere for them, for of so fewe men as ye have there was never men dud more worshipfully in proues than 5 ye have done to-day: for ye have macched thys day with the beste fyghters of (he worlde).'

'That ys trouthe,' seyde kynge Ban and Bors.

Than Merlyon bade hem, 'Withdraw where ye lyst, for thys three yere I dare undirtake they shall nat dere you; and 10 by that tyme ye shall hyre newe tydyngis.'

Than Merlion seyde unto Arthure, 'Thes eleven kyngis have more on hande than they are ware off, for the Sarezynes ar loded in their contreies mo than fourty thousande, and brenne and sle and have leyde syege to the castell Wandes- 15 borow, and make grete destruction: therefore drede you nat thys yere. Also, sir, all the goodis that be gotyn at this batayle lette hit be serched, and whan ye have hit in your 15' hondis lette hit be geffyn frendly unto thes two kyngis, Ban and Bors, that they may rewarde their knyghtes wythall: 20 and that shall cause straungers to be of bettir wyll to do you servyse at nede. Also ye be able to rewarde youre owne knyghtes at what tyme somever hit lykith you.'

'Ye sey well,' seyde Arthure, 'and as thou haste devised so shall hit be 25 done.'

Whan hit was delyverde to thes kynges, Ban and Bors, they gaff the godis as frely to their knyghtes as hit was gevyn to them.

Than Merlion toke hys leve of kynge Arthure and of the two kyngis, for to go se hys mayster Bloyse that dwelled in 30 Northumbirlonde. And so he departed and com to hys mayster that was passynge glad of hys commynge. And there he tolde how Arthure and the two kynges had spedde at the grete batayle, and how hyt was endyd, and tolde the namys of every kynge and knyght of worship that was there. 35 And so Bloyse wrote the batayle worde by worde as Merlion

5-6 C ther were neuer men dyd more of prowesse than they haue done 8-9 C
 bors Also said Merlyn withdrawe yow where 11 C by than i4-15 C that
 brenne 15 C att the castell 19 C gyuen frely vnto 23-4 C knyghtes of
 your owne goodes whan someuer it lyketh you It is wel said qd Arthur 26 thes
 kynges not in C 27 Ckny3tesasfrelyas 30Cgoandsee CBleyse

tolde hym, how hit began and by whom, and in lyke wyse how hit was ended and who had the worst. And all the batayles that were done in Arthurs dayes, Merlion dud hys mayster Bloyse wryte them. Also he dud wryte all the 5 batayles that every worthy knyght ded of Arthurs courte.

So aftir this Merlion departed frome his mayster and com to kynge Arthure that was in the castell of Bedgrayne, that was one of the castels that stondith in the foreyste of Sherewood. And Merlion was so disgysed that kynge 10 Arthure knewe hym nat, for he was all befurred in blacke shepis skynnes, and a grete payre of bootis, and a boowe and arowis, in a russet gowne, and brought wylde gyese in hys honde. And hit was on the morne aftir Candilmasse day. But kynge Arthure knew hym nat.

15 'Sir,' seyde Merlion unto the kynge, 'woll ye geff me agyfFte?'

'Wherefore,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'sholde I gyff the a gyffte, chorle?'

'Sir,' seyd Merlion, 'ye were bettir to *gyff* me a gyrfte 20 that ys nat in youre honde than to lose grete rychesse. For here in the same place there the grete batayle was, ys grete tresoure hydde in the erthe.'

'Who tolde the so, chorle?'

'Sir, Merlyon tolde me so/ seyde he.

25 Than Ulphuns and Brastias knew hym well inowghe and smyled. 'Sir,' seyde thes two knyghtes, 'hit ys Merlion that so spekith unto you.'

Than kynge Arthure was gretly abaysshed and had 16^r mervayle of Merlion, and so had kynge Ban and Bors. So 30 they had grete disporte at hym.

Than in the meanewhyle there com a damesell that was an erlis doughter; hys name was Sanam and hir name was Lyonors, a passynge fayre damesell. And so she cam thidir for to do omage as other lordis ded after that grete batayle. 35 And kynge Arthure sette hys love gretly on hir, and so ded she uppon hym, and so the kynge had ado with hir and gate on hir a chylde. And hys name was Borre, that was aftir a good knyght and of the Table Rounde.

Than the[r] com worde that kynge Ryens of North Walis made grete warre on kynge Lodegreauce of Camylarde, for the whiche kynge Arthure was wrothe, for he loved hym welle and hated kyng Royns, for allwayes he was agenst hym.

5

(So by ordinauns of the three kynges ther were sente home unto Benwyke a[U] (that) wolde departe, for drede of kynge Claudas. Thes knyghtes: Pharyaunce, Anthemes, Graciens, and Lyonses¹ Payarne were the leders of them that sholde kepe the two kynges londis.)

10

And than kynge Arthure, kynge Ban and kynge Bors (18) departed with hir felyship, a twenty thousand, and cam within seven dayes into the contrey of Camylarde; and there rescowed kynge Lodegraunce, and slew there muche people of kynge Ryons, unto the numbir of ten thousand, and putte hem to flyght. And than had thes thre kynges grete chere of kynge Lodegraunce, and he thanked them of their grete goodnes that they wolde revenge hym of his enemyes.

And there had Arthure the firste syght of queene Gwenyvere, the kyngis doughter of the londe of Camylarde, and ever afftir he loved hir. And aftir they were wedded, as hit tellith in the booke.

So breffly to make an ende, they took there leve to go into hir owne contreyes, for kynge Claudas dud grete destruction on their londis. Than seyde Arthure,

'I woll go with you.'

'Nay,' seyde the kyngis, 'ye shall nat at thys tyme, for ye have much to do yet in thys londe. Therefore we woll departe. With the grete goodis that we have gotyn in this londe by youre gyfftis we shall wage good knyghtes and withstonde the kynge Claudas hys malice, for, by the grace of God, and we have nede, we woll sende to you for succour.

1 W Than the com C thenne there cam——Ryence 2-3 C Lodegreauce
of camlyard for the whiche thyngf arthur 6 C kynges that were 7 W
Benwyke and wolde C Benwyck all they wolde 8 Thes knyghtes *not in C*
8-9 W Graciens lyonses and payarne C* Grasians and lyonses payarne
with the F Leonce de paerne 13 C within VI dayes C Cmyliarde
15-16 C x M men and put hym to 17 C that thanked 20-1 C syght
of gweneuer 21 of the londe *not in C* 22C her After they were 28 C in
these landes 30 C departe and with the 30-1 C in these landes

And ye have nede, sende for us, and we woll nat tarry, by the feythe of oure bodyes.'

'Hit shall nat nede,' seyde Merlion, 'thes two kynges to com agayne in the wey of warre; but I know well kyng
5 Arthure may nat be longe frome you. For within a yere or
16^v two ye shall have grete nede, than shall he revenge you of youre enemyes as ye have done on his. For thes eleven kyngis shall dye all in one day by the grete myght and prouesse of armys of two valyaunte knyghtes,'—as hit tellith
10 aftir. Hir namys—Balyne le Saveage, and Balan, hys brothir, that were merveylous knyghtes as ony was tho lyvyng.

Now turne we unto the eleven kynges that returned unto a cite* that hyght Surhaute, which cite was within kyng
Uriens londe; and there they refreysshed them as well as
15 they myght, and made lechys serche for their woundis and sorowed gretly for the deth of hir people. So with that there com a messyngere and tolde how there was comyn into theyre londis people that were lawles, as well as Sarezynes a fourty thousande, and have brente and slayne all the
20 people that they may com by withoute mercy, and have leyde sege unto the castell Wandesborow.

'Alas!' seyde the eleven kyngis, 'here ys sorow uppon sorow, and if we had nat warred agaynste Arthure as we have done, he wolde sone a revenged us. And as for kyng
25 Lodegreauce, he lovithe Arthure bettir than us; and as for kyng Royens, he hath ynow ado with kyng Lodegreauens, for he hath leyde sege unto hym.'

So they con[^]ent[^]ed togydir to kepe all the marchis of Cornuwayle, of Walis, and of the Northe. So firste they
30 put kyng Idres in the cite of Nauntis in Bretayne with four thousand men of armys to wacche bothe watir and the londe. Also they ^rput in the cyte* of Wyndesan kyng

1 C And yf ye 3 C not saide Merlyn nede that these 6-7 C on youre
10 C names ben Balyn 11 C that ben merueillous good knyghtes as ben
ony lyuyng 13-14 C Surhaute . . . londe *not in C* 15 for *not in C* 21 C
wadisborow 24 C soone reuenge vs 28 W they condescended C* they
consentyd F (MS. Hart. 6340,/. 82V, col. 2) si s'acorderent a la fin a ce qu'il
garniront les marches de Galene et Gorre et Galvoye et devers Cornuaille et devers
Orchanye 31—p. 41, 2 W bothe water and the londe Also they had of othir men
C bothe the water and the land Also they put in the cyte of Wyndesan kyng Nauntres
of garlott with four thousand knyghtes to wathe both on water and on lond Also
they had F (MS. Harl. 6340,/. 8r*, col. 1) L'autre cite" qu'il envoyerent garnir

Nauntres of Garlott with four thousand knyghtes to watche both on water and on lond. Also they¹ had of othir men of warre mo than eyght thousand for to fortifye all the fortresse in the marchys of Cornuwayle. Also they put mo kyngis in all the marchis of Walis and Scotlonde with many good 5 men of armys, and so they kept hem togydirs the space of three yere and ever alyed hem with myghty kynges and dukis. And unto them felle kyng Royns of Northe Walis which was a myghty kyng of men, and Nero that was a myghty man of men. And all thys whyle they furnysshed 10 and garnyssed hem of good men of armys and vitayle and of all maner of ablemente that pretendith to warre, to avenge hem for the batay[l]e of Bedgrayne, as hit tellith in the booke of adventures.

Than aftir the departynge of kyng Bans and Bors, kyng 15 (19) Arthure rode unto the cite* of Carlyon. And thydir com unto hym kyng Lottis wyff of Orkeney in maner of a message, but she was sente thydir to aspye the courte of kyng Arthure, and she com rychely beseyne with hir four sonnes, Gawayne, Gaheris, Aggravayne and Gareth, with many other 20 knyghtes and ladyes, for she was a passynge fayre lady. 17^r Wherefore the kyng caste grete love unto hir and desired to ly by her. And so they were agreed, and [he] begate uppon hir sir Mordred. And she was syster on the modirs syde Igrayne unto Arthure. So there she rested hir a monthe, 25 and at the laste she departed.

Than the kyng dremed a mervaylous dreame whereof he was sore adrad. (But all thys tyme kyng Arthure knew nat kyng Lottis wyff was his sister.) But thus was the dreame of Arthure: hym thought there was com into hys 30 londe gryffens and serpentes, and hym thought they brente and slowghe all the people in the londe; and than he thought he fought with them and they dud hym grete harme and wounded hym full sore, but at the laste he slew hem.

si eut nom Huitdesant. A celle alia le roy Nantres de Garlot, si en emmena avec lui trois mille {homoeoteleuton in W} 4 C moo kny3tes in 8 C dukes and lordes And 9 C myghty man of men 12 C to the werre to anenge 13 W batayne C bataille 14 C auentures folowyng 16 the cite of not in C 20 C Agrauaynes 23 C and he begate 24 sir not in C 24-5 C his syster on the moder syde Igrayne So ther 23-5 W (sidenote): A dreame of Arthure 30-1 C in to this land 33 C passynge grete

Whan the kyng waked, he was passynge hevy of hys dreame; and so to putte hit oute of thought he made hym redy with many knyghtes to ryde on huntynge. And as sone as he was in the foreste, the kyng saw a grete harte
 5 before hym. 'Thys harte woll I chace,' seyde kyng Arthure. And so he spurred hys horse and rode aftir longe, and so be fyne force oftyn he was lyke to have smytten the herte. Wherefore as the kyng had chased the herte so longe that hys horse lost his brethe and felle downe dede, than a
 10 yoman fette the kyng another horse.

So the kyng saw the herte unboked and hys horse dede, he sette hym downe by a fowntayne, and there he felle downe in grete thought. And as he sate so hym thought he herde a noyse of howndis to the som of thirty, and with
 15 that the kyng saw com towarde hym the strongeste beste that ever he saw or herde of. So thys beste wente to the welle and dranke, and the noyse was in the bestes bealy 'lyke unto the questyng of thirty coupyl houndes, but alle the whyle the beest dranke there was no noyse in the bestes
 20 bealy¹. And therewith the beeste departed with a grete noyse, whereof the kyng had grete mervayle. And so he was in a grete thought, and therewith he felle on slepe.

Ryght so there com a knyght on foote unto Arthure, and seyde, 'Knyght full of thought and slepy, telle me if
 25 thou saw any stronge beeste passe thys way.'

'Such one saw I,' seyde kyng Arthure, 'thatys paste nye two myle. What wolde ye with that beeste?' seyde Arthure.

'Sir, I have folowed that beste longe and kylde myne horse, so wolde God I had another to folow my queste.'

30 Ryght so com one with the kyngis horse. And whan

6 C the horse 7-8 C herte where as the kyng 9 Chors had loste 11 C the herte enbusshed and 12-13 C fell in grete thoughtes 15 C saw comyng
 15 C the straungest best F (*Huth Merlin*,/. 76a) une beste moult grant ici estoit la plus diverse qui onques fust veue de sa figure qui tant estoit estraingne de cors et de faiture. 17-20 W the noyse in the bestes bely and therewith C bely lyke unto the questyng of xxx coupyl houndes but alle the whyle the beest dranke there was no noyse in the bestes bely and therewith F (*be. cit.*) elle a dedens son cors brakes tout vis qui glatissent ...(/. 76b) Et si tost comme elle ot comenchie a boire, le (les ?) biestes qui dedens li estoient et glatissoient s'acoisent et se tinrent coient. Quant elle ot beu et fu issue de la fontaine, si recommancierent a glatir autressi comme il faisoient devant 25 C thow sawest a straunge best
 26 nye not in C 27 C with the best 28 C long tyme

the knyght saw the horse he prayde the kyng to gyff hym 17
 the horse, 'for I have folowed this queste thys twelve-monthe,
 and othir I shall encheve hym othir blede of the beste bloode
 in my body.' (Whos name was kyng Pellynor that tyme
 folowed the questynge beste, and afftir hys dethe sir 5
 Palomydes folowed hit.)

'Sir knyght,* seyde the kyng, 'leve that queste and suffir (20)
 me to have hit, ana I woll folowe hit anothir twelve-monthe.'

'A, fooleT seyde the kyng unto Arthure, 'hit ys in vayne
 thy desire, for hit shall never be encheved but by me other 10
 by my nexte kynne.'

And therewithe he sterte unto the kyngis horse and
 mownted into the sadyl and seyde, 'Gramercy, for this
 horse ys myne owne.'

'Well,' seyde the kyng, 'thou mayste take myne horse 15
 by force, but and I myght preve hit I wolde weete whether
 thou were bettir worthy to have hym or I . '

Whan the kyng herde hym sey so he seyde, 'Seke me
 here whan thou wolte, and here nye thys welle thou shake
 fynde me,' and soo passed on his weye. Thenne the kyng 20
 sat in a study¹ and bade hys men fecche another horse as
 faste as they myght.

Ryght so com by hym Merlyon lyke a chylde of fourtene
 yere of ayge and salewed the kyng and asked hym whye
 he was so pensyff. 25

'I may well be pensiff,' seyde the kyng, 'for I have sene
 the mervaylist syght that ever I saw.'

'That know I well,' seyde Merlyon, 'as welle as thyselff,
 and of all thy thoughtes. But thou arte a foole to take
 thought for hit that woll nat amende the. Also I know 30
 what thou arte, and who was thy fadir, and of whom thou

4-5 C body Pellinore that tyme kyng folowed 6 C Palamydes 9 C said
 the Knyghte vnto 16-18 C preue the whether thow were better on horsbak
 or I wel said the knyght seke me 20-2 W fynde me and bade hys men
 C* fynde me and soo passyd on his weye thenne the kyng sat in a study and bad his
 men fetche his hors as faste as euer they myghte F (Huth Merlin, f. 77b) Atant
 s'em parti li chevaliers et s'en vait grant oirre cele part ou sa beste s'en estoit alee.
 Et li rois vint a l'escuier, se li dist qu'il s'en aille et li amaint uns autre cheval....
 Illuec demoura li rois grant piece tant pensis de eel aventure qu'il avoit le jour veues
 (sic) que il ne savoit preu consillier. Et en chou qu'il estoit si pensis etc. 28-29
 know I well... of all thy thoughtes stands for the Trench tu ne penses chose que
 je ne sache (Huth Merlin, f. 77c) 29 C art but a foole 30 C it wylle

were begotyn: for kynge Uther was thy fadir and begate the on Igrayne.'

'That ys false!' seyde kynge Arthure. 'How sholdist thou know hit, for thou arte nat so olde of yerys to know
5 my fadir?'

'Yes/ seyde Merlyon, 'I know hit bettir than ye or ony man lyvyng.'

'I woll nat beleve the,' seyde Arthure, and was wrothe with the chylde.

io So departed Merlyon, and com ayen in the lyknesse of an olde man of four score yere of ayge, whereof the kynge was passynge glad, for he semed to be ryght wyse. Than seyde the olde man, 'Why ar ye so sad?'

'I may well be sad,' seyde Arthure, 'for many thynges.
15 For ryght now there was a chylde here, and tolde me many thynges that mesemythe he sholde nat knowe, for he was nat of ayge to know my fadir.'

'Yes,' seyde the olde man, 'the chylde tolde you trouthe, and more he wolde a tolde you and [y]e wolde a suffirde
20 hym. But ye have done a thyng late that God ys displeased with you, for ye have lyene by youre syster and on hir ye
18^r have gotyn a childe that shall destroy you and all the knyghtes of youre realme.'

'What ar ye,' seyde Arthure, 'that telle me thys tydyngis?'

25 'Sir, I am Merlion, and I was he in the chyldis lycknes.'

'A,' seyde the kynge, 'ye ar a mervaylous man! But I mervayle muche of thy wordis that I mou dye in batayle.'

'Mervayle nat,' seyde Merlion, 'for hit ys Goddis wyll that youre body sholde be punysshed for your fowle dedis.
30 But I ought ever to be hevy,' seyde Merlion, 'for I shall dye a shamefull dethe, to be putte in the erthe quycke; and ye shall dey a worshipfull dethe.'

And as they talked thus,, com one with the kyngis horse, and so the kynge mownted on hys horse, and Merlion on
35 anothir, and so rode unto Carlyon. And anone the kynge askyd Ector and Ulphuns how he was begotyn, and they

i C begoten kynge Vtherpendragon was thy fader 12 C was ryght glad

14-15 wel be heuy said ... thynges Also here was a chyld and told 19 W

and he wolde 24-5 C these tydynges I am 27 W mou dye

C mote dye 28-9 C wyll youre body to be punysshed 30 C but I may

wel be sory said Merlyn 33 C talked thisf cam

tolde hym how kynge Uther was hys fadir, and quene Igrayne hys modir. 'So Merlion tolde me. I woll that my modir be sente for, that I myght speke with hir. And if she sey so hirselff, than woll I beleve hit.' So in all haste the quene was sente for, and she brought with hir Morgan 5 le Fay, hir doughter, that was a fayre lady as ony myght be. And the kynge welcommed Igrayne in the beste maner.

Ryght so com'in Ulphuns and seyde opynly, that the (21) kynge and all myght hyre that were fested that day, 'Ye ar the falsyst lady of the worde, and the moste traytours 10 unto the kynges person.'

'Beware,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'what thou seyste: thou spekiste a grete worde.'

'Sir, I am well ware,' seyde Ulphuns, 'what I speke, and here ys my gloove to preve hit uppon ony man that woll 15 sey the contrary: that thys quene Igrayne ys the causer of youre grete damage and of youre grete warre, for and she wolde have uttirde hit in the lyff of Uther of the birth of you, and how ye were begotyn, than had ye never had the mortall warrys that ye have had. For the moste party of 20 your barownes of youre realme knewe never whos sonne ye were, ne of whom ye were begotyn; and she that bare you of hir body sholde have made hit knowyn opynly, in excusynge of hir worship and youre, and in lyke [wyse] to all the realme. Wherefore I preve hir false to God and to t\$ you and to all youre realme. And who woll sey the contrary, I woll preve hit on hys body.'

Than spake Igrayne and seyde, 'I am a woman and I may nat fyght; but rather than I sholde be dishonoured, there wolde som good man take my quarell. But,' thus she seyde, 30 'Merlion knowith well, and ye, sir Ulphuns, how kynge Uther com to me into the castell of Tyntagyl in the lyknes 18^v of my lorde that was dede thre owres tofore, and there begate a chylde that nyght uppon me, and aftir the thirteenth day kynge Uther wedded me. And by his commaunde- 35 mente, whan the chylde was borne, hit was delyvirde unto

1 C how *not in C* 2-3 C moder thenne he sayd to Merlyn I wylle that my moder
5 C and she cam & broughte 6 C was as fayre a lady as 8C cam Vlffyus
14 Sir *not in C* 19 than had *not in C* 19 W than had ye had nev(er) had
24 W in lyke to C in lyke wyse to 30-1 quarel More she sayd Merlyn
32 C Tyntagaill 33-4 Cf and therby gat a child

Merlion and fostred by hym. And so I saw the childe never aftir, nothir wote nat what ys hys name; for I knew hym never yette.'

Than Ulphuns seyde unto Merlion, 'Ye ar than more
5 to blame than the queene.'

'Sir, well I wote I bare a chylde be my lorde kynge Uther, but I wote never where he ys becom.'

Than the kynge toke Merlion by the honde seying thys wordis: 'Ys this my modir ?'

io 'Forsothe, sir, yee.'

And therewith com in sir Ector, and bare wytnes how he fostred hym by kynge Uthers commaundement. And therewith kyng Arthure toke his modir, queene Igrayne, in hys armys and kyssed her, and eythir wepte uppon other.
15 Than the kynge lete make a feste that lasted eyght dayes.

So on a day there com into the courte a squyre on horsebacke ledynge a knyght tofore hym, wounded to the deth, and tolde how there was a knyght in the foreste that had rered up a pavylon by a welle, 'that hath slayne my mayster,
20 a good knyght: hys name was Myles. Wherefore I besech you that my maystir may be buryed, and that som knyght may revenge my maystirs dethe.' Than the noyse was grete of that knyghtes dethe in the courte, and every man seyde hys advyce.

25 Than com Gryfflet that was but a squyre, and he was but yonge, of 'the ayge of the kyng Arthur'¹. So he besought the kynge for all hys servyse that he had done hym to gyff hym the Order of Knyghthoode.

(22) 'Thou arte but yonge and tendir of ayge,' seyde kynge
30 Arthure, 'for to take so hyghe an ordefr] uppon you.'

'Sir,' seyde Gryfflett, 'I beseche you to make me knyght.'

'Sir,' seyde Merlion, 'hit were pite* to lose Gryfflet, for he woll be a passynge good man whan he ys of ayge, and he

1 C and nourysshed by hym 3-6 C yet And there Vlkyus 8aide to the quene Merlyn is more to blame than ye wel I wote said the quene I bare 7 C wote not where 8-12 C thenne Merlyn toke the kynge by the hand sayeng this is your moder and therewith syr Ector bare wytnes how he nourysshed hym F {Huih Merlin, f. 84c) Lors prent Artu par le brach et li dist: 'Artu ... la roine Ygerne est ta mere' 19 C and hath slayne 20 C mylis 26 W of ayge so he C* but yonge of the age of the kyng Arthur soo he F (/ . 86a) estoit de l'aage le roi Artu. 29 C arte full yong 32 C were grete pyte 33—p. 47,1 C age abydynge with yow

shall abyde with you the terme of hys lyff. And if he aventure his body with yondir knyght at the fountayne, hit ys in grete perell if ever he com agayne, for he ys one of the beste knyghtes of the worlde and the strengyst man of armys.' 5

'Well'.seyde Arthure, 'at thyne owne desire thou shalt be made knyght.' 'So at the desyre of Gryflet the kyng made hym knyght.']

'Now/ seyde Arthure unto Gryfflet, 'sith I have made the knyght, thou muste gyff me a gyffte.' 10

'What ye woll,' seyde Gryfflet.

'Thou shalt promyse me by thy feyth of thy body, whan 19r thou haste justed with that knyght at the fountayne, whether hit falle ye be on horsebak othir on foote, that ryght so ye shall com agayne unto me withoute makynge ony more 15 debate.'

'I woll promyse you,' seyde Gryfflet, 'as youre desire ys.'

Than toke Gryfflet hys horse in grete haste and dressed hys shelde and toke a spere in hys honde, and so he rode a grete walop tylle he com to the fountain. And thereby he 20 saw a ryche pavilion, and thereby undir a cloth stood an horse well sadeled and brydyled, and on a tre hynge a shelde of dyvers coloures, and a grete spere thereby. Than Gryfflet smote on the shylde with the butte of hys spere, that the shylde felle downe. 25

With that the knyght com oute of the pavilion and seyde, 'Fayre knyght, why smote ye downe my shylde?'

'Sir, for I wolde juste with you,' seyde Gryfflet.

'Sir, hit ys bettir ye do nat,' seyde the kyng, 'for ye ar but yonge and late made knyght, and youre myght ys nat 30 to myne.'

'As for that,' seyde Gryfflet, 'I woll joust with you.'

'That ys me loth,' seyde the knyght, 'but sitthyn I muste nedis, I woll dresse me thereto. Of whens be ye?' seyde the knyght. 35

6-7 at thyne owne desire thou shalt be made knyght *not in C* 7-8 C* so at the desyre of gryflet the kyng made hym knyght *F A l'endemain fist GifHet li rois Artus chevalier (ibid.,/. 87a).* 13 C the knyght 16Cas yow desyre 21-2 Cstode a fayr hors 22 hynge *not in C* 23 thereby *not in C* 25-6 Cdoune to the ground with that 27-8 Csheld for I wil 29 Sir *not in C* C doo not sayd the knyghte 30-1 Cis nothyng to myn

'Sir, I am of kynge Arthurs courte.'

So the two knyghtes ran togydir, that Gryfflettis spere all to-shevirde. And therewithal! he smote Gryfflet thorow the shelde and the lyffte syde, and brake the spere, that the
5 truncheon stake in hys body, and horse and man felle downe to the erthe.

(2 3) Whan the knyght saw hym ly so on the grounde he alyght and was passyng hevy, for he wente he had slayne hym. And than he unlaced hys helme and gate hym wynde; and
10 so with the troncheon he sette hym on his horse and gate hym wynde, and so betoke hym to God and seyde, 'He had a myghty hertel' And seyde, 'If he myght lyve, he wolde preve a passyng good knyght,' and so rode forthe sir Gryfflet unto the courte, whereof passyng grete dole was
15 made for hym. But thorow good lechis he was heled and saved.

Ryght so com into the courte twelve knyghtes that were aged men, whiche com frome the Emperoure of Rome. And they asked of Arthure trwage for hys realme, othir ellis the
20 Emperour wolde destroy hym and all hys londe.

'Well,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'ye ar messyngers: therefore ye may sey what ye woll, othir ellis ye sholde dye therefore. But thys ys myne answer: I owghe the Emperour no
19^v trewage, nother none woll I yelde hym, but on a fayre fylde
25 I shall yelde hym my trwage, that shall be with a sherpe spere othir ellis with a sherpe swerde. And that shall nat be longe, be my fadirs soule Uther!' And therewith the messyngers departed passyngly wrothe, and kyng Arthure as wrothe; for in an evyll tyme com they.

30 But the kynge was passyngly wrothe for the hurte of sir Gryfflet, and so he commaunded a prevy man of hys chambir that or hit were day his beste horse and armoure 'and all that longith to my person be withoute the cite or to-morow day'. Ryght so he mette with his man and his horse,
35 and so mownted up, and dressed his shelde and toke hys

5-7 C body, that hors and knyghte fylle doune Capitulum XXIII Than the knyght
12 C hert and yf he 14 C court where grete 17-18 C & were aged men
and they cam 19 C for this realme 20 all *not in C* 24 C will I hold hym
25 C shall yeue hym 29-30 C cam they thenne for the kyng 32 Chit be day
32-3 C armour with all that longeth vnto his person 34 O Ryght so or to
morow day he met

spere, and bade hys chambir layne tary there tyll he com agayne.

And so Arthure rode a soffte pace tyll hit was day. And than was he ware of thre chorlys chasyng Merlion and wolde have slayne hym. Than the kynge rode unto them and 5 bade hem: 'Fie, chorlis!' Than they fered sore whan they sawe a knyght com, and fledde.

'A, Merlion!' seyde Arthure, 'here haddist thou be slayne for all thy crafftis, had nat I bene.'

'Nay/ seyde Merlyon, 'nat so, for I cowde a saved my- 10 selffe and I had wolde. But thou arte more nere thy deth than I am, for thou goste to thy dethe warde, and God be nat thy frende.'

So as they wente thus talkynge, they com to the fountayne and the ryche pavilion there by hit. Than kynge Arthure 15 was ware where sate a knyght armed in a chayre.

'Sir knyght/ seyde Arthure, 'for what cause abydist thou here, that there may no knyght ryde thys way but yf he juste with the? I rede the to leve that custom.'

'Thys custom,' seyde the knyght, 'have I used and woll 20 use magre who seyth nay. And who that ys agreved with my custum lette hym amende hit.'

'That shall I amende,' seyde Arthure.

'And I shall defende the,' seyde the knyght. And anone he toke hys horse, and dressed hys shelde and toke a grete 25 spere in hys honde, and they come togydir so harde that eythir smote other in mydde the shyldis, that all to-shevird theire speris.

Therewith anone Arthure pulled oute his swerde.

'Nay, nat so,' seyde the knyght, 'hit ys bettir that we 30 twayne renne more togydirs with sherpe sperys.'

'I woll well,' seyde Arthure, 'and I had ony mo sperys here.'

6 C thenne were they aferd whan 7 com *not in C* 10-11 C coude save myself and I wold 12 C to the deth ward 19-20 C wyth the said the kynge I rede the leue that custome said Arthur This customme 21 C & who is 22-3 C amende hit that wol I wil amende it said Arthur 24 *W Hand in margin pointing to 1.24* 25 grete *notin C* 26 in hys honde *not in C* 26-8 C they met so hard either in others sheldes that al to sheuered their sperysf 30 C said the knyght it is fayrer sayd the kny3t that we 32 C ii good sperys *Misprint in S* (in good sperys).

'I have inow/ seyde the knyght.

So there com a squyre and brought forthe two sperys,
and Arthure chose one and he another. So they spurred
20^r theire horsis and come togydir with all theire myghtes, that
5 eyther brake their sperys to their hondis. Than Arthure
sette honde on his swerde.

'Nay,' seyde the knyght, 'ye shall do bettir. Ye ar a
passyng good juster as ever y mette withall, and onys for
the hyghe Order of Knyghthode lette us jouste agayne.'

io 'I assente me,' seyde Arthure.

And anone there was brought forth two grete sperys, and
anone every knyght gate a spere; and therewith they ran
togiders, that Arthures spere all to-shevirde. But this other
knyght smote hym so harde in myddis the shelde that horse
15 and man felle to the erthe. And therewith Arthure was egir,
and pulde oute hys swerde, and seyde,

*I woll assay the, sir knyght, on foote, for I have loste
the honoure on horsebacke,' seyde the kyng.

'Sir, I woll be on horsebacke styll to assay the.'

20 Than was Arthure wrothe and dressed his shelde to-
warde hym with his swerde drawyn. Whan the knyght saw
that he alyght, for hym thought no worship to have a knyght
at such avayle, he to be on horsebacke and hys adversary on
foote, and so he alyght and dressed his shelde unto Arthure.
25 And there began a stronge batayle with many grete strokis,
and so they hew with hir swerdis, that the cantels flowe unto
the feldys, and mucche bloode they bledde bothe, that all
the place thereas they fought was ovirbledde with bloode.
And thus they fought longe and rested them. And than
30 they went to the batayle agayne, and so hurteled togydirs
lyke too rammes that aythir felle to the erthe. So at the laste
they smote togyders, that bothe hir [swerdys] mette evyn
togyders. But kyng Arthurs swerde brake in two pecis,
wherefore he was hevy.

35 Than seyde the knyght unto Arthure, 'Thou arte in my
daungere, whethir me lyst to save the or sle the; and but

8-9 C ones for the loue of the hyghe . . . Iuste ones ageyn 12 anone *not in C*
14 C hyt hym . . . myddes of the shelde 18-20 C horsbak I will be on horsbak
said the knyght thenne wasf 23-4 C horsbak and he on foot 26 C they
not in Cf 32 W hir mette C* her swerdys met 33 C But the swerd of the
knyght smote kyng arthurs swerd in two pyeces

thou yelde the to me as overcom and recreaunte, thou shalt dey.'

'As for that,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'dethe ys wellcom to me whan hit commyth. But to yelde me unto the I woll nati'

5

And therewithall the kynge lepte unto kynge Pellynore, and toke hym by the myddyll, and overthrew hym, and raced of hys helme. So Whan the knyght felte that, he was adradde, for he was a passynge bygge man of myght. And so forthe-with he wrothe Arthure undir hym and raced of hys helme, 10 and wolde have smytten off hys hede.

And therewithall com Merlion and seyde, 'Knyght, (24) holde thy honde, for and thou sle that knyght thou puttyst 20^v thys realme in the gretteste damage that evir was realme: for thys knyght ys a man of more worship than thou 15 wotist off.'

'Why, what ys he ?' seyde the knyght.

'For hit ys kynge Arthure,' seyde Merlyon.

Than wolde he have slayne hym for drede of hys wratthe, and so he lyffte up hys swerde. And therewith Merlion 20 caste an inchauntemente on the knyght, that he felle to the erthe in a grete slepe. Than Merlion toke up kynge Arthure and rode forthe on the knyghtes horse.

'Alas!' seyde Arthure, 'what hast thou do, Merlion? Hast thou slayne thys good knyght by thy craufftis? For 25 there lyvith nat so worshipfull a knyght as he was. For I had levir than the stynte of my londe a yere that he were on lyve.'

'Care ye nat,' seyde Merlion, 'for he ys holer than ye: he ys but on slepe and woll awake within thys owre. I 30 tolde you,' seyde Merlyon, 'what a knyght he was. Now here had ye be slayne had I nat bene. Also there lyvith nat a bygger knyght than he ys one; and afftir this he shall do

1 to me *not in C* 3-4 *C* as for dethf said kyng arthur welcome be it whan it
4-6 *C* vnto the as recreaunt I had letter deye than to be soo shamed And ther
with al 6 *C* vnto Pellinore 7 *C* and threwe hym doune and 9-10 *C*
myghte and anone he broughte Arthur 18 For *not in C* seyde
Merlyon *not in C* 19-20 *C* wrathe and heue vp his 21 *C* to the knyght
25, 26 For *not in C* 30 *C* for he ys but *C* within thre houres
No mention of time in F. 31 Now *not in C* 33—p. 52, 1 *C* and he shal
here after do yow rygth gaod seruyse

you jgoode servyse. And hys name ys kynge Pellinore, and he shall have two sonnes that shall be passyng good men as ony lyvyng: save one in thys worlde they shall have no felowis of prouesse and of good lyvyng, and hir
 5 namys shall be Fercyvall and sir Lamerake of Walis. And he shall telle you the name of youre owne son begotyn of youre syster, that shall be the destruccion of all thys realme.'

(25) Ryght so the kynge and he departed and wente unto an
 10 ermytage, and there was a good man and a grete leche. So the ermyte serched the kynges woundis and gaff hym good salves. And so the kyng was there three dayes, and than wer his woundis well amended, that he myght ryde and goo; and so departed.

15 And as they rode, kynge Arthur seyde, 'I have no swerde.'

'No force,' seyde Merlyon, 'hereby ys a swerde that shall be youre, and I may.'

So they rode tyll they com to a laake that was a fayre
 20 watir and brode. And in the myddis Arthure was ware of an arme clothed in whyght samyte, that helde a fayre swerde in that honde.

'Lo,' seyde Merlion, 'yondir ys the swerde that I spoke off.'

25 So with that they saw a damesell goynge uppon the laake.
 r<'What damoyssel is that?' said Arthur.

'That is the Lady of the Lake,'¹ seyde Merlion. 'There ys a grete roche, and therein ys as fayre a paleyce as ony on
 21^r erthe, and rychely besayne. And thys damesel woll come to
 30 you anone, and than speke ye fayre to hir, that she may gyff you that swerde.'

So anone com this damesel to Arthure and salewed hym, and he hir agayne.

'Damesell,' seyde Arthure, 'what swerde ys that yondir

1 kynge *not in C* 5 *C* Persyual of walys & Lamerak of walys 9-10 *C* went vn tyl an ermyte that was a good 11 *C* serched all his woundys 19 *C* lake the whiche was a fayr 20 *C* myddes of the lake Arthur 22-3 *C* that swerd 25-8 *W* uppon the laake seyde M *C* vpon the lake what damoyssel is that said Arthur that is the lady of the lake said Merlyn And within that lake is a roche {*homoeoteleuton in W*} 28 Cf a place as *F* palais grans et miervilleus 30 *W* speke speke *C* she will gyue 34 *C* that that yonder

that the arme holdith aboven the watir? I wolde hit were myne, for I have no swerde.'

'Sir Arthure,' seyde the damesel, 'that swerde ys myne, and if ye woll gyff me a gyffte whan I aske hit you, ye shall have hit.'

5

'Be my feyth,' seyde Arthure, 'I woll gyff you what gyffte that ye woll aske.'

'Well/ seyde the damesell, 'go ye into yondir barge, and rowe yourselffe to the swerde, and take hit and the scawberde with you. And I woll aske my gyffte whan I se my tyme.'

10

So kynge Arthure and Merlion alyght and tyed their horsis unto two treys; and so they wente into the barge. And whan they come to the swerde that the honde hylde, than kynge Arthure toke hit up by the hondils and bare hit with hym, and the arme and the honde wente undir the watir. And so he com unto the londe and rode forthe.

15

And kynge Arthure saw a ryche pavilion.

'What signifieth yondir pavilion?'

'Sir, that ys the knyghtes pavyls that ye fought with laste, sir Pellynore; but he ys oute. He ys nat at home, for he hath had ado with a knyght of youres that hyght Egglame, and they had foughtyn togyddyr; but at the laste Egglame fledde, and ellis he had bene dede, and he hath chaced hym evyn to Carlion. And we shall mete with hym anone in the hygheway.'

25

'That ys well seyde,' seyde Arthure. 'Now have I a swerde I woll wage batayle with hym and be avenged on hym.'

'Sir,' seyde Merlion, 'nat so; for the knyght ys wery of fyghtyng and chasyng, that ye shall have no worship to have ado with hym. Also he woll nat lyghtly be macched of one knyght lyvyng, and therefore hit ys my counceile: latte hym passe, for he shall do you good servyse in shorte tyme, and hys sonnes afftir hys dayes. Also ye shall se that

30

35

3 C Syr Arthur kynge said the 12-13 C the horses 4-14 W (sidenote):
 Here ys a mencion of the Lady of the Laake whan she asked Balyne le saveage his
 hede 13-14 C the ship & 15-16 Chandels & toke hit with hym 20 C kny3tes
 pavelion seid merlyn Jt zx-z C he is not there he hath adoo 23 C & they
 haue fou3ten 23 Misprint in S (al the last) 28 C swerd now will I
 30 C ye shal not so 31 C so that

day in shorte space that ye shall be ryght glad to gyff hym youre syster to wedde for hys good servyse. Therefore have nat ado with hym whan ye se hym.'

'I woll do as ye avise me.*

s Than kynge Arthure loked on the swerde and lyked hit passynge well. Than seyde Merlion,

'Whethir lyke ye better the swerde othir the scawberde ?'

'I lyke bettir the swerde,' seyde Arthure.

21^v 'Ye ar the more unwyse, for the scawberde ys worth ten io of the swerde; for whyles ye have the scawberde uppon you, ye shall lose no blood, be ye never so sore wounded. Therefore kepe well the scawberde allweyes with you.'

So they rode unto Carlion; and by the wey they mette with kynge Pellinore. But Merlion had done suche a 15 crauffte unto kynge Pellinore saw nat kynge Arthure, and so passed by withoute ony wordis.

'I mervayle,' seyde Arthure, 'that the knyght wold nat speke/

'Sir, he saw you nat; for had he seyne you, ye had nat to lyghtly parted.'

So they com unto Carlion, wherof hys knyghtes were passynge glad. And whan they herde of hys adventures, they mervayled that he wolde jouparde* his person so alone. But all men of worship seyde hit was myrry to be under 25 such a chyffayne that wolde putte hys person in adventure as other poure knyghtis ded.

(27) So thys meanewhyle com a messyngere frome kynge Royns of Northe Walis, and kynge he was of all Irelande and of lies. And this was hys message, gretynge well kyng 30 Arthure on thys maner of wyse, sayng that kynge Royns had discomfite and overcom eleven kyngis, and every of them dud hym omage. And that was thus to sey they gaff their beardes clene flayne off, as much as was bearde; wherefore the messyngere com for kynge Arthures berde. 35 For kynge Royns had purfilde a mantell with kynges

1 Cspace ye shal 2-5 Cf to wedde Whan I see hym I wil doo as ye aduyse m
sayd Arthur Thenne 9 C vnwyse sayd Merlyn for 15 C crafte tha
pellinore saw 19-20 Csyr said Merlyn he .. . lyghtly departed 27 Wrong
chapter number in C. See note on p. 6 28 C Ryons 29 C many lies
31-2 C eueryche of hem 32-3 C And that was this they gaf hym their berdys
33-4 Cas moche as ther was wher for

berdis, and there lacked one place of the mantell; wherefore he sente for hys bearde, othir ellis he wolde entir into his londis and brenne and sle, and nevir leve tylle he hathe the hede and the bearde bothe.

'Well,' seyde Arthure, 'thou haste seyde thy message, 5 the whych ys the moste orgulus and lewdiste message that evir man had isente unto a kynge. Also thou mayste se my bearde ys fuH yonge yet to make off a purphile. But telle thou thy kynge thus, that I owghe hym [none homage] ne none of myne elders; but or hit be longe to, he shall do 10 me omage on bothe his knees, other ellis he shall lese hys hede, by the fayth of my body! For thys ys the moste shamefullyste message that ever y herde speke off. I have aspyed thy kynge never yette mette with worshipfull man. But telle hym I woll have hys hede withoute he do me 15 omage.'

Than thys messyngere departed.

'Now ys there ony here that knowyth kynge Royns ?'

Than answerde a knyght that hyght Naram: 'Sir, I know the kynge well: he ys a passynge good man of hys body as 20 fewe bene lyvyng and a passynge proude man. And, sir, doute ye nat he woll make on you a myghty puyssaunce.'

'Well,' seyde Arthure, 'I shall ordayne for hym in shorte 22^r tyme.'

Than kynge Arthure lette sende for all the children that 25 (were borne in May-day, begotyn of lordis and borne of ladyes; for Merlyon tolde kynge Arthure that he that sholde destroy hym and all the londe sholde be borne on May-day. Wherefore he sente for hem all in payne of dethe, and so there were founde many lordis sonnys and many knyghtes 30 sonnes, and all were sente unto the kynge. And so was Mordred sente by kynge Lottis wyff. And all were putte in a shyppe to the se; and som were four wekis olde and som lesse. And so by fortune the shyppe drove unto a castelle,

2 W he he sente 3-4 C haue the 4 bothe *not in* C 6 C most vylaynous
F (HutA Merlin, f.gsd): *distqu'iln'oionquesmaisparlerdesifol mandement nede*
si orgilleus come chis li mande 7 C man herd sente 8 C make a pursyl of hit
 But 9-10 W hym ne none C hym none homage ne none 18 C ony
 here said Arthur that 22 C make warre on yow with a myghty 25-6 C
 childrg born on may day 28 and all the londe *not in* C 30-1 and many
 knyghtes sonnes *not in* C

and was all to-ryven and destroyed the moste party, save that Mordred was cast up, and a good man founde hym, and fostird hym tyll he was fourtene yere of age, and than brought hym to the courte, as hit rehersith aftirward and
 5 towarde the ende of the MORTE ARTHURE.

So, many lordys and barownes of thys realme were displeased for hir children were so loste; and many putte the wyght on Merlion more than of Arthure. So what for drede and for love, they helde their pece.

10 But whan the messynge com to the kynge Royns, than was he woode oute of mesure, and purveyde hym for a grete oste, as hit rehersith aftir in the BOOKE OF BALYNE LE SAVEAGE that folowith nexte aftir: that was the adventure how Balyne gate the swerde.

3 C and nourysshed hym tyl C yere olde & thenne 4-5 W aftirward and towarde and towarde the ende of the morte Arthure. C afterward toward the ende of the deth of Arthur 8 C than on Arthur 10 C the messenger camme 13-14 Cnext after how by aduenture Balyn gat the swerd EXPLICIT LIBER PRIMUS INCIPIT LIBER SECUNDUS W the swerde after *The last word belongs to the next sentence* Afftir the deth etc. *In the manuscript used by the scribe of W this was probably the end of a page, and after was inserted as a catchword.*

II
BALYN LE SAUVAGE
OR
THE KNIGHT WITH THE TWO SWORDS

*[Winchester MS. ff^o 22^r-34^ri
Caxton, Book II]*

CAXTON'S RUBRICS

- Ch. 1. Of a damoyssel whyche came gyrde wyth a swerde for to fynde a man of suche vertue to drawe it oute of the scabard.
- „ 2. How Balen arayed lyke a poure knyght pulled out the swerde whyche afterward was cause of his deth.
- „ 3. How the Lady of the Lake demaunded the knyghtes heed that had wonne the swerde, or the maydens hede.
- „ 4. How Merlyn tolde th'adventure of this damoyssel.
- „ 5. How Balyn was pursyewed by syr Launceor, knyght of Irelande, and how he justed and slewe hym.
- „ 6. How a damoyssel whiche was love to Launceor slewe hyrself for love, and how Balyn mette wyth his brother Balan.
- „ 7. How a dwarfe reprevyd Balyn for the deth of Launceor, and how kyng Marke of Cornewayl founde them and maad a tombe over them.
- „ 8. How Merlyn prophecyed that two the best knyghtes of the world shold fyght there, whyche were syr Launcelot and syr Trystram.
- „ 9. How Balyn and his broder by the counceyl of Merlyn toke kyng Ryons and brought hym to kyng Arthur.
- „ 10. How kyng Arthur had a bataylle ayenst Nero and kyng Loth of Orkeney, and how kyng Loth was deceyved by Merlyn, and how twelve kynges were slayne.
- „ 11. Of the entyrement of twelve kynges and of the prophecye of Merlyn how Balyn should gyve the dolorous stroke.
- „ 12. How a sorouful knyght cam tofore Arthur and how Balyn fet hym, and how that knyght was slayn by a knyght invysyble.
- „ 13. How Balyn and the damoyssel mette wyth a knyght whych was in lyke wyse slayn, and how the damoyssel bledde for the custom of a castel.
- „ 14. Ho(w) Balyn mette wyth that knyght named Garlon at a feest and there he slewe hym to have his blood to hele therwith the sone of his hoost.
- „ 15. How Balyn fought wyth kyng Pelham and how his swerde brake, and how he gate a spere werewyth he smote the dolorous stroke.
- „ 16. How Balyn was delyverd by Merlyn and savyd a knyght that wold have slayn hymself for love.
- „ 17. How that knyght slewe his love and a knyght lyeng by hyr, and after how he slewe hymself wyth his owne swerde, and how Balyn rode toward a castel where he lost his lyf.

- Ch. 18. How Balyn mette wyth his brother Balen and how eche of theym slewe other unknowen tyl they were wounded to deth.
- „ 19. How Merlyn buryed hem bothe in one tombe, and of Balyns swerd.

A F F T I R the deth of Uther regned Arthure, hys son, which (i)
 \.had grete warre in hys dayes for to gete all Inglonde
 into hys honde; for there were many kyngis within the
 realme of Inglonde and of Scotlonde, Walys and Cornu-
 wayle.

So hit befelle on a tyme whan kynge Arthure was at
 London, ther com a knyght and tolde the kynge tydyngis
 how the kynge Royns of Northe Walis had rered a grete
 numbir of peple and were entred in the londe and brente
 and slew the kyngis trew lyege people.

'Iff thys be trew,' seyde Arthure, 'hit were grete shame
 unto myne astate but that he were myghtyly withstonde.'

'Hit ys trouthe,' seyde the knyght, 'for I saw the oste
 myselfrV

'Well,' seyde the kynge, 'I shall ordayne to wythstonde 15
 hys malice.'

Than the kynge lette make a cry that all the lordis,
 knyghtes and jantilmen of armys sholde draw unto the
 castell called Camelot in tho dayes, and there the kynge
 wolde lette make a counceile generall and a grete justis. 20
 So whan the kynge was com thidir with all his baron- 22^v
 age and logged as they semed beste, also there was com
 'a damoisel' the which was sente frome the grete Lady
 Lyle of Avilion. And whan she com before kynge Arthure
 she tolde fro whens she com, and how she was sente on 25
 message unto hym for thys causis. Than she lette hir
 mantell falle that was rychely furred, and than was she
 gurde with a noble swerde whereof the kynge had mervayle
 and seyde, 'Damesel, for what cause ar ye gurte with that
 swerde? Hit besemyth you nought.' 30

'Now shall I telle you,' seyde the damesell. 'Thys swerde

4-5 C Englonde and in walys Scotland and Cornewaille 15-17 I shall ordayne
 .. Than the kynge *not in Cf* 18-19 C vnto a castel 19 W called Camelot
 called in tho 22 also *not in C* 22-4 W was com the which was sente
 frome the grete lady lyle of Avilion C* was come a damoisel the whiche was sente
 on message from the grete lady lylle of auelyon F (*Huth Merlin*,/, *ggc*): vint laiens
 une damoisiele riche et de grant biautd plainne, et est (*sic*) la dame apielee la dame
 de Tisle Avalon. Si dist au roi: 'A toi m'envoie, rois, ma dame de l'isle Avalon,'
 etc. 25 C told from whome she

that I am gurte withall doth me grete sorow and comber-
 aunce, for I may nat be delyverde of thys swerde but by
 a knyght, and he muste be a passynge good man of hys
 hondys and of hys dedis, and withoute velony other trechory
 5 and withoute treson. And if I may fynde such a knyght
 that hath all thes vertues he may draw oute thys swerde
 oute of the sheethe. For I have bene at kynge Royns, for
 hit was tolde me there were passyng good knyghtes; and he
 and all his knyghtes hath assayde and none can spede.'

10 'Thys ys a grete mervayle,' seyde Arthure. 'If thys be
 sothe I woll assay myselffe to draw oute the swerde, nat
 presumynge myself! that I am the beste knyght; but I woll
 begynne to draw youre swerde in gyvyng an insample to
 all the barownes, that they shall assay everych one aftir
 15 othir whan I have assayde.' Than Arthure toke the swerde
 by the sheethe and gurdil and pulled at hit egirly, but the
 swerde wolde nat oute.

'Sir,' seyde the damesell, 'ye nede nat for to pulle halffe
 so sore, for he that shall pulle hit oute shall do hit with
 20 litill myght.'

'Ye sey well,' seyde Arthure. 'Now assay ye all, my
 barownes.'

'But beware ye be nat defoyled with shame, trechory,
 nother gyle, for than hit woll nat avayle,' seyde the damesel,
 25 'for he muste be a clene knyght withoute vylony and of
 jantill strene of fadir syde and of modir syde.'

The moste parte of all the barownes of the Rounde Table
 that were there at that tyme assayde all be rew, but there
 myght none spede. Wherefore the damesel made grete
 30 sorow oute of mesure and seyde, 'Alas! I wente in this
 courte had bene the beste knyghtes of the worlde withoute
 trechory other treson.'

'Be my faythe,' seyde Arthure, 'here ar good knyghtes
 as I deme as ony be in the worlde, but their grace ys nat
 '35 to helpe you, wherefore I am sore displeased.'

(2) Than hit befelle so that tyme there was a poore knyght
 with kynge Arthure that had bene presonere with hym

9 C knyghtes haue assayed it and
 drawe at your
 Moost of all

19 Cso hard for

31 C of the worlde not in C

12 C presumynge vpon my self

25-6 C of a gentil strene

35 sore not in C

13 C

26-7 Csyde

half a yere for sleynge of a knyght which was cosyne unto
 kynge Arthure. And the name of thys knyght was called
 Balyne, and by good meanys of the barownes he was
 delyverde oute of preson, for he was a good man named of
 his body, and he was borne in Northehumbirlonde. And 5
 so he wente pryvaly into the courte and saw thys adventure
 whereoff hit reysed his herte, and wolde assayde as othir
 knyghtes ded. But for he was poore and poorly arayde,
 he put hymself nat far in prees. But in hys herte he was
 fully assured to do as well if hys grace happed hym as ony 10
 knyght that there was. And as the damesell toke [her] leve
 of Arthure and of all the barownes, so departynge, thys
 knyght Balyn called unto her and seyde,

'Damesell, I pray you of youre curteysy suffir me as well
 to assay as thes other lordis. Thoughe that I be pourely 15
 arayed yet in my herte mesemyth I am fully assured as
 som of thes other, and mesemyth in myne herte to spede
 ryght welle.'

Thys damesell than behelde thys poure knyght and saw
 he was a lyckly man; but for hys poure araymente she 20
 thought he sholde nat be of no worship withoute vylony
 or trechory. And than she seyde unto that knyght,

'Sir, hit nedith nat you to put me to no more payne, for
 hit semyth nat you to spede thereas all thes othir knyghtes
 have fayled.' 25

'A, fayre damesell,' seyde Balyn, 'worthynes and good
 tacchis and also good dedis is nat only in araymente, but
 manhode and worship [ys hyd] within a mannes person; and
 many a worshipfull knyght ys nat knowyn unto all peple.
 And therefore worship and hardynesse ys nat in araymente.' 30

'Be God,' seyde the damesell, 'ye sey soth, therefore ye
 shall assay to do what ye may.' Than Balyn toke the swerde
 by the gurdyll and shethe and drew hit oute easily. And
 whan he loked on the swerde hit pleased hym muche.

3 C Balen 5 C northumberland 7 C wolde assaye it as 12 W toke
 þ<er> leue C* toke her leue 14-19 W (*sidenote*) Vertue and manhode ys hyed
 wythin the bodye 15-16 C be so pourely clothed in my 19 C The
 damoyssel C the poure knyght 21 nat *not in*C 23 C it nedith not to put
 me to more payn or labour for 24-5 C there as other haue 28 W worship
 w<i>t<h>in a mannes C* worship is hyd within mans (ys hyd is confirmed by
 the *sidenote* in W, see note 14-19 above)

Than had the kynge and all the barownes grete mervayle that Balyne had done that aventure; many knyghtes had grete despite at hym.

'Sertes,' seyde the damesell, 'thys ys a passynge good
5 knyght and the beste that ever y founde, and moste of
worship withoute treson, trechory, or felony. And many
mervayles shall he do. Now, jantyll and curtayse knyght,
23^v geffme the swerde agayne.'

'Nay,' seyde Balyne, 'for thys swerde woll I kepe but hit
io be takyn fro me with force.'

'Well/ seyde the damesell, 'ye ar nat wyse to kepe the
swerde fro me, for ye shall sle with that swerde the beste
frende that ye have and the man that ye moste love in the
worlde, and that swerde shall be youre destruccion.'

15 'I shall take the aventure,' seyde Balyn, 'that God woll
ordayne for me. But the swerde ye shall nat have at thys
tyme, by the feythe of my body!'

'Ye shall repente hit within shorte tyme,' seyde the dame-
sell, 'for I wolde have the swerde more for youre avauntage
20 than for myne; for I am passynge hevy for youre sake, for
and ye woll nat leve that swerde hit shall be youre destruc-
cion, and that ys grete piteV So with that departed the
damesell and grete sorow she made.

And anone afftir Balyn sente for hys horse and armoure,
25 and so wolde departe frome the courte, and toke his leve
of kynge Arthure. 'Nay,' seyde the kynge, 'I suppose ye
woll nat departe so lyghtly from thys felyship. I suppose
that ye ar displesyd that I have shewed you unkyndnesse.
But blame me the lesse, for I was mysseinfourmed ayenste
30 you: but I wente ye had nat bene such a knyght as ye ar of
worship and prouesse. And if ye woll abyde in thys courte
amonge my felyship, I shall so avaunce [you] as ye shall be
pleased.'

'God thanke youre Hyghnesse,' seyde Balyne. 'Your
35 bounte* may no man prayse halfF unto the valew, butt at thys

3 C despyte af Balen

19-20 C for your auaylle than

20-1 C your

sake For ye wil not byleue that swerd shal bef F (*Huth Merlin*,/, lood): 'Et
je vous di, fait elle, que se vous l'emportes qu'il vous en mal aterra'

22-24 C

pyte with that the damoyssel departed makynge grete sorowe Anone after 29 C
mys senformed

32 W avaunce as ye shall

C auaunce yow as ye shalle

35 C bounte and hyhenes may

tyme I muste nedis departe, besechyng you allway of youre good grace.'

'Truly,' seyde the kynge, 'I am ryght wroth of youre departyng. But I pray you, fayre knyght, that ye tarry nat longe frome me, and ye shall be ryght wellcom unto me 5 and to my barownes, and I shall amende all mysse that I have done agaynste you.'

'God thanke youre good grace,' seyde Balyn, and therewith made hym redy to departe. Than the moste party of the knyghtes of the Rounde Table seyde that Balyne dud 10 nat this adventure on^rPy by myght but by wycchecrauffte.

So the meanwhyle that thys knyght was makynge hym (3) redy to departe, there com into the courte the Lady of the Laake, and she com on horsebacke rychely beseyne, and salewed kynge Arthure and there asked hym a gyffte that 15 he promysed her whan she gaff hym the swerde.

'That ys sothe,' seyde Arthure, 'a gyffte I promysed you, 24^r but I have forgotyn the name of my swerde that ye gaff me.'

'The name of hit,' seyde the lady, 'ys Excalibir, that ys as muche to sey as Kutte Stele.' 20

'Ye sey well,' seyde the kynge. 'Aske what ye woll and ye shall have hit and hit lye in my power to gyff hit.'

'Well,' seyde thys lady, 'than I aske the hede of thys knyght that hath wonne the swerde, othir ellis the damesels hede that brought hit. I take no force though I have both 25 theire hedis: for he slew my brothir, a good knyght and a trew; and that jantillwoman was causer of my fadirs death.'

'Truly,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'I may nat graunte you nother of theire hedys with my worship; therefore aske what ye woll els, and I shall fulfille youre desire.' 30

'I woll aske none other thyng,' seyde the lady.

So whan Balyn was redy to departe, he saw the Lady of the Lake which by hir meanys had slayne hys modir; and he had sought hir three yere before. And whan hit was

5 frome me *not in C* 8 C thanke your grete lordship said n W ony by myght C* al only by F (*Huth Merlin*, f. xoxb): dient li auquant qu'il savoit d'enchantment et qu'il Pa plus fait que par la prouece de lui (*Between the words fait and que the editors of the Huth Merlin interpolate par enchantement*) lz W whyle Jt that that thys knyght 13-14 C a lady that hyght the lady of the lake 19 C Excalibur 32-3 W saw the lady of the lady of the lake 33 C slayne Balyns moder 34 before *not in C*

tolde hym how she had asked hys hede of kynge Arthure,
 he wente to hir streyght and seyde, 'Evyll be [y]e founder
 ye wolde have myne hede, and therefore ye shall loose
 youres!' And with hys swerde lyghtly he smote of hyr hede
 5 before kynge Arthure.

'Alas, for shame!' seyde the kynge. 'Why have ye do
 so? Ye have shamed me and all my courte, for thys lady
 was a lady that I was much beholdynge to, and hyder she
 com undir my sauffconduyghte. Therefore I shall never
 ic forgyfFyou that trespasse.'

'Sir,' seyde Balyne, 'me forthynkith of youre displeasure,
 for this same lady was the untrwyste lady lyvyng, and by
 inchauntement and by sorcery she hath bene the destroyer
 of many good knyghtes, and she was causer that my modir
 15 was brente thorow hir falsehode and trechory.'

'For what cause soever ye had,' seyde Arthure, 'ye sholde
 have forborne in my presence. Therefore thynke nat the
 contrary 5 ye shall repente hit, for such anothir despite had
 I nevir in my courte. Therefore withdraw you oute of my
 20 courte in all the haste that ye may.'

Than Balyn toke up the hede of the lady and bare hit
 with hym to hys ostry, and there mette with hys squire that
 was sory he had displeased kynge Arthure, and so they rode
 forthe oute of towne.

25 'Now,' seyde Balyne, 'we muste departe; therefore take
 thou thys hede and bere hit to my frendis and telle hem
 how I have spedde, and telle hem in Northhumbirlande how
 24^v my moste foo ys dede. Also telle hem how I am oute of
 preson, and what adventure befelle me at the getyng of
 30 this swerde.'

'Alas!' seyde the squire, 'ye ar gretly to blame for to
 displease kynge Arthure.'

'As for that,' seyde Balyne, 'I woll hyghe me in all [the]
 haste that I may [to] mete with kyng Royns and destroy

1C hym that she asked 1-6 W (*sidenote*): The dethe of the Lady of the Lake 2W
 be e founde C be youf founde 4 W *Hand in margin pointing to this line.*
 6-7 W do so C done so 8 C was be holden to 17 C forborne her in
 my 24 C oute of the town 25 therefore not in C 27 C and telle my
 frendys in Northumberland 33-4 *The words in square brackets the and*
*to occur both in C and in Ws second rendering of Balyne*s speech. See next page,*
note to lines 5-6

hym, othir ellis to dye therefore. And iff hit may happe
me to wynne hym, than woll kynge Arthure be my good
frende.'

'Sir, [wher] shall I mete with you?' seyde his squyre.

'In kynge Arthurs courte,* seyde Balyne. So his squyre 5
and he departed at that tyme. Than kynge Arthure and all
the courte made grete dole and had grete shame of the Lady
of the Lake. Than the kynge buried hir rychely.

So at that tyme there was a knyght, the which was the (4)
kynges son of Irelonde, and hys name was Launceor, the 10
which was an orgulus knyght and accompted hymselff one
of the beste of the courte. And he had grete despite at
Balyne for the enchevyng of the swerde, that ony sholde be
accompted more hardy or more of prouesse, and he asked
kynge Arthure licence to ryde afftir Balyne and to revenge 15
the despite that he had done. 'Do youre beste,' seyde
Arthur. 'I am ryght wrothe with Balyne. I wolde he were
quytte of the despite that he hath done unto me and my
courte.' Than thys Launceor wente to his ostre to make
hym redy. 20

So in the meanewhyle com Merlyon unto the courte of
kynge Arthure, and anone was tolde hym the adventure
or the swerde and the deth of the Lady of the Lake. 'Now
shall I sey you,' seyde Merlion; 'thys same damesell that
here stondith, that brought the swerde unto youre courte, 25
I shall telle you the cause of hir commynge. She ys the
falsist damesell that lyveth—she shall nat sey nay! For she
hath a brothir, a passyng good knyght of proues and a full
trew man, and thys damesell loved anothir knyght that
hylde her as paramoure. And thys good knyght, her 30
brothir, mette with the knyght that helde hir to paramoure,
and slew hym by force of hys hondis. And whan thys false
damesell undirstoode this she wente to the lady Lyle of

1 C to dye S or dye 2-4 C my good and gracious lord where shall I
5-6 W seyde Balyne I woll hyghe me in all the haste that I may to mete with kynge
Royns So his C said Balen so his W repeats a line from Bafyne's previous
speech (see p. 66, 33-34). The error is doubtless due to the recurrence of the words
seyde Balyne in almost identical position. 7 C and had shame of the deth of
the lady 15 W kynge kynge C Arthur yf he wold gyue hym leve to ryde
17 C wroth saidf Balen I wold . 22 C Arthur and there was told 26 C she
was the 27-8 C lyueth say not so said they She hath a

Avylion and toke hir hys swerde and besought hir of helpe to be revenged on hir owne brothir.

25* 'And so thys lady Lyle of Avylion toke hir this swerde that she brought with hir, and tolde there sholde no man
5 pulle hit oute of the sheethe but yf he be one of the beste knyghtes of thys realme, and he sholde be hardy and full of prouesse; and with that swerde he sholde sle hys brothir. Thys was the cause, damesell, that ye com into thys courte. I know hit as well as ye. God wolde ye had nat come here;
10 but ye com never in felyship of worshipfful folke for to do good, but allwayes grete harme. And that knyght that hath encheved the swerde shall be destroyed thorow the swerde; for the which woll be grete damage, for there lyvith nat a knyght of more prouesse than he ys. And he shall do unto
15 you, my lorde Arthure, grete honoure and kyndnesse; and hit ys grete pite he shall nat endure but a whyle, for of his strengthe and hardinesse I know hym nat lyvyng hys macche.'

So thys knyght of Irelande armed hym at all poyntes and
20 dressed his shyld on hys sholdir and mownted uppon horsebacke and toke hys glayve in hys honde, and rode aftir a grete pace as muche as hys horse myght dryve. And within a litill space on a mowntayne he had a syght of Balyne, and with a lowde voice he cryde, 'Abyde, knyght!
25 for ells ye shall abyde whethir ye woll other no. And the shelde that ys tofore you shall nat helpe you,' seyde thys Iryshe knyght, 'therefore com I affter you.'

1 and toke hir hys swerde not in C*. Whether these "jvoords occurred in M is at best doubtful, for they are clearly out of keeping with the story. F makes it plain that the damsel receives the sword from the Lady of Avalonj the words toke hir this swerde that she brought with hir in the next sentence must therefore be taken to mean "game her the sword that she (i.e. the damsel) had brought to Arthurs court.' Cf Huth Merlin, f. 104a: et maintenant le chainst de l'espee que elle aporta en ceste court
7 Cslee her broder

F (Huth Merlin, f 104b) would justify either reading: Et si n'averra de ceste espee mie seul mal a son frere, ains en mourront cil dui queje connois vraiment qui sont li millor chevalier dou roiaume 8-11 C the cause

that the damoyssel came in to this Courte I knowe it as well as ye wolde god she had nat comen in to thys Courte but she came neuer in felauship of worship to do good 17 hym not in C z\|C toke his spere 22 C myght goo and

,25 ells not in C Cy e will or nyll arid 26-7 C not helpe whan Balyn herd the noyse he tourned his hors fyersly and saide faire knyghte what wille ye with me wille ye Iuste with me ye said the Irysshe F (Huth Merlin, f 105a) lends no support to this reading: A ches paroles se regarde Balaam et connoist que joster le

'Peradventure,' seyde Balyne, 'ye had bene bettir to have holde you at home. For many a man wenyth to put hys enemy to a rebuke, and ofte hit fallith on hymselff. Oute of what courte be ye com fro?' seyde Balyn.

'I am com frome the courte of kyng Arthure,' seyde the 5 knyght of Irelande, 'that am com hydir to revenge the despite ye dud thys day unto kyng Arthure and to his courte.'

'Well,' seyde Balyne, 'I se well I must have ado with you; that me forthynkith that I have greved kyng Arthure 10 or ony of hys courte. And youre quarell ys full symple,' seyde Balyne, 'unto me; for the lady that ys dede dud to me grete damage, and ellis I wolde have bene lothe as ony knyght that lyvith for to sle a lady.'

'Make you redy,' seyde the knyght Launceor, 'and dresse 15 you unto me, for that one shall abyde in the fylde.'

Than they fewtred their spearis in their restis and com togidirs as muche as their horsis my[g]ht dryve. And the 25^v Irysh knyght smote Balyn on the shylde that all wente to shyvers of hys spere. And Balyne smote hym agayne thorow 20 the shylde, and [the] hawbirk perysshed, and so bore hym thorow the body and over the horse crowper; and anone turned hys horse fersely and drew oute hys swerde, and wyst nat that he had slayne hym.

Than he saw hym lye as a dede corse, he loked aboute 25 (6) hym and was ware of a damesel that com rydyng full faste as the horse myght dryve, on a fayre palferey. And whan she aspyed that Launceor was slayne she made sorow oute of mesure and seyde, 'A! Balyne, two bodyes thou haste sla(in in) one herte, and two hertes in one body, and two soules 30 thou hast loste.' And therewith she toke the swerde frome hir love that lay dede, and felle to the grounde in a swowghe.

And whan she arose she made grete dole oute of mesure, convient erramment, se H a dit si haut que chis le puet bien entendre: 'Chevaliers! Anchois que tu joustes a moi, di moi a cui tu ieV i Cit had ben better 4 C be ye sent fro 10 C forthynketh for to greue kyng arthurf 17 C they toke their speres in their restis not in C W Hand in margin opposite this line, 20-2 C Balyn hyt hym thorough the sheld and the hauberk perysshed & so percyd. thurgh his body and the hors crowpe W (sidenote): How Balyn slew Launceor 24-5 C slayn hym and thenne he sawe hym lye as a dede corps CAPITULUM VI Thenne he 26-7 C that came ryde ful fast as the how myghte ryde on a 30 W slayne one C slayne and one (see note) 32 C in a swowne

which sorow greved Balyn passyngly sore. And he wente unto hir for to have tane the swerde oute of hir honde; but she helde hit so faste he myght nat take hit oute of hir honde but yf he sholde have hurte hir. And suddeynly
 5 she sette the pomell to the grounde, and rove hirselff thorowoute the body.

Whan Balyne aspyed hir dedis he was passyng hevy in his herte and ashamed that so fayre a damesell had destroyed himselff for the love of hys dethe. 'Alas!' seyde Balyn, 'me
 ie repentis sore the dethe of thys knyght for the love of thys damesel, for there was muche trw love betwyxte hem.' And so for sorow he myght no lenger beholde them, but turned hys horse and loked towarde a fayre foreste.

And than was he ware by hys armys that there com rydyng
 15 hys brothir Balan. And whan they were mette they put or hyr helmys and kyssed togydirs and wepte for joy and pite*. Than Balan seyde, 'Brothir, I litill wende to have mette with you at thys suddayne adventure, but I am ryght glad of youre delyveraunce of youre dolerous presonment:
 ao for a man tolde me in the Castell of Four Stonys that ye were delyverde, and that man had seyne you in the courte of kynge Arthure. And therefore I com hydir into thys contrey, for here I supposed to fynde you.'

And anone Balyne tolde hys brothir of hys adventure of
 »5 the swerde and the deth of the Lady of the Laake, and how kynge Arthure was displeased with hym.
 26^r 'Wherefore he sente thys knyght afftir me that lyethe here dede. And the dethe of thys damesell grevith me sore.'

30 'So doth hit me,' seyde Balan. 'But ye must take the adventure that God woll ordayne you.'

'Truly,' seyde Balyne, 'I am ryght hevy that my lorde Arthure ys displeased with me, for he ys the moste wor-
 shypfullist kynge that regnith now in erthe; and hys love
 35 I woll gete othir ellis I woll putte my lyff in adventure. For kynge Ryons lyeth at the sege of the Castell Terrable,

12 C behold hymf but 13 C a grete forest No adjective in F. 14-15 C and ther he was ware by the armes of his broder Balan 17 Brothir not in C 19 C delyueraunce and off F (*Huth Merlin*, f. xosd): par quel aventure estes vous delivr& de la dolereuse prison ou vous estids 23-4 C fynde you anon the kny[^]t balyn 33-4 C worshipful knyght that 36 C lyeth at a syege atte castelTarabil

and thydir woll we draw in all goodly haste to preve oure worship and prouesse uppon hym.'

'I woll well,' seyde Balan, 'that ye so do; and I woll ryde with you and put my body in adventure with you, as a brothir ought to do.'

'Now go we hense,' seyde Balyne, 'and well we beth (7) mette.'

The meanewhyle'as they talked there com a dwarff frome the cite* of Camelot on horsebacke as much as he myght, and founde the dede bodyes; wherefore he made grete dole 10 and pulled hys heyre for sorowe and seyde,

'Which of two knyghtes have done this dede?'

'Whereby askist thou?' seyde Balan.

'For I wolde wete,' seyde the dwarff.

'Hit was I, ' seyde Balyn, 'that slew this knyght in my 15 defendaunte; for hyder he com to chase me, and othir I muste sle hym other he me. And this damesell slew herself for his love, which repentith me. And for hir sake I shall owghe all women the bettir wylle and servyse all the dayes of my lyff.'

'Alas!' seyde the dwarff, 'thou hast done grete damage unto thyself?. For thys knyght that ys here dede was one of the moste valyauntis men that lyved. And truste well, Balyne, the kynne of thys knyght woll chase you thorow the worlde tyll they have slayne you.'

'As for that,' seyde Balyne, 'the I fere nat gretely; but I am ryght hevy that I sholde displease my lorde, kynge Arthure, for the deth of thys knyght.'

So as they talked togydirs there com a kynge of Cornu- wayle rydyng, which hyght kyng Marke. And whan he 30 saw thes two bodyes dede, and undirstood howe they were dede, 'by'¹ the two knyghtes aboven-seyde, [thenne] made

1 goodly *not in C* 3-5 *C* that we do & we wil helpe eche other as bretheren
 ought to do *CA VII* 6-7 *C* wel be we met 12 *C* which of you kny3tes
 13-14 *C* askest thou it said balan... wete it said the dwarfe 19-21 *C* better loue
 Alias 26 the *not in C* 27 *C* that I haue displeasyd 32—p. 72, 1
W dede the ii knyghtes aboven seyde made to the kynge *C** dede by the ii knyghtes
 aboue saide thenne maade the kynge *C* is probably nearer the original; cf. *F* (*Huth*
Merlin,/. 106c): quant il fu venus la ou le dui cors gisoient ala terre et il en sot
 la verite" ensi comme li dui frere li conterent, il dist qu'il n'avoit onques mais oi
 parler de damoisele qui si loiaument amast. *W* must have overlooked the word by
 and added to for the sense.

the kynge grete sorow for the trew love that was betwyxte them, and seyde, 'I woll nat departe tyll I have on thys erth made a towmbe.' And there he pyght his pavylyons and sought all the contrey to fynde a towmbe, and in a chirch
 5 they founde one was fayre and ryche. And than the kyng
 26^v lette putte h[e]m bothe in the erthe, and leyde the tombe uppon them, and wrote the namys of hem bothe on the tombe, how 'here lyeth Launceor, the kyngis son of Irelande, that at hys owne rekeyste was slayne by the hondis of to Balyne,' and how 'this lady Columbe and peramour to hym slew hirself with hys swerde for dole and sorow.'

(8) The meanewhyle as thys was adoyng, in com Merlion to kynge Marke and saw all thys doynge. 'Here shall be,' seyde Merlion, 'in this same place the grettist bateyle
 15 betwyxte two [knyghtes] that ever was or ever shall be, and the trewyst lovers; and yette none of hem shall slee other.' And there Merlion wrote hir namys uppon the tombe with lettirs of golde, that shall feyght in that place: which namys was Launcelot du Lake and Trystrams.

20 'Thou [art] a merveyulous man,' seyde kynge Marke unto Merlion, 'that spekist of such mervayles. Thou arte a boysteous man and an unlyckly, to telle of suche dedis. What ys thy name?' seyde kynge Marke.

'At thys tyme,' seyde Merlion, 'I woll nat telle you.
 25 But at that tyme sir Trystrams ys takyn with his soveraigne lady, than shall ye here and know my name; and at that tyme ye shall *There*¹ tydynges that shall nat please you.'

'A, Balyne!' seyde Merlion, 'thou haste done thyselff grete hurte that thou saved nat thys lady that slew herselff;
 30 for thou myghtyst have saved hir and thou haddist wold.'

'By the fayth of my body,' seyde Balyne, 'I myght nat save hir, for she slewe herselff suddely.'

4 C soughte thurgh alle the 6-15 W (*sidenote*): how the lady Columbe slew hirselfe for the deth of Launceor. 6 W horn bothe C hem bothe C & put the tombe 10-11 C how his lady colombe and peramoure slew her self with her louses swerd for 13-14 C mark seyng alle his doynge said Here shalle be in 15 W two men (*see note*) C that was 18 C that shold fyghte 20 W Thou a C thou art a 24 you *not in C* 27 W shall othir tydynges C* shal here tydynges F (*Huth Merlin, f. 107a*): dont te dira on teuls nouviefies de moi qui te desclairont 27-8 C please yow Thenne said merlyn to balyne thou 29 C hurt by cause that 29-30 C her self that myght haue saued her & thou woldest

'Me repentis hit,' seyde Merlion; 'because of the dethe of that lady thou shalt stryke a stroke moste dolerous that ever man stroke, excepte the stroke of oure Lorde Jesu Cryste. For thou shalt hurte the trewyst knyght and the man of moste worship that now lyvith; and thorow that 5 stroke, three kyngdomys shall be brought into grete poverty miseri and wrecch[^]dnesse twelve yere. And the knyght shall nat be hole of that wounde many yerys.' Than Merlion toke hys leve.

'Nay,' seyde Balyn, 'nat so; for and I wyste thou seyde 10 soth, I wolde do so perleous a dede that I wolde sle myself to make the a Iyer/

Therewith Merlion vanysshed away suddeynly, and than Balyn and his brother toke their leve of kynge Marke.

'But first,' seyde the kynge, 'telle me youre name.' 15

'Sir,' seyde Balan, 'ye may se he beryth two swerdis, and thereby ye may calle hym the Knyght with the Two Swerdis.'

And so departed kynge Marke unto Camelot to kynge Arthure. 20

And Balyne toke the way to kynge Royns, and as they 27* rode togydir they mette with Merlion disgysed so that they knew hym nought.

'But whotherward ryde ye?' seyde Merlion.

'We had litill ado to telle you,' seyde thes two knyghtes. 25

'But what ys thy name?' seyde Balyn.

'At thys tyme,' seyde Merlion, 'I woll nat telle.'

'Hit ys an evyll sygne,' seyde the knyghtes, 'that thou arte a trew man, that thou wolt nat telle thy name.'

'As for that,' seyde Merlion, 'be as hit be may. But I 30 can telle you wherefore ye ryde thys way: for to mete with kynge Royns. But hit woll nat avayle you withoute ye have my counceyle.'

'A,' seyde Balyn, 'ye ar Merlion. We woll be ruled by youre counceyle.' 35

'Com on,' seyde Merlion, 'and ye shall have grete

3-4 Jesu Cryste *not in C* 6 C be in grete 9-11 Cleue of balyn & balen
said yf I wist it were soth that ye say I shold do suche a peryllous dede 22-3 C
desguysed but they 25-6 C we haue lytel to do saide the ij kny3tes to telle
the but 27 C telle it the 28 C it is euyl sene

worship. And loke that ye do knyghtly, for ye shall have nede.'

'As for that,' seyde Balyne, 'dred you nat, for we woll do what we may.'

- (9) 5 Than there lodged Merlion and thes two knyghtes in a woode amonge the levis besydes the hyghway, and toke of the brydyls of their horsis and putte hem to grasse, and leyde hem downe to reste tyll hit was nyghe mydnyght. Than Merlion bade hem ryse and make hem redy: 'for here
10 commyth the kynge nyghehonde, that was stoolyn away frome his oste with a three score horsis of hys beste knyghtes, and twenty of them rode tofore the lorde to warne the Lady de Vaunce that the kynge was commynge.' For that nyght kynge Royns sholde have lyen with hir.

- 15 'Which ys the kynge?' seyde Balyn.

'Abyde,' seyde Merlion, 'for here in a strete [weye] ye shall mete with hym.' And therewith he shewed Balyn and hys brothir the kynge.

- And anone they mette with hym, and smote hym downe
*o and wounded hym freyshly, and layde hym to the growunde. And there they slewe on the ryght honde and on the lyffte honde mo than fourty of hys men; and the remanaunte fledde. Than wente they agayne unto kynge Royns and wolde have slayne hym, had he nat yelded hym unto hir
25 grace. Than seyde he thus:

'Knyghtes full of prouesse, sle me nat! For be my lyff ye may wynne, and by my dethe litill.'

'Ye say sothe,' seyde the knyghtes, and so leyde hym on an horse littur.

- 30 So with that Merlion vanysshed, and com to kynge Arthure aforehonde and tolde hym how hys moste enemy was takyn and discomfite.

'By whom?' seyde kynge Arthure.

1-2 C haue grete nede 5 C Thenne Meryn lodged them in a 9-10 Cf for the the kynge was nygh them that was *Direct speech in F (Huth Merlin, f. io8c-d)*.
12 the lord *not in C* 13 C de Vance *F (loc. cit.) des Vaus* 16 C in a streyte wey *F (Huth Merlin, f. iogc): et il venoient petit et petit, car li chemins par les tertres estoit estrois pour aler a la montaigne* 18-19 C his broder where he rode anon balyn & his broder mette with the kyng & smote
20 C hym fyersly and 21-2 C lyfte hond and slewe moo 27-8 C dethe ye shalle wynne noo thinge Thenne sayd these two knyghtes ye say sothe so

'By two knyghtes,' seyde Merlion, 'that wolde faync have youre lordship. And to-morrow ye shall know what 27^T knyghtis they ar.'

So anone afir com the Knyght with the Two Swerdis and hys brothir, and brought with them kynge Royns of 5 Northe Waalis, and there delyverde hym to the porters, and charged hem with)xym. And so they two returned agen in the dawning of the day.

Than kynge Arthure com to kynge Royns and seyde, 'Sir kynge, ye ar wellcom. By what adventure com ye 10 hydir?'

'Sir,' seyde kynge Royns, 'I com hyder by an harde adventure.'

'Who wanne you?' seyde kynge Arthure.

'Sir,' seyde he, 'the Knyght with the Two Swerdis and 15 hys brothir, which ar two mervayles knyghtes of prouesse.'

'I know hem nat,' seyde Arthure, 'but much am I beholdynge unto them.'

'A, sir,' seyde Merlion, 'I shall telle you. Hit ys Balyn that encheved the swerde and his brothir Balan, a good 20 knyght: there lyvith nat a bettir of proues, nother of worthy-nesse. And hit shall be the grettist dole of hym that ever y knew of knyght; for he shall nat longe endure.'

'Alas,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'that ys grete pite;,for I am muche beholdynge unto hym, and I have evill deserved hit 25 agayne for hys kyndnesse.'

'Nay, nay,' sede Merlion, 'he shall do much more for you, 'and that shall ye know in haste. But, sir, ar ye purveyde?' seyde Merlion. '[For to-morn] the oste of kynge Nero, kynge Royns brothir, woll sette on you or none with a grete 30 oste. And therefore make you redy, for I woll departe frome you.'

Than kynge Arthure made hys oste redy in ten batayles; (10) and Nero was redy in the fylde afore the Castell Terrable with a grete oste. And he had ten batayles with many mo 35 peple than kynge Arthure had. Than Nero had the vawarde with the moste party of the peple. And Merlion com

1-2 C wold please your lordship 5 C and balan his broder 14-15 C said the
kyng the knyght a5Cdeseruedhitvntohymforhis 27 C nay said
29 W tomorne for C* for to morne 37 C of his peple

to kynge Lotte of the He of Orkeney, and helde hym with
 a tale of the prophecy tylle Nero and his peple were des-
 troyed. And there sir Kay the Senesciall dud passyngely
 well, that dayes of hys lyfF the worship wente never frome
 5 hym, and sir Hervis de Revel that dud merveyulous dedys
 of armys that day with Arthur. And kynge Arthure slew
 that day twenty knyghtes and maymed fourty.

So at that tyme com in the Knyght with the Two
 Swerdis and his brothir, but they dud so mervaylously that
 io the kynge and all the knyghtes mervayled of them. And
 all they that behelde them seyde they were sente frome
 28* hevyn as angels other devilles frome helle. And kynge
 Arthure seyde hymself they were the doughtyeste knyghtes
 that ever he sawe, for they gaff such strokes that all men had
 is wondir of hem.

So in the meanewhyle com one to kynge Lotte and tolde
 hym whyle he tarryed there how Nero was destroyed and
 slayne with all his oste. 'Alas/ seyde kynge Lotte, 'I am
 ashamed; for in my defaute there ys [many a worshipful
 20 man slayne; for and we had ben togyders there hadde ben]
 none oste undir hevyn were able to have macched us. But
 thys faytoure with hys prophecy hath mocked me.' All that
 dud Merlion, for he knew well that 'and"! kynge Lotte had
 bene with hys body at the first batayle, kynge Arthure had
 2\$ be slayne and all hys peple distressed. And well Merlion
 knew that one of the kynges sholde be dede that day; and
 lothe was Merlion that ony of them bothe sholde be
 slayne, but of the tweyne he had levir kyng Lotte of
 Orkeney had be slayne than Arthure.

30 'What ys beste to do?' seyde kynge Lotte. 'Whether ys

2 C a tale of prophecye 4 W that dayes of hys lyfF that the worship C* that
 the dayes of his lyf the worship 5 that *not in C* 6 of armys that day
not in C 9 C his broder Balan But they two did 13 C the best
 knyghtes 18 C al his peple Alias 19-21 C for by my defaute ther is
 many a worshipful man slayne for and we had ben to gyders there hadde ben
 none hooste vnder the heuen that had ben abel for to haue matched with vs After
 the words there ys W omits a whole line {approximately 70 letters}. These words
 most probably occurred in W's original at the end of a line, exactly as they do in W
 itself. 23 W that kynge C* that and kynge F (Huth Merlin, f. 117a):
 'Merlins m'a mort. Se je eusse des hui matin chevauchie' a esfors, je eusse le roi
 desconfit.' 24 C body there at 25 C peple destroyed 28-9 of Orkeney *not*
in C 30 C Now what C kyng Lot of Orkeney

me bettir to trete with kyng Arthur othir to fyght ? For the gretter party of oure people ar slayne and distressed.'

'Sir,' seyde a knyght, 'sette ye on Arthure, for they ar wery and forfoughtyn, and we be freyssh.'

'As for me,' seyde kyng Lott, 'I wolde that every knyght 5 wolde do hys parte as I wolde do myne.'

Than they avaunced baners and smote togydirs and brused hir sperys. And Arthurs knyghtes with the helpe of the Knyght with Two Swerdys and hys brothir Balan put kyng Lotte and hys oste to the warre. But allwayes 10 kyng Lotte hylde hym ever in the fore-fronte and dud merveyllous dedis of armys; for all his oste was borne up by hys hondys, for he abode all knyghtes. Alas, he myght nat endure, the whych was grete pite! So worthy a knyght as he was one, that he sholde be overmacched, that of late 15 tyme before he had bene a knyght of kyng Arthurs, and wedded the syster of hym. And for because that kyng Arthure lay by hys wyff and gate on her sir Mordred, therefore kyng Lott helde ever agaynste Arthure.

So there was a knyght that was called the Knyght with 20 the Strange Bes^{^e}"¹, and at that tyme hys ryght name was called Pellynore, which was a good man off prouesse as few in tho dayes lyvyng. And he strake a myghty stroke at kyng Lott as he fought with hys enemyes, and he fayled of hys stroke and smote the horse necke, that he foundred 25 to the erthe with kyng Lott. And therewith anone kyng 28^v Pellinor smote hym a grete stroke thorow the helme and hede unto the browis.

Than all the oste of Orkeney fledde for the deth of kyng Lotte, and there they were takyn and slayne, all the oste. 30 But kyng Pellynore bare the wyte of the dethe of kyng Lott, wherefore sir Gawayne revenged the deth of hys fadir

2 C slayne and destroyed 7-8 C to gyders and al to sheuered their speres
 11 ever *not in C* C forrest front 14-15 C P^{te} that so worthy a knygt
 as he was one shold be 17-18 C the sister of kyng arthur & for kyng
 Arthur lay by kyng lots wyf the whiche was arthurs syster & gat 19 ever
not in C 21 W best^{<es>} C* beeste. F (Huth Merlin, f. n8d) i li chevaliers a la
 diverse beste 22-3 as few in tho dayes lyvyng *not in C* 23 C he smote a
 myghty 24 C with all his enemyes 25-6 C that he fylle to the grounde
 26 W *Hand in margin pointing to this line.* 30-1 C and there were slayn
 many moders sones But 31-2 After kyng Lott W repeats the previous line.-
 and there were takyn and slayne all the hole oste

the ten yere aftir he was made knyght, and slew kyng
Pellynor hys owne hondis. Also there was slayne at that
batayle twelve kynges on the syde of kyng Lott with Nero,
and were buryed in the chirch of Seynte Stevins in Camelot.

5 And the remanent of knyghtes and other were buryed in
a grete roche.

(i i) So at the enterement com kyng Lottis wyff, Morgause,
with hir four sonnes, Gawayne, Aggravayne, Gaheris, and
Gareth. Also there com thydir kyng Uryens, sir Uwaynes
10 fadir, and Morgan le Fay, his wyff, that was kyng Arthurs
syster. All thes com to the enterement. But of all the
twelve kyngis kyng Arthure lette make the tombe of kyng
Lotte passynge rychely, and made hys tombe by hymselff.

And than Arthure lette make twelve images of laton
15 and cooper, and overgylte with golde in the sygne of the
twelve kynges; and eche one of hem helde a tapir of wexe
in hir honde that brente nyght and day. And kyng
Arthure was made in the sygne of a fygure stondynge aboven
them with a swerde drawyn in hys honde, and all the twelve
20 fygures had countenaunce lyke unto men that were over-
corn. All thys made Merlion by hys subtile craufte.

And there he tolde the kyng how that whan he was dede
thes tapers sholde brenne no lenger, 'aftir the adventures of
the Sankgreall that shall com amonge you and be encheved.'
25 Also he tolde kyng Arthure how Balyn, the worshipfull
knyght, shall *gyff* the dolerouse stroke, whereof shall falle
grete vengeaunce.

'A, where ys Balyne, Balan, and Pellinore?'

'As for kyng Pellinore,' seyde Merlion, 'he woll mete
30 with you soone. And as for Balyne, he woll nat be longe
frome you. But the other brothir woll departe: ye shall se
hym no more/

'Be my fayth,' seyde Arthur, 'they ar two manly knyghtes,
and namely that Balyne passith of proues off ony knyght

2 C Pellinore with his 4 C and all were 9-10 C Ewayns fader 13 C
made his tombe by his owne Not in F. i5<7ouergylthitwith 13-21 W
(sidenote): Here ys the dethe of kyng Lot and of the xii kyngis 15-16 C of xii
kynges 17 in hir honde not in Cf F (Huth Merlin, f. 119b): chascuns
tenoit en sa main un candeler 22-4 C the kyng wha I am dede these tapers
shalle brenne no lenger and soone after the aduentures of the Sangrayll shall
28-9 C Pellinore saide kyng Arthure as for Pellinore 33-4 C two merueyllous
knyghtes and namely Balyn

that ever y founde, for much am I beholdynge unto hym.
 Wolde God he wolde abyde with me!'

'Sir,' seyde Merlion, 'loke ye kepe well the scawberd of
 Excaleber, for ye shall lose no bloode whyle ye have the
 scawberde uppon you, thoughe ye have as many woundis 5 29^r
 uppon you as ye may have.' (So aftir for grete truste Arthure
 betoke the scawberde unto Morgan le Fay, hys sister. And
 she loved another knyght bettir than hir husbande, kynge
 Uriens, othir Arthure. And she wolde have had Arthure
 hir brother slayne, and therefore she lete make anothir 10
 scawberd for Excaliber Hyke it by enchauntement, and gaf
 the scawberd Excaliber to her lover]. And the knyghtes
 name was called Accolon, that aftir had nere slayne kynge
 Arthure.)

But aftir thys Merlion tolde unto kynge Arthure of the 15
 prophecy that there sholde be a grete batayle besydes
 Salysbiry, and Mordred hys owne sonne sholde be agaynste
 hym. Also he tolde hym that Bagdemagus was his cosyne
 germayne, and unto kynge Uryens.

So within a day or two kynge Arthure was somewhat 20(12)
 syke, and he lette pycch hys pavilion in a medow, and there
 he leyde hym downe on a paylet to slepe; but he myght have
 no reste. Ryght so he herde a grete noyse of an horse, and
 therewith the kynge loked oute at the porche dore of the
 pavilion and saw a knyght commynge evyn by hym makynge 25
 grete dole.

* Abyde, fayre sir,' seyde Arthure, 'and telle me wherefore
 thou makyst this sorow.'

'Ye may litill amende me,' seyde the knyght, and so
 passed forth to the Castell of Meliot. 30

And anone aftir that com Balyne. And whan he saw
 kyng Arthur he alyght of hys horse and com to the kynge
 one foote and salewed hym. 'Be my hede,' seyde Arthure,
 'ye be wellcom. Sir, ryght now com rydynge thys way a
 knyght makynge grete morne, and for what cause I can 35

11-12 W scawberd for Excaliber And the C* scauberd lyke it by enchaunte-
 ment and gaf the scauberd Excalibur to her loue and the knyghtes F (*Huth*
Merlin, f. 121b): Lors bailla a son ami meismes tout en eel jour l'autre fuerre
 18 C Basdemagus 18-19 C cosyn and germayn vnto kynge Vryence 24 dore
 net in C 31 C ther cam 35 C grete moorne F (*Huth Merlin*, f. 124b):
 grant duel

nat telle. Wherefore I wolde desire of you, of your curtesy and of your jantilnesse, to fecche agayne that knyght othir by force othir by his good wylle.'

'I shall do more for youre lordeship than that,' seyde
5 Balyne, 'othir ellis I woll greve hym.'

So Balyn rode more than a pace and founde the knyght with a damesell undir a foreyste and seyde, 'Sir knyght, ye muste com with me unto kyng Arthure for to telle hym of youre sorow.'

io 'That woll I nat,' seyde the knyght, 'for hit woll harme me gretely and do you none avayle.'

'Sir,' seyde Balyne, 'I pray you make you redy, for ye muste go with me othir ellis I muste fyght with you and bryng you by for[c]e. And that were me lothe to do.'

15 'Woll ye be my warraunte,' seyde the knyght, 'and I go with you?'

'Yee,' seyde Balyne, 'othir ellis, by the fayth of my body,
29^v I woll dye therefore.'

And so he made hym redy to go with Balyne and lefte
20 the damesell styll.

And as they were evyn before Arthurs pavilion, there com one invisible and smote the knyght that wente with Balyn thorowoute the body with a spere.

'Alas!' seyde the knyght, 'I am slayne undir youre con-
25 duyte with a knyght called [Garlon]. Therefore take my horse that is bettir than youre, and ryde to the damesell and folow the queste that I was in as she woll lede you, and revenge my deth whan ye may.'

'That shall I do,' seyde Balyn, 'and that I make a vow
30 to God and knyghthode.'

And so he departed frome kyng Arthure with grete sorow.

5 othir ellis I woll greve hym *not in C* 7 C damoyssel in a forestf F
(Huth Merlin, f. 124c): au piet d'une montaigne 8 W for for to telle 10-11
C wylle scathe me gretely and now do 14 W by fore C by force F
(Huth Merlin, f. 1240"): 'Se vous ne retorn&, fait li autres, vous me ferez faire
une vilonnie, car je m'en prendrai a vous a bataille pleniére' 17 by the fayth
of my body *not in Cf* 25 W Garlonde C* Garlon F Garlan (also Gallan)
26—p. 81,4 W (sidenote): How Garlonde that went invisible slew Harlewe le Barbens
under the conduyt of Balyn 29 *Misprint in S* (make vow). 30 God and *not in C*
31 C departed from thys knyghtef F (Huth Merlin,/. 125b): Puis dist au roi:
'Sire, je m'en vois de chi, si vous commanc a Dieu'

So kynge Arthure lette bury this knyght rychely, and made mencion [on] his tombe how here was slayne Berbeus and by whom the trechory was done of the knyght "'Garlon"¹. But ever the damesell bare the truncheon of the spere with hir that sir Harleus le Berbeus was slayne withall. 5

So Balyne and the damesell rode into the foreyste and there (1 3) mette with a knyght that had bene an hontynge. And that knyght asked Balyn for what cause he made so grete sorow.

'Me lyste nat to telle,' seyde Balyne.

'Now,' seyde the knyght, 'and I were armed as ye be, 10
1 wolde fyght with you but iff ye tolde me.'

'That sholde litell nede,' seyde Balyne, 'I am nat aferde to telle you/ and so tolde hym all the case how hit was.

'A,' seyde the knyght, 'ys thys all? Here I ensure you by the feyth of my body never to departe frome you whyle 15
my lyfflastith.'

And so they wente to their ostre* and armed hem and so rode forthe with Balyne.

And as they com by an ermytage evyn by a chy[r]cheyerde, there com "'Garlon"¹ invisible and smote this knyght, Peryne 20
de Mounte Belyarde, thorowoute the body with a glayve.

'Alas/ seyde the knyght, 'I am slayne by thys traytoure knyght that rydith invisible.'

'Alas,' seyde Balyne, 'thys ys nat the firste despite that he hath done me.' 25

And there the ermyte and Balyne buried the knyght undir a ryche stone and a tombe royall. And on the morne they founde letters of golde wretyn how that sir Gawayne shall revenge his fadirs deth [kynge Lot] on kynge Pellynore.

And anone aftir this Balyne and the damesell rode forth 30
tylle they com to a castell. And anone Balyne alyghte and wente in. And as sone as [Balyne came] with[in] the castels

2 W made mencion his tombe C* made a mensyon on his tombe C Herlews le berbeus 3 of not in C 3 See note top. 80, line 25. 5 le Berbeus not in C
6 C in to a forest 9 C to telle yow saide Balyn 11 but iff ye tolde me not in C
19-29 W (sidenote): Here Garlonde invisible slew Peryne de Mounte Beliard under the conduyght of Balyn 20 See note top. 80, line 25. 21 C with a speref F (**** Merlin, f. 129a): ferus d'une glaive par mi le cors
20-22 W Hand in margin pointing to these lines. 29 C* his faders deth kynge Lot on the kynge Pellinore F (HutA Merlin, f. 12gd): En ceste chimentiere vengera Gavains le roi Loth son pere 32—p. 82,1 W And as sone as they (?) were with (?) the portecolys were lette downe C* and anone as balyne came within the

yate¹ the portecolys were lette downe at his backe, and there
 30^r felle many men aboute the damesell and wolde have slayne
 hir. Whan Balyne saw that, he was sore greved for he myght
 nat helpe her. But than he wente up into a towre and
 5 lepte over the wallis into the dyche and hurte nat hymselff.
 And anone he pulled oute his swerde and wolde have
 foughtyn with them. And they all seyde nay, they wolde
 nat fyght with hym, for they dud nothyng but the olde
 custom of thys castell, and tolde hym that hir lady was
 xo syke and had leyne many yeres, and she myght nat be
 hole but yf she had bloode in a sylver dysshe full, of a
 clene mayde and a kynges doughter. 'And therefore the
 custom of thys castell ys that there shall no damesell passe
 thys way but she shall blede of hir bloode a sylver dysshe-
 «5 full.'

'Well,' seyde Balyne, 'she shall blede as much as she may
 blede, but I woll nat lose the lyff of hir whyle my lyff'
 lastitn.' And so Balyn made hir to bleede by hir good wylle,
 but hir bloode holpe nat the lady. And so she and he rested
 20 there all that nyght and had good chere, and in the mornynge
 they passed on their waves. And as hit tellith aftir in the
 SANKGREALL that sir Percivall his syster holpe that lady with
 hir blood, whereof she was dede.

(14) Than they rode three or four dayes and nevir mette with
 25 adventure. And so by fortune they were lodged with a
 jantilman. And as they sate at souper Balyn herde one
 complayne greuously by hym in a chambir.

'What ys thys noyse?' seyde Balyn.

Tor sothe,' seyde his oste, 'I woll telle you. I was but
 30 late at a justynge and there I justed with a knyght that ys
 brothir unto kynge Pellam, and twyse I smote hym downe.
 And than he promysed to quyte me on my beste frende.
 And so he wounded thus my son that can nat be hole tylle

castels yate the portecolys fyller downe *F(Huth Merlin, f. 130c)*: Et li chevailers
 aloit devant et la damoisiele apres, loing Tun de l'autre. Et si tost comme il se fu
 mis el chastiel cil d'amont laissent avaler une porte coulische 4 C helpe the
 damoyssel C in to the toure 5 C hurte hym not xi-xa C had a dysshe
 of syluer ful of blood of a clene x 3 that *not in C* 20 C had there ryght
 good 25 C and by happe 26-7 C a gentyll man that was a ryche man
 and well at ease And as they sat at her souper balyn herd ouer complayne
 greuously by him in a chayerf *F (Huth Merlin, f. 133b)*: . . . en une des
 chambres de laiens 33 thus *not in C*

I have of that knyghtes bloode. And he rydith all invisibyle,
but I know nat hys name/

'A,' seyde Balyne, 'I know that knyghtes name, which
ys 'Garlon"l, and he hath slayne two knyghtes of myne in
the same maner. Therefore I had levir mete with that 5
knyght than all the golde in thys realme, for the despyte
he hath done me.'

'Well,' seyde hys oste, 'I shall telle you how. Kynge
Pellam off Lystenoyse hath made do cry in all the contrey
a grete feste that shall be within thes twenty dayes, and no 10
knyght may com there but he brynge hys wyff with hym
othir hys paramoure. And that your enemy and myne ye 30^v
shall se that day.'

'Than I promyse you,' seyde Balyn, 'parte of his bloode
to hele youre sonne withall.' 15

'Than we woll be forewarde to-morne,' seyde he.

So on the morne they rode all three towarde kynge Pellam,
and they had fyftene dayes journey or they com thydir. And
that same day began the grete feste. And so they alyght
and stabled their horsis and wente into the castell, but 20
Balynes oste myght '[not] be lette in because he had no lady.
But Balyne was well receyved and brought unto a chambir
and unarmed hym. And there was brought hym robis to
his plesure, and wolde have had Balyn leve his swerde be-
hynde hym. 'Nay,' seyde Balyne, 'that woll I nat, for hit 25
ys the custom of my contrey a knyght allweyes to kepe hys
wepyn with hym. Other ells,' seyde he, 'I woll departe as
I [c]am.' Than they gaff hym leve with his swerde, and
so he wente into the castell and was amonge knyghtes of
worship and hys lady afore hym. 30

So aftir this Balyne asked a knyght and seyde, 'Ys there
nat a knyght in thys courte which his name ys TGarlon"¹ ?'

1 C alwey Inuysible 3-4 Cknowe that knyght his name is Garlon he hath
F Garlan 8 how *not in*C 9 C lystyneyse C this countrey 11 C but yf he
n C & that kny3te youre enemy 14 C I behote yow 16 Csaydhisooost
21 W myght be C* myght not be F (*Huth Merlin*, f. 134c): li ost remest defors
pour chou que il n'avoit avoec lui demoisele nule 21-2 C lady thenne Balyn
25 Cthatdoolnot 27CwithhymandthatcustommewylleIkepeore>lsIwyll
27-8 XT as I am Cas I cam F (*lac. at.*): dist que... se il ne voloient souffrir a faire
la coustume de son pais, il s'en iroit avant la dont il estoit venus 28 C leue to
were his swerd 29 C was sette amonge 30-1 C hym soone balyn 32—
p. 84,1 C Garlon yonder he goth sayd a knyght he with the W Garlonde F Garlan

'Yes, sir, yondir he goth, the knyght with the blacke face, for he ys the mervaylyste knyght that ys now lyvyng. And he destroyeth many good knyghtes, for he goth invisible.'

'Well,' seyde Balyn, 'ys that he?' Than Balyn avised
5 hym longe, and thought: 'If I sle hym here, I shall nat ascape. And if I leve hym now, peraventure I shall never mete with hym agayne at such a stevyn, and muche harme he woll do and he lyve.'

And therewith thys [Garlon] aspyed that Balyn vysaged
io hym, so he com and slapped hym on the face with the backe of hys honde and seyde, 'Knyght, why beholdist thou me so? For shame, ete thy mete and do that thou com fore.'

'Thou seyst soth,' seyde Balyne, 'thys ys nat the firste
15 spite tkyat thou haste done me. And therefore I woll do that I com fore.' And rose hym up fersely and clave his hede to the sholdirs. .

'Now geff me [the] troncheon,' seyde Balyn [to] his lady], 'that he slew youre knyght with.' And anone she
20 gaff hit hym, for allwey she bare the truncheune with hir. And therewith Balan smote hym thorow the body and seyde
31' opynly, 'With that troncheon thou slewyste a good knyght, and now hit stykith in thy body.'

Than Balyn called unto hys oste and seyde, 'Now may
(15)35 we fecche blood inoughe to hele youre son withall.' So anone all the knyghtes rose frome the table for to sette on Balyne. And kyng Pellam hymself arose up fersely and seyde, 'Knyght, why hast thou slayne my brothir? Thou shalt dey therefore or thou departe.'

30 'Well,' seyde Balyn, 'do hit youreselfrV

'Yes,' seyde kyng Pellam, 'there shall no man have ado with the but I myselff, for the love of my brothir.'

2-3 C lyuyng for he 4 C A wel 5 and thought *not in Cf* F (*Hutk Merlin, f. 135a*): Low *commenche li chevaliers a deusespees a penser, et quant il a grant pieche pense* etc. 9 W Garlonde C Garlon F Garlan 9-10 C that this Balen behelde hym and thenne he came and smote Balyn on the face 12C therfor ete 11-iiJV (*sidenote*): How Balyn slew Garlon the knyght that wente invisible 18-19W now geff me youre troncheon seyde Balyn that he slew youre knyght with C* gyue me the truncheon sayd Balyn to his lady where with he slewe your knyght F (*MS. cit., f. 135c*): Lors redist a la damoisiele: 'Damoisiele, baillils moi le tronchon de quoi li chevaliers fu ferus.' 24-5 C vnto hym his hoost sayenge now may ye fetche 28 why *not in Cf*

Than kynge Pellam [caught in his hand] a grymme wepyn
and smote egirly at Balyn, but he put hys swerde betwyxte
hys hede and the stroke, and therewith hys swerde braste
in sundir. And whan Balyne was wepynles he ran into a
chambir for to seke a wepyn [and] fro chambir to chambir, 5
and no wepyn coude he fynde. And allwayes kyng Pellam
folowed afftir hym. And at the last he enterde into a chambir
(whyche) was mervaylously dyght and ryche, and abedde
arayed with cloth of golde, the rycheste that myght be, and
one lyyng therein, and thereby stode a table of clene golde. 10
And uppon the table stode a mervaylous spere strangely
wrought.

So whan Balyn saw the spere he gate hit in hys honde and
turned to kynge Pellam and felde hym and smote hym
passyngly sore with that spere, that kynge Pellam [felle] 15
downe in a sowghe. And therewith the castell brake roffe
and wallis and felle downe to the erthe. And Balyn felle
downe and myght nat styrrer hande nor foote, and for the
moste party of that castell was dede thorow the dolorouse
stroke. 20

Ryght so lay kynge Pellam and Balyne three dayes. (1

Than Merlion com thydir, and toke up Balyn and gate
hym a good horse, for hys was dede, and bade hym voyde
oute of that contrey.

'Sir, I wolde have my damesell,' seyde Balyne. 25

'Loo,' seyde Merlion, 'where she lyeth dede.'

And kynge Pellam lay so many yerys sore wounded, and
myght never be hole tylle that Galaad the Hawte Prynce
heled hym in the queste of the Sankgreall. For in that place
was parte of the bloode of oure Lorde Jesu Cryste, which 30
Joseph off Aramathy brought into thys londe. And there

1 W Pellam a grymme C* Pellam cau3t in his hand a grym F (*Huth Merlin*, f. 35d)' Court a une grant perche de fust qui estoit en mi la saleetle prent % C but balyn put 5 Cseke somme wepen and soo fro chamber 7 folowed not in C 7-8 C chambyr that was merueillously wel dy3te and rychely 9 C that myght be thought 10-1 x C* gold with four pelours of syluer that bare vp the table and vpon 14 C and felde hym not in C 15-16 C Pellam felle doune in a swoune 16-17 C the castel roffe and wallys brake and fylle to the **erthe** 18-21 Cf And so the moost parte of the castel that was falle doune thorough that dolorous stroke laye vpon Pellam and balyn thre dayes 23-4 C hym ryde oute 29 C Sangraille 29—p. 86, 2 W (*sidenote*): Here ys a pronosttacion of the Sank Greall 31—p. 86, 1 C Ioseph of Armathe ... hym **self lay in** that

hymselff [lay] in that ryche bedde. And that was the spere
 whych Longeus smote oure Lorde with to the herte. And
 31* kynge Pellam was nyghe of Joseph his kynne, and that was
 the moste worshipfullist man on lyve in tho dayes, and grete
 5 pite* hit was of hys hurte, for thorow that stroke hit turned
 to grete dole, tray and tene.

Than departed Balyne frome Merlyon, 'for,* he seyde,
 'nevir in thys worlde we parte nother meete no more/ So
 he rode forthe thorow the fayre contreyes and citeys and
 10 founde the peple dede slayne on every syde, and all that evir
 were on lyve cryed and seyde, 'A, Balyne! Thou hast done
 and caused grete 'dommage¹ in thys contreyes! For the
 dolerous stroke thou gaff unto kynge Pellam thes three
 contreyes ar destroyed. And doute nat but the vengeaunce
 15 woll falle on the at the laste!' But whan Balyn was past tho
 contreyes he was passynge fayne, and so he rode eyght
 dayes or he mette with many adventure.

And at the last he com into a fayre foreyst in a valey, and
 was ware of a towure. And there besyde he mette with a
 20 grete horse tyed to a tree, and besyde there sate a fayre
 knyght on the grounde and made grete mournynge, and he
 was a lyckly man and a well made. Balyne seyde, 'God you
 save! Why be ye so hevy? Tell me, and I woll amende and
 I may to my power.'

25 'Sir knyght, he seyde, 'thou doste me grete gryeff, for I
 was in *m[er]ly* thoughtes and thou puttist me to more payne.'

Than Balyn went a litill frome hym and loked on hys
 horse, than herde Balyne hym sey thus: 'A, fayre lady! Why
 have ye brokyn my promyse? For ye promysed me to mete
 30 me here by noone. And I may curse you that ever ye gaff
 me that swerde, for with thys swerde I woll sle myselff,'
 and pulde hit out. And therewith com Balyne and sterte
 unto hym and toke hym by the honde.

x C the same spere 4 C worshipful man that lyued 7-8 C Merlyn and
 sayd in this world we mete neuer nomore 10 evir *not in C* 11 and seyde *not*
in C 11-12 done and *not in C* 12 W grete vengeaunce C* grete dommage
F (Huth Merlin, f. 139a): tu nous a fait tant de mal que tous li mondes nel porroit
amender 15 But *not in C* 17 many *not in C* 19-20 C he sawe a grete
 horse 25 C said he ageyne 26 W my thoughtes C*mery thoughtes FTuiids
 de chi, sire vassaui Vous m'aves mort, qui mon penser m'aves tolut. Je ne cuic que
 g'i soie ja mais si douoement comme jou i estoie orendroit' (*Huth Merlin, f. 139d*)
 29 C thow promysest 31 woll *not in C* 32 C therewith Balyn sterte

'Lette go my hande,' seyde the knyght, 'or ellis I shall sle the!'

'That shall nat nede,' seyde Balyn, 'for I shall promyse you my helpe to gete you youre lady and ye woll telle me where she ys.' 5

'What ys your name ?' seyde the knyght.

'Sir, my name ys Balyne le Saveage.'

'A, sir, I know you well inowghe: ye ar the Knyght with the Two Swerdis, and the man of moste proues of youre hondis lyvyng.' 10

'What ys your name ?' seyde Balyne.

'My name ys Garnysh of the Mownte, a poore mannes sonne, and be my proues and hardynes a deuke made me knyght and gave me londis. Hys name ys duke Harmel, and hys doughter ys [she that I love, and she me, as I demed.] *5 *Caxt0tt*

'Hou fer is she hens?' sayd Balyn.

'But six myle,' said the knyghte.

'Now ryde we hens,' sayde these two knyghtes.

So they rode more than a paas tyll that they cam to a fayr castel wel wallyd and dyched. 20

'I wyll into the castel,' sayd Balen, 'and lokeyf she be ther.'

Soo he wente in and serched fro chamber to chambir and fond her bedde, but she was not there. Thenne Balen loked into a fayr litil gardyn, and under a laurel tre he sawe her lye upon a quylt of grene samyte, and a knyght in her armes 25 fast halsynge eyther other, and under their hedes grasse and herbes. Whan Balen sawe her lye so with the fowlest knyghte that ever he sawe, and she a fair lady, thenne Balyn wente thurgh alle the chambers ageyne and told the knyghte how he fond her as she had slepte rast, and so brought hym 30 in the place there she lay fast slepyng.

And whan Garnysssh beheld hir so lyeng, for pure sorou (17) his mouth and nose brast oute on bledynge, and with his swerd he smote of bothe their hedes. And thenne he maade sorowe oute of mesure and sayd, 'O, Balyn! Moche sorow 35 hast thou brought unto me, for haddest thou not shewed me that syght I shold have passed my sorow.'

7 Sir *not in C* 12 C Garrysshe of the mount 13 C But by my 14 C Hermel
15 ff. *Folios 32 and 33 are wanting in W. The text in square brackets is based upon the corresponding passage in C.*

'Forsoth,' said Balyn, 'I did it to this entent that it sholde better thy courage and that ye myght see and knowe her falshede, and to cause yow to leve love of suche a lady; God knoweth I dyd none other but as I wold ye dyd to me.'

5 'Alias,' said Garnysshe, 'now is my sorou doubel that I may not endure, now have I slayne that I moost loved in al my lyf!'

And therwith sodenly he roofe hymself on his own swerd unto the hyltys.

x0 When Balen sawe that, he dressid hym thensward, lest folke wold say he had slayne them. And so he rode forth, and within thre dayes he cam by a crosse; and theron were letters of gold wryten that said: 'it is not for no knyght alone to ryde toward this castel.' Thenne sawe he an old hore
15 gentylman comyng toward hym that sayd, 'Balyn le Saveage, thow passyst thy bandes to come this waye, therfor torne ageyne and it will availle the,' and he vanysshed away anone.

And soo he herd an home blowe as it had ben the dethe
*0 of a best. 'That blast,' said Balyn, 'is blowen for me, for I am the pryse, and yet am I not dede.' Anone withal he sawe an honderd ladyes and many knyghtes that welcommed hym with fayr semblaunt and made hym passyng good chere unto his syght, and ledde hym into the castel, and ther was
25 daunsynge and mynstralsye and alle maner of joye. Thenne the chyef lady of the castel said, 'Knyghte with the Two Suerdys, ye must have adoo and juste with a knyght hereby that kepeth an iland, for ther may no man passe this way but he must juste or he passe.'

30 'That is an unhappy customme,' said Balyn, 'that a knyght may not passe this wey but yf he juste.'

'Ye shalle not have adoo but with one knyghte,' sayd the lady.

'Wei,' sayd Balyn, 'syn I shalle, therto I am redy; but
35 traveillynge men are ofte wery and their horses to, but though my hors be wery my hert is not wery. I wold be fayne ther my deth shold be.'

'Syr,' said a knyght to Balyn, 'methynketh your sheld is not good; I wille lene yow a byggar, therof I pray yow.' And

25 Cand mynstralsye 27 Chaneadoo 29Cmust Inste 39Cleneyew

so he tooke the sheld that was unknowen and lefte his owne, and so rode unto the iland and put hym and his hors in a grete boote. And whan he came on the other syde he met with a damoyssel, and she said, 'O, knyght Balyn, why have ye lefte your owne sheld? Alias! ye have put yourself in 5 grete daunger, for by your sheld ye shold have ben knowen. It is grete pyte of yow as ever was of knyght, for of thy prowess and hardynes thou hast no felawe lyvyng.*

'Me repenteth,' said Balyn, 'that ever I cam within this cuntry; but I maye not torne now ageyne for shame, and 10 what aventure shalle falle to me, be it lyf or dethe, I wille take the adventure that shalle come to me.'

And thenne he loked on his armour and understood he was wel armed, and therwith blessid hym and mounted 15 upon his hors.

Thenne afore hym he sawe come rydyng oute of a castel (1 a knyght, and his hors trapped all reed, and hymself in the same colour. Whan this knyghte in the reed beheld Balyn hym thought it shold be his broder Balen by cause of his two swerdys, but by cause he knewe not his sheld he demed ao it was not he. And so they aventryd theyr speres and came merveillously fast togyders, and they smote other in the sheldes, but their speres and their cours were soo bygge that it bare doune hors and man, that they lay bothe in a swoun. 25

But Balyn was brysed sore with the falle of his hors, for he was wery of travaille, And Balan was the fyrst that rose on foote and drewe his swerd and wente toward Balyn, and he ardos and wente ageynst hym; but Balan smote Balyn fyrste, and he put up his shelde and smote hym thorow the 30 shelde and tamyd his helme. Thenne Balyn smote hym ageyne with that unhappy swerd and wel nyghe had fellyd his broder Balan, and so they fought ther togyders tyl theyr brethes faylled.

Thenne Balyn loked up to the castel and sawe the towres 35 stand ful of ladyes. Soo they went unto bataille ageyne and wounded everyche other dolefully, and thenne they brethed oftymes, and so wente unto bataille that alle the place there-as they fought was blood reed. And att that tyme ther was none of them bothe but they hadde eyther smyten other 40

seven grete Woundes so that the lest of them myght have ben the dethe of the myghtyest gyaunt in this world.

Thenne they wente to batail ageyn so merveillously that doubte it was to here of that bataille for the grete blood s shedynge; and their hawberkes unnailed, that naked they were on every syde. Atte last Balan, the yonger broder, withdrewe hym a lytel and leid hym doune. Thenne said Balyn le Saveage, 'What knyghte arte thou? For or now I found never no knyght that matched me.'

io 'My name is,' said he, 'Balan, broder unto the good knyght Balyn.*

'Alias!' sayd Balyn, 'that ever I shold see this day,' and therwith he felle backward in a swoune.

Thenne Balan yede on al four feet and handes, and put 15 of the helme of his broder, and myght not knowe hym by the vysage, it was so ful hewen and bledde; but whan he awoke he sayd, 'O, Balan, my broder! Thow hast slayne me and I the, wherefore alle the wyde world shalle speke of us bothe.'

'Alias!' sayd Balan, 'that ever I sawe this day that thorow ao myshap I myght not knowe yow! For I aspyed wel your two swerdys, but bycause ye had another shild I demed ye had ben another knyght.'

'Alias!' saide Balyn, 'all that maade an unhappy knyght in the castel, for he caused me to leve myn owne shelde to *5 our bothes destruction. Andyf I myght lyve I wold destroye that castel for ylle customes.'

'That were wel done,' said Balan, 'for I had never grace to departe fro hem syn that I cam hyther, for here it happed me to slee a knyght that kept this iland, and syn myght I 30 never departe, and no more shold ye, broder, and ye myght have slayne me as ye have and escaped yourself with the lyf.'

Ryght so cam the lady of the toure with four knyghtes and six ladyes and six yomen unto them, and there she herd how they made her mone eyther to other and sayd, 'We 35 came bothe oute of one <w>ombe, that is to say one moders bely, and so shalle we lye bothe in one pytte.' So Balan prayd the lady of her gentylnesse for his true servyse that she wold burye them bothe in that same place there the bataille was done, and she graunted hem with wepyng it 40 shold be done rychely in the best maner.

'Now wille ye sende for a preest that we may receyve our sacrament and receyve the blessid body of oure Lord Jesu Cryst?'

'Ye,' said the lady, 'it shalle be done;' and so she sente for a preest and gaf hem her ryghtes. 5

'Now,' sayd Balen, 'whan we are buryed in one tombe and the mensyon made over us how two bretheren slewe eche other, there wille never good knyght nor good man see our tombe but they wille pray for our soules,' and so alle the ladyes and gentylwymen wepte for pyte. Thenne anone 10 Balan dyed, but Balyn dyed not tyl the mydnyghte after. And so were they buryed bothe, and the lady lete make a mensyon of Balan how he was ther slayne by his broders handes, but she knewe not Balyns name.

In the morne cam Merlyn and lete wryte Balyns name 15(19) on the tombe with letters of gold that 'here lyeth Balyn le Saveage that was the knyght with the two swerdes and he that smote the dolorous stroke/ Also Merlyn lete make there a bedde, that ther shold never man lye therin but he wente oute of his wytte. Yet Launcelot de Lake fordyd 20 that bed thorow his noblesse.

And anone after Balyn was dede Merlyn toke his swerd and toke of the pomel and set on another pomel. So Merlyn] bade a knyght that stood before hym to handyll the swerde, W 34^r and he assayde hit and myght nat handyll hit. Than 25 Merlion lowghe.

'Why lawghe ye?' seyde the knyght.

Thys ys the cause,' seyde Merlion: 'there shall never man handyll thys swerde but the beste knyght of the worlde, and that shall be sir Launcelot other ellis Galahad, hys 30 sonne. And Launcelot with hys swerde shall sle the man in the worlde that he lovith beste: that shall be sir Gawayne.'

And all thys he lette wryte in the pomell of the swerde.

Than Merlion lette make a brygge of iron and of Steele into that ilonde, and hit was but halff a foote brode, 'and 35 there shall never man passe that brygge nother have hardynesse to go over hit but yf he were a passynge good man withoute trechery or vylany.' Also the scawberd off Balyns

swerde Merlion lefte hit on thys syde the ilonde, that
 Galaad sholde fynde hit. Also Merlion lette make by
 hys suttelyte* that Balynes swerde was put into a marbil
 stone stondynge upryght as grete as a mylstone, and hoved
 5 allwayes above the watir, and dud many yeres. And so by
 adventure hit swamme downe by the streme unto the cite*
 of Camelot, that ys in Englysh called Wynchester, and that
 same day Galahad the Haute Prynce com with kynge
 Arthure, and so Galaad brought with hym the scawberde
 10 and encheved the swerde that was in the marble stone
 hovyngge uppon the watir. And on Whytsonday he en-
 chevyd the swerde, as hit ys rehersed in THE BOOKE OF THE
 SANKGREALL.

Sone aftir thys was done Merlion com to kynge Arthur
 15 and tolde hym of the dolerous stroke that Balyn gaff kynge
 Pellam, and how Balyn and Balan fought togydirs the mer-
 veyl[yste] batayle that evir was herde off, and how they were
 buried bothe in one tombe. 'Alas!' seyde kynge Arthure,
 'thys ys the grettist pite that ever I herde telle off of two
 20 knyghtes, for in thys worlde I knewe never such two
 knyghtes.'

THUS ENDITH THE TALE OF BALYN AND BALAN, TWO
 BRETHIRNE THAT WERE BORNE IN NORTHUMBIRLONDE, THAT
 WERE TWO PASSYNGE GOOD KNYGHTES AS EVER WERE IN THO
 *S DAYES.

EXPLICIT.

1 thys syde *not in C* 4 C and the stone houted 15 C to kyng 16-17 W
 mervylous 19-20 C that ouer I herd telle of two knyghtes for in the world
 I knowe not suche 22-5 C bretheren born in northfiberlad good knintes
 Sequitur iii liber Explicit *not in C*

III

TORRE AND PELLYNOR

Winchtstir MS.,ff. 3?-4ift
Caxun, Book III]

CAXTON'S RUBRICS

- Ch. i. How kyng Arthur took a wyf and wedded Guenever, doughter to Leodegran, kyng of the londe of Camelerd, wyth whome he had the Rounde Table.
- „ 2. How the knyghtes of the Rounde Table were ordeyned and theyr syeges blessyd by the Bysshop of Caunterburye.
- „ 3. How a poure man (came) rydyng upon a lene mare and desyred of kyng Arthur to make his sone knyght.
- » 4- How syr Tor was knowen for sone of kyng Pellynore and how Gawayn was made knyght.
- „ 5. How atte feste of the weddyng of kyng Arthur to Guenever a whyte herte came into the halle and thyrty couple houndes, and how a brachet pynched the herte whiche was taken awaye.
- „ 6. How syr Gawayn rode for to fetch ageyn the herte and how two brethern fought eche ageynst other for the herte.
- „ 7. How the herte was chaced into a castel and there slayn, and how Gauwayn slewe a lady.
- „ 8. How four knyghtes faught ayenst sir Gawayn and Gaheryse, and how they were overcom and her lyves saved atte request of four ladyes.
- „ 9. How syr Tor rode after the knyght wyth the brachet and of his adventure by the waye.
- „ 10. How syr Tor fonde the brachet wyth a lady and how a knyght assayled hym for the sayd brachet.
- „ 11. How syr Tor overcame the knyght and how he lost hys heed at the requeste of a lady.
- „ 12. How kyng Pellenore rode after the lady and the knyght that ladde her awaye, and how a lady desyred helpe of hym, and how he faught wyth ii knyghtes for that lady, of whome he slewe that one at the fyrst stroke.
- „ 13. How kyng Pellynore gate the lady and brought hyr to Camelot to the courte of kyng Arthur.
- „ 14. How on the waye he herde two knyghtes as he laye by nyght in a valey, and of other adventures.
- „ 15. How whan he was comen to Camelot he was sworne upon a book to telle the trouthe of his queste.

IN the begynnyng of Arthure, aftir he was chosyn kyng 35
by adventure and by grace, for the moste party of the
barowns knew nat he was Uther Pendragon son but as
Merlyon made hit opynly knowyn, but yet many kyngis
and lordis hylde hym grete werre for that cause. But well 5
Arthur overcom hem all: the moste party dayes of hys lyff
he was ruled by the counceile of Merlyon. So hit felle on
a tyme kyng Arthur seyde unto Merlion, 'My barownes
woll let me have no reste but nedis I muste take a wyff,
and I wolde none take but by thy counceile and advice.' 10

'Hit ys well done,' seyde Merlyon, 'that ye take a wyff,
for a man of youre bounte and nobles sholde not be withoute
a wyff. Now is there ony,' seyde Marlyon, 'that ye love
more than another?'

'Ye,' seyde kyng Arthure, 'I love Gwenyvere, the kynges 15
doughtir of Lodegrean, of the londe or Camelerde, the
whyche holdyth in his house the Table Rounde that ye
tolde me he had hit of my fadir Uther. And this damesell
is the moste valyaunte and fayryst that I know lyvyng, or
yet that ever I coude fynde.' 20

'Sertis,' seyde Marlyon, 'as of her beaute and fayrenesse
she is one of the fayrest on lyve. But and ye loved hir not
so well as ye do, I scholde fynde you a damesell of beaute
and of goodnesse that sholde lyke you and please you, and
yours herte were nat sette. But thereas mannes herte is 25
sette he woll be loth to returne.'

'That is trouthe,' seyde kyng Arthur.

But Marlyon warned the kyng covertly that Gwenyver
was nat holsom for hym to take to wyff. For he warned hym
that Launcelot scholde love hir, and sche hym agayne, and 30
so he turned his tale to the adventures of the Sankegreall.

Then Merlion desyred of the kyng for to have men with
hym that scholde enquire of Gwenyver, and so the kyng
gr(a)unted hym. And so Merlyon wente forthe unto kyng
Lodegean of Camylerde, and tolde hym of the desire of 35
the kyng that he wolde have unto his wyff Gwenyver, his

3 C that he was 5 hym *not in* 6C for the mooste 7 C ruled moche
10 C by thyne aduys 2 1 C Syre sayd Merlyn 25 C a mans herte 35 C
Camyllerd

doughter. 'That is to me,' seyde kyng Lodegreouns, 'the beste tydynges that ever I herde, that so worthy a kyng of prouesse and noblesse wol wedde my doug[h]ter. And as for
 35^v my londis, I wolde geff hit hym yf I wyste hyt myght please s hym, but he hath londis inow, he nedith none. But I shall sende hym a gyffte that shall please hym muche more, for I shall gyff hym the Table Rounde which Uther, hys fadir, gaff me. And whan hit ys fulle complete there ys an hondred knyghtes and fyfty. And as for an hondred good knyghtes,
 10 I have myselff, but I wante fyfty, for so many hathe be slayne in my dayes.' And so kyng Lodgreounce delyverd hys doughtir Gwenyver unto Merlion, and the Table Rounde with the hondred knyghtes; and so they rode freyssly with grete royalty, what by watir and by londe,
 15 tyll that they com nyghe unto London.

(2) Whan kynge Arthure herde of the commynge of quene Gwenyver and the hondred knyghtes with the Table Rounde, than kynge Arthure made grete joy for hir commyng and that ryche presente, and seyde opynly, 'Thys fayre lady ys
 20 passyngly wellcome to me, for I have loved hir longe, and therefore there ys nothyng so leeff to me. And thes knyghtes with the Table Rownde pleasith me more than ryght grete rychesse.'

And in all haste the kynge lete ordayne for the maryage
 *5 and the coronacion in the moste hono[r]ablyst wyse that cowude be devised. 'Now, Merlion,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'go thou and aspye me in all thys londe fyfty knyghtes which bene of moste prouesse and worship.' So within shorte tyme Merlion had founde such knyghtes that sholde
 30 fulfyllen twenty and eyght knyghtes, but no mo wolde he fynde. Than the Bysshop of Caunturbiry was [f]ette, and he blyssed the segis with grete royalté and devocion, and there sette the eyght and twenty knyghtes in her segis. And whan thys was done Merlion seyde, 'Fayre sirres, ye muste
 35 all aryse and com to kynge Arthure for to do hym omage; he woll the better be in wylle to maynteyne you.' And so

4 C hym wist I it myght 7-8 C Vtherpendragon gaue me 10 C but I fawte
 10-11 C haue ben . . . Ladegreans 16 quene *not in C* 25 W hononablyst
 C honorable 30-1 Cmo he coude fynde 31 W sette 36 C he will haue
 the better wil

they arose and dud their omage. And whan they were gone Merlion founde in every sege lettirs of golde that tolde the knyghtes namys that had sitte[n] there, but two segis were voyde.

And so anone com in yonge Gawayne and asked the kynge 5 a gyffte. 'Aske,' seyde the kynge, 'and I shall graunte you.'

'Sir, I aske that ye shall make me knyght that same day that ye shall wedde dame Gwenyver.'

'I woll do hit with a goode wylle,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'and do unto you all the worship that I may, for I muste 10 be reson ye ar my newew, my sistirs son.'

Forthwithall there com a poore man into the courte and (3) brought with hym a fayre yonge man of eyghtene yere of 36 ayge, rydyngge uppon a lene mare. And the poore man asked all men that he mette, 'Where shall I fynde kynge Arthure?' 15

'Yondir he ys,' seyde the knyghtes.

'Wolt tho[u] onythyngge with hym?'

'Ye,' seyde the poore man, 'therefore I cam hydir.' And as sone as he com before the kynge he salewed hym and seyde, 'Kynge Arthure, the floure of all kyngis, I beseche 20 Jesu save the! Sir, hit was tolde me that as thys tyme of youre maryaige ye wolde gyff ony man the gyffte that he wolde aske you excepte hit were unresonable.'

'That ys trouthe,' seyde the kynge, 'such cryes I lette make, and that woll I holde, so hit appayre nat my realme 25 nor myne astate.'

'Ye say well and graciously,' seyde the pore man. 'Sir, I aske nothyngge elis but that ye woll make my sonne knyght.'

'Hit ys a grete thyngge thou askyst off me,' seyde the kynge. 'What ys thy name?' seyde the kynge to the poore 30 man.

'Sir, my name ys Aryes, the cowherde.'

'Whethir commith thys of the other ells of thy sonne?' seyde the kynge.

'Nay, sir,' seyd Aryes, 'thys desyre commyth of my son 35 and nat off me. For I shall telle you, I have thirtene sonnes, and all they woll falle to what labour I putte them and woll

3 W sitter C sitten 6 C graunte it yow 8 C faire Gweneuer 10 first
I repeated in W. zoCO kyng C all knyghtes and kynges %i C at
23 C wold aske oute excepte 28 C my sone here a knyghte

be ryght glad to do laboure; but thys chylde woll nat laboure for nothyng that my wyff and I may do, but allwey he woll be shotyng, or castyng dartes, and glad for to se batayles and to beholde knyghtes. And allwayes day and
5 nyght he desyrith of me to be made knyght.'

'What ys thy name?' seyde the kyng unto the yonge man.

'Sir, my name ys Torre.' Than the kyng behelde hym faste and saw he was passyn[g]ly well vysaged and well made
10 of hys yerys.

'Well,' seyde kyng Arthure unto Aryes the cowherde, 'go fecche all thy sonnes before me that I may see them.'

And so the pore man dud. And all were shapyn muche lyke the poore man, but Torre was nat lyke hym nother in
15 shappe ne in countenaunce, for he was muche more than ony of them.

'Now,' seyde kyng Arthur unto the cowherde, 'where ys the swerde he shall [b]e made knyght withall?'

'Hyt ys here,' seyde Torre.

20 'Take hit oute of the shethe,' sayde the kyng, 'and requyre me to make you knyght.'

Than Torre alyght of hys mare and pulled oute hys
36 swerde, knelyng and requyryng the kyng to make hym knyght, and that he made hym knyght of the Table Rounde.

25 'As for a knyght I woll make you,' and therewith smote him in the necke with the swerde. 'Be ye a good knyght, and so I pray to God ye may be, and if ye be of proues and worthy-nes ye shall be of the Table Rounde.'

'Now, Merlion,' seyde Arthure, 'whethir thys Torre
30 shall be a goode man?'

'Yee, hardely, sir, he ought to be a good man for he ys com of good kynrede as ony on lyve, and of kynges bloode.'

'How so, sir?' seyde the kyng.

'I shall telle you,' seyde Merlion. 'Thys poore man
35 Aryes the cowherde ys nat his fadir, for he ys no sybbe to hym; for kyng Pellynore ys hys fadir.'

8 C Tor	12 go not in C	14-15 C was not lyke none of hem al in shape
18 W shall me made	26 C swerd sayeg	27 C god so ye may
whether S wether	31 hardely not in C	29 C
a man as ony is on lyue	35 C no thyng syb	32 C comen of as good

'I suppose nat,' seyde the cowherde.

'Well, fecch thy wyff before me,' seyde Merlion, 'and she shall nat sey nay.'

Anone the wyff was fette forth, which was a fayre houswyff. And there she answerde Merlion full womanly, and there she tolde the kyng and Merlion that whan she was a mayde and wente to mylke hir kyne, 'there mette with me a sterne knyght, and half be force he had my maydynhode. And at that tyme he begate my sonne Torre, and he toke away fro me my grayhounde that I had that tyme with me, 10 and seyde he wolde kepe the grayhounde for my love.'

'A,' seyde the cowherde, 'I wente hit had nat be thus, but I may beleve hit well, for he had never no tacchys of me.'

Sir Torre seyde unto Merlion, 'Dishonoure nat my 15 modir.'

'Sir,' seyde Merlion, 'hit ys more for your worship than hurte, for youre fadir ys a good knyght and a kyng, and he may ryght well avaunce you and youre modir both, for ye were begotyn or evir she was wedded.' 20

'That ys trouthe,' seyde the wyff.

'Hit ys the lesse gryff unto me,' seyde the cowherde.

So on the morne kyng Pellynor com to the courte of (4) kyng Arthure. And he had grete joy of hym and tolde hym of sir Torre," how he was hys sonne, and how he had made 25 hym knyght at the requeste of the cowherde. Whan kyng Pellynor behelde sir Torre he plesed hym muche. So the kyng made Gawayne knyght, but sir Torre was the firste he made at that feste.

'What ys the cause,' seyde kyng Arthure, 'that there ys 30 two placis voyde in the segis?'

'Sir,' seyde Merlion, 'there shall no man sitte in tho placis but they that shall be moste of worship. But in the Sege Perelous there shall nevyr man sitte but one, and yf 37 there be ony so hardy to do hit he shall be destroyed, and 35 he that shall sitte therein shall have no felowe.' And therewith Merlyon toke kyng Pellinor by the honde and, in that

i C I suppose nay 4 C was fet which 7 hir *not in C* C met with
her 12-13 CI wende not thys but 24 C Arthur whiche had grete ioye of
hym and told hym 33 C they that be of moost worship *Misprint in S* (they be)

one hande nexte the two segis and the Sege Perelous, he seyde in opyn audiens, 'Thys your place, for beste ar ye worthy to sitte thereinne of ony that here ys.'

And thereat had sir Gawayne grete envy and tolde
5 Gaherys hys brothir, 'Yondir knyght ys putte to grete worship, whych grevith me sore, for he slewe oure fadir kynge Lott. Therefore I woll sle hym,' seyde Gawayne, 'with a swerde that was sette me that ys passynge trench-
eaunte.'

10 'Ye shall nat so,' seyde Gaheris, 'at thys tyme, for as now I am but youre squyre, and whan I am made knyght I woll be avenged on hym; and therefore, brothir, hit ys beste to suffir tyll another tyme, that we may have hym oute of courte, for and we dud so we shall trouble thys hyghe feste.'

15 'I woll well,' seyde Gawayne.

(5) Than was thys feste made redy, and the kynge was wedded at Camelot unto dame Gwenyvere in the chirche of Seynte Stephyns with grete solempnite. Than as every man was sette as hys degre asked, Merlion wente to all the knyghtes
*o of the Round Table and bade hem sitte styll, 'that none of you remeve, for ye shall se a straunge and a mervailous adventure/

Ryght so as they sate there com rennyngge inne a whyght herte into the hall, and a whyght brachet nexte hym, and
25 thirty couple of blacke rennyngge houndis com afftir with a grete cry. And the herte wente aboute the Rounde Table, and as he wente by the syde-bourdis the brachet ever boote hym by the buttocke and pulde on a pece, wherethorow the herte lope a grete lepe and overthrew a knyght that
30 sate at the syde-bourde. And therewith the knyght arose and toke up the brachet, and so wente forthe oute of the halle and toke hys horse and rode hys way with the brachett.

Ryght so com in the lady on a whyght palferey and cryed

¹ *F* (Huth *Merlin*, f. 156b): et Merlins le mainne droit au siege *M* has mistaken mainne for main—that (C the) one hande—and rendered droit by nexte. The resulting phrase is meaningless. 2 C This is your place 8 C sente me 10-11 C at this tyme For at this tyme I am 13 C ye suffre 15 C said gauayn as ye wylle i6 Chyghfeeste 19 C set after his degre 20-i C none of hem zy C by other boordes ever not inC zyW hand in margin pointing to this line, 30 C boord syde

alowde unto kvnge Arthure and seyde, 'Sir, suffir me nat to have thys despite, for the brachet ys myne that the knyght hath ladde away.'

'I may nat do therewith,' seyde the kynge.

So with thys there com a knyght rydyng all armed on 5 37
a grete horse, and toke the lady away with forse wyth hym,
and ever she cryed and made grete dole. So whan she was
gone the kynge was gladde, for she made such a noyse.

'Nay/ seyde Merlion, 'ye may nat leve hit so, thys
adventure, so lyghtly, for thes adventures muste be brought 10
to an ende, other ellis hit woll be disworshyp to you and
to youre feste.'

'I woll,' seyde the kynge, 'that all be done by your
advice.' Than he lette calle sir Gawayne, for he muste
brynge agayne the whyght herte. 'Also, sir, ye muste lette 15
call sir Torre, for he muste brynge agay[ne] the brachette
and the knyght, other ellis sle hym. Also lette calle kynge
Pellynor, for he muste brynge agayne the lady and the
knyght, other ellis sle hym, and thes three knyghtes shall do
mervayles adventures or they com agayne.' 20

Than were they called all three as hit ys rehersed afore
and every of them toke their charge and armed them surely.
But sir Gawayne had the firste requeste, and therefore we
woll begynne at hym, and so forthe to thes other.

HERE BEGYNNITH THE FYRST BATAYLE THAT EVER SIR 25
GAWAYNE DED AFTER HE WAS MADE KNYGHT.

Syr Gawayne rode more than a pace and Gaheris his (6)
brothir rode with hym in the stede of a squyre to do hym
serveyse. So as they rode they saw two knyghtes fyght on
horseback passynge sore. So sir Gawayne and hys brothir 30
rode betwyxte them and asked them for what cause- they
foughte. So one of the knyghtes seyde, 'We fyght but for
a symple mater, for we two be two brethirne and be begotyn
of o[n]e man and of o[n]e woman.'

'Alas!' seyde sir Gawayne.

35

1 C to kyng S for the kyng and seyde not in C 9 hit so not in C
10-11C brought agaynef or els F (*Huth Merlin*, f. 158d): iceste daarrainne aventure
est vostre a achieveer 24 and ... other not in C 25-6 Here begynnith . ..
was made knyght not in C 32 Cso the one knyght ansuerd and sayd 33—p. 104,
1 C bretheren born & hegoten (S begoten) of one man & of one woman alias said
sir gauayn why do ye so syr said the eldar ther cam

'Sir,' seyde the either brother, 'there com a whyght herte
 thys way thys same day and many houndis chaced hym,
 and a whyght brachett was allwey nexte hym. And we
 undirstood hit was an adventure made for the hyghe feste
 5 of Arthure. And therefore I wolde have gone afftir to have
 wonne me worship, and here my yonger brothir seyde he
 wolde go aftir the harte for he was bygger knyght than I.
 And for thys cause we felle at debate, and so we thought to
 preff which of us was the bygger knyght.'

10 'Forsoth thys ys a symple cause,' seyde Gawayne, 'for
 uncouth men ye sholde debate withall, and no brothir with
 38^r brothir. Therefore do be my counceyle: other ellis I woll
 have ado with you bothe, other yelde you to me and that ye
 go unto kynge Arthure and yelde you unto hys grace.'

15 'Sir knyght,' seyde the two brethirne, 'we are forfoughten
 and muche bloode have we loste thorow oure wylfulness,
 and therefore we wolde be loth to have ado with you.'

'Than do as I woll have you do,' seyde sir Gawayne.

'We agre to fulfyll your wylle. But by whom shall we
 20 sey that we be thydir sente?'

'Ye may sey, by. the knyght that folowith the queste of
 the herte. Now what ys youre name?' seyde Gawayne.

'Sir, my name ys Sorluse of the Foreyste,' seyde the
 elder.

25 'And my name ys,' seyde the yonger, 'Bryan of the
 Foreyste.'

And so they departed and wente to the kyngis courte,
 and sir Gawayne folowed hys queste.

And as he folowed the herte by the cry of the howndis,
 30 evyn before hym there was a grete ryver; and the herte
 swam over. And as sir Gawayn wolde a folowed afftir there
 stood a knyght on the othir syde and seyde, 'Sir knyght, com
 nat over aftir thys harte but if thou wolt juste with me.'

'I woll nat fayle as for that,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'to folow
 35 the queste that I am inne.' And so made hys horse swymme
 over the watir.

2 same *not in C* 7 C better knyght 9 C better kny3t. 10 Forsoth *not in C*
 for *not in C* 12-13 C therfor but yf ye wil do by my couceil I wil haue ado
 with yow that is ye'shal yelde 18 C haue yow said 19 C we wille agre
 22 C the herte that was whyte 23 C Sorlouse 28-9 C Syr gauayne on his
 quest and as gauayne 31 C ouer the other syde

And anone they gate their glayves, and ran togydirs fulle harde, but Gawayne smote hym of hys horse and than he bade hym yelde hym. 'Nay,' seyde the knyght, 'nat so, for thoughe ye have the better of me on horsebak, I pray the, valyaunte knyght, alyght on foote and macche we to- 5 gidir with oure swerdis.'

'What ys youre name ?' seyde sir Gawayne.

'Sir, my name ys Alardyne of the Oute lies.*

Than aythir dressed their shyldes and smote togydir, but sir Gawayne smote hym so harde thorow the helme that hit 10 wente to the brayne and the knyght felle downe dede. 'A,' seyde Gaherys, 'that was a myghty stroke of a yonge knyght.'

Than sir Gawayne and Gaherys folowed afftir the whyte (7) herte, and lete slyppe at the herte thre couple of greyhoundes. And so they chace the herte into a castel, and in 15 the chyef place of the castel they slew the hert." Ryght soo there came a knyght oute of a chambir with a swerde drawyn in hys honde and slew two of the grayhoundes evyn in the syght of sir Gawayne, and the remanente he chaced with hys swerde oute of the castell. And whan he com agayne 20 he seyde, 'A, my whyght herte, me repentis that thou arte 38^v dede, for my soveraigne lady gaff the to me, and evyll have I kepte the, and thy dethe shall be evyl bought and I lyve.' And anone he wente into hys chambir and armyd hym, and com oute fersely. And there he mette with sir Gawayne and 25 he seyde, 'Why have ye slayne my howndys ? 'For they dyd but their kynde, and I wolde that ye had wrokyn youre angir uppon me rather than uppon a dome beste.'

r C gat their speres f F (*Huth Merlin*, f. 160a): glaive 2-8 W (*sidenote*): How sir Gawayne slew Alardyne knyght of the lies 4 for not in C 5 Ca foote 8 Sir my name is not in C C Alardyn of the Ilys 13-16 W folowed afftir ryght so C* ThSne Gauayne and Gaheryse rode more than a paas after the whyte herte . . . slewe the hert syr gauayne and gaheryse folowed after Ryght soo F (*Huth Merlin*, f. 161a): Et Gavains qui les (= les chiens) vint ataignant les commenche a crier et a huer apres le chierf . . . Tant a li chierf (*sic*) fui et li chien cachie et Gavains feri des esperons entre lui et Gahariet, tant (*sic*) qu'il issirent del bois par deviers destre, et lors voient devant eus en une plaigne une fortorece moult bien seant . . . et li chiers qui trueve la porte ouverte se met dedens et s'adrece viers la sale et entre laiens . . . E t . . . il orent tantost le chierf mort et occhis' (*Homctoteleuton in W*) 23 C dere bought 25-6 and he seyde not in C (he refers to Gawayne) 26-7 C* houndes said syr gauayn for they dyd but their kynde and leuer I had ye had wroken F (*Huth Merlin*,/. 16x0): il ont fait chou que il durent

'Thou seyst trouth,' seyde the knyght, 'I have avenged me on thy howndys, and so I woll on the or thou go.'

Than sir Gawayne alyght on foote and dressed hys shyldes, and stroke togydys myghtyly and clave their shyldis
5 and stoned their helmys and brake their hawbirkes that their blo[de] thirled downe to their feete. So at the last sir Gawayne smote so harde that the knyght felle to the erthe, and than he cryed mercy and yelded hym and besought hym as he was a jantyll knyght to save hys lyff.

io 'Thou shalt dey,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'for sleynge of my howndis.'

'I woll make amendys,' seyde the knyght, 'to my power.'

But sir Gawayne wolde no mercy have, but unlaced hys helme to have strekyn of hys hede.

15 Ryght so com hys lady oute of a chambir and felle over hym, and so he smote of hir hede by myssefortune. 'Alas,' seyde Gaherys, 'that ys fowle and shamefully done, for that shame shall never frome you. Also ye sholde gyff mercy unto them that aske mercy, for a knyght withoute mercy
20 ys withoute worship.' So sir Gawayne was sore astoned of the deth of this fayre lady, that he wyst nat what he dud, and seyde unto the knyght, 'Aryse, I woll gyff the mercy.'

'Nay, nay,' seyde the knyght, 'I take no forse of thy mercy now, for thou haste slayne with vilony my love and my lady
25 that I loved beste of all erthly t[h]ynge.'

'Me sore repentith hit,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'for I mente the stroke unto the. But now thou shalt go unto kynge Arthure and telle hym of thyne adventure and how thou arte overcom by the knyght that wente in the queste of the
30 whyght harte.'

'I take no force,' seyde the knyght, 'whether I lyve othir dey.' But at the last, for feare of dethe, he swore to go unto kynge Arthure, and he made hym to bere the one grehownde before hym on hys horse and the other behynde hym.

35 'What ys youre name,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'or we departe ?'

'My name ys,' seyde the knyght, 'Blamoure of the
39r Maryse.' And so he departed towarde Camelot.

6 C blood ranne

9 C as he was a knyghte and gentylman

16 C by mis-

aventure

20 C was so stonyed

24 with vilony *not in C*

26-7 C for I

thoughte to stryke unto the

And sir Gawayne wente unto the castell and made hym (8)
 redy to lye there all nyght and wolde have unarmed hym.
 'What woll ye do?' seyde Gaherys, 'Woll ye unarme you
 in thys contrey? Ye may thynke ye have many fooes in thys
 contrey.' He had no sunner seyde the worde but there com 5
 in four knyghtes well armed and assayled sir Gawayne harde,
 and seyde unto hym, 'Thou new made knyght, thou haste
 shamed thy knyghthode, for a knyght withoute mercy ys
 dishonoured. Also thou haste slayne a fayre lady to thy
 grete shame unto the worldys ende, and doute the nat thou 10
 shalt have grete nede of mercy or thou departe frome us.'
 And therewith one of hem smote sir Gawayne a grete stroke,
 that nygh he felle to the erthe. And Gaherys smote hym
 agayne sore. And so they were assayled on the one syde and
 on the othir, that sir Gawayne and Gaherys were in jouparte* 15
 of their lyves. And one with a bowe, an archer, smote sir
 Gawayne thorow the arme, that hit greved hym wondirly sore.

And as they sholde have bene slayne, there com four
 fayre ladyes and besought the knyghtes of grace for sir
 Gawayne. And goodly at the requeste of thes ladyes they 20
 gaff sir Gawayne and Gaherys their lyves and made them
 to yelde them as presoners. Than sir Gawayne and Gaherys
 made grete dole. 'Alas,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'myn arme
 grevith me sore, that I am lyke to be maymed,' and so made
 hys complaynte pytewusly. 25

So erly on the morne there com to sir Gawayne one of
 the four ladyes that had herd hys complaynte, and seyde,

'Sir knyght, what chere?'

'Nat good.'

'Why so? Hit ys youre owne defaute,' seyde the lady, 30
 'for ye have done passynge foule for the sleynge of thys
 lady, the whych woll be grete vylony unto you. But be ye
 nat of kynge Arthurs?' seyde the lady.

'Yes, trully,' seyde sir Gawayne.

'What ys youre name?' seyde [the] lady, 'for ye muste 35
 telle or ye passe.'

4 C many enemyes here 14 assayled *not in Cf F* (*HutA Merlin, f. 163c*): et
 1'assaiUent de toutes les pars que il pueent a lui venir 24 that *not in C* x+W
 lyke 29 C not good said he 30 Why so *not in C* 33 C of kynge
 Arthurs kyn 35 W seyde sir lady for *not in C*

'Fayre lady, my name ys sir Gawayne, the kynges son Lotte of Orkeney, and my modir ys kyng Arthurs sister.'

'Than ar ye newew unto the kyng,' seyde the lady.

39^v 'Well,' seyde the lady, 'I shall so speke for you that ye shall
5 have (leve) to go unto kyng Arthure for hys love.'

And so she departed and told the four knyghtes how the presonere was kyng Arthurs newew, 'and hys name ys sir Gawayne, kyng Lottis son of Orkeney.' So they gaff hym leve and toke hym the hartes hede with hym because
10 hit was in the queste. And than they delyverde hym undir thys promyse, that he sholde bere the dede lady with hym on thys maner: the hede of her was hanged aboute hys necke, and the hole body of hir before hym on hys horse mane.

Ryght so he rode forthe unto Camelot. And anone as
15 he was com Merlion dud make kyng Arthure that sir Gawayne was sworne to telle of hys adventure, and how he slew the lady, and how he wolde gyff no mercy unto the knyght, wherethorow the lady was slayne. Than the kyng and the quene were gretely displeased with sir Gawayne
20 for the sleynge of the lady, and there by ordynaunce of the queene there was sette a queste of ladyes uppon sir Gawayne, and they juged hym for ever whyle he lyved to be with all ladyes and to fyght for hir quarels; and ever that he sholde be curteyse, and never to refuse mercy to hym that askith
25 mercy. Thus was sir Gawayne sworne uppon the four Evaungelystis that he sholde never be ayenste lady ne jantillwoman but if he fyght for a lady and hys adversary fyghtith for another, AND THUS ENDITH THE ADVENTURE OF SIR GAWAYNE THAT HE DUD AT THE MARIAGE OF ARTHURE.

(9) 30 Whan sir Torre was redy he mounted uppon horsebacke and rode afftir the knyght with the brachett. And so as he rode he mette with a dwarff suddeynly, that smote hys horse on the hede with a staff, that he reled bakwarde hys spere lengthe. 'Why dost thou so?' seyde sir Torre.

35 'For thou shalt nat passe thys way but if thou juste withe yondir knyghtes of the pavilions.'

4 Well seyde the lady *not in C* 4-5 *C* ye shall haue conduyte to go 8-9 *C* and they gaf hym the hertes hede by cause 1 o *C* delyuerd syr Gauayne 12 *C* in this maner 15-16 *C* merlyn desyred of kyng Arthur . . . shold be sworne 29 *C* Arthur Amen 30 *C* Than Syre Tor . . . his horsbak

Than was sir Torre ware where were two pavilions, and grete spery[s] stood oute, and two shildes hangynge on treys by the pavilions.

'I may nat tarry,' seyde sir Torre, 'for I am in a queste that I muste nedys folow.'

'Thou shalt nat passe thys wey,' seyde the dwarfF, and therewithall he blew hys home. Than there com one armed on horsebacke and dressed hys shylde and com fast towarde sir Torre. And than he dressed hym ayenste hem and so ran togydirs, and sir Torre bare hym from hys horse, and anone the knyght yelded hym to hys mercy. 'But, sir, I have a felow in yondir pavilyon that woll have ado with you anone.'

'He shall be wellcom,' seyde sir Torre.

Than was he ware of another knyght commynge with grete rawndom, and eche of hem dressed to other, that mervayle hit was to se. But the knyght smote sir Torre a grete stroke in myddys the shylde, that his spere all to-shyverde. And sir Torre smote hym thorow the shylde benethe, that hit wente thorow the coste of the knyght; but the stroke slew hym nat. And therewith sir Torre alyght and smote hym on the helme a grete stroke, and therewith the knyght yelded hym and besought hym of mercy.

'I woll well/ seyde sir Torre, 'but ye andyoure felow muste go unto kynge Arthure and yelde you presoners unto hym.'

'By whom shall we say we ar thydir sente?'

'Ye shall sey, by the knyght that wente in the queste of the knyght with the brachette. Now, what be your two namys?' seyde sir Torre.

'My name ys,' seyde that one, 'sir Phelot of Langeduke.'

'And my name ys,' seyde the othir, 'sir Petipace of Wynchilsee/

'Now go ye forthe,' seyde sir Torre, 'and God spede you and me.'

Than cam the dwarfF and seyde unto sir Torre, 'I pray you gyfF me my bone.'

z C sperys 6 thys wey *not in C* 19-20 C shelde by lowe of the sheld and
it 31 CFelot of Langduk 32-3 C Petypase of Wynchylse 37 C
gyue me a yefte

'I woll well,' seyde sir Torre, 'aske and ye shall have.'

'I aske no more,' seyde the dwarfF, 'but that ye woll suffir me to do you servyse, for I woll serve no more recreaunte knyghtes/

5 'Well, take an horse,' seyde sir Torre, 'and ryde one with me.'

'For I wote,' seyde the dwarfF, 'ye ryde afftir the knyght with the whight brachette, and I shall brynge you where he ys,' seyde the dwarfF.

10 And so they rode thorowoute a foreste; and at the laste they were ware of two pavilions evyn by a pryory, 'with two sheldes¹, and that one shyld was enewed with whyght and that othir shyld was rede.

(10) Therewith sir Torre alyght and toke the dwarfF hys
15 glayve, and so he com to the whyght pavilion. He saw three
damesels lye in hyt on a paylette slepynge; and so he wente
40^T unto the tother pavylyon and founde a lady lyyng in hit
slepynge, but therein was the whyght brachett that bayed
at hym faste. And than sir Torre toke up the brachette and
20 wente hys way and toke hit to the dwarfFe.

And with the noyse the lady com oute of the pavilion,
and all hir damesels, and seyde, 'Woll ye take my brachette
frome me?'

'Ye,' seyde sir Torre, 'this brachett have I sought frome
*5 kynge Arthures courte hydir.'

'W[e]ll,' seyde the lady, 'sir knyght, ye shall nat go
farre with hir but that ye woll be mette with and graved.'

'I shall abyde what adventure that commyth by-the grace
of God,' and so mownted uppon hys horse and passed on
30 hys way toward Camelot.

But it was so nere nyght he myght nat passe but litill farther.

1 and ye shall have *not in C* 5 Well *not in C* 6-7 C me I wote ye ryde
n-12 C* with two sheldes and the one shyld F (*fluth Merlin*,/. 169b): A
chascun des pavilions pendoit uns escus 16 C lye in it and one paylett
17-18 C lyeng slepyng ther in But ther was the 18-19 C that bayed at
herf F (*Huti Merlin*,/. i6gc): et li brakes saut jus del litet commence a glatir
si fort pour chou que il ne conmissoit pas le chevalier 19-22 C fast and therewith
the lady yede oute of the pavelione & all her damoyseles But anone as syr Tor
aspyed the whyte brachet he took her by force and took her to the dwerf what
wille ye so sayd the lady take my brachet 21 with the noyse *not in Of* F
(*loc. cit.*): Et la damoisele s'esveille erraument pour la noise que cil faisoit
24 W shought 27 farre *not in C*

'Know ye any lodgyng here nye ?' seyde sir Torre.

'I know none,' seyde the dwarff, 'but here besydys ys an ermytaige, and there ye muste take lodgyng as ye fynde.'

And within a whyle they com to the hermytage and toke 5 such lodgyng as was there, and as grasse and otis and brede for their horsis. Sone- hit was spedde, and full harde was their souper. But there they rested them all nyght tylle on the morne, and herde a masse devoutely and so toke their leve of the ermyte. And so sir Torre prayde the 10 ermyte to pray for hym, and he seyde he wolde, and betoke hym to God. And so mownted uppon horsebacke and rode towardis Camelot a longe whyle.

So with that they herde a knyght calle lowde that com afftir them, and seyde, 'Knyght, abyde and yelde my 15 brachette that thou toke frome my lady!' Sir Torre returned agayne and behelde hym how he was a semely knyght and well horsed and armed at all poyntes. Than sir Torre dressed hys shyld and toke hys glayve in hys hondys. And so they com fersely on as freysshe men and 20 droff both horse and man to the erthe. Anone they arose lyghtly and drew hir swerdis as egirly as lyons, and put their shyldis before them, and smote thorow their shyldys, that the cantels felle on bothe partyes. Also they tamed their helmys, that the hote bloode ran oute and the thycke 25 mayles of their hawbirkes they carff and rooffe in sundir, that the hote bloode ran to the erthe. And bothe they had 41 many woundys and were passynge wery.

But sir Torre aspyed that the tothir knyght faynted, and than he sewed faste uppon hym and doubled hys strokis 30 and stroke hym to the erthe on the one syde. Than sir Torre bade hym yelde hym. 'That woll I nat,' seyde Abelleus, 'whyle lastith the lyff and the soule in my body, onles that thou wolte geff me the brachette.'

'That woll I nat,' seyde sir Torre, 'for hit was my queste 35 to brynge agayne the brachette, thee, other bothe.'

5 W they com they com 6 C* and was there gras ao-i C and the
other cam fyersly vpon hym and smote hors & man to the erthe 31 C and
garte hym go to 33 C whyle my lyf lasteth and the soule is within my body
35 C not doo

(n) With that cam a damesell rydyng on a palferey as faste as she myght dryve, and cryed with lowde voice unto sir Torre.

'What woll ye with me ?' seyde sir Torre.

5 'I beseche the,' seyde the damesell, 'for kynge Arthurs love, *gyff* me a *gyffte*, I requyre the, jantyll knyght, as thou arte ajantillman.'

'Now,' seyde sir Torre, 'aske a *gyffte* and I woll *gyff* hit you.'

io 'Grauntemercy,' seyde the damesell. 'Now I aske the hede of thys false knyght Abelleus, for he ys the moste outerageous knyght that lyvith, and the grettist murtherer.'

'I am lothe,' seyde sir Torre, 'of that *gyffte* I have gyvyn you; but lette hym make amendys in that he hathe tres-
15 pased agayne you.'

'Now,' seyde the damesell, 'I may nat, for he slew myne owne brothir before myne yghen that was a bettir knyght than he, and he had had grace; and I kneled halfe an owre before hym in the myre fo[r] to sauff my brothirs lyff that
20 had done hym no damage, but fought with hym by adventure of armys, and so for all that I coude do he strake of hys hede. Wherefore I requyre the, as thou arte a trew knyght, to *gyff* me my *gyffte*, othir ellis I shall shame the in all the courte of kynge Arthure; for he ys the falsyste
*5 knyght lyvyng, and a grete destroyer of men, and namely of good knyghtes.'

So whan Abellyus herde thys, he was more aferde and yelded hym and asked mercy. 'I may nat now,' seyde sir Torre, 'but I sholde be founde false of my promyse, for ere-
3° whyle whan I wolde have tane you to mercy ye wolde none aske, but iff ye had the brachett agayne that was my queste.' And therewith he toke off hys helme, and therewith he
41^v arose and fledde, and sir Torre afftir hym, and smote of hys hede quyte.

35 'Now, sir,' seyde the damesell, 'hyt ys nere nyght. I pray you com and lodge with me hereby at my place.'

10 C gramercy 16 WI may nat I may nat C he may notf F {Huth
Merlin/. 27id): Ja Dieus n'ait merchi de m'arme se je en ai merchi z\$ of
men and namely *not in C* 19 ere *not in Cf* 36 C with me here at my
place it is here fast by

'I woll well,' seyde sir Torre, 'for my horse and I have fared evyll syn we departed frome Camelot'

And so he rode with her, and had passynge good chere with hir. And she had a passyng fayre olde knyght unto hir husbunde that made hym good chere and wejl easyd 5 both hys horse and hym. And on the morne [he] herde hys masse and brake hys faste, and toke hys leve of the knyght and of the lady that besought hym to telle hys name.

'Truly,' he seyde, 'my name ys sir Torre, that was late made knyght, and thys was the firste queste of armys that 10 ever y ded, to brynge agayne that thys knyght Abelleus toke away frome kynge Arthurs courte.'

'Now, fayre knyght,' seyde the lorde and the lady, 'and ye com here in oure marchys, se here youre poore lodgyng, and hit shall be allwayes at youre commaundement.' 15

So sir Torre departed and com to Camelot on the third day by noone. And the kynge and the quene and all the courte was passynge fayne of hys commynge, and made grete joy that he was com agayne, for he wente frome the courte with litill succour but as kynge Pellynor, hys fadir, 20 gaff hym an olde courser, and kynge Arthur gaff hym armour and swerde; othir ellis had he none other succour, but rode so forthe hymself alone. And than the kynge and the quene by Merlions advice made hym swere to telle of hys adventures, and so he tolde and made prevys of hys dedys as hit 25 ys before reherced, wherefore the kynge and the quene made grete joy.

'Nay, nay,' seyde Merlion, 'thys ys but japis that he hath do, for he shall preve a noble knyght of proues as few lyvyng, and jantyl and curteyse and of good tacchys, and 30 passyng trew of hys promyse, and never shall he outeage.' Wherethorow Merlions wordis kynge Arthure gaff an erledom of londis that felle unto hym. AND HERE ENDITH THE QUESTE OF SIR TORRE, KYNGE PELLYNORS SONNE.

Than kynge Pellynore armed hym and mownted uppon 35(12)42' hys horse, and rode more than a pace after the lady that the

1 C his how and he had 2 C syn they departed 6 C his hors and he 13 C
0 fayr knyght said the lady and her husband 14 C come and see oure poure
lodgyng 27 S made hym grete ioye 28-9 C* Iapes to that he shalle doo
31 he not in C

knyght lad away. And as he rode in a foreyste he saw in a valey a damesell sitte by a well and a wounded knyght in her armys, and kynge Pellynor salewed hir. And whan she was ware of hym, she cryed on lowde and seyde, 'Helpe
 5 me, knyght, for Jesuys sake V But kynge Pellynore wolde nat tarry, he was so egir in hys queste; and ever she cryed an hondred tymes aftir helpe. Whan she saw he wolde nat abyde, she prayde unto God to sende hym as much nede of helpe as she had, and that he myght feele hit or he deyed.
 10 So, as the booke tellith, the knyght there dyed that was wounded, wherefore for pure sorow the lady slew hirselff with hys swerde.

As kynge Pellynore rode in that valey he mette with a poore man, a laborer, (and) seyde, 'Sawyst thou ony knyght
 15 rydyng thys way ledyng a lady?*

'Ye, sir,' seyde the man, 'I saw that knyght and the lady that made grete dole. And yondir beneth in a valey there shall ye se two pavilions, and one of the knyghtes of the pavilions chalenged that lady of that knyght, and seyde she
 20 was hys cosyne nere, wherefore he shold lede hir [no] farther. And so they waged batayle in that quarell; that one seyde he wolde have hir by force, and that other seyde he wold have the rule of her, for he was hir kynnesman and wolde lede hir to hir kynne.' So for thys quarell he leffte hem fyghtyng.
 *5 'And if ye woll ryde a pace ye shall fynde them fyghtyng, and the lady was leffte with two squyers in the pavelons.'

'God thanke the,* seyde kynge Pellynor.

Than he rode a walop tyll he had a syght of the two pavilions, and the two knyghtys fyghtyng. And anone he
 30 rode unto the pavilions and saw the lady how she was there, for she was hys queste, and seyde, 'Fayre lady, ye muste go with me unto the courte of kynge Arthure.'

'Sir knyght,' seyde the two squyres, 'yondir ar two knyghtes that fyght for thys lady. Go ye thyder and departe
 35 them, and be ye agreed with them, and than may ye have hir at youre plesure.*

5-6 C for crystes sake kynge Pellinore & he wold not 14 C labourer Sawest
 thow not saide Pellinore a knyghte W a laborer which seyde etc. *The only way*
to account for this reading is to assume that which was *Ws rendering of that*
which in its turn was a misreading of a contracted and 15 Cledyng awaye
 ao W ne farther 23 C by cause he was' 30-1 C the lady that was his quest

'Ye sey well,' seyde kyng Pellynor.

And anone he rode betwixte hem and departed them, and asked them their causis why they fought. 42^v

'Sir knyght,* seyde that one, 'I shall telle you. Thys lady ys my kynneswoman nye, my awntis doughtir, and whan 5 I herde hir complayne that she was with hym magre* hir hede, I waged batayle* to fyght with hym.*

'Sir knyght,* seyde thys othir whos name was Outelake of Wentelonde, 'and thys lady I gate be my prouesse of hondis and armys thys day at Arthurs courte.* 10

'That ys nat trew,' seyde kyng Pellynor, 'for ye com in suddeynly thereas we were at the hyghe feste and toke away thys lady or ony man myght make hym redy, and therefore hit was my queste to brynge her agayne and you bothe, othir ellis that one of us to leue in the fylde. Therefore 15 thys lady shall go with me, othir I shall dye therefore, for so have I promysed kyng Arthur. And therefore fyght ye no more, for none or you shall have parte of hir at thys tyme. And if ye lyst for to fyght for hir with me, I woll defende hir.' 20

'Well/ seyde the knyghtes, 'make you redy, and we shall assayle you with all oure power.*

And as kyng Pellynor wolde have put hys horse frome hym, sir Outelake roff hys horse thorow with a swerde, and seyde, 'Now art thou afoote as well as we ar/ Whan kyng 25 Pellynore aspyed that hys horse was •"slayne¹, lyghtly he lepe frome hys horse, and pulled oute hys swerde, and put hys shyld afore hym and seyde, 'Knyght, kepe the well, for thou shalt have a buffette for the sleynge of my horse.* So kyng Pellynor gaff hym such a stroke uppon the helme 30 that he clave the hede downe to the chyne, and felle downe to the erthe dede.

Than he turned hym to the other knyght that was sore (13) wounded. But whan he saw that buffette he wolde nat fyght, but kneled downe and seyde, 'Take my cosyn, 35 thys lady, with you, as ys youre queste, and I require

8-9 C Hontlake of wentland 10 hondis and *not in C n C* that is vntruly said
 15 C to abyde in the 19-20 C her fy3te with me and I wille defende her
 26 W horse was C hors was slayne F (*Ruth Merlin*, f. 175a): li uns laisse aler l'espee et fiert le cheval en *coste* seniestre, si l'ochist et li chevaus chiet mors
 34 C sawe the others buffet 36 C yow at youre request

you, as ye be a trew knyght, put hir to no shame nother vylony.'

* What ?' seyde kynge Pellynore, 'woll ye nat fyght for hir ?'

'No,' seyde the knyght, 'I woll nat fyght with such a
5 knyght of proues as ye be.'

'Well/ seyde kynge Pellynore, 'I promyse you she shall have no vyllany by me, as I am trew knyght.'

'But now me wantis an horse,' seyde kynge Pellynor, 'but I woll have Outelakis horse.'

io 'Sir, ye shall nat nede,' seyde the knyght, 'for I shall gyff you such an horse as shall please you, so that ye woll lodge with me, for hit ys nere nyght'

'I woll well,' seyde kynge Pellynore, 'abyde with you all nyght.'

15 And there he had with hym ryght good chere and fared of the beste with passyng good wyne, and had myry reste that nyght.

And on the morne he harde masse, and dyned. And so was brought hym a fayre bay courser, and kynge Pellynors
20 sadyll sette upon hym.

'Now, what shall I calle you,' seyde the knyght, 'inasmuch as ye have my cousyn at youre desyre of youre queste ?'

'Sir, I shall telle you: my name ys kynge Pellynor, kynge of the His, and knyght of the Table Rounde.'

25 'Now am I glad,' seyde the knyght, 'that such a noble man sholde have the rule of my cousyn.'

'Now, what ys youre name ?' seyde kynge Pellynor. 'I pray you telle.me.'

'Sin my name ys sir Meliot de Logurs, and thys lady, my
30 cosyn, hir name ys called 'Nyneve'¹. And thys knyght that was in the other pavilion was my sworne brother, a passyng good knyght, and hys name ys Bryan of the His, and he ys full lothe to do ony wronge or to fyght with ony man but if he be sore sought on.'

35 'Hit ys mervayle,' seyde kynge Pellynor, 'he wolde nat have ado with me.'

6 C Pellenore ye say wel 8 C me lacketh 30 W Nenyve C cosyn hyght
Nimue (*In a later passage, p. 125, I.5, C gives the spelling Nyneue which is nearest
to the French Nivienne, Nivene*) 33 C ful loth to do wronge and ful lothe
to fyghte with 34 C* sought on so that for shame he may not leue it

'Sir, he woll nat have ado with no man but if hit be at hys requeste.'

'I pray you brynge hym to the courte one of thes dayes,' seyde kynge Pellynor.

'Sir, we woll com togydirs.'

5

'Ye shall be wellcom,' seyde kynge Pellynore^ 'to the courte of kynge Arthure, and ye shall be gretely alowed for youre commynge.'

And so he departed with the lady and brought her to Camelot.

10

But so as they rode in a valey, hit was full of stonys, and there the ladyes horse stumbled and threw her downe, and hir arme was sore brused, that nerehonde she swooned for payne.

'Alas!' seyde the lady, 'myn arme ys oute of lythe, *5 wherethorow I muste nedys reste me.'

'Ye shall well,' seyde kynge Pellynor.

And so he alyght undir a tre where was fayre grasse, and he put hys horse thereto, and so rested hem undir the tree and slepte tylle hit was ny nyght. And when he awoke he *° wolde have rydden forthe, but the lady seyde, 'Ye may as well ryde backwarde as forewarde, hit ys so durke.' So they abode styлле and made there theire lodgyng. Than kynge Pellynor put of hys armoure.

Tha[n] so a litill tofore mydnyght they herde the *5 trottyng of an horse. 'Be ye styлле,' seyde kynge Pellynor, 'for we shall hyre of som adventure.'

^3^T

And therewith he armed hym. So ryght evyn before hym (14) there mette two knyghtes, that one com frowarde Camelot, and that othir com from the Northe, and eyther salewed 3° other and asked:

'What tydynges at Camelot ?' seyde that one knyght.

'Be my hede,' seyde the other¹, 'there have I bene and aspied the courte of kynge Arthure, and there ys such a felyshyp that they may never be brokyn, and well-nyghe all 35

3 I pray you *not in C* 7 Cand gretely allowed 18 C a fayr tree 19 C soleydhym
 21 Cryden Sir said the lady 25 W that so a litill C>thēne a lytel
 31 and asked *not in C* 32-3 W seyde that one knyght Be my hede there
 C* sayd the one by my hede saide the other ther F (Huth Merlin, / . xy6b)i 'Qu& nouvelles aport& vous?' *J^e n'aporch, fait il, nules nouvelles qui me plaisent'

the world holdith with Arthure, for there ys the floure of chevalry. And now for thys cause am I rydyng into the Northe: to telle oure chyfftaynes of the felyship that ys withholdyn with kynge Arthure.'

5 'As for that,' seyde the othir knyght, ^CI have brought a remedy with me that ys the grettist poysen that ever ye herde speke off. And to Camelot woll I with hit, for we have a frende ryght nyghe the kynge, well cheryshed, that shall poysen kynge Arthure, for so hath he promysed oure so chyfftaynes, and receyved grete gyfftis for to do hit.'

'Beware,' seyde the othir knyght, 'of Merlion, for he knowith all thynges by the devylles craftte.'

'As for that, woll I nat lett,' seyde the knyght; and so they departed in sondir.

15 And anone aftir that kynge Pellynor made hym redy, and hys lady, and rode towarde Camelot. And as they com by the welle thereas the wounded knyght was and the lady, there he founde the knyght and the lady etyn with lyons othir with wylde bestis, all save the hede, wherefore he made
20 grete sorow and wepte passynge sore, and seyde, 'Alas I hir lyfmyght I have saved, but I was ferse in my queste that I wolde nat abyde.'

'Wherefore make ye such doole?' seyde the lady.

'I wote nat,' seyde kynge Pellinore, 'but my herte rwyth
25 sore of the deth of hir that lyeth yondir, for she was a passyng fayre lady, and a yonge.'

'Now, woll [ye] do by myne advise ? Take the knyght and lette hym be buried in an ermytage, and than take the ladyes hede and bere hit with you unto kynge Arthure.' So kynge
30 Pellynor toke thys dede knyght on hys shyld and brought hym to the ermytage, and charged the heremyte with the corse, that servyse sholde be done for the soule.

'And take ye hys harneyse for youre payne.'

'Hit shall be done,' seyde the hermyte, 'as I woll answer
35 to God.'

44* And therewith they departed and com thereas the lady lay with a fayre yalow here. That greved kynge Pellynore

13CtherforewiUeInotleteit 1651adyrode 24 C herte morneth 25that lyeth yondir not in C 27 C aduys said the lady take 30 C on his sholders F devant soi 36-7 C* the hede of the lady lay

passynge sore whan he loked on hit, for much hys herte caste unto that vysage. And so by noone they come unto Camelot, and the kyng and the quene was passyng fayne of hys commynge to the courte. And there he was made to swere uppon the four Evangelistes to telle the trouthe of 5 hys queste frome the one ende to that other.

'A, kyng Pellynor,' seyde quene Gwenyver, 'ye were gretly to blame that ye saved nat thys ladyes lyfr?

'Madam,' seyde kyng Pellynore, 'ye were gretely to blame and ye wolde nat save youre owne lyff and ye myght. 10 But, salf youre displeure, I was so furyous in my queste that I wolde nat abyde, and that repentis me and shall do dayes of my lyff.*

'Truly ye ought sore to repente hit,' seyde Merlion, 'for that lady was youre owne doughtir, begotyn of the lady of 15 the Rule, and that knyght that was dede was hir love and sholde have wedded hir, and he was a ryght good knyght of a yonge man, and wolde a proved a good man. An[d] to this courte was he commynge, and hys name was sir Myles of the Laundis, and a knyght com behynde hym and slew 20 hym with a spere, and hys name was Lorayne le Saveage, a false knyght and a cowherde. And she for grete sorow and dole slew hirselff with his swerde, and hyr name was Alyne. And because ye wolde nat abyde and helpe hir, ye shall se youre beste frende fayle you whan ye be in the grettist 25 distresse that ever ye were othir shall be. And that penaunce God hath ordayned you for that dede, that he that ye sholde truste moste on of ony man on lyve, he shall leve you there ye shall be slayne.*

'Me forthynkith hit,' seyde kyng Pellynor, 'that thus 30 shall me betyde, but God may well fordo desteny.'

Thus whan the queste was done of the whyght herte the whych folowed sir Gawayne, and the queste of the brachet whych folowed sir Torre, kyng Pellynors son, and the queste of the lady that the knyghte toke away, whych at 35 that tyme folowed kyng Pellynor, than the kyng stablysshed all the knyghtes and gaff them rychesse and londys;

6 ende *not in Cf* 11 C *sauf your pleasir* 23 C *Eleyne* 28 C *most truste to*
 30 hit *not in C* 30-1 C *that this shalle* 31 C *fordoo wel* 33-4 C
 brachet folowed of syr Tor Pellenors sone 37 C *all his knyghtes*

44 and charged them never to do outirage nothir morthir, and
 allwayes to fle treson, and to gyff mercy unto hym that
 askith mercy, uppon payne of forfiture [of their] worship and
 lordship of kynge Arthure for evirmore; and allwayes to
 5 do ladyes, damesels, and jantilwomen and wydowes [socour:]
 strengthe hem in hir ryghtes, and never to enforce them
 uppon payne of dethe. Also that no man take no batayles in
 a wrongerull quarell for no love ne for no worldis goodis.
 So unto thys were all knyghtis sworne of the Table Rounde
 10 both olde and yonge. And every yere so were the[y] sworne
 at the hygh feste of Pentecoste.

EXPLICIT THE WEDDYNG OF KYNG ARTHUR.

1 C doo outragiousyte 2 C treason Also by no meane to be cruel but to gyue
 mercy 3 W othir worship 5-7 C gentylwymmen socour* vpon payne of dethe
 (and wydowes... enforce them *omitted*) 8 C for no lawe ne for noo worldis

IV
THE DEATH OF MERLIN
AND
THE WAR WITH THE FIVE KINGS

*{Winchester MS., ff. 45^r-49^r;
Caxton, Book IF> chs. 1-5]*

CAXTON'S RUBRICS

- Ch. i. How Merlyn was assorted and dooted on one of the ladyes of the Lake, and how he was shytted in a roche under a stone and there deyed.**
- „ **2. How fyve kynges came into this londe to warre ayenst kyng Arthur and what counceyl Arthur had ayenst them.**
- „ **3. How kyng Arthur had adoo with them and overthrewc them and slewe the five kynges and made the remenaunte to flee.**
- „ **4. How the batayl was fynysshed or he came, and how the kyng founded an abbay where the batayl was.**
- „ **5. How syr Tor was made knyght of the Rounde Table, and how Bagdemagusf was dyspleased.**

t S Badgemagus

SO aftir thes questis of syr Gawayne, syr Tor, and kyng 45
Spellynore, than hit befelle that Merlyon felle in dotage
on the damesell that kyng Pellynore brought to courte;
and she was one of the damesels of the Lady of the Laake,
that hyght [Nyneve]. But Merlion wolde nat lette her have 5
no reste, but allwayes he wolde be wyth her. And ever she
made Merlion good chere tylle sche had lerned of hym
all maner of thynges that sche desyred; and he was assoted
uppon hir, that he myght nat be from hir.

So on a tyme he tolde to kyng Arthure that he scholde 10
nat endure longe, but for all his craftes he scholde be putte
into the erthe quyk. And so he tolde the kyng many thyngis
that scholde befall, but allwayes he warned the kyng to
kepe well his swerde and the scawberde, Tor he told hym
how the swerde and the scawberde scholde be stolyn by 15
a woman frome hym that he moste trusted. Also he tolde
kyng Arthure that he scholde mysse hym.

'And yett had ye levir than all youre londis have me
agayne.'

'A,' sayde the kyng, 'syn ye knowe of youre evil adven- 20
ture, purvey for hit, and putt hit away by youre crauftes,
that mysseadventure.'

'Nay,' seyde Merlion, 'hit woll not be.'

He departed frome the kyng, and within a whyle the
damesell of the Lake departed, and Merlyon went with 25
her evermore wheresomever she yeode. And oftyntymes
Merlion wolde have had hir prevayly away by his subtile
crauftes. Than she made hym to swere that he sholde
never do none inchauntemente uppon hir if he wolde have
his wil, and so he swore. Than she and Merlyon wente 30
over the see unto the londe of Benwyke thereas kyng Ban
was kyng, that had grete warre ayenste kyng Claudas.

And there Merlion spake with kyng Bayans wyff, a
fayre lady and a good; hir name was Elayne. And there he

3 S to the Courte 4 C one of the damoyseles of the lake 5 W Nyneve
C Nyneue F (*Huth Merlin*, ff. 18 aa and 183c): Nivienne, Nivene 8 C maner
thynges 11 C dure long 14-15 C* scaubard for he told hym how the swerd
and the scaubard shold be stolen F (*Huth Merlin*, f. 188b): sa boineespee od
tout le fuerre 26 C she wente 33 C kyng Bans

sawe yonge Launcelot. And there the queene made grete sorowe for the mortal werre that kyng Claudas made on hir loVdis.

45^T 'Take none hevynesse,' seyde Merlyon, 'for this same
5 chylde yonge Launcelot shall within this twenty yere
revenge you on kyng Claudas, that all Crystendom shall
speke of hit; and this same chylde shall be the moste man
of worship of the worlde. And his fyrst name ys Galahad,
that know I well,' seyde Merlyon, 'and syn ye have con-
10 fermed hym Launcelot.'

'That is trouth,' seyde the quene, 'his name was fyrst Galahad. A, Merlyon,' seyde the quene, 'shall I lyve to se my son suche a man of prouesse?'

'Yee, hardely, lady, on my perelle ye shall se hit, and lyve
15 many wyntirs aftir.'

Than sone aftir the lady and Merlyon departed. And by weyes he shewed hir many wondyrs, and so come into Cornuayle. And allwayes he lay aboute to have hir maydynhode, and she was ever passynge wery of hym and wolde
20 have bene delyverde of hym, for she was aferde of hym for cause he was a devyls son, and she cowde not be skyfte of hym by no meane. And so one a tyme Merlyon ded shew hir in a roche whereas was a grete wondir and wrought by enchauntement that went undir a grete stone. So by hir
*5 subtile worchyng she made Merlyon to go undir that stone to latte hir wete of the mervayles there, but she wrought so there for hym that he come never oute for all the craufte he coude do, and so she departed and leffte Merlyon.

(2) And as king Arthure rode to Camelot and helde there
30 a grete feste with myrth and joy, and sone aftir he returned unto Cardolle. And there come unto Arthure newe tydynges that the kyng of Denmarke and the kyng of Irelande, that was his brothir, and the kyng of the Vale and the kynge of Sorleyse and the kyng of the He of Longtaynse, all these
35 fyve kynges with a grete oste was entirde into the londis of kyng Arthure and brent and slewe and distroyed clene byfore hem bothe the citeis and castels, that hit was pite

2-3 JTonhirlordis C* on her landes 5 yonge Launcelot *not in C* 14 hardely *not in C* 18 C alweys Merlyn lay aboute the lady to haue her 21-2 C beskyfte hym W of of hym 3iCCardoylle 35 C the lad 36 and distroyed *notin C*

to here. 'Alas!' seyde Arthure, 'yet had I never reste one 46*
monethe syne I was kyng crowned of this londe. Now
shall I never reste tylle I mete with tho kyngis in a fayre
felde, that I make myne avow; for my trwe lyege peple shall
not be destroyed in my defaughte. Therefore go with me 5
who so woll, and abyde who that wyll.'

Than kyng Arthure lette wryte unto kyng Pellynor and
prayde hym in all haste to make hym redy 'with suche peple
as we myght lyghtlyeste arere,' and to hyghe hym aftir in
haste. Than all the barownes were wrothe prevayly that 10
the kyng wolde departe so suddaynly; but the kyng by
no meane wolde abyde, but made wrytyng unto them that
were nat ther and bade hyghe them aftir hym suche as
were nat at that tyme at that courte. Than the kyng come
to quene Gwenyver and seyde unto her, 'Madame, make 15
you redy, for ye shall go with me, for I may nat longe mysse
you. Ye shall cause me to be the more hardy, what adven-
ture so befall me; yette woll I nat wyghte my lady to be in
nojoupardye.'

'Sir,' she seyde, 'I am atyoure commaundemente, and shall 20
be redy at all tymes.'

So on the morne the kyng and the quene departed with
suche felyship as they had and come into the North, into
a forerste besyde Humbir, and there lodged hem. So whan
this worde come unto the fyve kynges abovynseyde that 25
Arthure was besyde Humbir in a foreste, so there was a
knyght, brothir unto one of the fyve kynges, that gaff hem
suche counseyle: 'Ye knowe well that sir Arthur hath
the floure of chevalry of the worlde with hym, and hit
preved by the grete batayle he did with the eleven kynges. 30
And therefore hyghe ye unto hym nyght and day tyll that
we be nyghe hym, for the lenger he taryeth the bygger
he is, and we ever the weyker. And he is so corageous of 46^T
hymself that he is com to the felde with lytyll peple, and
therefore lette us sette uppon hym or day, and we shall sle 35
downe of his knyghtes that none shall helpe other of them.'

Soo unto this counseyle these five kynges assented, and (3)

5 Therefore *not in C* 9 Crere 14 Cin the Courte 15 Csayd lady
make 21 C* redy what tyme so ye be redy 25 C the word & tydyng came
29 C as it is 36 C of his knyghtes ther shal none escape

so they passed forth with hir oste thorow North Walys and
 come uppon Arthure be nyght and sette uppon his oste as
 the kyng and his knyghtes were in theire pavylyons. So
 kyng Arthure was unarmed and leyde hym to reste with
 5 his quene Gwenyvere.

'Sir,' seyde sir Kayus, 'hit is nat beste we be unarmed.'

'We shall have no nede,' seyde sir Gawayne and sir
 Gryflet that lay in a lytyll pavylyon by the kyng.

So with that they harde a grete noyse and many cryed
 x0 'Treson!'

'Alas!' seyde Arthure, 'we be betrayed! Unto armys,
 felowys!' than he cryed. So they were armed anone at all
 poyntes.

Than come there a wounded knyght unto the kyng and
 15 seyde, 'Sir, save youreself and my lady the quene, for oure
 oste is destroyed, and slayne is much of our people.'

So anone the kyng and the quene and the three knyghtes
 toke hir horses and rode toward Humbir to passe over hit,
 and the water was so rowgh that they were aferde to passe
 20 over hit.

'Now may ye chose,' seyde kyng Arthure, 'whethir ye
 woll abyde and take the adventure on this syde, for and ye
 be takyn they wol sle you.'

'Yet were me lever to dey in this watir than to falle in
 *5 youre enemyes handis,' seyde the quene, 'and there to be
 slayne.'

And as they stode talkyng sir Kayus saw the fyve kynges
 47^r commynge on horsebak by himself alone, wyth hir sperys
 in hir hondis, evyn towarde hem.

30 'Lo,' seyde sir Kayus, 'yondir be tho fyve kynges. Lette
 us go to them and macche hem.'

'That were foly,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'for we ar but four,
 and they be fyve.'

'That is trouth,' seyde sir Gryfflette.

35 'No force,' seyd sir Kayus. 'I woll undirtake for two of
 the beste of hem, and than may ye three undirtake for all
 the othir three.'

And therewithall sir Kay lette his horse renne as faste

6Ckaynus C it is not good
 queue (S quene) to dye

10C treson treson
 25 Chandes & there be

24 C It were me leuer sayd the
 32 C we are but thref

as he myght to encountir with one of them, and strake one of the kynges thorow the shelde and also the body a fadom, that the kyng felle to the erthe starke dede. That sawe sir Gawayne and ran unto anothir kyng so harde that he smote hym downe and thorow the body with a spere, that he felle 5 to the erthe dede. Than sir Gryfflet ran to the fourth kyng and gaff hym suche a falle that his necke brake in sondir. Anone sir Arthure ran to anothir and smote hym thorow the body with a spere, that he fell to the erthe dede. Than sir Kay ran unto the fyfth kyng and smote hym so harde 10 on the helme that the stroke clave the helme and hede to the erthe.

'That was well stryken,' seyde kyng Arthure, 'and worshipfully haste thou holde thy promyse; therefore I shall honoure the whyle that I lyve.' 15

And therewithall they sette the quene in a barge into Humbir. But allwayes quene Gwinyvere prayded sir Kay for his dedis and seyde, 'What lady that ye love and she love you nat agayne, she were gretly to blame. And amonge all ladyes,' seyde the quene, 'I shall bere your noble fame, 20 for ye spake a grete worde and fulfilled hit worshipfully.' And therewith the quene departed.

Than the kyng and the three knyghtes rode into the fore[s]te, for there they supposed to here of them that were ascapid, and there founde the moste party of his peple, and 2\$ tolde hem how the fyve kynges were dede.

'And therefore lette us holde us togedyrs tyll hit be day, and whan hir oste have aspyed that their chyfteynes be slayne they woll make such dole that they shall nat helpe hemself.'

And ryght as the kyng seyde, so hit was, for whan they 30 founde the fyve kynges dede they made such dole that they felle downe of there horsis. And therewithall com in kyng

1-2 C myghte and strake one of them thorow 5 downe and *not in C* 5-6 with a spere that he felle to the erthe dede *not in C* 7 in sondir *not in C* 6-8 In C Arthur comes before Gryfflet, and as in both texts Gryfflet attacks the fourth king, C is right in giving him the fourth place. This does not necessarily mean that W is at fault. The order of battles in W is the same as in F, and W's fourth kyng may well be the result of M's misinterpretation of the words *refiert tout autretel Tun des rois* (Huth Merlin, f. 193a): 'un', represented in French manuscripts by four identical strokes, could easily have been mistaken by M for the figure *iiii* 24 W forerte 25 W the moste party of the fyve kynges (the moste party is repeated from previous line) 2 9 C shalle not mowe helpe 3 2 C fell fro their

Arthure but with a fewe peple and slewe on the ryght honde and the lyffte honde, that well nye there ascaped no man, but all were slayne to the numbir of thirty thousand. And whan the batayle was all ended the kynge kneled downe and
 5 thanked God mekely. And than he sente for the quene. And anone she was com and made grete joy of the overcommynge of that batayle.

- (4) Therewithal! come one to kynge Arthure and tolde hym that kynge Pellynore was within three myle with a grete oste.
 10 And [so he] seyde, 'Go unto hym and let hym undirstonde how we have spedde.' So within a whyle kyng Pellynore com with a grete oste and salewed the peple and the kynge, and there was grete joy on every syde. Than the kynge let serch how many peple he had slayne, and there was founde
 15 but lytyll paste two hondred men slayne and eyght knyghtes of the Table Rounde in their pavylyons.

Than the kynge lat rere and devyse, in the same place thereas the batayle was done and made, a fayre abbay, and endewed hit with grete lyvelode, and let calle hit the Abbay
 *^o of La Beale Adventure. But whan som of them come into there contrayes thereas the fyve kynges were kynges, and tolde hem how they were slayne, there was made grete dole. And all the kynge Arthurs enemyes, as the kynge of North Walis and the kynges of the Northe, knewe of this batayle;
^r 25 they were passynge hevy.

And so the kynge retourned unto Camelot in haste. And whan he was com to Camelot he called kyng Pellynore unto hym and seyde, 'Ye undirstonde well that we have loste eyght knyghtes of the beste of the Table Rounde, and
 30 by youre advyse we must chose eyght knyghtes of the beste we may fynde in this courte.'

'Sir,' seyde Pellynore, 'I shall counsayle you aftir my conceyte the beste wyse. There ar in youre courte full noble knyghtes bothe of olde and yonge. And be myne advyse ye
 35 shall chose half of the olde and half of the yonge.'

'Whych be the olde ?' seyde kynge Arthure.

'Sir, mesemyth kynge Uryence that hath wedded youre sistir Morgan le Fay, and the kynge of the Lake, and sir

Hervyse de Revell, a noble knyght, and sir Galagars the fourthe.'

'This is well devysed,' seyde Arthure, 'and ryght so shall hit be. Now, whyche ar the four yonge knyghtes?'

'Sir, the fyrste is sir Gawayne, youre nevew, that is as 5
good a knyght of his tyme as is ony in this londe. And the
secunde as mesemyth beste is sir Gryfflette le Fyse de Du,
that is a good knyght and full desyrous in armys, and who
may se hym lyve, he shall preve a good knyght. And the
thirde as mesemyth ys well worthy to be one of the Table 10
Rounde, sir Kay the Senesciall, for many tymes he hath
done full worshipfully. And now at youre laste batayle he
dud full honorably for to undirtake to sle two kynges.'

'Be my hede,' seyde Arthure, 'ye sey soth. He is beste
worthy to be a knyght of [the] Rounde Table of ony that 15
is rehersed yet, and he had done no more prouesse his
lyve dayes.'

'Now,' seyde kyng Pellynore, 'chose you of two knyghtes (5)
that I shall reherce whyche is most worthy, of sir Bagde-
magus and sir Tor, my son; but for because he is my son 20
I may nat prayse hym, but ellys and he were nat my son 48^v
I durste say that of his age there is nat in this londe a better
knyght than he is, nother of bettir condycions, and loth to
do ony wronge and loth to take ony wronge.'

'Be my hede,' seyde Arthure, 'he is a passyng good knight 25
as ony ye spake of this day. That wote I well,' seyde the
kyng, 'for I have sene hym proved; but he seyth but lytil,
but he doth much more, for I know none in all this courte,
and he were as well borne on his modir syde as he is on
youre syde, that is lyke hym of prouesse and of myght. 30
And therefore I woll have hym at this tyme and leve'sir
Bagdemagus tyll anothir tyme.'

So whan they were chosyn by the assent of the barouns,
so were there founden in hir seges every knyghtes name that
here ar rehersed. And so were they sette in hir seges, where- 35
of sir Bagdemagus was wondirly wrothe that sir Tor was

4 C kny3tes said Arthur 7 Cf fyse the dene F (Huth Merlin,/. 195b)'. li fiex
Dou (v a r Do) Islle putte to yow two knyghtes and
ye shalle chese which is moost worthy that is Syr Bagdemagus 27 C
seyth lytyll 33 C of alle the 36 W sir Bagdemagus tyll anothir tyme
The last three words are repeated from the sentence four lines above. The scribe was

avaunced afore hym. And therefore soddeynly he departed
 frome the courte and toke his squyre with hym and rode
 longe in a foreste tyll they come to a crosse, and there he
 alyght and seyde his prayers devoutely. The meanewhyle
 5 his squyre founde wretyn uppon the crosse that Bagdemagus
 sholde never retourne unto the courte agayne tyll he had
 wonne a knyght of the Table Rounde body for body.

'Loo/ seyde his squyer, 'here I fynde wrytyng of you;
 therefore I rede you, retourne agayne to the courte.'

xo 'That shall I never,' seyde Bagdemagus, 'tyll men speke
 of me ryght grete worship, and that I be worthy to be a
 kn[y]ght of the Rounde Table.'

And so he rode forth, and there by the way he founde a
 braunche of holy herbe that was the signe of the Sancgreall,
 15 and no knyght rounde no suche tokyns but he were a good
 49^r ly ver and a man of prouesse.

So as sir Bagdemagus rode to se many adventures, so
 hit happed hym to come to the roche thereas the Lady of
 the Lake had put Merlyon undir the stone, and there he
 20 herde hym make a grete dole; wherefore sir Bagdemagus
 wolde have holpyn him, and wente unto the grete stone, and
 hit was so hevy that an hondred men myght nat lyffte hit
 up. Whan Merlyon wyste that he was there, he bade hym
 leve his laboure, for all was in vayne: for he myght never be
 25 holpyn but by her that put hym there.

And so Bagdemagus departed and dud many adventures
 and preved aftir a full good knyght, and come ayen to the
 courte and was made knyght or the Rounde Table. So on
 the morne there befelle new tydyngis and many othir
 30 adventures.

*obously about to repeat the whole of the intervening passage, but soon noticed his
 mistake. 3 he not inC 7 C a kny3tes body of the round table 8 C lo syr
 10 S Bagdemagus by men 14 C Sancgraill 16 and a man of prouesse not in C
 z% hym not inC t\$Wby hir her 29 many not in C*

V

ARTHUR AND ACCOLON

*[Winchester MS..ff. 49'58-
Caxton, Book IV, chs. tf-15]*

CAXTON'S RUBRICS

6. How kyng Arthur, kyng Uryens, and syr Accolon of Gaule chaced an hert, and of theyr mervayllous adventure.
7. How Arthur took upon hym to fyght to be delyverd oute of pryson, and also for to delyver twenty knyghtes that were in pryson.
8. How Accolon fonde hymself by a welle, and he toke upon hym to doo bataylle ayenst Arthur.
- . 9. Of the bataylle bytwene Arthur and Accolon.
10. How kyng Arthurs swerde that he faught wyth brake, and how he recoverd of Accolon his owne swerde Excalibur and overcame his enemye.
11. How Accolon confessyd the treason of Morgan le Fay, kyng Arthurs syster, and how she wold have doon slee hym.
12. How Arthur accorded the two brethern and delyverd the twenty knyghtes, and how syr Accolons deyed.
13. How Morgan wold have slayn syr Uryens hyr husbond, and how syr Ewayn hir sone saved hym.
14. How quene Morgan le Fay made grete sorowe for the deth of Accolon, and how she stale awaye the scawbard fro Arthur.
15. How Morgan le Fay saved a knyght that shold have be drowned, and how kyng Arthur retorned home ageyn.

TH A N hit befelle that Arthure and many of his knyghtes 49^r
 rode on huntyng into a grete foreste. And hit happed
 kyng Arthure and kyng Uryence and sir Accalon of
 Gawle folowed a grete harte; for they three were well horsed,
 and so they chaced so faste that within a whyle they three 5
 were more than ten hiyle from her felyshep. And at the
 laste they chaced so sore that they slewe hir horsis undir-
 nethe them, and the horses were so fre that they felle downe
 dede. Than were all three on foote and ever they saw the
 harte before them passyng wery and inboced. 10

What shall we do ?' seyde kyng Arthure, 'we ar harde
 bestadde.'

'Lette us go on foote,' seyde kyng Uryence, 'tyll we may
 mete with somme lodgyng.' Than were they ware of the
 harte that lay on a grete watir banke, and a brachette bytyng 15
 on his throte; and mo othir houndis come aftir. Than
 kyng Arthure blewe the pryce and dyght the harte.

Than the kyng loked aboute the worlde and sawe before 49^v
 hym in a grete water a lytyll shippe all apparayled with sylke
 downe to the watir. And the shippe cam ryght unto them 20
 and landed on the sandis. Than Arthure wente to the banke
 and loked in and saw none erthely creature therein. 'Sirs,'
 seyde the kyng, 'com thens and let us se what is in this
 shippe.' So at the laste they wente into the shippe all three,
 and founde hit rychely behanged with cloth of sylke. 25

So by that tyme hit was durke nyght, there suddeynly
 was aboute them an hondred torchis sette uppon all the
 shyppe-bordis, and hit gaff grete lyght. And therewithall
 there come twelve fayre damesels and salued kyng Arthure
 on hir kneis, and called hym be his name and seyde he was 30
 ryght wellcom, and suche chere as they had he sholde have
 of the beste. Than the kyng thanked hem fayre. There-
 wythall they ledde the kyng and his felawys into a fayre

3-4 C Accolon of Gaulle F (Huth Merlin, f. 197b)'. Accalon 6 C were
 thenne x myle ffrom F (ibid., f. 197c); il ot plus ale de dis Hues englesques
 8-9 and the horses were so fre (sore) that they felle downe dede not in C to-11
 C wery and enbusshed What wille 18 loked aboute the worlde is a mis-
 translation of regarde contre mont la riviere etc. (Huth Merlin, f. 198a) 24 at
 the laste not in C C wente in al thre 25-6 C sylke By thenne it was
 27-8 C* alle the sydes of the shyp hordes

chambir, and there was a clothe leyde richely beseyne of all that longed to a table, and there were they served of all wyne and metys that they coude thynke of. But of that the kyng had grete mervayle, for he never fared bettir in his lyff as
5 for one souper.

And so whan they had souped at her leyser kyng Arthure was lad into a chambir, a ryche besene chambir sawe he never none; and so was kyng Uryence se[r]ved and lad into such anothir chambir; and sir Accolon was lad into the
10 thirde chambir passyng rychely and well besayne. And so were they leyde in their beddis easily, and anone they felle on slepe and slepte merveylously sore all the nyght.

And on the morne kyng Uryence was in Camelot abedde in his wyves armys, Morgan le Fay. And whan he woke he
50*^J 5 had grete mervayle how he com there, for on the evyn before he was two dayes jurney frome Camelot.

And whan kyng Arthure awoke he founde hymself in a durke preson, heryng aboute hym many complayntes of wofull knyghtes.

(7) ²⁰ 'What ar ye that so complayne ?' seyde kyng Arthure.

'We bene here twenty knyghtes presoners, and som of us hath layne here eyght yere, and som more and somme lesse.'

'For what cause ?' seyde Arthure.

'We shall tell you,' seyde the knyghtes.

25 'This lorde of this castell his name is sir Damas, and he is the falsyst knyght that lyvyth, and full of treson, and a very cowarde as [ony] lyvyth. And he hath a yonger brothir, a good knyght of prouesse, and his name is sir Oughtlake. And this traytoure Damas, the elder brother, woll geff hym
30 no parte of his londis but as sir Outlake kepyth thorow prouesse of his hondis. And so he kepith frome hym a full fayre maner and a rych, and therein sir Outlake dwellyth worshipfully and is well beloved with all peple. And this sir Damasoure mayster is a evyll beloved, for he is withoute
35 mercy, and he is a cowarde, and grete warre hath bene betwyxte them. But Outlake hath ever the bettir, and ever

3 C thynke of that the kyng

said they

28 Cf Ontlake

34 C is as euyl

22 C seuen yere

30 C noo parte of his lyuelode

36 C them bothe

8 W seued

C* serued

27 W as lyvyth

21 C prysoners

C* as ony lyueth

33 C biloued of al peple

he proferyth sir Damas to fyght for the lyvelode, body for body, but he woll nat of hit, other ellys to fynde a knyght to fyght for hym. Unto that sir Damas hath grauntid to fynde a knyght, but he is so evyll beloved and hated that there is no knyght woll fyght for hym. 5

'And whan Damas saw this, that there was nevera knyght wolde fyght for hym,. he hath dayly layne a wayte wyth many a knyght with hym and takyn all the knyghtes in this countray to se and aspye hir adventures: he hath takyn hem by force and brought hem to his preson. And so toke he us severally, as we rode on oure adventures, and many good knyghtes hath deyde in this preson for hunger, to the numbir of eyghtene knyghtes. And yf ony of us all that here is or hath bene wolde have foughtyn with his brother Outlake he wolde have delyverde us; but for because this Damas ys 15 so false and so full of treson we wolde never fyght for hym to dye for hit, and we be so megir for hungir that unnethe we may stonde on oure fete.'

'God delyver you for his grete mercy 1'

Anone withall come a damesel unto Arthure and asked 20 hym, 'What chere?'

'I cannot say,' seyde Arthure.

'Sir,' seyde she, 'and ye woll fyght for my lorde ye shall be delyverde oute of preson, and ellys ye ascape never with the lynV 25

'Now,' seyde Arthure, 'that is harde. Yet had I lever fyght with a knyght than to dey in preson. Wyth this,' seyde Arthure, 'I may be delyverde and all thes presoners, I woll do the batayle.'

'Yes,' seyde the damesell. 3«

'Than I am redy,' seyde Arthure, 'and I had horse- and armoure.'

'Ye shall lak none,' seyde the damesell.

'Mesemethe, damesell, I shold have sene you in the courte of Arthure/ 35

'Nay,' seyde the damesell, 'I cam never there. I am the lordis doughter of this castell.'

z C wylle not doo other 6 C there nys neuer 8 C many knyghtes 11 C
seueratly 17 C soo lene for 19c his mercy sayd Arthur tt C sayd he
24 with not in C

Yet was she false, for she was one of the damesels of Morgan le Fay.

Anone she wente unto sir Damas and tolde hym how he wolde do batayle for hym, and so he sente for Arthure. And
 5 whan he com he was well coloured and well made of his lymmes, that all knyghtes that sawe hym seyde hit were *pite** that suche a knyght sholde dey in preson. So sir Damas and he were agreed that he sholde fyght for hym uppon this covaunte, that all the othir knyghtes sholde be delyverde.
 10 And unto that was sir Damas sworne unto Arthur and also he to do the batayle to the uttermoste. And with that all the
 51* twenty knyghtes were brought oute of the durke preson into the halle, and (he) delyverde hem, and so they all abode to se the batayle.

(8) 15 Now turne we unto Accalon of Gaule, that whan he awoke he founde hymself by a depe welles syde within half a foote, in grete perell of deth. And there com oute of that fountayne a pype of sylver, and oute of that pype ran water all on hyghe in a stone of marbil. Whan sir Accolon sawe this he blyssed
 20 hym and seyde, 'Jesu, save my lorde kynge Arthure and kynge Uryence, for thes damysels in this shippe hath betrayed us. They were fendis and no women. And if I may ascape this mysadventure I shall distroye them, all that I may fynde of thes false damysels that faryth thus with
 *5 theire inchauntementes.'

And ryght with that there com a dwarf with a grete mowthe and a flatte nose, and salewed sir Accalon and tolde hym how he cam fromme quene Morgan le Fay. 'And she gretys yow well and byddyth you be of stronge herte, for
 30 ye shall fyght to-morne wyth a knyght at the houre of pryme. And therefore she hath sent the Excalebir, Arthurs swerde, and the scawberde, and she byddyth you as ye love her that ye do that batayle to the uttirmoste withoute ony mercy, lyke as ye promysed hir whan ye spoke laste togedir in
 35 prevyte". And what damesell that bryngyth her the kynges hede whyche ye shall fyght withall, she woll make hir a quene/

II he *not in C* 13 hem *not in C** 16 W with with in 23-4 C destroye
 all where 1 may fynde these 24-5 C that vsen enchatitementys 33 C doo
 the batail S omits the 34 laste *not in C* 35-6 C the knyghtes hede

⁴'Now I undirstonde you,' seyde Accalon, 'I shall holde that I have promysed her, now I have the swerde. Sir, whan sawe ye my lady Morgan le Fay?'

'Ryght late,' seyde the dwarff.

Than Accalon toke hym in his armys and sayde, 'Re- 5
commaunde me unto my lady the quene and teile hir all
shall be done that I promysed hir, and ellis I woll dye for
hit. Now I suppose,' seyde Accalon, 'she hath made all
this crauftis and enchaumentes for this batayle.' 51^T

'Sir, ye may well beleve hit,' seyde the dwarff. 10

Ryght so there come a knyght and a lady wyth six squyers,
and salewed Accalon and prayde hym to aryse and com
and reste hym at his maner. And so Accalon mounted
uppon a voyde horse and wente with the [knyght] unto
a fayre maner by a pryory, and there he had passyng good *5
chere.

Than sir Damas sente unto his brothir Outelake and bade
make hym redy be to-morne at the houre of pryme, and to
be in the felde to fyght with a good knyght; for he had
founden a knyght that was redy to do batayle at all poyntis. *«
Whan this worde come to sir Outlake he was passyng hevy,
for he was woundid a lytyll tofore thorow bothe his thyghes
with a glayve, and he made grete dole; but as he was wounded
he wolde a takyn the batayle an honde.

So hit happed at that tyme, by the meanys of Morgan le *\$
Fay, Accalon was with sir Oughlake lodged. And whan he
harde of that batayle and how Oughlake was wounded he
seyde that he wolde fyght for hym because that Morgan
le Fay had sent hym Excaliber and the shethe for to fyght
with the knyght on the morne. This was the cause sir 30
Accalon toke the batayle uppon hym. Than sir Outelake
was passyng glad and thanked sir Accalon with all his
herte that he wolde do so muche for hym. And therewithall
sir Outlake sente unto his brother sir Damas that he hadde

1 C yow wel sayd z Sir not in C 6 C my lady Quene 10 Sir not in C
14 W the kyng C the knyghte 23 C with a speref ff's reading was
certainly in the original text. Malory must have telescoped the following two
sentences from F (Huth Merlin, f. 203d): (a) i vint li autres freres tout navris d'une
plaie que uns chevaliers li avoit faite; (b) (Morgan's remark) 'garde's que vous
a'en parlei a vostre frere'. Et cil dist qu'il vaurroit mieusestre ferus d'une glaive
par mi la cuisse k'il en parlast 34 W sente unto C* sente word vnto

a knyght redy that sholde fyght with hym in the felde be the houre of pryme.

So on the morne sir Arthure was armed and well horsed, and asked sir Damas, 'Whan shall we to the felde ?'

5 'Sir,' seyde sir Damas, 'ye shall hyre masse.'

And so Arthure herde a masse, and whan masse was done
52^r there com a squyre ^ron a grete hors"¹ and asked sir Damas
if his knyght were redy, 'for oure k[n]yght is redy in the
felde.' Than sir Arthure mounted uppon horsebak. And
io there were all the knyghtes and comons of that contray,
and so by all their advyces there was chosyn twelve good
men of the contrey for to wayte uppon the two knyghtes.

And ryght as Arthure was on horsebak, there com a
damesel fromme Morgan le Fay and brought unto sir
15 Arthure a swerde lyke unto Excaliber and the scawberde,
and seyde unto Arthure, 'She sendis here youre swerde for
grete love.' And he thanke hir and wente hit had bene so;
but she was falce, for the swerde and the scawberde was
counterfete and brutyll and false.

(9) 20 Than they dressed hem on two partyes of the felde and
lette their horses ren so faste that aythir smote other in
the myddis of the shelde, and their sperys helde, that bothe
horse and man wente to the erthe, and than they stert up
bothe and pulde oute their swerdis.

25 The meanewhyle that they were thus at the batayle com
the Damesel of the Lake into the felde that put Merlyon
undir the stone. And she com thidir for the love of kynge
Arthur, for she knew how Morgan le Fay had ordayned for
Arthur shold have bene slayne that day, and therefore she
30 come to save his lyff.

And so they went egerly to the batayle and gaff many

7 W a squyre and and asked C* a squyer on a grete hors & asked F (*Huth Merlin*, f. 208a): et lors vint laiens sour un grant ronchin uns escuiers 8 W kyght C* knyght 16 C Morgan le fey sendeth 20 C on bothe partyes 21-2 C in the myddes of the shelde with their speres hedef F (*Huth Merlin*, f. 208c): si durement que li escu ne li haubert qu'il tenoient as boins (poins ?) ne les garandissent qu'il ne se metent es chars nues les fers des glaives. Mais de chou lour avint il bien que a chelui caup n'en i out nule plaie mortel. .. Apres s'entre hurtent des core et des visages si durement qu'il chairent a la terre. *Malory seems to have telescoped this passage as follows*: li glaives qu'il tenoient ne les garandissent qu'il ne ... chairent a la terre 28-9 C had soo ordeyned that kynge Arthur shold

grete strokes. But allwayes Arthurs swerde bote nat lyke Accalons swerde, and for the moste party every stroke that Accalon gaff he wounded sir Arthure sore, that hit was mervayle he stood, and allwayes his blood felle frome hym faste. Whan Arthure behelde the grounde so sore bebledde 5 he was dismayde. And than he demed treson,-^that his swerde was chonged, for his swerde bote nat Steele as hit was wonte to do. Therefore he dred hym sore to be dede, for 52^v ever hym semyd that the swerde in Accalons honde was Excaliber, for at every stroke that Accalon stroke he drewe 10 bloode on Arthure.

'Now, knyght,' seyde Accolon unto Arthure, 'kepe the well frome me!' But Arthure answered not agayne, but gaff hym such a buffette on the helme that he made hym to stowpe nyghe fallyng to the erthe. Than sir Accalon 15 wythdrewe hym a lytyll, and com on wyth Excaliber on heyght, and smote sir Arthure suche a buffette that he fylle ny to the erthe. Than were they bothe wrothe oute of mesure and gaff many sore strokis.

But allwayes sir Arthure loste so muche bloode that hit 20 was mervayle he stode on his feete, but he was so full of knyghthode that he endured the payne. And sir Accolon loste nat a dele of blood; therefore he waxte passynge lyght, and sir Arthure was passynge fyeble and [wente] veryly to have dyed, but for all that he made countenaunce as he %\$ myght welle endure and helde Accolon as shorte as he myght. But Accolon was so bolde because of Excalyber that he waxed passyng hardy. But all men that behelde hem seyde they sawe nevyr knyght fyght so well as Arthur ded, conciderynge the bloode that he had bled; but all that peple 30 were sory that thes two brethirne wolde nat accorde.

So allwayes they fought togedir as fers knyghtes, and at the laste kynge Arthure withdrew hym a lytyll for to reste hym, and sir Accolon callyd hym to batayle and seyde, 'Hit is no tyme for me to suffer the to reste,' and therewith he 35 come fersly uppon Arthure. But Arthur therewith was

7 C boote not styl

18-9 oute of mesure *not in C*

19 C gaf eche other

zz C that knyghtly he endured

24 W and veryly

C* and wende veryly

25-6 C as though he myght

30-1 Cf he bled Soo was all the peple sory for

hym but the two bretheren

32-3 at the last *not in C*

wroth for the bloode that he had loste, and smote Accolon
 53^r on hyghe uppon the helme so myghtyly that he made hym
 nyghe falle to the erthe; and therewith Arthurs swerde
 braste at the crosse and felle on the grasse amonge the
 5 bloode, and the pomell and the sure handyls he helde in
 his honde. Whan kynge Arthure saw that, he was in grete
 feare to dye, but allwayes he helde up his shelde and loste
 no grounde nother batyd no chere.

(10) Than sir Accolon began with wordis of treson and seyde,
 io 'Knyght, thou art overcom and mayste nat endure, and also
 thou art wepynles, and loste thou haste much of thy bloode,
 and I am full loth to sle the. Therefore yelde the to me
 recreaunte.'

'Nay,' seyde sir Arthur, 'I may nat so, for I promysed by
 the fey the of my body to do this batayle to the uttermyste
 whyle my lyff lastith, and therefore I had levir to dye with
 honour than to lyve with shame. And if hit were possible
 for me to dye an hondred times, I had levir to dye so oufte
 than yelde me to the. For though I lak wepon, yett shall I
 ao lak no worshippe, and if thou sle me wepynles that shall
 be thy shame.'

'Well/ seyde Accolon, 'as for that shame I woll nat spare.
 Now kepe the fro me, for thou art but a dede man!' And
 therewith Accolon gaff hym such a stroke that he fell
 25 nyghe to the erthe, and wolde have had Arthure to have
 cryed hym mercy. But sir Arthure prece unto Accolon
 with his shelde and gaff hym wyth the pomell in his honde
 suche a buffette that he reled three strydes abake.

Whan the Damesell of the Lake behelde Arthure, how
 30 full of prouesse his body was, and the false treson that was
 wrought for hym to have had hym slayne, she had grete
 pete* that so good a knyght and such a man of worship
 sholde so be destroyed. And at the nexte stroke sir Accolon
 53^v stroke at hym suche a stroke that by the damesels inchaunte-
 35 mente the swerde Excaliber fell oute of Accalons honde to the
 erthe, and therewithall sir Arthure lyghtly lepe to hit and

3 C to falle 6 C his handes 10 S maxste not 13 C as recreaunt 16 C
 whyle me lasteth the lyf 22 Cas for the shame 28 C that he went 33-
 4 C Accolon stroke hym 34-5 W inchaumentente that the swerde C* en-
 chaumentent the swerd

gate hit in his honde, and forthwithall he knew hit that hit was his swerde Excalyber. 'A,' seyde Arthure, 'thou haste bene frome me all to longe and mucche damage hast thou done me!'

And therewith he aspyed the scawberde by his syde, and suddaynly he sterte to hym and pulled the scawberte frome hym and threw, hit frpme hym as fer as he myght throw hit. 'A, sir knyght,' seyde kyng Arthur, 'this day haste thou done me grete damage wyth this swerde. Now ar ye com unto youre deth, for I shall nat warraunte you but ye shall be as well rewarded with this swerde or ever we departe as ye have rewarded me, for mucche payne have ye made me to endure and much bloode have y loste.'

And therewith sir Arthure raced on hym with all his myght and pulde hym to the erthe, and than raced of his helme and gaff hym suche a buffete on his hede that the bloode com oute at his erys, nose, and mowthe.

'Now woll I sle the!' seyde Arthure.

'Sle me ye may well,' seyde sir Accolon, 'and hit please you, for ye ar the beste knyght that ever I founde, and I se well that God is with you. But for I promysed,' seyde Accolon, 'to do this batayle to the uttirmyst and never to be recreaunte while I leved, therefore shall I never yelde me with my mowthe, but God do with my body what He woll.'

Than sir Arthure remembirde hym and thought he scholde have sene this knyght.

'Now telle me,' seyde Arthure, 'or I woll sle the, of what contrey ye be and of what courte.'

'Sir knyght,' seyde sir Accolon, 'I am of the ryall courte of kyng Arthure, and my name is Accolon of Gaule.'

Than was Arthure more dismayde than he was tofore- honde, for than he remembirde hym of his sister Morgan le Fay and of the enchauntement of the shippe. 'A, sir k[n]yght, I pray you [telle me] who gaff you this swerde and by whom ye had hit.'

Than sir Accolon bethought hym and seyde, 'Wo worthe this swerde! for by hit I have gotyn my dethe.'

'Hit may well be,' seyde the kyng.

1 C knewe that 2 C 8c sayd thow 13 W ye loste C* I lost 14,15 C
rushed 17 Chis nose & his mouthe 34 C knyght sayd he I (see note)

'Now, sir/ seyde Accolon, 'I woll tell you: this swerde hath bene in my kepyng the moste party of this twelve monthe, and Morgan le Fay, kyng Uryence wyff, sente hit me yestirday by a dwarfe to the entente to sle kyng Arthure, 5 hir brothir; for ye shall undirstonde that kyng Arthure ys the man in the worlde that she hatyth moste, because he is moste of worship and of prouesse of ony of hir bloode. Also she lovyth me oute of mesure as paramour, and I hir agayne. And if she myght bryng hit aboute to sle Arthure x0 by hir crauftis, she wolde sle hir husbonde kyng Uryence lyghtly. And than had she devysed to have me kyng in this londe and so to reigne, and she to be my quene. But that is now done,' seyde Accolon, 'for I am sure of my deth.'

15 'Well,' seyde kyng Arthure, 'I fele by you ye wolde have bene kyng of this londe, yett hit had be grete damage to have destroyed your lorde,' seyde Arthure.

'Hit is trouthe,' seyde Accolon, 'but now I have tolde you the trouthe, wherefore I pray you tell me of whens ye x0 ar and of what courte.'

'A, Accolon,' seyde kyng Arthure, 'now y let the wete that I am kyng Arthure that thou haste done grete damage t[o].'

Whan Accolon herd that he cryed on-lowde, 'Fayre 25 swete lorde, have mercy on me, for I knew you nat.'

'A, sir Accolon,' seyde kyng Arthure, 'mercy thou shalt have because I fele be thy wordis at this time thou knewest 54^v me nat, but I fele by thy wordis that thou haste agreed to the deth of my persone, and therefore thou art a traytoure; but 30 I wyte the the less for my sistir Morgan le Fay by hir false crauftis made the to agre to hir fals lustes. But I [shall] be sore avenged uppon hir, that all Crystendom shall speke of hit. God knowyth I have honoured hir and worshipped hir more than all my kyn, and more have I trusted hir than my 35 wyff and all my kyn aftir.'

Than kyng Arthure called the kepers of the felde and

4 C to this entente that I shold slee 4-5 entente . . . undirstonde *repeated in*
 C 11 C hadde she me deuysed to be kyng 16 yett *not in C* 22-3 C
 Arthur to whome thou haste done grete damage 23 Wte 27-8 Cknowest
 not my persone But I vnderstand wel by 31 C agree and consente 34-5 C
 myn owne wyf 36 C syr Arthur

seyde, 'Sirres, commyth hyder, for here ar we two knyghtes that have foughtyn unto grete damage unto us bothe, and lykly eche of us to have slayne other, and had ony of us knowyn othir, here had bene no batayle nothir no stroke stryken.' Than all alowde cryed Accolon unto all the 5 knyghtes and men that were [there,] and seyde, 'A, lordisl This knyght that I have foughten withall is the moste man of prouesse and of worship in the worlde, for hit is hymself kynge Arthure, oure all lyege lorde, and with myssehappe and mysseadventure have I done this batayle with the lorde 10 and kynge that I am withholdyn withall.'

Than all the peple felle downe on her knees and cryed (12) kynge Arthure mercy. 'Mercy shall ye have,' seyde Arthure. 'Here may ye se what soddeyn adventures befallys ouftyn of arraunte knyghtes, how that I have foughtyn with a knyght 15 of myne owne unto my grete damage and his bothe. But, syrs, because I am sore hurte and he bothe, and I had grete nede of a lytyll reste, ye shall undirstonde this shall be the opynyon betwyxte you two brethirne:

'As to the, sir Damas, for whom I have bene champion 20 and wonne the felde of this knyght, yett woll I juge. Because 55^r ye, sir Damas, ar called an [o]rgulus knyght and full of vylony, and nat worth of prouesse of youre dedis, therefore woll I that ye geff unto youre brother all the hole maner with the apportenaunce undir this fourme, that sir Outelake 25 holde the maner of you and yerely to gyff you a palfrey to ryde uppon, for that woll becom you bettir to ryde on than uppon a courser. Also I charge the, sir Damas, uppon payne of deth, that thou never distresse no knyghtes araunte that ryde on their adventure, and also that thou restore thyse 30 twenty knyghtes, that thou haste kepte longe presoners, of all their harmys that they be contente for. And ony of them com to my courte and complayne on the, be my hede, thou shalt dye therefore!

'Also, sir Oughtlake, as to you, because ye ar named a 35 good knyght and full of prouesse and trew and jantyll in all

3 C other yf if had happed soo And hadde ony 4 W had had bene 6 C
 men that were thfine there gadred to gyder and sayd 7-8 C* with all the
 whiche me sore repenteth is the mooste man of prowesse of manhode and of worship
 9 C our alther liege 11 C I am holden with all 14 soddeyn *not in C*
 18 this shall be *not in C* 22 W ergulus 32 C and yf 33 C of the

youre dedis, this shall be youre charge I woll gyffyou: that in all goodly hast ye com unto me and my courte, and ye shall be a knyght of myne, and if youre dedis be thereaftir I shall so proferre you by the grace of God that ye shall in shorte
5 tyme be in ease as for to lyve as worshipfully as youre brother Damas.'

'God thonke youre largenesse of youre grete goodnesse and of youre bounte! I shall be frome hensforewarde in all tymes at your commaundement. For, [sir/ said] sir Ought-
to lake, 'as God wolde, I was hurte but late with an adventures knyght thorow bothe the thyghes, and ellys had I done this batayle with you.'

'God wolde,' seyde sir Arthure, 'hit had bene so, for than had nat I bene hurte as I am. I shall tell you the cause
1s why: for I had nat bene hurte as I am, had nat bene myne
55* owne swerde that was stolyn frome me by treson; and this batayle was ordeyned aforehonde to have slayne me, and so hit was broughte to the purpose by false treson and by enchauntment.'

20 'Alas,' seyde sir Outlake, 'that is grete pite that ever so noble a man as ye ar of your dedis and prouesse, that ony man or woman myght fynde in their hertis to worche ony treson agenst you.

'I shall rewarde them,' seyde Arthure. 'Now telle me,*
25 seyde Arthure, 'how far am I frome Camelot?'

'Sir, ye ar two dayes jurney.'

'I wolde be at som place "of worship,' seyde sir Arthur, 'that I myght reste me.'

'Sir/ seyde Outlake, 'hereby is a ryche abbey of youre
30 elders foundacion, of nunnys, but three myle hens.'

So the kynge toke his leve of all the peple and mounted uppon horsebak and sir Accolon with hym.

And whan they were com to the abbey he lete fecch lechis and serchid his woundis and sir Accolons bothe. But
35 sir Accolon deyed within four dayes, for he had bled so much blood that he myght nat lyve, but kynge Arthure

5 as not in C

that greued me sore & els

in short tyme by the grace of god Now

fayn be at

7 grete not in C

18-19 C by fals enchauntement

29 C syr Ontzelake

9 C For syr said syr

26-7 C iourney ther fro I wold

11 C thyes

24 C Arthur

was well recoverde. So whan Accolon was dede he lette sende hym in an horse-bere with six knyghtes unto Camelot, and bade 'bere hym unto my systir, Morgan le Fay, and sey that I sende her hym to a present. And telle hir I have my swerde Excalyber and the scawberde.' So they departe 5 with the body.

The meanewhyle Morgan le Fay had wente kynge (13) Arthure had bene' dede. So on a day she aspyed kynge Uryence lay on slepe on his bedde, than she callyd unto hir a mayden of her counseyle and sayde, 'Go fecche me my lordes 10 swerde, for I saw never bettir tyme to sle hym than now.'

'A, madame,' seyde the damesell, 'and ye sle my lorde ye can never ascape.'

'Care the not,' sayde Morgan, 'for now I se my tyme is 56^r beste to do hit, and therefore hyghe the faste and fecche me 15 the swerde.'

Than this damesell departed and founde sir Uwayne slepyng uppon a bedde in anothir chambir. So she wente unt[o] sir Uwayne and awaked hym and bade hym 'aryse and awayte on my lady youre modir, for she woll sle the kynge 20 youre fadir slepyng on his bedde, for I go to fecch his swerde.'

'Well,' seyde sir Uwayne, 'go on your way and lette me dele.'

Anone the damesell brought the quene the swerde with quakyng hondis. And lyghtly she toke the swerde and 25 pullyd hit oute, and wente boldely unto the beddis syde and awayted how and where she myght sle hym beste. And as she hevyd up the swerde to smyte, sir Uwayne lepte unto his modir and caught hir by the honde and seyde,

'A, fende, what wolt thou do? And thou were nat my 30 modir, with this swerde I sholde smyte of thyne hedel A,' seyde sir Uwayne, 'men seyde that Merlyon was begotyn of a fende, but I may say an erthely fende bare me.'

'A, fayre son Uwayne, have mercy uppon mel I was tempted with a fende, wherefore I cry the mercy. I woll 35 nevermore do so. And save my worship and discover me nat!'

'On this coveNaunte,' seyde sir Uwayne, 'I woll forgyff you: so ye woll never be aboute to do such dedis.'

'Nay, son, and that I make you assuraunce.'

- (14) Then come tydynges unto Morgan le Fay that Accolon
 5 was dede and his body brought unto the chirche, and how
 kyng Arthure had his swerde ayen. But whan quene
 Morgan wyste that Accolon was dede, she was so sorowfull
 56 that nye hir herte to-braste. But bycause she wolde nat hit
 were knowyn oute, she kepte hir countenaunce and made
 10 no sembelaunte of dole, but welle sche wyste, and she abode
 tyll hir brother Arthure come thydir, there sholde no golde
 go for hir lyff.

Than she wente unto the quene Gwenyvere and askid hir
 leve to ryde into hir contrey.

- 15 'Ye may abyde,' seyde the quene, 'tyll youre brother the
 kynge com home.*

'I may nat, madame,' seyde Morgan le Fay, 'for I have
 suche hasty tydynges.'

'Well,' seyde the quene, 'ye may departe whan ye woll.'

- ao So erely on the morne, or hit was day, she toke hir horse
 and rode all that day and moste party of the nyght, and on the
 morne by none she com to the same abbey of nonnys whereas
 lay kynge Arthure, and she wyste (welle) that he was there.
 And anone she asked where he was, and they answerde and
 25 seyde how he was leyde hym on his bedde to slepe, 'for he
 had but lytyll reste this three nyghtes.'

'Well,' seyde she, 'I charge that none of you awake hym
 tyll I do/

- And than she alyght of hir horse and thought for to
 30 stele away Excaliber, his swerde. And she wente streyte
 unto his chambir, and no man durste disobey hir comaunde-
 ment. And there she found Arthur aslepe on his bedde,
 and Excalyber in his ryght honde naked. Whan she sawe
 that, she was passyng hevy that she myght nat com by the
 35 swer[d]e withoute she had awaked hym, and than she wyste
 welle she had bene dede. So she t[o]ke the scawberde and
 went hir way to horsebak.

9 C oute ward Cf countece naun & 18 C* tydynges that I maye not
 tary 23-4 C* & she knowyng he was there she asked W wyste nat that {see note}
 24-5 and seyde not inC 26 C had had 36 W take 37C* on horsbak

Whan the kynge awoke and myssed his scawberde, he was wroth, and so he asked who had bene there, and they seyde his sister, quene Morgan le Fay, had bene 57 there and had put the scawberde undir hir mantell and is gone. s

'Alas,' seyde Arthure, 'falsly have ye wacched me.'

'Sir,' seyde they all, 'we durst nat disobey your sistyrs commaundement.'

'A,' seyde the kynge, 'lette fecch me the beste horse that may be founde, and bydde sir Outlake arme hym in all hast 10 and take anothir good horse and ryde with me.'

So anone the kynge and sir Outlake were well armyd and rode aftir this lady. And so they com be a crosse and founde a cowherde, and they asked the pore man if there cam ony lady late rydyng that way. 'Sir,' seyde this pore man, 'ryght 15 late com a lady rydyng this way with a fourty horses, and to yonder forest she rode."⁴ And so they folowed faste, and within a whyle Arthur had a syght of Morgan le Fay. Than he chaced as faste as he myght. Whan she aspyed hym folowyng her, she rode a grete pace thorow *o the foreste tyll she com to a playn. And when she sawe she myght nat ascape she rode unto a lake thereby and seyde, 'Whatsoever com of me, my brothir shall nat have this scawberde!' And than she lete throwe the scawberde in the deppyst of the watir. So hit sanke, for hit was hevy of golde 15 and precious stonys. Than she rode into a valey where many grete stonys were, and whan she sawe she muste be overtake, she shope herself, horse and man, by enchauntement unto grete marbyll stonys.

And anone withall come kynge Arthure and sir Outlake 30 whereas the kynge myght know his sistir and her men and one knyght frome another. 'A,' seyde the kynge, 'here may ye se the vengeance of God! And now am I sory this mysaventure is befaller.' And than he loked for the scawberde, but hit wold nat be founde; so he turned to the abbey 35 there she come fro. So whan Arthure was gone they turned all their lyknesse as she and they were before, and seyde, 57*

4-5 C was gone 9 that *not in C* 15 late *not in S* 17 C* (*see note*) with a 3d horses and to yonder forest she rode Thenne they spored their horses and folowed zo C gretter paas 29 C marbyll stonef 31 W myght nat (*see note*)

i Si The Tale of King Arthur [Bk. IV

(i\$) 'Sirs, now may we go where we wyll.'

Than seyde Morgan le Fay, 'Saw ye of Arthure my brother?'

'Yee,' seyde hir men, 'and that ye sholde have founde, and we myght a stered of one stede; for by his amyvestyall
5 countenance [he] wolde have caused us to have fledde.'

'I beleve you/ seyde the quene.

So anone after as she rode she mette a knyght ledynge another knyght on horsebake before hym, bounde hande and foote, blyndefelde, to have drowned hym in a fowntayne.

10 Whan she sawe this knyght so bounde she asked,

'What woll ye do with that knyght?'

'Lady,' seyde he, 'I woll drowne hym.'

'For what cause?' she asked.

'For I founde hym with my wyff, and she shall have the
15 same deth anone.'

'That were pyteV seyde Morgan le Fay. 'Now, what sey ye, knyght? Is hit trouthe that he seyth of you?'

'Nay, truly, madame, he seyth nat ryght on me.'

'Of whens be ye,' seyde the quene, 'and of what contrey?'

to *I am of the courte of kynge Arthure, and my name is Manessen, cosyn unto Accolon of Gaule.'

'Ye sey well, and for the love of hym ye shall be delyverde, and ye shal have youre adversary in the same case that ye were in.'

So this Manessen was loused, and the other kn[y]ght
25 bounde. And anone Manessen unarmed hym and armede hymself in his harneyse, and so mounted on horsebak and the knyght afore hym, and so threw hym in the fountayne and so drowned hym. And than he rode unto Morgan ayen and asked if she wolde onythyng unto Arthure. 'Telle
30 hym,' seyde she, 'that I rescued the nat for the love of hym, but for the love of Accolon, and tell hym I feare hym nat whyle I can make me and myne in lyknesse of stonys, and
58^r lette hym wete I can do much more whan I se my tyme.'

And so she departed into the contrey of Gore, and there
35 was she rychely receyved, and made hir castels and townys strong, for allwey she drad muche kyng Arthure.

4 W we me myght C haue stered 4 C armyuestal {see note} 17-18 C* of yow she said to the knyght that shold be drowned nay truly 21 C Manessen 22 C wel said she and 2 3 C caas ye be in 30 seyde she not in C 32 C me and them that ben with me in 33 much (C moche) not in S

VI

GAWAIN, YWAIN, AND MARHALT

*[Winchester MS., ff. 58^r-70^v{
Caxton. Book IF, chs. i6—29]*

CAXTON'S RUBRICS

- Ch. 16. How the Damoyssel of the Lake saved kynge Arthur from a mantel which sholde have brente hym.
- „ 17. How syr Gawayn and syr Ewayn mette with twelve feyr damoysselles, and how they compleyned on syr Marhaus.*
- „ 18, 19. How syr Marhaws justed with syr Gawayn and syr Ewayn and overthrewe them bothe.
- „ 20. How syr Marhaus, syr Gawayn, and syr Ewayn mette the damoysselles and eche of them toke one.
- „ 21. How a knyght and a dwarf stroof for a lady.
- „ 22. How kyng Pelleas suffred hymself to be taken prysoner by cause he wolde have a syght of his lady.
- „ 23. How syr Gawayn came to the lady Ettard and laye by hyr, and how syr Pelleas fonde them slepyng.
- „ 24. How syr Pelleas loved no more Ettard by the moyan of the Damoyssel of the Lake whom he loved ever after.
- „ 25. How syr Marhaus rode with the damoyssel, and how he came to the duke of the South Marchis.
- „ 26. How syr Marhaus faught wyth the duke and his six sones and made them to yelde them.
- „ 27. How syr Ewayn rode wyth the damoyssel of forty yere of age, and how he gate the prys at tornoyeng.
- „ 28. How syr Ewayn faught with two knyghtes and overcam hem.
- „ 29. How at the yeres ende alle thre knyghtes with theyr thre damoysselles metten at the fontayne.

• C Marhans

WHAN the kynge had well rested hym at the abbey 58^r
he rode unto Camelot and founde his quene and his
barownes ryght glad of his commyng. And whan they herde
of his stronge adventures, as hit is before rehersed, they all
had mervayle of the falsehede of Morgan le Fay. Many \$
knyghtes wysshed^{he} "hir brente. Than come Manessen to
courte and told the kynge of his adventure. 'Well,' seyde
the kyng, 'she is a kynde sister. I shall so be avengid on
hir and I lyve, that all crystendom shall speke of hit.'

So on the morne there cam a damesell on message frome 10
Morgan le Fay to the kynge, and she brought with hir the
rycheste mantell that ever was sene in the courte, for hit
was sette all full of precious stonys as one myght stonde
by another, and therein were the rycheste stonys that ever
the kynge saw. And the damesell seyde, 'Your sister sendyth 15
you this mantell and desyryth that ye sholde take this gyfte
of hir, and what thyng she hath offended she woll amende
hit at your owne plesure.' When the kyng behelde this
mantell hit pleased hym much. He seyde but lytyll.

With that come the Damesell of the Lake unto the kynge 20 (
and seyde, 'Sir, I muste speke with you in prevyteY

'Sey on,' seyde the kynge, 'what ye woll.'

'Sir,' seyde this damesell, 'putt nat uppon you this
mantell tylle ye have sene more, and in no wyse lat hit nat
com on you nother on no knyght of youres tyll ye com- 25
maunde the brynger thereof to putt hit uppon hir.'

'Well,' seyde the kynge, 'hit shall be as you counseyle me.'

And than he seyde unto the damesell that com frome his 58^v
sister, 'Damesell, this mantell that ye have brought me, I
woll se hit uppon you.' 30

'Sir,' she seyde, 'hit woll nat beseme me to were a kynges
garmente.'

'Be my hede,' seyde Arthure, 'ye shall were hit or hit
com on my bak other on ony mannys bak that here is.'

And so the kynge made to putt hit uppon hir. And 35
forthwithall she fell downe deede and never spoke worde
after, and brente to colys.

Than was the kynge wondirly wroth more than he was toforehande, and seyde unto kynge Uryence, 'My sistir, your wyff, is allway aboute to betray me, and welle I wote other ye or my nevewe, your son, is counseyle with hir to have
 5 me distroyed. But as for you,' seyde the kynge unto kynge Uryence, 'I deme nat gretly that ye be of counseyle, for Accolon confessed to me his owne mowthe that she wolde have distroyed you as well as me; therefore y holde you excused. But as for your son sir Uwayne, I holde hym
 10 suspecte. Therefore I charge you, putt hym oute of my courte.' So sir Uwayne was discharged.

And whan sir Gawayne wyste that, he made hym redy to go with hym, 'for whoso banyshyth my cosyn jarmayne shall banyshe me.' So they too departed and rode into a
 15 grete foreste, and so they com unto an abbey of monkys, and there were well logged. Butt whan the kynge wyste that sir Gawayne was departed frome the courte, there was made grete sorowe amonge all the astatis. 'Now,' seyde Gaherys, Gawaynes brother, 'we have loste two good
 20 knyghtes for the love of one.'

So on the morne they herde the masses in the abbey and so rode forth tyll they com to the grete foreste. Than was
 59^r sir Gawayne ware in a valey by a turrette twelve fayre damesels and two knyghtes armed on grete horses, and the
 25 damesels wente to and fro by a tre. And than was sir Gawayne ware how there hynge a whyght shelde on that tre, and ever as the damesels com by hit they spette uppon
 (17) hit and som threwe myre uppon the shelde. Than sir Gawayne and sir Uwayne wente and salewed them, and
 30 asked why they dud that dispyte to the shelde.

'Sir,' seyde the damesels, 'we shall telle you. There is a knyght in this contrey that owyth this whyght shelde, and he is a passyng good man of his hondis, but he hatyth all ladyes and jantyllwomen, and therefore we do all this
 35 dyspyte to that shelde.'

'I shall sey you,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'hit besemyth evyll a good knyght to dispyse all ladyes and jantyllwomen; and peraventure thoughe he hate you he hath som cause, and

6 C of her counceill
 came to a grete

7 C by his own
 38 cause *not in Cf*

22 C they rode forth tyl that they

peraventure he lovyth in som other placis ladyes and jantyll-
women and y(s) belovyd agayne, and he be suche a man of
prouesse as ye speke of. Now, what is his name?*

'Sir,' they seyde, 'his name is sir Marhaus, the kynges son
of Irelande.' 5

'I knowe hym well,' seyde sir Uwayne, 'he is a passynge
good knyght. as ony on lyve, for I sawe hym onys preved
at a justys where many knyghtes were gadird, and that tyme
there myght no man withstonde hym.'

'A,' sayde sir Gawayne, 'damesels, methynke ye ar to 10
blame, for hit is to suppose he that hyng that shelde there
he woll nat be longe therefro, and than may tho knyghtes
macche hym on horsebak. And that is more youre worshyp
than thus to do, for I woll abyde no lenger to se a knyghtes
shelde so dishonoured.' 15

And therewith sir Gawayne and sir Uwayne departed
a lytyll fro them. And than ware they ware where sir
Marhaus com rydyng on a grete horse streyte toward hem. 59^v
And whan the twelve damesels sawe sir Marhaus they fledde
to the turret as they were wylde, that som of hem felle by 10
the way. Than that one of the knyghtes of the towre
dressed his shyld and seyde on hyghe, 'Sir Marhaus,
defende the!' And so they ran togedyrs that the knyght
brake his spere on sir Marhaus, but Marhaus smote hym
so harde that he brake his necke and his horse bak. That t\$
sawe the other knyght of the turret and dressed hym to
Marhaus, that so egerly they mette that this knyght of the
turret was smyte doune, horse and man, dede.

And than sir Marhaus rode unto his shyld and sawe how (18,19)
hit was defoyled, and sayde, 'Of this dispyte of parte I am 30
avenged. But yet for hir love that gaff me this whyght
shelde I shall were the and hange myne where that was.'
And so he honged hit aboute his necke. Than he rode
streite unto sir Gawayne and to sir Uwayne and asked
them what they dud there. They answerde hym and seyde 35
they come frome kynge Arthurs courte for to se adventures.
'Welle,' seyde sir Marhaus, 'here am I redy, an adventures

1 W and & 2 W ye belovyd C| to be loued 7 C ony is on lyue 14 to
do not inC 26 C dressyd hym toward *7 C they mette so egrely to gyders
30-1 C of this despyte I am a parte auengyd But for 3a C * where thow was

knyght that woll fulfyll any adventure that ye woll desyre.' And so departyd frome hem to fecche his raunge.

⁴'Late hym go,' seyde sir Uwayne unto sir Gawayne, 'for he is a passynge good knyght os ony lyvyng. I wolde not
5 be my wylle that ony of us were macched with hym.'

'Nay,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'nat so! Hit were shame to us and he were nat assayed, were he never so good a knyght.'

'Welle,' seyde sir Uwayne, 'I wolle assay hym before you, for I am weyker than ye, and yff he smyte me downe
io than may ye revenge me.'

So thes two knyghtes come togedir with grete raundom,
60^r that sir Uwayne smote sir Marhaus, that his spere braste in pecis on the shelde. And sir Marhaus smote hym so sore that horse and man he bare to the erthe, and hurte
15 sir Uwayne on the lefte syde. Than sir Marhaus turned his horse and rode thidir as he com fro and made hym redy with his spere. Whan sir Gawayne saw that, he dressed his shelde, and than they feautirde their sperys, and they com togedyrs with all the myght of their horses, that eyther
20 knyght smote other so harde in myddis the sheldis. But sir Gawaynes spere brake, but sir Marhaus speare helde, and therewith sir Gawayne and his horse russhed downe to the erthe.

And lyghtly sir Gawayne wan on his feete and pulde oute
*5 his swerde and dressed hym toward sir Marhaus on foote. And sir Marhaus saw that he pulde oute his swerde, and began to com to sir Gawayne on horsebak.

'Sir knyght,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'alyght on foote, or ellis I woll sle thyne horse.'

30 'Gramercy,' sayde sir Marhaus, 'of your jentylnesse! Ye teche me curtesy, for hit is nat commendable one knyght to be on horsebak and the other on foote.'

And therewith sir Marhaus settehis spere agayneatre, and alyght and tyed his horse to a tre, and dressed his shelde,
35 and eyther com unto other egirly and smote togedyrs with hir swerdys, that hir sheldis flew in cantellys, and they bresed their helmys and hawbirkes and woundid eyther other.

4 C ony is lyuyng
they auentryd their speres

16-17 C rode toward Gawayne with his spere

^l% &

24 C Gawayne rose 31-2 C not for one kny3t
to be on foote and the other on horsbak

But sir Gawayne, fro hit was nine of the klok, wexed ever
 strengre and strengre, for by than hit cam to the howre of
 noone he had three tymes his myght encreased. And all this
 aspyed sir Marhaus and had grete wondir how his myght
 encreased. And so they wounded eyther other passyng sore. 5
 So whan hit was 'past noone, and whan it drewe¹ toward
 evynsonge, sir Gawayns strength fyebled and woxe passyng
 faynte, that unnethe he myght dure no lenger, and sir
 Marhaus was than bygger and bygger.

'Sir knyght,' seyde sir Marhaus, 'I have welle felt that 10
 ye ar a passyng goode knyght and a mervaylous man of
 myght as ever I felte ony whyle hit lastyth, and oure quarellys
 ar nat grete, and therefore hit were pyte* to do you hurte, for
 a fele ye ar passyng fyeble.'

'A,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'jantyll knyght, ye say the worde 15
 that I sholde sey.'

And therewith they toke of her helmys and eyther kyssed
 other and there they swore togedyrs eythir to love other as
 brethirne. And sir Marhaus prayde sir Gawayne to lodge
 with hym that nyght. And so they toke their horsis and to
 rode towarde sir Marhaus maner.

And as they rode by the way, 'Sir knyght,' seyde sir
 Gawayne, 'I have mervayle of you, so valyaunte a man as
 ye be of prouesse, that ye love no ladyes and damesels.'

'Sir,' seyde sir Marhaus, 'they name me wrongfully, for *5
 hit be the damesels of the turret that so name me and other
 suche as they be. Now shal I telle you for what cause I
 hate them: for they be sorsseres and inchaunters many of
 them, and be a knyght never so good of his body and as
 full of prouesse as a man may be, they woll make hym a 30
 starke cowerde to have the bettir of hym. And this is the
 pryncipall cause that I hate them. And all good ladyes
 and jantyllwomen, I owghe them my servyse as a knyght
 ought to do.'

i C fro it passed ix 2 by *not in C* %C noone & thrycs his myghte was
 encreaced 5-7 C* sore And thenne whan it was past noone and whan it drewe
 toward euensonge W sore so whan hit was toward evynsonge F (MS. BJf.fr.
 112, f. xgc): Et quant os vint aprea nonne que Gauvain fu auques lasses 21 C
 syr Marhaus hous 23-4 C merueylle that so valyaunt a man as ye be loue no
 ladyes ne damoyseles 25-6 C* wrongfully tho that gyue me that name but wel
 I wote it ben the damoyseles

For, as the booke rehersyth in Freynsch, there was this many knyghtes that overmacched sir Gawayne for all his thryse double myght that he had: sir Launcelot de Lake, sir Trystrams, sir Bors de Gaynes, sir Percivale, sir Pelleas,
 5 sir Marhaus; thes six knyghtes had the bettir of sir Gawayne.

Than within a lytyll whyle they come to sir Marhaus place [which] was in a lytyll pryory, and there they alyght, and ladyes and damesels unarmed them and hastily loked to their hurtes, for they were all three hurte. And so they
 10 had good lodgyng with sir Marhaus and good chere, for whan he wyste that they were kynge Arthurs syster-sonnes he made them all the chere that lay in his power. And so they sojourned there a sevennyght and were well eased of their woundis, and at the laste departed. 'Nay/ sayde sir
 15 Marhaus, 'we woll nat departe so lyghtly, for I woll brynge you thorow the foreste.' So they rode forth all three. And sir Marhaus toke with hym his grettyste spere. And so they rode thorow the foreste, and rode day be day well-nye a seven dayes or they founde ony aventure.

20 So at the laste they com into a grete foreste that was named the contrey and foreste of Arroy, and the contrey is of stronge adventures. 'In this contrey,' seyde Marhaus, 'cam nevir knyght syn hit was crystynde but he founde strange adventures.' And so they rode and cam into a depe
 25 valey full of stonys, and thereby they sawe a fayre streme of watir. Aboven thereby was the hede of the streme, a fayre fountayne, and three damesels syttyng thereby. And than they rode to them and ayther salewed othir. And the eldyst had a garlonde of golde aboute her hede, and she was
 30 three score wyntir of age or more, and hir heyre was whyght undir the garlonde. The secunde damselle was of thirty wyntir of age, wyth a cerclet of golde aboute her hede. The thirde damesel was but fiftene yere of age, and a garlonde of floures aboute hir hede.

35 Whan thes knyghtes had so beholde them they asked hem the cause why they sate at the fountayne. 'We be here,' seyde the damesels, 'for this cause: if we may se ony of arraunte knyghtes to teche hem unto stronge adventures.

7 C* whiche was in 16-18 So they rode forth . . . thorow the foreste *not in C-f*
 (homaoteltuton) aa unotinC\

And ye be three knyghtes adventures and we be three damesels,
and therefore eche one of you muste chose one of us; and
whan ye have done so, we woll lede you unto three hyghe-
wayes, and there eche of you shall chose a way and his
damesell with hym. And this day twelve moneth ye muste 5 61^v
mete here agayne, and God sende you the lyves, and thereto
ye muste plyght your trouth.'

'This is well seyde,' seyde sir Marhaus. 'Now shall (20)
everyche of us chose a damesell.'

'I shall tell you,' seyde sir Uwayne, 'I am yongyst and 10
waykest of you bothe, therefore lette me have the eldyst
damesell, for she hath sene much and can beste helpe me
whan I have nede, for I have moste nede of helpe of you
bothe.'

'Now,' seyde sir Marhaus, 'I woll have the damesell of 15
thirty wyntir age, for she fallyth beste to me.'

'Well,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'I thanke you, for ye have lefte
me the yongyst and the fayryste, and hir is me moste levyste.'

Than every damesell toke hir knyght by the reygne of his
brydyll and brought hem to the three wayes, and there was »o
made promesse to mete at the fountayne that day twelve
monthe and they were lyvyng. And so they kyssed and
departed, and every k[n]yght sette his lady behynde hym.
And sir Uwayne toke the way that lay weste, and sir
Marhaus toke the way that lay sowthe, and sir Gawayne 25
toke the way that lay northe.

Now woll we begyn at sir Gawayne that helde that way
tyll that he com to a fayre maner where dwelled an olde
knyght and a good householder. And there sir Gawayne
asked the knyght if he knewe of any adventures. 'I snail 30
shewe you to-morne,' seyde the knyght, 'mervelos adven-
tures.' So on the morne they rode all in same to the foreste
of adventures tyll they com to a launde, and thereby they
founde a crosse. And as they stood and hoved, there cam
by them the fayreste knyght and the semelyest man that 35
ever they sawe. But he made the grettyst dole that ever man

t C knyghtes that seken auentes	6 C your lyues	n C therfor I wyl
haue	18 C and she is moost leuest to me	31-2 Cf yow somme to
morne sayd the old knyghte and that merueyllous Soo		32 all in tame not
in C	36 C sawe makynge the gretttest	

62^r made. And than he was ware of sir Gawayne and salewed hym, and prayde to God to sende hym muche worshyp.

'As for that,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'gramercy. Also I pray to God sende you honoure and worshyp.'

5 'A,' sayde the knyght, 'I may lay that on syde, for sorow and shame commyth unto me after worshyppe.'

(21) And therewyth he passed unto that one syde of the lawnde, and on that other syde saw sir Gawayne ten knyghtes that hoved and made hem redy with hir sheldis and with hir
10 sperys agaynste that one knyght that cam by sir Gawayne. Than this one knyght feautred a grete spere, and one of the ten knyghtes encountird with hym. But this wofull knyght smote hym so harde that he felle over his horse taylor. So this dolorous knyght served them all, that at the
is leste way he smote downe horse and man, and all he ded with one spere. And so whan they were all ten on foote they wente to the one knyght, and he stode stone-stylesse and suffyrde hem to pulle hym downe of his horse, and bounde hym honde and foote, and tyed hym undir the horse
*o bely, and so led hym with hem.

'A, Jesu,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'this is a dolefull syght to se the yondir knyght so to be entreted. And hit semyth by the knyght that he sufferyth hem to bynde hym so, for he makyth no resistence.'

25 'No,' seyde [his] hoste, 'that is trouthe, for, and he wolde, they all were to weyke for hym.'

'Sir,' seyde the damesell Unto sir Gawayne, 'mesemyth hit were your worshyp to helpe that dolerouse knyght, for methynkes he is one of the beste knyghtes that ever I sawe.'

30 'I wolde do for hym,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'but hit semyth he wolde have no helpe.'

'No,' seyde the damesel, 'methynkes ye have no lyste to helpe hym.'

Thus as they talked they sawe a knyght on the other
62^v 35 syde of the launde all armed save the hede. And on the other syde there com a dwarff on horsebak all armed save the hede, with a grete mowthe and a shorte nose. And whan the dwarff com nyghe he seyde, 'Where is this lady

11 C auentryd a grete spere 26 C to weyke soo to doo hym 31-2 C helpe thenne sayd

sholde mete us here ?' And therewithall she com forth oute of the woode. And than they began to stryve for the lady, for the knyght seyde he wolde have hir.

'Woll we do welle ?' seyde the dwarff. *Yondir is a knyght at the crosse. Lette hit be putt uppon hym, and as he demeth 5 hit, so shall hit be.'

'I woll well,' seyde the knyght.

And so they wente all three unto sir Gawayne and tolde hym wherefore they stroof.

⁴Well, sirres, woll ye putt the mater in myne honde ?* 10

'Ye, sir,' they seyde bothe.

'Now, damesell,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'ye shall stonde betwyxte them bothe, and whethir ye lyste bettir to go to he shall have you.'

And whan she was sette betwene hem bothe she lefte 15 the knyght and went to the dwarff. And than the dwarff toke hir up and wente his way *syngyng*[^] and the knyght wente his way with grete mournyng.

Than com there two knyghtes all armed and cryed on hyght, 'Sir Gawayne, knyght of the courte of kynge Arthure! 20 Make the redy in haste and juste with me!' So they ran togedirs, that eyther felle downe. And than on foote they drew there swerdis and dud full actually. The meanewhyle the other knyght went to the damesell and asked hir why she abode with that knyght, and seyde, 'If ye wolde abyde [^]\$ with me I wolde be your faythefull knyght.'

'And with you woll I be,' seyde the damesell, 'for I may nat fynde in my herte to be with hym, for ryght now here was one knyght that scomfyted ten knyghtes, and at the laste he was cowardly ledde away. And therefore let us 30 two go whyle they fyght.' 63^r

And sir Gawayne fought with that othir knyght longe, but at the laste they accorded bothe. And than the knyght prayde sir Gawayne to lodge with hym that nyght.

So as sir Gawayne wente with this knyght he seyde, 35 'What knyght is he in this contrey that smote downe the ten knyghtes ? For whan he had done so manfully he suffirde hem to bynde hym hande and foote, and so led hym away.'

S Clete vs put it bothe vpon hym loCwelsyrssaidhe nCyethey to of the courte not in C a[^]Cfknyghteandyfye 28 ryght not in C 3 \$C he asked hym

'A,' sayde the knyght, 'that is the beste knyght I trow in the worlde and the moste man of prouesse, and hit is the grettyst pyte* of hym as of ony knyght lyvyng, for he hath be served so as he was this tyme more than ten tymes. And
 5 his name hyght sir Pelleas; and he lovyth a grete lady in this contrey, and hir name is Ettarde. And so whan he loved hir there was cryed in this contrey a grete justis three dayes, and all this knyghtes of this contrey were there and jantyll-women. And who that preved hym the beste knyght sholde
 w have a passyng good "'sward'" and a cerclet of golde, and that cerclet the knyght sholde geff hit to the fayryste lady that was at that justis.

'And this knyght sir Pelleas was far the beste of ony that was there, and there were fyve hondred knyghtes, but there
 15 was nevyr man that ever sir Pelleas met but he stroke hym downe other ellys frome his horse, and every day of three dayes he strake downe twenty knyghtes. And therefore they gaff hym the pryce. And rurthewithall he wente there-as the lady Ettarde was and gaff her the cerclet and seyde
 20 opynly she was the fayreste lady that there was, and that wolde he preve uppon ony knyght that wolde sey nay.
 (22) 'And so he chose hir for his soveraygne lady, and never to love other but her. But she was so prowde that she had
 63^T scorne of hym and seyde she wolde never love hym though
 2s he wolde dye for hir; wherefore all ladyes and jantyllwomen had scorne of hir that she was so prowde, for there were fayrer than she, and there was none that was there but and sir Pelleas wolde have proryrde hem love they wolde have shewed hym the same for his noble prouesse. And so this
 30 knyght promysed Ettarde to folow hir into this contray and nevyr to leve her tyll she loved hym, and thus he is here the moste party nyghe her and logged by a pryory.

'And every weke she sendis knyghtes to fyght with hym, and whan he hath putt hem to the worse, than woll he suffir

2-3 hit is the grettyst pyte" of hym as of any knyght lyvyng, for *not in Cf (homeeoteleuton)*. *F (MS. B.N.fr. 112, f. 24a)*: c'estla greigneur douleur qui soit en ce pais et le chevalier que je plus plains
 4 C was fine more than
 10 C* a passyng good swerd W a passyng goodf *F (MS. B.N.fr. 112, f. 24a)*: le tournoient estoit assemblees en tel maniere que celle qui provee y seroit a plus belle pour loier de sa beaut6 emporterait un cercle d'or qui estoit mis dessus ung glaive au milieu du tournoient

hem wylfully to take hym presonere because he wolde have
 a syght of this lady. And allwayes she doth hym grete
 dispyte, for somtyme she makyth his knyghtes to tye hym
 to his horse taye, and somtyme bynde hym undir the horse
 bealy. Thus in the moste shamfyllyste wyse that she can
 thynke he is brought to hir, and all she doth hit for to
 cawse hym to leve this contrey and to leve his lovyng. But
 all this cannat make hym to leve, for, and he wolae a fought
 on foote, he myght have had the bettir of the ten knyghtes
 as well on foote as on horsebak.' 10

'Alas,' sayde sir Gawayne, 'hit is grete pyte of hym, and
 aftir this nyght I woll seke hym to-morow in this foreste to
 do hym all the helpe I can/'

So on the morow sir Gawayne toke his leve of his oste,
 sir Carados, and rode into the foreste. And at the laste he 15
 mette with sir Pelleas makynge grete mone oute of mesure;
 so eche of hem salewed other, and asked hym why he made
 such sorow. And as hit above rehersyth sir Pelleas tolde
 sir Gawayne. 'But allwayes I suffir her knyghtes to fare 64^r
 so with me as ye sawe yestirday, in truste at the laste to *^o
 wyne hir love; for she knoweth well all hir knyghtes sholde
 nat lyghtly wyne me and me lyste to fyght with them to
 the uttirmoste. Wherefore and I loved hir nat so sore I had
 lever dye an hondred tymes, and I myght dye so ofte rathir
 than I wolde suffir that dispyte, but I truste she woll have *5
 pyte* uppon me at the laste; for love causyth many a good
 knyght to suffir to have his entente, but alas,-1 am infor-
 tunateP And therewith he made so grete dole that unnethe
 he myght holde hym on his horse bak.

'Now,' sayde sir Gawayne, 'leve your mournynge, and 30
 I shall promyse you by the feyth of my body to do all that
 lyeth in my powere to gete you the love of your lady, and
 thereto I woll plyghte you my trouthe.'

'A,' seyd sir Pelleas, 'of what courte ar ye?'

'Sir, I am of the courte of kynge Arthure, and his sistir- 35
 son, and kynge Lotte of Orkeney was my fadir, and my
 name is sir Gawayne.'

4 C some to byndf 29 his *not in C* 34-5 C* are ye telle me I praye yow
 my good frend And thenne syr gawayne sayd I am 37-p.i.<>8,1 C Gawayne
 And thenne he sayd my name

'And my name is sir Pelleas, born in the lies, and of many iles I am lorde, and never loved I lady nother damesel tyll nowe. And, sir knyght, syn ye ar so nye cosyn unto kyng Arthure and ar a kynges son, therefore betray me nat,
 5 but help me, for I may nevyr com by hir but by some good knyght, for she is in a stronge castell here faste by, within this four myle, and over all this contrey she is lady off.

'And so I may never com to hir presence but as I suffir hir knyghtes to take me, and but if I ded so that I myght
 io have a syght of hir, I had bene dede longe ar this tyme. And yet fayre worde had I never none of hir. But whan I am brought tofore hir she rebukyth me in the fowlyst maner; and than they take me my horse and harneyse and puttyth me oute of the yatis, and she woll nat suffir me to ete
 15 nother drynke. And allwayes I offir me to be her presoner,
 64^v but that woll she nat suffir me, for I wolde desire no more, what paynes that ever I had, so that I myght have a syght of hir dayly.'

'Well,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'all this shall I amende, and
 20 ye woll do as I shall devyse. I woll have your armoure, and so woll I ryde unto hir castell and tell hir that I have slayne you, and so shall I come within hir to cause hir to cheryshe me. And than shall I do my trew parte, that ye shall nat
 (23) fayle to have the love of hir.' And there, whan sir Gawayne
 25 plyght his trouthe unto sir Pelleas to be trew and feythfull unto hym, so eche one plyght their trouthe to other, and so they chonged horse and harneyse.

And sir Gawayne departed and com to the castel where stood hir pavylyons withoute the gate. And as sone as
 30 Ettarde had aspyed sir Gawayne she fledde in toward the castell. But sir Gawayne spake on hyght and bade hir abyde, for he was nat sir Pelleas.

'I am another knyght that have slayne sir Pelleas.'

'Than do of your helme,' seyde the lady Ettarde, 'that
 35 I may se your vysage.'

So whan she saw that hit was nat sir Pelleas she made hym alyght and lad hym into hir castell, and asked hym

3 C now in an vnhappy tyme and
 13 me *not in C*
 there with syr

14 C putten

31 But *not in C*

4 ar *not in C*

20 C your hors and your armour

34 Than *not in C*

11 none *not in C*

24 C

feythfully whethir he had slayne sir Pelleas, and he seyde yee. Than he tolde hir his name was sir Gawayne, of the courte of kynge Arthure and his sistyrs son, and how he had slayne sir Pelleas. 'Truly,' seyde she, 'that is grete pyte* for he was a passynge good knyght of his body.' But of all 5 men on lyve I hated hym moste, for I coude never be quytte of hym. And for ye have slayne hym I shall be your woman and to do onythyng that may please you.' So she made sir Gawayne good chere.

Than sir Gawayne sayde that he loved a lady and by no xo meane she wolde love hym.

'Sche is to blame,' seyde Ettarde, 'and she woll nat love you, for ye that be so well-borne a man and suche a man of prouesse, there is no lady in this worlde to good for you.' 65^r

'Woll ye,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'promyse me to do what 15 that ye may do be the fayth of your body to gete me the love of my lady?'

'Yee, sir, and that I promyse you be my fayth.'

'Now,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'hit is yourself that I love so well; therefore holde your promyse.' 20

'I may nat chese,' seyde the lady Ettarde, 'but if I sholde be forsworne.'

And so she graunted hym to fulfyllle all his desyre.

So it was in the monthe of May that she and sir Gawayne wente oute of the castell and sowped in a pavylyon, and there 25 was made a bedde, and there sir Gawayne and Ettarde wente to bedde togedyrs. And in another pavylyon she leyde hir damesels, and in the thirde pavylyon she leyde parte of hir knyghtes, for than she had no drede of sir Pelleas. And there sir Gawayne lay with hir in the pavylyon two dayes 30 and two nyghtes. And on the thirde day on the morne erly sir Pelleas armed hym, for he hadde never slepte syn sir Gawayne promysed hym by the feythe of his body to com to hym unto his pavylyon by the pryory within the space of a day and a nyght. Than sir Pelleas mounted uppon 35 horsebak and com to the pavylyons that stood withoute the

3-4 and how he had slayne sir Pelleas *not in Cf* 8 C that myghte 18 Cye
 syre sayd she and that I promyse yow by the feythe of my body 24 C was
 thenne in 26 C the lady Ettard 32-3 C* syn syr Gawayn departed from
 hym for syr Gawayne had promysed hym (*homaoteleuton in W?*)

castell, and founde in the fyrste pavylyon three knyghtes
 in three beddis, and three squyres lyggyng at their feete.
 Than wente he to the secunde pavylyon and founde four
 jantyllwomen *lyggyng* in four beddis. And than he yode
 5 to the thirde pavylyon and founde sir Gawayne *fyggyng* in
 the bed with his lady Ettarde and aythir clyppynge other
 in armys. And whan he sawe that, his hert well-nyghe
 braste for sorow, and sayde, 'Alas, that ever a knyght sholde
 be founde so false!' And than he toke his horse and myght
 10 nat abyde no lenger for pure sorow, and whan he had ryden
 65^v nyghe half a myle he turned agayne and thought for to sle
 hem bothe. And whan he saw hem lye so bothe slepyng
 faste that unnethe he myght holde hym on horsebak for
 sorow, and seyde thus to hymself: 'Though this knyght be
 15 never so false, I woll never sle hym slepyng, for I woll never
 dystroy the hyghe Ordre of Knyghthode,' and therewith he
 departed agayne. And or he had rydden half a myle he
 returned agayne and thought than to sle hem bothe,
 makynge the grettyst sorow that ever man made. And whan
 20 he come to the pavylyons he tyed his horse to a tre and
 pulled oute his swerde naked in his honde and wente to
 them thereas they lay. And yet he thought shame to sle
 hem, and leyde the naked swerde overthawrte bothe their
 throtis, and so toke his horse and rode his way.
 25 And whan sir Pelleas com to his pavylyons he tolde his
 knyghtes and his squyers how he had spedde, and seyde thus
 unto them: 'For youre good and true servyse ye have done
 me I shall gyff you all my goodes, for I woll go unto my
 bedde and never aryse tyll I be dede. And whan that I am
 30 dede, I charge you that ye take the herte oute of my body
 and bere hit her betwyxte two sylver dysshes and telle her
 how I sawe hir lye wyth that false knyght sir Gawayne.'
 Ryght so sir Pelleas unarmed hymself and wente unto his
 bedde makynge mervylous dole and sorow.
 35 Than sir Gawayne and Ettarde awoke of her slepe and
 founde the naked swerd overthawrte their throtis. Than
 she knew hit was the swerde of sir Pelleas. 'AlasP she

12 C sawe hem bothe soo lye slepyng
 slepyng

24 C waye S awaye

14 C thus S then

29 CI am dede

22-3 C slee them

37 C knewe wel

37-p. 171,4c* syr Pelleas swerd Alias sayd she to sir Gawayne ye haue bitrayed

Bk IV] *Gawain, Ywain, and Marhalt* 171

seyde, 'Sir Gawayne, ye have betrayde sir Pelleas and me,
'for you told me you had slayne hym, and now I know wel
it is not soo: he is on lyve. But had he bene so uncurteyse
unto you as ye have bene to hym, ye had bene a dede knyght.
But ye have dissayved me, that all ladyes and damesels may 5
beware be you and me.' And therewith sir Gawayne made
hym redy and wente into the foreste. 66^r

So hit happed the Damesell of the Lake, Nynyve, mette
with a knyght of sir Pelleas that wente on his foote in this
foreste makynge grete doole, and she asked hym the cause; 10
and so the wofull knyght tolde her all how his mayster and
lorde was betrayed thorow a knyght and a lady, and how
he woll never aryse oute of his bedde tyll he be dede.
'Brynge me to hym,' seyde she anone, 'and y woll waraunte
his lyfe. He shall nat dye for love, and she that hath caused »5
hym so to love she shall be in as evylle plyte as he is or hit
be longe to, for hit is no joy of suche a proude lady that woll
nat have no mercy of suche a valyaunte knyght.'

Anone that knyght broute hir unto hym, and whan she
sye hym lye on his bedde she thought she sawe never so 20
lykly a knyght. And therewith she threw an enchaunte-
ment uppon hym, and he fell on slepe. And than she rode
unto the lady Ettarde and charged that no man scholde
awake hym tyll she come agayne.

So within two owres she brought the lady Ettarde thidir, 25
and bothe the ladyes founde hym on slepe. 'Loo,' seyde the
Damesell of the Lake, 'ye oighte to be ashamed for to
murther suche a knyght,' and therewith she threw such an
inchauntemente uppon hir that she loved hym so sore that
well-nyghe she was nere oute of hir mynde. 30

'A, Lorde Jesu,' seyde this lady Ettarde, 'how is hit
befallyn unto me that I love now that I have hatyd moste
of ony man on lyve?'

'That is the ryghteouse jugemente of God,' seyde the
damesell. 35

me and syr Pelleas bothe for ye told me ye had slayne hym and now I knowe wel
it is not soo he is on lyue And yf syre Pelleas had ben as uncurteis to yow *F* (MS.
B.N.fr. 112, 27c): vous me faisilsentendant que vous aviez Pellias occis, mez non
avez, car ce est il qui ceans a est6 5 C* deceyued me and bytrayd me falsly that
8 C Nymue 20 C lye in 22 C And ther whyle she 29 so *not in Cf*
30 nere *not in C* 32 C now hym that 34 C ryght wys Iugement

And than anone sir Pelleas awaked and loked uppon **Ettarde**, and wha[n] he saw hir he knew her, and than he hated hir more than ony woman on lyve, and seyde, 'Away,
 66^y traytours, and com never in my syght!' And whan she
 5 herde hym sey so she wepte and made grete sorow oute of mynde.

(24) 'Sir knyght Pelleas,' seyde the Damesel of the Lake, 'take your horse and com forth withoute of this contrey, and ye shall love a lady that woll love you.'

10 *I woll well,' seyde sir Pelleas, 'for this lady Ettarde hath done me grete dispyte and shame;' and there he tolde hir the begynnyng and endyng, and how he had never purposed to have rysen agayne tyll he had bene dede. 'And now suche grace God hath sente me that I hate hir as much as I have
 15 loved hir.'

'Thanke me therefore,' seyde the Lady of the Lake.

Anone sir Pelleas armed hym and toke his horse and commaunded his men to brynge aftir his pavylyons and his stuffe where the Lady of the Lake wolde assyngne them. So
 20 this lady Ettarde dyed for sorow, and the Damesel of the Lake rejoysed sir Pelleas, and loved togedyrs duryng their lyfe.

(25) Now turne we unto sir Marhaute that rode with the damesel of thirty wynter of ayge southwarde. And so they
 25 come into a depe foreste, and by fortune they were nyghted and rode longe in a depe way, and at the laste they com unto a courtlage and there they asked herborow. But the man of the courtlage wolde nat logge them for no tetryse that they coulde trete, but this much the good man seyde: 'And
 30 ye woll take the adventure of youre herbourage, I shall bryng you there ye may be herbourde.'

'What aventure is that I shall have for my herborow?' seyde sir Marhaute.

'Ye shall wete whan ye com there,' seyde the good man.
 35 'Sir, what aventure so hit be, I pray the to brynge me thidir, for I am wery, my damesel and my horse both.'

5-6 *C* oute of mesure*

19 them *not in C*

lodgyng

me thyder

I pray the sayd syr Marhaus for

16 therefore *not in C*

zz *C* lyf dayes

31 Cyeshallebelodged

32 Cmylodgyng

36 both *not in C*

C damoyssel of the lake

29 *C* thus moche

30 *C* youre

35-6 *C* be bryng

So the good man wente uppon his gate before hym in
a lane, and within an houre he brought hym untyll a fayre
castell. And than the pore man called the porter, and anone 67^r
he was lette into the castell. And so he tolde the lorde how
he had brought hym a knyght arraunte and a damesell 5
wolde be lodged with hym. 'Lette hym in,' seyde the lorde,
'for hit may happen, he shall repente that they toke theire
herborow here.' So sir Marhaute was let in with a torche-
lyght, and there was a grete syght of goodly men that
welcomed hym; and than his horse was lad into a stable, 10
and he and the damesel were brought into the halle, and
there stode a myghty duke and many goodly men aboute
hym. Than this duke asked hym what he hyght, and fro
whens he com, and with whom he dwelte.

'Sir,' he seyde, 'I am a knyght of kynge Arthurs and 15
knyght of the Table Rounde, and my name is sir Marhaute,
and borne I was in Irelande.'

'That me repentes,' seyde the duke, 'for I love nat thy
lorde nother none of thy felowys of the Table Rounde. And
therefore ease thyself this nyght as well as thou mayste, 20
for as to-morne I and my six sonnes shall macch with
you.'

'Is there no remedy,' seyde sir Marhaute, 'but that I
must have ado with you and your six sunnes at onys?'

'No,' seyde the duke, 'for this cause, I made myne avowe, 25
for sir Gawayne slew my sevynt sonne in a recountre,
therefore I made myne avow that there sholde never
knyght of kynge Arthurs courte lodge with me or com
thereas I myght have ado with hym but I wolde revenge me
of my sonnes deth.' 30

'What is your name?' sayde sir Marhaute, 'I requyre you
telle me, and hit please you.'

'Wete thou well I am the duke of Southe Marchis.'

'AT seyde sir Marhaute, 'I have herde seyde that ye
have bene longe tyme a grete foo unto my lorde Arthure 35
and unto his knyghtes.'

1-2 Cf wente and opened the gate and within (see note)	7-8 C their lodgyng
9 C was a goodely syghte	15 C Kynge Nrthurs
thenne sayd the duke to hym that me sore repenteth the cause is this for	17-18 C Irland And
seuen sonnes	26 Cf
29-30 C wold haue a reuengyng of my	34 C herd saye

'That shall ye fele to-morne,' seyde the duke, 'and ye leve so longe.'

67^v 'Shall I have ado with you?' seyde sir Marhaute.

'Ye,' seyde the duke, 'thereof shalt thou not chose. And
5 therefore let take hym to his chambir and lette hym have all that tyll hym longis.' So sir Marhaute departed and was led unto his chambir, and his damesel was led in tyll hir chambir.

And on the morne the duke sente unto sir Marhaute and bade hym make hym redy. And so sir Marhaute arose and
10 armed hym. And than there was a masse songe afore hym, and brake his faste, and so mounted on horsebak in the courte of the castell there they sholde do batayle. So there was the deuke all redy on horsebak and clene armed, and his six sonnys by hym, and everyche had a spere in his
15 honde. And so they encountirde whereas the deuke and his sonnys brake her sperys uppon hym, but sir Marhaute hylde up his spere and touched none of hem.

(26) Than come the four sonnes by couple, and two of them brake their sperys, and so dud the other two. And all this
20 whyle sir Marhaute towched hem nat. Than sir Marhaute ran to the deuke and smote hym downe with his speare, that horse and man felle to the erthe, and so he served his sonnes. Than sir Marhaute alyght downe and bade the deuke yelde hym, other he wolde sle hym. Than som of his sonnes
25 recovirde and wolde have sette uppon sir Marhaute. Than sir Marhaute seyde, 'Sir deuke, cese thy sonnys, and ellys I woll do the uttirmust to you all.' Than the deuke sye he myght nat ascape the deth, he cryed to his sonnes and charged them to yelde them to sir Marhaute, and than they
30 kneled alle adowne and putt the pomels of their swerdis to the knyght, and so he receyvid them; and than they hove up their fadir on his feete. And so by their comunal assent promysed to sir Marhaute never to be fooys unto kynge Arthure, and thereuppon at Whytsonday next aftir to com,
35 he and his sonnes, and there to putt them in the kynges
68^r grace. Then sir Marhaute departed.

1-2 and ye leve so longe *not in Cf* 5-6 C therfore take yow to your chambre
and ye shalle haue all that to yow longeth 7 C to a chamber C
vnto her chamber 12 W of of 21 downe *not in C* 26 C sayd to
the duke sease thy **sones** or **els** 31 W **and & so** 31-2 C they halp **vp**
their fader and soo by their comynal 34 **next not in C**

And within two dayes sir Marhautes damesel brought hym whereas was a grete turnemente that the lady Vawse had cryed, and who that dud beste sholde have a ryche cerclet of golde worth a thousand besauntis. And there sir Marhaute dud so nobely that he was renomed, and had 5 smeten doune forty knyghtes, and so the cerclet of golde was rewarded hym. Than he departed thens with grete honoure.

And so within sevennyght his damesel brought hym to an erlys place. His name was the erle Fergus that aftir was sir Trystrams knyght, and this erle was but a yonge man 10 and late com to his londis, and there was a gyaunte faste by hym that hyght Taulurd, and he had another brother in Cornuayle that hyght Taulas that sir Trystram slewe whan he was oute of his mynde. So this erle made his complaynte unto sir Marhaute that there was a gyaunte by hym that 15 destroyed all his londis and how he durste nowhere ryde nother go for hym.

'Sir,' seyde he, 'whether usyth he to fyght on horsebak othir on foote?'

'Nay/ seyde the erle, 'there may no horse bere hym.' 20

'Well,' seyde sir Marhaute, 'than woll I fyght with hym on foote.'

So on the morne sir Marhaute prayde the erle that one of his men myght brynge hym where the gyaunte was, and so one brought hym where he syghe hym sytte undir 25 a tre of hooly, and many clubbis of ironne and gysernes aboute hym. So this knyght dressed hym to the gyaunte and put his shylde before hym, and the gyaunte toke an ironne club in his honde, and at the fyrste stroke he clave syr Marhautis shelde. And there he was in grete perell, 30 for the gyaunte was a sly fyghter. But at the laste sir Marhaute smote of his ryght arme aboven the elbow. Than the gyaunte fledde and the knyght affter hym, and so he drove hym into a watir; but the gyaunte was so hyghe that 68 he myght nat wade aftir hym. And than sir Marhaute 35 made the erle Fergus man to fecche hym stonys, and with th[o] stonys the knyght gave the gyaunte many sore strokis

1 C his damoyssel 2 C de Vawse 5-6 C had somtyme fdoune 7 Cgrete worship
18 C sayd the knyghte 25 C and so he was for he saw hym 26 C gysarms
30 C* shelde in iipyeces And 31 Cawyly fyghter 37 XT that Cioreknockes

tylle at the laste he made hym falle downe in the watir, and so was he there dede.

Than sir Marhalte wente into the gyauntes castell, and there he delyverde four-and-twenty knyghtes oute of the
 5 gyauntes preson and twelve ladyes; and there he had grete rychesse oute of numbir, that dayes of his lyff he was nevyr poore man. Than he returned to the erle Fergus, the whyche thanked hym gretly and wolde have yevyn hym half his londys, but he wolde none take. So sir Marhaute dwellid
 10 with the erle nye half a yere, for he was sore brused with the gyaunte. So at the laste he toke his leve, and as he rode by the way with his damysel he mette with sir Gawayne and wyth sir Uwayne.

So by adventure he mette with four knyghtes of Arthurs
 15 courte: the fyrst was sir Sagramour le Desyrus, sir Ozanna le Cure Hardy, sir Dodynas le Saveage, and sir Felotte of Lystynoyse; and there sir Marhaute with one spere smote downe these four knyghtes and hurte them sore. And so departed to mete at his day.

(27) 20 Now turne we unto sir Uwayne that rode westwarde with his damesell of three score wyntir of ayge. And there was a turnemente nyghe the marche of Walys, and at that turnemente sir Uwayne smote doune thirty knyghtes. Therefore was gyffyn hym the pryce, and that was a
 25 jarfaucon and a whyght stede trapped with cloth of golde.

So than sir Uwayne ded many strange adventures by the
 69^r meanys of the olde damesel, and so she brought [hym] to a lady that was called the Lady of the Roch, the whyche was curtayse.

So there was in that contrey two knyghtes that were
 30 brethirne, and they were called two perelous knyghtes: that one hyght sir Edwarde of the Rede Castell, and that other sir Hew of the Rede Castell, and these two brethirne had disheryted the Lady of the Roche of a barounery of londis by their extorsion. And as this knyghte was lodged with
 35 this lady, she made hir complaynte to hym of thes two knyghtes.

4-5 C xxiiii ladyes and twelue kny3tes oute of the gyants pryson 16 le cure
 hardy not in C C syre felot 19 C day afore sette 21-2 C and she
 broughte hym there as was a turnement 25 C gerfaukon 27 W olde olde
 29 C there were in the countrey 32 C syr Hue

'Madam,¹ seyde sir Uwayne, 'they ar to blame, for they do ayenste the hyghe Order of Knyghthode and the oth that they made. And if hit lyke you I woll speke with hem, because I am a knyght of kyng Arthurs, and to entrete them with fayrenesse; and if they woll nat, I shall do batayle 5 with them for Goddis sake and in the defence of your ryght.'

'Gramercy,' seyde the lady, 'and thereas I may nat acquyte you, God shall.'

So on the morne the two knyghtes were sente fore, that they sholde speke with the Lady of the Roche, and wete 10 you well they fayled nat, for they com with an hondred horses. But whan this lady sawe them in suche maner so bygge she wolde nat suffir sir Uwayne to go oute to them uppon no surete* ne of fayre langage, but she made hym to speke with them over a toure. But fynally thes two brethirne 15 wolde nat be entreted, and answerde that they wolde kepe that they had.

'Well,' seyde syr Uwayne, 'than woll I fyght with one of you and preve that ye do this lady wronge.'

'That woll we nat,' seyde they, 'for and we do batayle 20 we two woll fyght bothe at onys with one knyght. And therefore, yf ye lyst to fyght so, we woll be redy at what oure ye woll assygne, and yf ye wyne us in batayle, she 69^v to have hir londis agayne.'

'Ye say well,' seyde sir Uwayne, 'therefore make you 25 redy, and that ye be here to-morne in the defence of this ladyes ryght.'

So was there sykernesse made on bothe partyes, that no (28) treson sholde be wrought. And so thes knyghtes departed and made them redy. 30

And that nyght sir Uwayne had grete chere, and on the morne he arose erly and harde masse and brake his faste, and so rode into the playne withoute the gatis where hoved the two brethirne abydyng hym. So they ran togedyrs passyng sore, that sir Edward and sir Hew brake their 35 sperys uppon sir Uwayne, and sir Uwayne smote sir

6 for Goddis sake *not in C* xo C shold come thyder to speke 12 C this
maner 14 C ne for no fayr 21 C fyght with one kny3t at ones 22 C
yf ye wille fyghte 23-4 C bataille the lady shal haue 29 C wrought on
neyther partye soo thenne the knyghtes 34 C they rode f

Edwarde, that he felle over his horse and yette his spere
braste nat. And than he spurred his horse and com uppon
sir Hew and overthrew hym. But they sone recoverde and
dressed their shyldes and drew oute their swerdes, and bade
5 sir Uwayne alyght and do his batayle to the utteraunce.

Than sir Uwayne devoyded his horse delyverly and put
his shyld before hym and drew his swerde, and so they
threste togedyrs and eythir gave other grate strokis. And
there thes two brethirne wounded sir Uwayne passyng
io grevously, that the Lady of the Roche wente he sholde have
deyed. And thus they fought togedyrs fyve oures as men
outraged of reson, and at the laste sir Uwayne smote sir
Edwarde uppon the helme suche a stroke that his swerde
kerved unto his canellbone; and than sir Hew abated his
15 corrage, but sir Uwayne presed faste to have slayne hym.
That saw sir Hew and kneled adowne and yelded hym to
sir Uwayne, and he of his jantylnesse resceyved his swerde
and toke hym by the honde, and wente into the castell
togedyrs.

20 Than this Lady of the Roche was passyng glad, and sir
Hew made grete sorow for his brothirs deth. But this lady
70^r was restored ayen of all hir londis, and sir Hew was com-
maunded to be at the courte of kynge Arthure at the next
feste of Pentecoste. So sir Uwayne dwelled with this lady
25 nyghe halfe a yere, for hit was longe or he myght be hole
of his grete hurtis. And so, whan hit drew nyghe the terme-
day that sir Gawayne, sir Marhaute and sir Uwayne made
to mete at the crosseway, than every knyght drew hym
thydir to holde his promyse that they made. And sir
30 Marhalte and sir Uwayne brought their damesels with hem,
but sir Gawayne had loste his damesel,

(29) Ryght so at the twelve monthis ende they mette all three
knyghtes at the fountayne and their damesels, but the
damesell that sir Gawayne had coude sey but lytyll worshyp
35 of hym. So they departed frome the damesels and rode
thorowe a grete foreste, and there they mette with a mes-

5 C to the vttermest 6 C hors sodenly 7-8 C they dressyd 8 C suche
strokesf 11-12 C men raged oute of W men outraged of of 16 C Hue
he kneled 20-1 C and the other broder made 21 C dethe thenne the lady
27-8 C Vwayne shold mete 29 C had made 31 C damoyssel as it is afore
reherced

syngere that com from kynge Arthurs courte that had sought hem well-nyghe a twelve-monthe thorowoute all Ingelonde, Walis, and Scotlonde, and charged yf ever he myght fynde sir Gawayne and sir Uwayne to haste hem unto the courte agayne. And than were they all glad, and 5 so they prayde sir Marhaute to ryde with hem to the kynges courte.

And so within twelve dayes they come to Camelot, and the kynge was passyng glad of their commyng, and so was all the courte. Than the kynge made hem to swere uppon 10 a booke to telle hym all their adventures that had befallē them that twelve-monthe before, and so they ded. And there was sir Marhaute well knowyn, for there were knyghtes that he had macched aforetyme, and he was named one of the beste knyghtes lyvyng. 15

So agayne the feste of Pentecoste cam the Damesell of the Laake and brought with hir sir Pelleas, and at the hyghe feste there was grete joustys. Of all knyghtes that were at that justis sir Pelleas had the pryce and syr Marhaute was named next. But sir Pelleas was so stronge that there 20 myght but few knyghtes stonde hym a buffette with a spere. And at the next feste sir Pelleas and sir Marhalt were made knyghtes of the Rounde Table; for there were two segis voyde, for two knyghtes were slayne that twelve-monthe. 25

And grete joy had kynge Arthure of sir Pelleas and of sir Marhalte, but Pelleas loved never after sir Gawayne but as he spared hym for the love of the kynge; but oftyn- tymes at justis and at turnementes sir Pelleas quytte sir Gawayne, for so hit rehersyth in the booke of Frensh. 30

So sir Trystrams many dayes aftir fought with sir Marhaute in an ilande. And there they dud a grete batayle, but the laste sir Trystrams slew hym. So sir Trystrams was so wounded that unnethe he myght recover, and lay at a nunrye half a yere. 35

And sir Pelleas was a worshypfull knyght, and was one of the four that encheved the Sankgreal. And the Damesel of

1-2 C kynge Arthur that had sought (had <i>not in S</i>)	4 C to brynge hem
12 before <i>not in C</i>	13 W Marhaute was well
knyghtes and of al knyghtes that	18 C grete Iustynge of
28 C of kyng arthur	21 C sytte hym
33 C at the last*	23 C table roOd

the Laake made by her meanes that never he had ado with
 sir Launcelot de Laake, for where sir Launcelot was at
 ony justis or at ony turnemente she wolde not suffir hym
 to be there that day but yf hit were on the syde of sir
 5 Launcelot.

HERE ENDYTH THIS TALE, AS THE FREYNSHE BOOKE SEYTH,
 FRO THE MARYAGE OF KYNGE U THER UNTO KYNG ARTHURE
 THAT REGNED AFTIR HYM AND DED MANY BATAYLES.

AND THIS BOOKE ENDYTH WHEREAS SIR LAUNCELOT AND
 10 SIR TRYSTRAMS COM TO COURTE. WHO THAT WOLL MAKE ONY
 MORE LETTE HYM SEKE OTHER BOOKIS OF KYNGE ARTHURE OR
 OF SIR LAUNCELOT OR SIR TRYSTRAMS ; FOR THIS WAS DRAWYN
 BY A KNYGHT PRESONER, SIR THOMAS MALLEORRE^ THAT G o D
 SENDE HYM GOOD RECOVER. AMEN.

15

EXPLICIT.

5-15 C launcelot Explicit liber quart us *The colophon {from Here endyth to
 Amen) is not in Cf* 14 W Amen Sec.

THE TALE
OF THE
NOBLE KING ARTHUR
THAT WAS EMPEROR HIMSELF
THROUGH DIGNITY OF
HIS HANDS

*[Winchester MS., ff. 71^r-96^r;
Caxton, Book V"]*

CAXTON'S RUBRICS

- i. How twelve aged Ambassaytours of Rome came to kyng Arthur to demaunde truage for Brytayne.
2. How the kynges and lordes promysed to kyng Arthur ayde **and** helpe ageynst the Romainys.
3. How kyng Arthur helde a parlement at Yorke and how he ordeyned how the royame shold be governed in his absence.
4. How kyng Arthur beyng shyped and lyeng in his caban had a mervayllous dreame, and of th'exposycion therof.
5. How a man of the contreye tolde to hym of a mervayllous geaunte, and how he faught and conquerd hym.
6. How kyng Arthur sente syr Gawayn and other to Lucius and how they were assayled and escaped wyth worshyp.
7. How Lucius sente certeyn espyes in a busschement for to have taken hys knyghtes beyng prysonners, and how they were letted.
8. How a senatour tolde to Lucius of their dyscomfytur, and also of the grete batayl betwene Arthur and Lucius.
9. How Arthur after he had achyevyd the batayl ayenst the Romainys entred into Almayn and so into Ytalye.
10. Of a bataylle doon by Gauwayn ayenst a Sarasyn whiche after was yelden and became Crysten.
11. How the Sarasyns came oute of a wode for to rescowe theyr beestys, and of a grete bataylle.
12. How syr Gauwayn retorned to kyng Arthur wyth his prysoners. And how the kyng wanne a cyty, and how he was crowned Emperour.

*The text in small type is a reprint of Caxton¹ s Book V, and Caxton*s chapter-numbers are given in round brackets in the margin. Asterisks denote variants which are confirmed by earlier texts.*

In the critical text, based here as elsewhere on the Winchester MS,, the following symbols are used: 'for alliterating lines; for readings supplied by Caxton and attested by at least one of the earlier texts; [] for emendations based on Caxton; and < > for all other emendations. Rejected readings are given in footnotes.

The line-numbers in square brackets refer to the unique surviving copy of the alliterative Morte Arthure (MA),

HYTBELLE whan kyng Arthur had wedded quene 71*
 Gwenyvere and fulfilled the Rounde Table, and so [MA26]
 aftir his mervelous knyghtis and he had venquyshed the
 moste party of his enemyes, than sone aftir com sir Launcelot
 de Lake unto the courte, and sir Trystrams come that tyme 5
 also, and than ^rkyng Arthur helde a ryal feeste and Table
 Rounde"¹.

So hit befelle that the Emperour Lucius, Trocurour of [78]
 the publyke wele of Rome¹, sente unto Arthure messyngers
 commaundyng hym to pay his trewage that his auncet- 10
 tryes have payde before hym. Whan kyng Arthure wyste
 what they mente he loked up with his gray yghen and angred
 at the messyngers passyng sore. Than were this messyngers
 aferde and knelyd styll and durste nat aryse, they were so
 aferde of his grymme countenaunce. 15

Than one of the knyghtes messyngers spake alowde and [124]
 seyde, 'Crowned kyng, myssedo no messyngers, for we
 be com at his commaundemente, as servytures sholde.'

Than spake the Conquerroure, 'Thou recrayedest coward

CWHanne kyng Arthur had after longe werre rested and helde a (1)

VV Ryal feeste and table rounde* {MA 74: thus on ryall araye he
 helde his rounde table) with his alyes of kynges prynces and noble
 knyghtes all of the round table there cam in to his halle he syttyng
 in his throne Ryal xij aucyen men berynge eche of them a braunche 5
 of Olyue in token that they cam as Embassatours* (*Geoffrey* 247
 'ecce duodecim viri maturae aetatis, reverendi vultus, ramos olivae
 in signum legationis in dextris ferentes') *Wace* 115-16 'Es vous douse
 homes blans, quenus, Bien atornes et bien vestus ... Douse estoient,
 et douse rains D'olive portent en lor mains'; *Huth Merlin* 180 'Es 10
 vous par laiens entrer douze hommes qui tout estoient vestu de blanc
 samit. Et estoient tout li honme viel et anchiien et tout blanc de
 kenissure(s), et portoit chascuns en sa main un rain d'olive par
 senefiance') and messagers fro the Emperour Lucius whiche was
 called at that tyme Dictatour or procurour of the publyke wele of 15
 Rome* {W Emperour of Roome Lucius; *Geoffrey* 247 reipublicae
 procurator), whiche sayde messagers after their entryng & comyng
 in to the presence of kyng Arthure dyd to hym theyr obeysaunce in
 makyng to hym reuerence said to hym in this wyse The hyghe &

knyghte, why feryst thou my countenaunce? There be in this halle, and they were sore aggrieved, thou durste nat for a deukedom of londis loke in their facis.'

[136] 'Sir,' seyde one of the senatoures, 'so Cryste me helpe,
 5 I was so aferde whan I loked in thy face that myne herte wolde nat serve for to sey my message. But sytthen hit is
 [86] my wylle for to sey myne erande, the gretis welle Lucius, the Emperour of Roome, and commaundis the uppon payne that woll falle to sende hym the trewage of this realme io that thy fadir Uther Pendragon payde, other ellys he woll bereve the all thy realmys that thou weldyst, ^rand thou as rebelle, not knowynge hym as thy soverayne, withholdest and reteynest, contrary to the statutes and decrees maade ["5] by the noble and worthy Julius Cezar, conquerour of this 15 realme"¹.'

[140] 'Thow seyste well/ seyde Arthure, 'but for all thy brym wordys I woll nat be to over-hasty, and therfore thou and
 71^v thy felowys shall abyde here seven dayes; and shall calle unto me my counceyle of my moste trusty knyghtes and
 20 deukes and regeaunte kynges and erlys and barowns and of my moste wyse doctours, and whan we have takynoure avysement ye shall have your answeere playnly, suche as I shall abyde by.'

Than somme of the yonge knyghtes, heryng this their myghty Emperour Lucius sendeth to the kyng of Bretayne gretynge c5maudyng the to knouliche hym for thy lord and to sende hym the truage due of this Royamme vnto thempyre whiche thy fader and other to fore thy precessours haue paid as is of record And *thou as
 5 *rebelle not knowynge hym as thy souerayne withholdest and reteynest contrary to the statutes and decrees maade by the noble and *worthy Iulius Cezar conquerour of this Royame* {MA 103-15 Why thow arte rebelle to Rome and rentez them wythholdez... That Iulius Cesar wan) and fyrst Emperour of Rome And yf thou refuse
 10 his demaunde and commaundement knowe thou for certayne that he shal make stronge werre ageynst the thy Royames & londes and shall chastyse the and thy subgettys that it shal be ensample (S ensamble) perpetuel vnto alle kynges and prynces for to denye their truage vnto that noble empyre whiche domyneth vpon the vnyuersal world
 15 Thenne whan they had shewed theffecte of their message the kyng commaunded them to withdrawe them And said he shold take auyce of counceyle and gyue to them an ansuere Thenne *somme of the

Bk v] Of King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius 187

message, wold have ronne on them to have slayne them, sayenge that it was a rebuke to alle the knyghtes there beyng present to suffre them to saye so to the kyng. And anone the kyng commaunded that none of them upon payne of dethe to myssaye them ne doo them ony harme.] 5

Than the noble kyng commaunded sir Clegis to loke [155] that thes men be seteled and served with the beste, that there be no deyntys spared uppon them, that nother chylde nor horse faught nothyng, 'for they ar full royall peple. And thoughe they have greved me and my courte, yet we 10 muste remembir on oure worshyp.' So they were led into chambyrs and served as rychely of deynt[^]s that myght be gotyn. So the Romaines had therof grete mervayle.

Than the kyng unto counsayle called his noble Hordes [243] and[^]1 knyghtes, and within a towre there they assembled, the 15 moste party of the knyghtes of the Rounde Table. Than the kyng commaunded hem of theire beste counceyle.

'Sir,' seyde sir Cadour of Cornuayle, 'as for me, I am nat [427] hevy of this message, for we have be many dayes rested now. The lettyrs of Lucius the Emperoure lykis me well, 20 for now shall we have warre and worshyp.'

*yonge knyghtes heryng this their message wold haue ronne on them
*to haue slayne them sayenge that it was a rebuke to alle the knyghtes
*there beyng present to suffre them to saye so to the kyng And anone
*the kyng commaunded that none of them vpon payne of dethe to
myssaye them ne doo them ony harme (*Vulgate Merlin* 425 'Si dient 5
et jurent qu'il deshoneront les messages qui les lettres avoient
aportees. Si lor eurent fait asses de honte et de laidure se li rois Artus
ne fust qui lor dist moult doucement: "Biaus signeur, laisiles!";
Wace 119-20 'Que cil seront deshonore Qui le message ont aporte,
Et lors ont mult as messagiers Dit ramprones et reproviers Mais li 10
rois se leva em pies, Si lor cria: "Taisies, taisies!") and commanded
a knyghte to bryng them to their lodgyng and see that they haue
alle that is necessary and requysyte for them with the best chere and
that noo deyntee be spared For the Romaines ben grete lordes and
though theyr message please me not ne my court yet I must remembre 15
myn honour After this the kyng lete calle alle his lordes* and knyghtes
(*MA* 244 lordes) of the round table to counceyl vpon this mater and
desyred them to saye theire aduys thenne syr Cadour of Cornewaile
spacke fyrste and sayd Syre this message lyketh me wel for we haue
many dayes rested vs and haue ben ydle and now I hope ye shalle ao

- [259] 'Be Cryste, I leve welle,' seyde the kyng, 'sir Cador, this message lykis the. But yet they may nat be so answerde, for their spyteuous speche grevyth so my herte. That truage to Roome woll I never pay. Therefore counceyle
5 me, my knyghtes, for Crystes love of Hevyn. For this muche have I founde in the cronycles of this londe, that sir Belyne and sir Bryne, of my bloode elders that borne were in Bretayne, and they hath occupyed the empyreship eyght score wyntyrs; and aftir Constantyne,oure kynnesman, con-
72^rio querd hit/ and ^Ndame Elyneys son, of Ingelonde, was Emperour of Roome'; and he [^]recoverde the Crosse that Cryste dyed uppon/ And thus was the Empyre kepte be my kynde elders, and thus have we evydence inowghe to the empyre of hole Rome.'
- [288] 15 Than answerde kyng Angwysshaunce unto Arthure: 'Sir, thou oughte to be aboven all othir Crysten kynges for of knyghthode and of noble counceyle that is allway in the. And Scotlonde had never scathe syne ye were crowned kyng, and 'whan the Romaines raynede uppon us they
20 raunsomed oure elders' and raffte us of oure lyves. Therefore I make myne avow unto mylde Mary and unto Jesu Cryste that I shall be avenged uppon the Romainys, and to farther thy fyght I shall brynge the ferce men of armys, fully twenty thousand of tyred men. I shall yeff hem my wages make sharp warre on the Romainys where I doubte not we shal gete honour I byleue wel sayd Arthur that this mater pleaseth the wel but these ansuers may not be ansuerd for (S sor) the demaunde greueth me sor For truly I wyl neuer paye truage to Rome wherfore
5 I pray yow to counceylle me I haue vnderstande that Bellinus* and Brenius* (*Geoffrey* 250 Belinus, Brennius) kynges of (S os) Bretayne haue had thempyre in their handes many dayes And also Constantyn the sone of Heleyne whiche is an open euydence that we owe noo trybute to Rome but of ryght we that ben descended of them haue
10 ryght to clayme the tytyle of thempyre
- (2) Thenne ansuerd kyng Anguyshe of Scotland Syr ye oughte of ryght to be aboue al other kynges for vnto yow is none lyke ne pareylle in Crystendome of kny3thode ne of dygnyte & I counceylle you neuer to obeye the Romainys for whan they regned on vs they destressyd oure
15 elders and putte this land to grete extorcions & taylles wherfore I make here myn auowe to auenge me on them and for to strengthe youre quarel I shal furnysshe xy M good men of warre and wage

Bk V] *Of King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius* 189

for to go and warre on the Romaines and to dystroy hem, and all shall be within two ayges to go where the tykes.'

Than the kyng of Lytyll Brytayne sayde unto kynge [304] Arthure, 'Sir, answeere thes alyauntes and gyff them their 5 answeere, and I shall somen my peple, and thirty thousand men shall ye have at *my* costis and wages.'

'Ye sey well,' seyde the kynge Arthure.

Than spake a myghty deuke that was lorde of Weste Walys: 'Sir, I make myne avowe to God to be revenged on ^{xo} [3*0] the Romaines, and to have the vawarde, and there to ^Nvynquysse with vycctory the vyscounte of Roome/ For onys ^sas I paste on pylgrymage all by the Poynte Tremble', than the vyscounte was in Tu(s)kayne, and toke up my knyghtys and raunsomed them unresonable\ And than ^NI 15 complayned me to the Potestate the Pope hymself, but I had nothyng ellys but plesaunte wordys; other reson at Roome myght I none have, and so I yode my way sore 72^r rebuked. And therefore to be avenged I woll arere of my wyghteste Walshemen, and of myne owne fre wagis bryng a you thirty thousand.'

Than sir Ewayne and his son Ider that were nere cosyns [337] unto the Conquerroure, yet were they cosyns bothe twayne, and ^Nthey helde Irelande and Argayle and all the Oute Iles: 'Sir,' seyde they unto kynge Arthure, 'here we make 25 oure avowes untoo Cryste manly to ryde into Lumbardy and so unto Melayne wallys, and so over the Poynte Tremble ^x into the vale of Vyterbe, and there to vytayle my knyghtes;' and for to be avenged on the Romainys we shall bryng the thirty thousand of good mennys bodyes.' 30

Than leepe in yong sir Launcelot ae Laake with a lyght [368] them on my costes whiche shal awayte on yow with my self whan it shal please yow and the kyng of lytel Bretayne graunted hym to the same xxxM wherfor kynge Arthur thanked them And thenne euery man agreed to make warre and to ayde after their power that is to wete the lorde of westwalis promysed to bryng xxx M men And 5 syr Vwayne syre Ider his sone with their cosyns promysed to bryng xxx M thenne syre launcelot with alle other promysed in lyke wyse euery man a grete multytude And whan kynge Arthur vnderetood

herte' and seyde unto kyng Arthure, 'Thoughe my londis
 marche nyghe thyne enemyes, yet shall I make myne avow
 aftir my power that of good men of armys aftir my bloode
 thus many I shall brynge with me: twenty thousand helmys
 5 in haubirkes attyred that shall never fayle you whyles oure
 lyves lastyth.'

[382] Than lowghe sir Bawdwyn of Bretayne and carpys to the
 kyng: 'I make myne avow unto the vernacle noble for to
 brynge with me ten thousand good mennys bodyes that
 10 shall never fayle whyle there lyvis lastyth.'

[395] 'Now I thanke you/ seyde the kyng, 'with all my trew
 herte. I suppose by the ende be done and dalte the Romaines
 had bene bettir to have leffte their proude message.'

[415] So whan the sevendyghte was atte an end the Senatours
 15 besought the kyng to have an answe. 'Hit is well,' seyde
 the kyng. 'Now sey ye to youre Emperour that I shall in
 all haste me redy make with my keene knyghtes, and by
 73^r the rever of Rome holde my Rounde Table. And I woll
 brynge with me the beste peple of fyftene realmys, and
 20 with hem ryde on the mountaynes in the maynelondis,
 and myne doune the wallys of Myllayne the proude,
 and syth ryde unto Roome with my royallyst knyghtes,
 Now ye have youre answe, hygh you that ye were hense,
 and frome this place to the porte there ye shall passe over;
 25 and I shall gyff you seven dayes to passe unto Sandwyche.

[449] Now spede you, I counceyle you, and spare nat youre
 horsis,' and loke ye go by Watlynge strete and no way ellys,'

theire courages and good wylles he thanked them hertely and after
 lete calle thembassatours to here theire ansuere And in presence of
 alle his lordes and knyghtes* (MA 417 The kyng in his concell) he
 sayd to them in thys wyse I wylle that ye retorne vnto your lord and
 5 procurour of the comyn wele for the Romainys and saye ye to hym
 Of his demaunde and commaundement I sette nothyng And that
 I knowe of no truage ne trybute that I owe to hym ne to none erthely
 prynce Crysten ne hethen but I pretende to haue and occupye the
 soueraynte of thempyre wherin I am entytled by the ryght of my
 10 predecessours somtyme kynges of this lond and saye to hym that I am
 delybered and fully concluded to goo wyth myn armye with strengthe
 and power vnto Rome by the grace of god to take possession in them-
 pyre and subdue them that ben rebelle wherfore I commaunde hym

Bk v] Of King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius 191

and where nyght fallys on you, loke ye there abyde, be hit felle other towne, I take no kepe; for hit longyth nat to none alyauntis for to ryde on nyghtes. And may ony be founde a spere-lengthe oute of the way and that ye be in the watir by the sevensnyghtes ende, there shall no golde 5 undir God pay for youre raunsom.'

'Sir,' seyde this eenatoures, 'this is an harde conduyte. [467] We beseche you that we may passe saufly.'

'Care ye nat/ seyde the kynge, 'youre conduyte is able.'⁷

Thus they passed fro Carleyle unto Sandwyche-warde 10 [479] that hadde but seven dayes for to passe thorow the londe, and so sir Cador brought hem on her wayes. But the senatours spared for no horse, but hyred hem hakeneyes frome towne to towne, and by the sonne was sette at the seven dayes ende they come unto Sandwyche; so blythe were they 15 never.

And so the same nyght they toke the watir and passed [493] into Flaundres, •"Almayn"¹, and aftir that over the grete mountayne that hyght Godarde, and so aftir thorow Lombardy and thorow Tuskayne, and sone aftir they come to 20 the Emperour Lucius, and there they shewed hym the lettyrs 73^v of kynge Arthure, and how he was the gastfullyst man that ever they on loked.

Whan the Emperour Lucius hadde redde the lettyrs and [s^o7] undirstoode them welle of their credence, he fared as a man 25 were rased of his wytte. 'I wente that Arthure wold have obeyed you and served you 'hymself unto your honde, for

and alle them of Rome that incontynent they make to me their homage & (S or) to knouliche me for their Emperour and gouernour vpon payne that shalle ensiewe And thenne he commaunded his tresorer to gyue to them grete and large yeftes and to paye alle theyr dispencys and assygned syre Cador to conueye them oute of the land 5 and soo they took their leue and departed and tooke theyr shyppe at Sandwyche and passed forthe by flaundrys Almayn* (MA 496 Till Akyn in Almayn) the montayns and all ytalye vntyl they cam vnto Lucius And after the reuerence made they made reiacon of their 10 answere lyke as ye to fore haue herd whan themperour Lucyus had wel vnderstonde theyre credence he was sore meued as he had ben al araged & sayd I had supposed that Arthur wold haue obeyed to my commaundement and haue serued yow hym self* (MA 514 hafe

so he besemed, other ony kynge crystynde, for to obey ony
senatour that is sente fro my persone.'

[1515] 'Sir,' sayde the senatours, 'lette be suche wordis, for
that we have ascaped on lyve we may thonke God ever; for
5 we wolde nat passe ayen to do that message for all your
brode londis. And therfore, sirres, truste to our sawys,
ye shall fynde hym your uttir enemye; and seke ye hym and
ye lyst, for into this londis woll he com, and that shall ye
fynde within this half-yere, for he thynkys to be Emperour
10 hymself. For he seyth ye have occupyed the Empyre with
grete wronge, for all his trew auncettryes sauff his fadir
Uther were Emperoures of Rome.

[532] 'And of all the soveraynes that we sawe ever he is the
royallyst kynge that lyvyth on erthe, for we sawe on Newerys
15 day at his Rounde Table nine kyngis, and the fayryst
felyship of knyghtes ar with hym that durys on lyve, and
thereto of wysedome and of fayre speeche and all royalte
and rychesse they fayle of none. Therefore, sir, be my
counsaille, rere up your lyege peple and sende kynges and
20 dewkes to loke unto your marchis, and that 'the moun-
taynes of Almayne be myghtyly kepte.'

[554] 'Be Estir,' seyde the Emperour, 'I caste me for to passe
Almayne and so furth into Fraunce and there bereve hym
seruede J^e hym seluen) as hym wel bysemed or ony other kyng to doo
O syre sayd one of the senatours late be suche vayn wordes for we
late yow wete that I and my felawes were ful sore aferd to beholde
his countenaunce I fere me ye haue made a rodde for your self for
5 he entendeth to be lord of this empyre whiche sore is to be doubted
ye he com for he is al another ma than ye wene and holdeth the most
noble courte of the world alle other kynges ne prynces maye not
compare vnto his noble mayntene On newe yeres daye we sawe hym
in his estate whiche was the ryallest that euer we sawe for he was
10 serued at his table with ix kynges and the noblest felauship of other
prynces lordes and knyghtes that ben in the world and euery knyghte
approued and lyke a lord and holdeth table roud And in his persone
the moost manly man that lyueth and is lyke to conquere alle the
world for vnto his courage it is to lytel wherfore I aduyse yow to kepe
15 wel youre marches and straytes in the montayns For certaynly he is
a lord to be doubted Wel sayd Lucius bfore Eester I suppose to passe
the moutayns and soo forth in to fraunce and there byreue hym his
londes with Ianeweyes and other myghty warryours of Tuskane and

Bk. v] Of King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius 193

his londis. I shall brynge with me many gyauntys of Geene,
that one of them shall be worth an honored of knyghtes,
and perleous passage shall be surely kepte with my good
knyghtes.'

Than the Emperour sente furth his messyngers of wyse 5 [570]
olde knyghtes unto a contrey callyd Ambage, and Arrage,
and unto Alysundir/,to Ynde, to Ermony that the rever
of Eufrate renmys by, and to Assy, Aufryke, and Europe
the large/^Nand to Ertayne, and Elamyne, to the Oute Yles,
to Arrabe, to Egypte, to Damaske, and to Damyake, and to 10
noble deukis and erlys. Also the kynge of Capydos, and
the kyng of Tars, and of Turke, and of Pounce, and of
Pampoyle, and oute of Preter Johanes londe, also the
sowdon of Surre. And frome Nero unto Nazareth, and frome
Garese to Galely, there come Sarysyns and becom sudgettis 15
unto Rome. So they come glydyng in galyes. Also ther
come the kynge of Cypres, and the Grekis were gadirde
and goodly arayed' with the kynge of Macidony, and of
Calabe and of Catelonde bothe kynges and deukes, and the
kynge of Portyngale with many thousande Spaynardis. ao

Thus all thes kynges and dukys and admyrallys noblys [609]
assembled with syxtene kynges at onys, and so they com
unto Rome with grete multytude of peple. Whan the
Emperour undirstood their comynge he made redy all his
noble Romaines and all men of warre betwyxte hym and 25
Flaundrys. Also he had gotyn with hym fyffty gyauntys

lombardy And I shall sende for them all that ben subgettys and alyed
to thepyre of Rome to come to myn ayde and forthwith sente old wyse
knyghtes vnto these countrayes folowyng fyrste to ambage and
arrage to Alysaundrye to ynde to hermony where as the ryuer of
Eufrates renneth in to Asye to Auffryke and Europe the large to 5
ertayne and Elamyne to Arabye Egypte and to damaske to damyete
and Cayer to Capadoce to tarce Turkye pounce and pampoylle to
Surrye and gallacye And alle these were subgette to Rome and many
moo as Grece Cypres Macydone Calabre Cateland portyngale with
many thousandes of spaynardys Thus alle these kynges dukes and 10
admyrals assembled aboute Rome with xvj kynges attones with grete
multytude of peple whan themperour vnderstood their comyng he
made redy his Romainys and alle the peple bytwene hym & Flaundres
Also he hadde gotten wyth hym fyfty Geaunts whiche had ben en-

that were engendirde with fendis, and all tho he lete ordeyne for to awayte on his persone and for to breke the batayle of the frunte of Arthurs knyghtes, but they were so muche of their bodyes that horsys myght nat bere them.

5 And thus the Emperour with all hys horryble peple drew to passe Almayne to dystroy Arthures londys that he wan thorow warre of his noble knyghtes.

[623] And so Lucius com unto Cullayne, and thereby a castelle besegys, and wanne hit within a whyle, and feffyd hit with
10 Saresyns. And thus Lucius within a whyle destroyed many
74^v fayre contrayes that Arthure had wonne before of the myghty kyng Claudas. So this Lucius dispercled abroad his oste syxty myle large, and commaunde hem to mete with hym in Normandy, in the contray of Constantyne, 'and at Bar-
15 flete there ye me abyde, for the douchery of Bretayne I shall thorowly dystroy hit.'

[625] Now leve we sir Lucius and speke we of kyng Arthure that commaunded all that were undir his obeysaunce, aftir the utas of Seynte Hyllary that all shulde be assembled for
20 to holde a parlement at Yorke, within the wallys. And there they concluded shortly to arest all the shyppes of this londe, and within fyftene dayes to be redy at Sandwyche. 'Now, sirrys,' seyde Arthure, 'I purpose me to passe many perelles waves' and to occupye the Empyre that myne elders

gendred of fendys And they were ordeyned to garde his persone and to breke the frounte of the batayle of kyng Arthur And thus departed fro Rome and came doune the montayns for to destroye the londes that Arthur had conquerd and cam vnto Coleyne and bysegged
5 a Castel there by and wanne it soone and stuffed hit with two honderd sarasyns or Infydeles and after destroyed many fayr countrees whiche Arthur had wonne of kyng Claudas And thus Lucius cam with alle his hoost whiche were disperplyd lx myle in brede and commaunded them to mete with hym in Burgoyne for he purposed to destroye the
10 Royame of lytyl Bretayne

(3) Now leue we of Lucius the emperour and speke we of kyng Arthur that commaunded alle them of his retenue to be redy atte vtas of hyllary for to holde a parlement at yorke And at that parlement was concluded to areste alle the nauye of the lond and to be redy within xv
15 dayes at sandwyche and there he shewed to his armye how he purposed to conquere thempyre whiche he ought to haue of ryght And there he ordeyned two gouernours of this (S his) Royame that is to say Syre

Bk v] Of King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius 195

afore have claymed. Therefore I pray you, counseyle me that may be beste and most worshyp.'

The kynges and knyghtes gaairde hem unto counsaile and were condecended for to make two chyfftaynes, that was sir Baudwen of Bretayne, an auncient and an honorable 5 knyght, for to counceyle and comforte; sir Cadore son of Cornuayle, that was at the tyme called sir Constantyne, that aftir was kyng aftir Arthurs dayes. And there in the presence of all the lordis the kyng resceyved all the rule unto thes two lordis and quene Gwenyvere. 10

And sir Trystrams at that tyme beleft with kyng Marke of Cornuayle for the love of La Beale Isode, wherefore sir Launcelot was passyng wrothe.

Than quene Gwenyver made grete sorow that the kyng [715] and all the lordys sholde so be departed, and there she fell 15 doune on a swone, and hir ladyes bare hir to her chambir. Than the kyng commaunded hem to God and belefte the quene in sir Constantynes and sir Baudewens hondis, and 75^r all Inglonde holy to rule as themselfe demed beste.

And whan the kyng was an horsebak he seyde in herynge 20 of all the lordis, 'If that I dye in this jurney, here I make the, sir Constantyne, my trew ayre, for thou arte nexte of my kyn save sir Cadore, thy fadir, and therefore, if that I dey, I woll that ye be crowned kyng.'

Ryght so he sought and his knyghtes towarde Sande- 25 [720] wyche where he founde before hym many galyard knyghtes, for there were the moste party of all the Rounde Table redy

Bawdewyn of Bretayne for to counceille to the best and syr Constantyn sone to syre Cadore of Cornewaylle whiche after the dethe of Arthur was kyng of this Royamme And in the presence of all his lordes he resyned the rule of the royame and Gweneuer his quene to them wherfore syr launcelot was wrothe for he lefte syre Trystram with kyng marke 5 for the loue of beal Isoulde Thenne the quene Gweneuer made grete sorowe for the departyng of her lord and other and swouned in suche wyse that the ladyes bare her in to her chambre Thus the kyng with his grete armye departed leuyng the queene zn& Royamme in the gouernaunce of syre Bawduyn and Constantyn And whan he was 10 on his hors he sayd with an hyhe voys yf I dye in this iourney I wyl that syre Constantyn be myn heyer and kyng crowned of this royame as next of my blood And after departed and entred in to the see atte

on tho bankes for to sayle whan the kynge lyked. Than in
all haste that myght be they shynned their horsis and
harneyse and all maner of ordynaunce that fallyth for the
werre, and tentys and pavylyons many were trussed, and
5 so they shotte frome the bankes many grete caryckes and
many shynnes of forestage with coggis and galeyes and
spynnesse full noble with galeyes and galyottys, rowing with
many ores. And thus ^xthey strekyn forth into the stremys
many sadde hunderthes/

[75⁶] 10

HERE FOLOWYTH THE DREME OF KYNGE ARTHURE.

As the kynge was in his cog and lay in his caban, he felle
in a slumberyng and ^vdremed how a dredfull dragon dud
drenche muche of his peple/ and com fleyng one wyng
oute of the weste partyes. And his hede, hym semed, was
15 enamyled with asure, and his shuldrys shone as the golde,
and his wombe was lyke mayles of a merveyllous hew, and
his tayle was fulle of tatyrs, and ^vhis feete were florysshed
as hit were fyne sable/ And his clawys were lyke clene
golde, •"and¹ ^Nan hydeouse flame of fyre there flowe oute of
20 his mowth/ lyke as the londe and the watir had flawmed
all on fyre.

774 Than hym semed there com oute of the Oryent a grymly
75^v beare, all blak, in a clowde, and his pawys were as byg as a
poste. He was all to-rongeled with lugerande lokys, and he
25 was the fowlyst beste that ever ony man sye. He romed and
rored so rudely that merveyle hit were to telle.

Sandwyche with alle his armye with a greete multitude of shynnes
galeyes Cogges and dromoundes sayllynge on the see.

(4) And as the kyng laye in his caban in the shyp he fyll in a slomerynge
and dremed a merueyllous dreame hym semed that a dredful dragon
5 dyd drowne moche of his peple and he cam fleyng oute of the west
and his hede was enameled with asure and his sholders shone as gold
his bely lyke mayles of a merueyllous hewe his taylle ful of tatters
his feet ful of fyne sable & his clawes lyke fyne gold And*

10 lyke as the londe and water had flammed all of fyre After hym semed
there came oute of thoryent a grymly bore al blak in a clowde and his
pawes as bygge as a post he was rugged lokynge roughly he was the
foulest beest that euer man sawe he rored and romed soo hydously
that it were merueill to here Thenne the dredful dragon auanced

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^vThan the dredfull dragon dressyd hym ayenste hym' [786]
and come in the wynde lyke a faucon, and freyshely strykis
the beare. And agayne the gresly beare kuttis with his
grysly tuskes, that his breste and his bray(l)e was bloods,
and ^rthe reed blood"¹ rayled all over the see. Than. | he worme 5
wyndis away and fleis uppon hyght and com downe with
such a sowghe, and'towched the beare on the rydge that
^Nfro the toppe to the tayle was ten foote large⁷. And so he
rentyth the beare and brenmys hym up clene that all felle
on poudre, both the fleysh and the bonys, and so hit floterod 10
abrode on the sea.

Anone the kynge waked ^rand was sore abashed"¹ of his [806]
dreame, and in all haste he sente for a philozopher and
charged hym to telle what sygnyfied his dreame.

'Sir,' seyde the phylozopher, 'the dragon thou dremyste 15 [814]
of betokyns thyne owne persone that thus here sayles with
thy syker knyghtes; and the coloure of his wyngys is thy
kyngdomes that thou haste with thy knyghtes wonne. And
his tayle that was all to-tatered sygnyfied your noble
knyghtes of the Rounde Table. And the beare that the 20
dragon slowe above in the clowdis ^sbetokyns som tyraunte
that turmentis thy peple/ other thou art lyke to fyght with

hym and cam in the wynde lyke a fawcon gyuyngre grete strokes on
the bore and the bore hytte hym ageyne with his grysly tuskes that
his brest was al bloody and that the hote blood* made alle the see reed*
of his blood (/Fand hit rayled; MA 795 Rynnande on reede blode
asrayneoftheheuen). Thenne the dragon flewe away al on an hey³te 5
and came doune with suche a swough and smote the bore on the rydge
whiche was x foote large fro the hede to the taylle and smote the
bore all to powdre bothe flesshe and bonys that it flytteryd (S flutteryd)
al abroad on the see And therewith the kynge awoke anone and was
sore abashed* (MA 806 wery foretrauaillede) of this dreame And sente 10
anone for a wyse philosopher commaundyng to telle hym the
sygnyfycacion of his dreame Syre sayd the philosopher the dragon that
thow dremedest of betokeneth thyn owne persone that sayllest here
& the colours of his wynges ben thy Royames that thou haste wonne
And his taylle which is al to tatterd sygnefyeth the noble knyghtes 15
of the round table And the bore that the dragon slough comyng fro
the clowdes betokeneth some tyraunt that tormenteth the peple or
else thow arte lyke to fyghte with somme Geaunt thy self beyngre

4 W brayre (MA 793 hys brest and his brayell)

5 W and hit rayled

som gyaunt boldely in batayle be thyself alone. Therefore of this dredfull dreame drede the but a lytyll/ and care nat now, sir conquerroure, but comfortHi¹ thyself."

[834] Than within a whyle they had a syght of the bankys of
5 Normandy, and at the same tyde the kyng aryved at Bariflete and founde there redy many of his grete lordis, as he
76^r had commaunded at Crystemasse before hymselfe.

And than come there an husbandeman oute of the contrey and talkyth unto the kyng wondourfull wordys and sayde,
10 'Sir, here is [besyde] a [grete] gyaunte of Gene that turmentyth thy peple; mo than fyve hundred and many mo of oure chyldren, that hath bene his sustynaunce all this seven wynters. Yet is the sotte never cesid, but in the contrey of Constantyne he hath kylled [and destroyed"¹ all
15 oure knave chyldren, and this nyght he hath cleyghte the duches of Bretayne as she rode by a ryver with her ryche knyghtes, and ledde hir unto yondir mounete to ly by hir whyle hir lyff lastyth.

[856] Many folkys folowed hym, mo than fyve hundird'
20 barounes and bachelers and knyghtes full noble, but ever

horryble and abhomynable whoos pere ye sawe neuer in your dayes wherfore of this dredeful dreame doubte the no thyng but as a Conquerour come forth* {W comforte; MA 830 comforth) thy self Thenne after this soone they had syghte of londe and saylled tyl they
5 arryued atte Barflete in Flaundres and whanne they were there he fond many of his grete lordes redy as they had ben commaunded to awayte vpon hym

(5) Thenne came to hym an husbond man of the countrey and told hym how there was in the countre of Constantyn besyde* Bretayne
10 a grete* {W here is a foule gyaunte of Genej MA 842 Here es a teraunt besyde that tourmentez thi pople, A grett geaunte of Geen) gyaunt whiche hadde slayne murthered and deuoured moche peple of the countreye and had ben susteyned seuen yere with the children of the comyns of that land in soo moche that alle the children ben alle
15 slayne and destroyed* {MA 850 clenly dystroyede) and now late he hath taken the duchesse of Bretayne as she rode (S rode by) with her meyne and hath ledde her to his lodgyng whiche is in a montayne for to rauysshe and lye by her to her lyues ende and many people folowed her moo than v C but alle they myghte not rescowe her but
20 they lefte her shrykyng* and cryenge lamentably wherfore I suppose

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she sh[r]yked wondirly lowde, that the sorow of the lady cover shall we never. She was thy cousyns wyff, sir Howell the Hende, a man that we calle nyghe of thy bloode. Now, 'as thou arte oure ryghtwos kynge, rewe on this lady' and on thy lyege peple, and revenge us as a noble conquerroure 5 sholde.'

'Alas,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'this is a grete myscheffel [868] I had levir than all the realmys I welde unto my crowne that

I had bene before that freyke a furlonge way for to have rescowed that lady, and I wolde have done my payne. Now, fellow,' seyde Arthure, 'woldist thou ken me where that carle dwellys? I trowe I shall trete with hym or I far passe.'

'Sir conquerroure,' seyde the good man, 'beholde yondir [880] two fyrys, for there shalte thou fynde that carle beyonde the 15 colde stendys, and tresoure oute of numbir there mayste thou sykerly fynde, more tresoure, as I suppose, than is in all Fraunce aftir.'

The kynge seyde, 'Good man, pees! and carpe to me no [887] 76^y more. Thy sothsawys have greved sore my herte. Than 20 he turnys towarde his tentys and carpys but lytyll.

Than the kynge [called to hym¹ sir Kay in counceyle, [892] and to sir Bedwere the bolde thus seyde he: 'Loke that ye two aftir evynsonge be surely armed, and your beste horsis, for I woll ryde on pylgrymage prevayly, and none but we 25

that he hath slayn her in fulfyllynge his fowle lust of lechery She was wyf vnto thy Cosyn syre Howe! whome we calle ful nyhe of thy blood Now as thou a ryghtful kynge haue pyte on this lady and reuenge vs al as thou arte a noble conquerour Alas sayd kynge Arthur this is a grete meschyef I had leuer than the best Royame that 5 I haue that I hadde ben a forlonge way to fore hym for to haue rescowed that lady Now felawe sayd kynge Arthur canst thou brynge me there as thys gyaunt haunteth ye syre sayd the good man loo yonder where as thou seest tho two grete fyres there shalt thou fynde hym and more tresour than I suppose is in al Fraunce whanne the 10 kynge hadde vnderstanden this pyteous caas he retorned in to his tente Thenne he callyd* to hym syre kaye (W seyde unto sir Kay ; MA 892 He calles sir Cayous) and syre Bedwere & commaunded them secreately to make redy hors and harneis for hym self and them

three. And whan my lordis is served we woll ryde to Seynte Mychaels Mounte where mervayles ar shewed."

[900] Anone sir Arthure wente to his wardrop and caste on his armoure, bothe his gesseraunte and his basnet with his
5 brode shyld. And so he buskys hym tyll his stede that on the bente hoved. Than he stertes uppon loffte and hentys the brydyll, and stirres hym stoutly, and sone he fyndis his knyghtes two full clenly arayed. And than they trotted on styllly togedir over a blythe contray full of many myrry
10 byrdis, and whan they com to the forlonde Arthure and they alyght on hir foote. [And the kynge commaunded them to tarye there. 'Now fastenys,' seyde Arthure, 'oure horsis that none nyghe other, for I woll seche this seynte be myself alone and speke wyth this maystir-man that kepys this
15 mountayne.'

[941] Than the kynge yode up to the creste of the cragge, and than he comforted hymself with the colde wynde; and than he yode forth by two welle-stremys, and there he fyndys two fyres flamand full hyghe, And at that one fyre he founde
20 a carefull wydow wryngande hir handys, syttande on a grave that was new marked. Than Arthure salued hir and she hym agayne, and asked hir why she sate sorowyng.

[957] 'Alas,' she seyde,' carefull knyght! Thou carpys over lowdel⁷ Yon is a werlow woll destroy us bothe. I holde
25 the unhappy. What doste thou on this mountayne? Though

tweyne For after euensonge he wold ryde on pylgremage with them two only vnto saynt Mychels mounte And thenne anone he maad hym redy and armed hym* (MA 902 Armede hym in a acton) at alle poyntes and tooke his hors and his sheld And soo they thre
5 departed thens and rode* (MA 920 they roode) forthe as faste as euer they my[^]t tyl that they cam to the forlond of that mount And there they alyghted and the kynge commaunded them to tarye there* (MA 935-6 And thene the kyng kenely comandydde his knyghtez For to byde with theire blonkez) for he wold hym self goo vp in to that
10 mounte And soo he ascended vp in to that hylle tyl he came to a grete fyre and there he fonde a careful wydowe wryngynge her handes and makynge grete sorowe syttyng by a graue newe made And thenne kynge Arthur salewed her and demaunded of her wherfore she made suche lamentacion to whome she ansuerd and sayd Syre knyghte
15 speke softe for yonder is a deuyll yf he here the speke he wylle come and destroye the I hold the vnhappy what dost thou here in this

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here were suche fyffty, ye were to feyble for to macche hym 77'
all at onys. Whereto berys thou armoure? Hit may the
lytyll avayle, for he nedys none other wepyn but his bare
fyste. Here is a douches dede, the fayryst that lyved; he
hath murthered that mylde withoute ony mercy;' he forced 5
hir by fylth of hymself, and so aftir slytte hii unto the
navyll.'

'Dame,' seyde the kynge, 'I com fro the rnable con- [986]
querroure, sir Arthure, for to trete with the tirraunte for
his lyege peple.'

10
'Fy on suche trefyse,' she seyde than, 'for he settys [993]
nought by the kynge nother by no man ellys. But and thou
have brought Arthurs wyff, dame Gwenyvere, he woll be
more blyther of hir than thou haddyste gefFyn hym halfen-
dele Fraunce. And but yf thou have brought hir, prese hym 15
nat to nyghe. Loke what he hath done unto fyftene kynges:
he hath made hym a coote full of precious stonys, and the
bordoures thereof is the berdis (of) fyftene kynges, and they
were of the grettyst blood that dured on erthe. Othir
farme had he none of fyftene realmys. This presente was 20
sente hym to this laste Crystemasse, they sente hym in
faythe for savyng of their peple. And for Arthurs wyffe he
lodgys hym here, for he hath more tresoure^s than ever had
Arthure or ony of his elders, And now thou shalt fynde
hym at souper with syx knave chyldirne, and there he hath 25
made^N pykyll and powder with many precious wyne/ and

mountayne For yi ye were suche fyfty as ye be ye were not able to
make resystence ageynst this deuyll here lyeth a duchesse dede the
whiche was the fayrest of alle the world wyf to syre Howel due of
Bretayne he hath murthred her in forcyng her and hath slytte her
vnto the nauyl Dame sayd the kynge I come (S came) fro the noble* 5
Conqueroure {MA 987 Jp conquerour curtaise and gentill) kynge
Arthur for to treate with that tyraunt for his lyege peple Fy on suche
treatys sayd she he setteth not by the kynge ne by no man els But
and yf thou haue broughte Arthurs wyf dame Gweneuer he shalle be
gladder than thou haddest gyuen to hym half fraunce Beware ap- 10
proche hym not to nygh for he hath vaynquysshed xv kynges and
hath maade hym a cote ful of precious stones enbrowdred with theyre
berdes whiche they sente hym to haue his loue for sauacion of theyr
peple at this laste Crystemasse And yf thou wylt speke with hym
at yonder grete fyre at souper wel sayd Arthur I wyl accomplyshe 15

three fayre maydens that turnys the broche that bydis to go to his bed, for they three shall be dede within four oures or the fylth is fulfylled that his fleyshe askys".

'Well,' seyde Arthure, 'I woll fulfyll my message for
5 alle your grym wordis.'

'Than fare thou to yondir fyre that flamys so hyghe,' and there thou shalt fynde hym sykerly for sothe.'

[1041] Than he paste forth to the creste of the hylle and syghe where he sate at his soupere alone⁷ gnawying on a lymme of
10 a large man, and there he beekys his brode lendys by the
77v bryght fyre' and brekelys hym s(e)mys. And three damesels turned three brochis, and thereon was twelve chyldir but late borne, and they were broched in maner lyke birdis. Whan the kynge behylde that syght his herte was nyghe bledying
15 for sorow. Than he haylesed hym with angirfull wordys:

[1059] 'Now He that all weldys geff the sorow, theeff, there thou syttes! For thou art the fowlyste freyke that ever was fourmed/ and fendly thou fedyst the, the devill have thy soule! And by what cause, thou carle, hast thou kyllled
20 thes Crysten chyldern?' 'Thou haste made many martyrs by mourtheryng of this londis.' Therefore thou shalt have thy mede thorow Mychael that owyth this mounte. And also, why haste thou slayne this fayre douches? Therefore dresse the, doggys son, for thou shalt dye this day thorow
25 the dynte of my hondis.

[1074] Than the gloton gloored and grevid full foule He had teeth lyke a grayhounde, he was the foulst wyghte that ever man sye, and there was never suche one fourmed on

my message for al your ferdful wordes and wente forth by the creast of that hylle and sawe where he satte atte souper gnawynge on a lymme of a man bekyng his brode lymmes by the fyre and bercheles and thre fayr damoyseles tornynge thre brochis wheron were broched
5 twelue yonge children late borne lyke yonge byrdes Whanne kynge Arthur beheld that pyteous sygte he had grete compassion on them so that his hert bledde for sorowe and hayled hym sayeng in this wyse he that alle the world weldeth gyue the shorte lyf & shameful dethe And the deuyl haue thy soule why hast thou murthred these
10 yonge Innocent children and murthred this duchesse Therefore aryse and dresse the thow gloton For this day shall thou dye of my hand Thenne the gloton anone starte vp and tooke a grete clubbe in his

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erthe, for there was never devil in helle more horriblyer
made: for he was fro the hede to the foote fyve fadom longe
and large. And therewith sturdely he sterte uppon his leggis
and caughte a clubbe in his honde all of clene iron
'Than he swappis at the kynge with that kyd wepyn/ He 5
cruysshed downe with the club the coronal doune' to the
colde erthe. The kynge coverde hym with his shyld and
rechis a boxe evyn infourmede in the myddis of his forehede,
that the slypped blade unto the brayne rechis. Yet he
shappis at sir Arthure, but the kynge shuntys a lytyll and 10 .

Than he rored and brayed and yet angurly he strykes, [1124]
and fayled of sir Arthure and the erthe hittis, that he kutte
into the swarffe a large swerde-length and more. Than the 15
kynge sterte up unto hym and raught hym a buffette and 78^r
kut his baly in sundir, that oute wente the gore, that the
grasse and the grounde all foule was begone.

Than he kaste away the clubbe and caughte the kynge [1132]
in his armys and handeled the kynge so harde that he 20
crusshed his rybbes. Than the balefull maydyns wronge
hir hondis and kneled on the grounde and to Cryste called
'for helpe and comforte of Arthur'¹. With that the warlow
wrath Arthure undir, and so they waltyrde and tumbylde
over the craggis and busshys, and eythir cleyght other full 25
faste in their armys. And other whyles Arthure was aboven
and other whyle undir, and so ^rweltryng and walowynge
they rolled doune the hylle, and¹ they never leffte tyll they
fyllle thereas the floode marked. But ever in the walteryng

hand and smote at the kynge that his coronal fyllle to the erthe and
the kynge hytte hym ageyn that he carf his bely* (MA 1122 Ewyn
into [J>e] inmette the gyaunt he hyttez) and cutte of his genytours
that his guttes & his entraylles fyllle doune to the ground thenne the
gyaunt threwe away his clubbe and caught the kynge in his armes 5
that he crushyd his rybbes Thenne the thre maydens knelyd doune
and callyd to Cryst for helpe and comforte of Arthur* (MA 1138
Criste comforthe 5one knyghte and kepe hym fro sorowe And latte
neuer 3one fende fell hym o lyfe) And thenne Arthur weltred and
wrong that he was other whyle vnder and another tyme aboue And ¹⁰
so weltryng and walowynge they rolled doune the hylle* {MA 1142

Arthure smyttes and hittis hym with a shorte dagger up to the hyltys, and in his fallynge there braste of the gyauntes rybbys three evyn at onys.

C3 And by fortune they felle thereas the two knyghtes
 5 aboode with their horsis. Whan sir Kay saw the kynge and the gyaunte so icleyght togyder, 'Alas,' sayd sir Kay, 'we ar forfeite for ever! Yondir is our lorde overfallen with a fende.' 'Hit is nat so,' seyde the kynge, 'but helpe me, sir Kay, for this corseynte have I clegged oute of the yondir
 io clowys.' 'In fayth,' seyde sir Bedwere, 'this is a foule carle,'
 'and caughte the corseynte oute of the kynges armys' and there he seyde, 'I have mykyll wondir, and Mychael be of suche a makying, that ever God wolde suffir hym to abyde in hevyn. 'And if seyntis be suche that servys Jesu/ I woll
 15 never seke for none, be the fayth of my body!'

[1170] The kynge than lough at Bedwers wordis and seyde,
 'This seynte have I sought nyghe unto my grete daunger. But stryke of his hede and sette hit on a trouncheune of a speare, and geff hit to thy servaunte that is swyffte-horsed,
 20 and bere hit unto sir Howell that is in harde bondis, and bydde hym be mery, for his enemy is destroyed. And aftir
 78^v in Barflete lette brace hit on a barbycan, that all the comyns of this contrey may hit beholde.

[1184] 'And than ye two go up 'to the montayn" and fecche me
 25 my shelde, my swerde, and the boystouse clubbe of iron, and yf ye lyste ony tresoure, take what ye lyst, for there may Welters and walowes ouer within Jæ [wilde] buskez) tyl they came to the see marke and euer as they soo weltred Arthur smote* (MA 1148-9 smyttez and hittez euer in the hulke vp to pe hiltz) hym with his daggar and it fortunied they came to the place where as the
 5 two knyghtes were and kepte Arthurs hors thenne when they sawe the kynge fast in the gyaunts armes they came and losed* hym (MA 1156-7 Jæy hafe vp hys hawberke Jæn and handilez pervndyre His hyde and his haunche eke, on heghte to Jæ schuldrez) And thenne the kynge commaunded syr kaye to smyte of the gyaunts hede and
 10 to sette it vpon a truncheon of a spere and bere it to syre howel and telle hym that his enemy was slayne and after late this hede be bounden to a barbycan that alle the peple may see and behold hit and go ye two up to the montayn* (MA 1185 On pe creeste of pe cragge) and fetche me my sheld my suerd and the clubbe of yron And as for
 15 the tresour take ye it for ye shalle fynde there good oute of nombre So

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ye fynde tresoure oute of numbir. So I have the curtyll
"and the clubbe"¹, I kepe no more. For this was a freysh
gyaunte and mykyll of strength, for I mette nat with suche ["74]
one this fyftene wyntir sauff onys in the mounthe of Arrabe*
I mette with suche another, but this was ferser; that had I s
nere founden, had nat my fortune be good/ "*"

Than the knyghtee- fecched the clubbe and the coote and [IX9*]
all the remenaunte, and toke with hem what tresoure that
hem lyked. Than the kynge and they sterte uppon their
horsys, and so they rode fro thens thereas they come fro. *o

And anone the clamoure was howge aboute all the contrey, [XI9⁸]
and than they wente with one voyse tofore the kynge and
thanked God and hym that their enemy was destroyed.
'All thanke ye God,' seyde Arthure, 'and no man ellys.
Looke that the gooddys be skyffted, that none playne of 15
his parte.' Than he commaunded his cosyn, sir Howell, to
make a kyrke on that same cragge in the worshyppe of
Seynte Mychael.

On the morne frome Barflete remevyth the kynge with [«**]
all his grete batayle proudly arayed, and so they shooke over 20
the stremys into a rayre champayne, and thereby doune in
a valey they pyght up hir tentys.

And evyn at the mete-whyle come two messyngers, that [I23*]
one was the marchall of Fraunce, that seyde to the kynge
how the Emperour was "'entryd"¹ into Fraunce, 'and hath 25

I haue the kertyl and the clubbe* {MA 1191 Haue I the kyrtyll and
Jæ clubb) I desyre no more This was the fyerst gyaunt that euer I
mette with sauff one in the mount of Arabe whiche I ouercame but
this was gretter and fyerser Thenne the knyghtes fette the clubbe
and the kyrtyl and some of the tresour they took to them self and 5
retorned ageyne to the host And anone this was knowne thurgh alle
the countrey wher for the peple came and thanked the kynge And
he sayd ageyne yeue the thanke to god and departe the goodes among
yow And after that kynge Arthur sayd and commaunded his Cosyn
howel that he shold ordeyne for a chirche to be bylded on the same 10
hille in the worship of saynte Mychel And on the morne the kynge
remeuyd with his grete bataylle and came in to Champayne and in
a valeye and there they pyght their tentys and the kynge beyng set
at his dyner ther cam in two messagers of whome that one was Marchal

- destroyed much of oure marchis, and is com into Burgayne, and many borowys hath destroyed, and hath made grete slaughtir of your noble people. And where that he rydyth
 79^r all he destroyes. And now he is comyn into Dowse Fraunce,
 s and there he brenmys all clene. Now all the (dowseperys),
 bothe deukys and other, and the peerys of Parys towne, ar
 fledde downe into the Lowe Contrey towarde Roone, and
 but yf thou helpe them the sunner they muste yelde hem
 all at onys, bothe the bodyes and townys. They can none
 io othir succour, but nedys they muste yelde them in haste.'
- [1263] Than ^xthe kynge byddis sir Borce: 'Now bowske the
 ' blythe' and sir Lyonel and sir Bedwere, loke that ye fare
 with sir Gawayne, my nevew, with you, and take as many
 good knyghtes, and looke that ye ryde streyte unto sir
 is Lucius and sey I bydde hym in haste to remeve oute of my
 londys. And yf he woll nat, so bydde hym dresse his batayle
 and lette us redresse oure ryghtes with oure handis, and that
 is more worshyppe than thus to overryde maysterlesse men.'
- [1279] Than anone in all haste they dressed hem to horsebak,
 20 thes noble knyghtes, and whan they com to the grene wood
 they sawe before hem many prowde pavylyons of sylke of
 dyverse coloures that were sette in a medow besyde a ryver,
 and the Emperoures pavylyon was in the myddys with an
 egle displayed on loffte. Than thorow the wood oure
 *5 knyghtes roode tylle that they com unto the Emperoures
 of frauce and sayd to the kyng that themperour was entryd* (IV was
 com; MA 1239 es entirde) in to fraunce and had destroyed a grete
 parte and was in Burgoyn and had destroyed and made grete slaughter
 of peple & brente townes and borowes wherfor yf thou come not
 5 hastily they must yelde vp their bodyes and goodes
- (6) Thenne the kynge dyd doo calle syre Gawayne syre Borce syr
 Lyonel and syre Bedwere and commaunded them to goo straye
 to syre Lucius and saye ye to hym that hastily he remeue oute of
 my land And yf He wil not bydde hym make hym redy to bataylle
 10 and not distresse the poure peple* {MA 1276 raunsone the pople)
 Thenne anone these noble knyghtes dressyd them to horsbak And
 whanne they came to the grene wood they sawe many pavelions sette
 in a medowe of sylke of dyverse colours besyde a ryuer And them-
 perours pavelione was in the myddle with an egle displayed aboue To
 15 the whiche tente our knyghtes rode toward and ordeyned syr Gawayn
 and syre Bors to doo the message And lefte in a busshement syre

tente. But behynde them they leffte stuff of men of armys in a boyshement; and there he leffte in the boyshement sir Lyonel and sir Bedwere. Sir Gawayne and sir Borce wente with the message.

So they rode worthyly into the Emperoures tente and 5 [1307] spoke bothe at onys with hawte wordys: 'Now geff the sorow, sir Emperour, and all thy sowdyars the aboute/ For why occupyest thou with wronge the empyreship of Roome? That is kyng Arthures herytage be kynde or his noble elders: there lakked none but Uther, his fadir. There- w fore the kyng commaundyth the to ryde oute of his londys, other ellys to fyght for all and knyghtly hit wyne.' 79*

'Ye sey well,' seyde the Emperour, 'as youre lorde hath [1326] you commaunded. But 'saye to¹ your lorde I sende hym gretynge, but I have no joy of youre renckys thus to rebuke 15 me and my lordys. But sey youre lorde I woll ryde downe by Sayne and wyne all that thereto longes, and aftir ryde unto Roone and wyne hit up clene.'

'Hit besemys the ylle,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'that ony such [1342] an elffe sholde bragge suche wordys, for I had levir than all *o Fraunce to fyght ayenste the.' 'Other I , ' seyde sir Borce, 'than to welde all Bretayne other Burgayne the noble/

Than a knyght that hyght sir Gayus that was cosyn unto [^47] the Emperour, he seyde thes wordys: 'Loo! how¹ thes Englyshe Bretouns be braggars of kynde, for ye may see 25 how^N they boste and bragge as they durste bete all the worlde.'" ^NThan grevid sir Gawayne at his grete wordys',

Lyonel and syre Bedwere And thenne syre Gawayn and syr Borce dyd their message and commaunded Lucius in Arthurs name to auoyde his lond or shortly to adresse hym to bataylle To whome Lucius ansuerde* and sayd (MA 1326 The emperour ansuerde) ye shalle retorne to your lord and saye* ye to (JV But telle; MA 1330 But say 5 to) hym that I shall subdue hym and alle his londes Thenne syre Gawayn was wrothe and sayde I hadde leuer than alle Fraunce fyghte ageynste the and so hadde I saide syr Borce leuer than alle Bretayne or burgoyne Thenne a knyght named syre Gaynus nyghe cosyn to the Emperour sayde loo how* (MA 1349 loo how he brawles 10 hym) these Bretons ben fui of pryde and boost and they bragge as though they bare vp alle the worlde Thenne syre Gawayne was sore

and^s with his bowerly bronde that bryght semed' he stroke of the hede of sir Gayus the knyght.

C^r355] And so they turned their horsis and rode over watyrs and woodys into they com ny the busschement there sir Lyonell
5 and sir Bedwere were hovyng styлле. Than the Romaines folowed faste on horsebak and ^xon foote over a fayre champeyne unto a fayre wood/

Than turnys hym sir Borce wyth a freyshe wylle and sawe a gay knyght ^rcome fast on¹, all floryshed in golde, that bare
io downe of Arthures knyghtes wondirfull many. Than sir Borce aspyed hym, he kaste in feautir a spere and gyrdis hym thorowoute the body, that his guttys fylle oute and the knyght ^rfylle doune¹ to the grounde that gresly gronyd.

[1374] Than preced in a bolde barowne all in purpull arayed.

15 He threste into the prece of kyng Arthures knyghtes and fruysshed downe many good knyghtes, and he was called
80^r Calleborne, the strengyste of Pavynes Londis. And sir Borce turned hym to and ^Nbare hym thorow the brode shyld and the brode of his breste¹, that he felle to the erthe
io as dede as a stone.

[1382] Than sir Feldenake the myghty that was a praysted man of armys, ^she gurde to sir Gawayne for greff of sir Gayus/
and his other felowys, and sir Gawayne was ware and drew Galantyne, his swerde, and hyt hym such a buffette that he

greued with these wordes and pulled oute his swerd and smote of his hede And therwith torned .theyr horses and rode ouer waters and thurgh woodes tyl they came to theyre busschement where as syr Lyonel and syr Bedeuer were houyng The romayns folowed
5 fast after on horsbak and on foote ouer a chapayn vnto a wood thenne syre Boors torned his hors and sawe a knyghte come fast on* (MA 1365-7 Come forthermaste on a freson... And folowes faste on owre folke)^whome he smote thurgh the body with a spere that he fylle dede doune* (MA 1372 The gome and ðe grette horse at ðe
10 grounde lygge) to the erthe thenne cam Callyburne one of the strengest of paue and smote doun many of Arthurs knyghtes And whan syr Bors sawe hym do soo moche harme he adressyd toward hym & smote hym thurij the brest that he fylle doune dede to the erthe Thenne fyr Feldenak thought to reuenge the dethe of gaynus vpon
1^s syre Gawayn but syre gawayn was ware therof and smote hym on the

1-3 W {sidenote) The deth of sir Gayus 24-p. 209, 3 W (sidenote) The deth of sir Feldenak

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cleved hym to the breste, and than he caughte his courser
and wente to his ferys.

Than a rych man of Rome, one of the senatours, called C^l39^h
to his felowys and bade hem returne, 'for yondir ar shrewed
messengers and bolde boosters. If we folow them ony 5
farther the harme shall be owrys/ And so the Romaines
returned lyghtly to tthere tentys and tolde the Emperour
how they had spedde, and how the marchall of Rome was
slayne, and mo than fyve thousand in the felde dede.

But yet ore they wente and departe, ^Noure bushemente ¹⁰ [H°7]
brake on bothe sydys' of the Romaines, and there the bolde
Bedwer and sir Lyonel bare downe the Romaines on every
syde. There oure noble knyghtes of mery Ingelonde bere
hem thorow the helmys and bryght sheldis and slew hem
downe, and there the hole roughthe returned unto the Em- *5
perour and tolde hym at one worde his men were destroyed,
ten thousand, by batayle of tyred knyghtes, 'for they ar the
brymmyst men that evir we saw in felde.'

But allwayes sir Borce and sir Gawayne freyshly folowed [H**]
on the Romaines evyn unto the Emperoures tentes. Than *◇
oute ran the Romaines on every syde, bothe on horse and
on foote, to many oute of numbir. But sir Borce and sir
Berel ^Nwere formeste in the frunte and freyshly faught' as
ever dud ony knyghtes. But sir Gawayne was on the ryght
honde and dud what he myght, but there were so many hym *5
agaynste he myght nat helpe there his ferys, but was fayne
to turne on his horse othir his lyffe muste he lese. Sir Borce 80^v
and sir Berell, the good barounnes, fought as two boorys
that myght no farther passe. But at the laste, thoughe
they loth were, they were yolden and takyn and saved their 30
lyves, yet the stale stode a lytyll on fer with sir Gawayne
that made sorow oute of mesure for thes two lordys.

hede whiche stroke stynted not tyl it came to his breste And thenne
he retorned and came to his felawes in the busschement And there was
a recountre for the busschement brake on the Romainys and slewe and
hewe doune the Romainys and forced the Romainys to flee and retorne
whome the noble knyghtes chaced vnto theyr tentes Thenne the 5
Romainys gadred more peple and also foote men cam on and ther was
a newe bataille and soo moche peple that syr Bors and syr Berel were
taken but whan syre gawayn sawe that he tooke with hym syre

[1439] But than cam in a freysh knyght clenly arayed, sir Idres, sir Uwaynes son, a noble man of armys. He brought fyve hondred good men in haubirkes attyred, and whan he wyste sir Borce and sir Berel were cesed of werre, 'Alas,' he sayde
 5 'this is to muche shame and overmuche losse! For with kynge Arthure, and he know that thes two knyghtes bene thus loste, he woll never mery be tyll this be revenged.'

'A, fayre knyght,' sayde sir Gawayne, 'thou moste nedis be a good man, for so is thy fadir. I knowe full well thy
 10 modir. In Ingelonde was thou borne. Alas, thes Romaines this day have chaced us as wylde harys, and they have oure noble chyfften takyn in the felde. There was never a bettir knyght that strode uppon a steede. Loo ^x where they lede oure lordys over yondir brode launde.' I make myne avowe,'
 15 seyde sir Gawayne, 'I shall never se my lorde Arthure but yf I reskew hem that so lyghtly ar ledde us fro.'

'That is knyghtly spokyn,' seyde sir Idres, and pulde up her brydyls and halowed over that champayne. There was russhynge of sperys and swappyng of swerdis, and sir
 20 Gawayne with Galantyne, his swerde, dud many wondyrs. Than he threste thorow the prece unto hym that lad sir Bors, and bare hym thorow up to the hyltys, and lade away sir Bors straye unto his ferys. Than sir Idrus the yonge, sir Uwaynes son, he threste unto a knyght that had
 *5 sir Berell, that the brayne and the blode clevid on his swerde.

[1476] There was a proude senatoure preced aftir sir Gawayne, and gaff hym a grete buffet. That sawe sir Idres and aftir rydyth, and had slayne the senatour but that he yelded hym
 81^r 30 in haste. Yet he was loth to be yoldyn but that he nedys muste, and with that sir Idrus ledde hym oute of the prees unto sir Lyonel and unto sir Lovel, Idrus brothir, and commaunded hem to kepe hym on payne of theire hedis.

Than there began a passynge harde stoure, for the Idrus the good knyght and sayd he wold neuer see kynge Arthur but yf be (S he) rescued them and pulled out galatyn his good swerd and folowed them that ledde tho ij knyghtes awaye and he smote hym that lad syre Bors and took syr Bors fro hym and delyuerd hym to his
 5 felawes And syre Idrus in lyke wyse rescowed syr Berel thenne beganne the bataill to be grete that oure knyijtes were in grete leopardy

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Romaynes ever wexed ever bygger. Whan sir Gawayne that aspyed he sente forth a knyght unto kyng Arthure. 'And telle hym what sorow we endure, and how we have takyn the chefe chaunceler of Rome. And Petur is presoner, a [*543] senatoure full noble, and odir proude pryncis, we knowe s nat theire namys. And pray hym, as he is oure lorde, to rescowe us betyme,«for oure presoners may pay rychesse oute of numbir; and telle hym that I am wounded wondirly sore.'

Whan the messyngers com to the kyng and tolde hym ¹⁰ 1^{SS9}] thes wordys ^Nthe kyng thanked Cryste clappyng his hondys/ 'And for thy trew sawys, and I may lyve many wyntyrs, there was never no knyght better rewardid. But there is no golde undir God that shall save their lyvys, I make myne avow to God, and sir Gawayne be in ony perell 15 of deth; for I had levir that the Emperour and all his chyff lordis were sunkyn into helle than ony lorde of the Rounde Table were byttyrly wounded.' So forth the presoners were brought before Arthure, and he commaunded hem into keypyng of the conestablys warde, surely to be kepte as ²⁰ noble presoners.

So within a whyle com in the fore-ryders, that is for to say sir Bors, sir Bedwere, sir Lyonell, and sir Gawayne that was sore wounded, with all hir noble felyshyp. They loste no man of worshyppe. So anone the kyng lete rensake sir *5 Gawayne anone in his syght and sayde, 'Fayre cosyn, me ruys of thy hurtys! And yf I wyste hit myght glad thy hert othir fare the bettir with hit, I sholde presente the with hir hedys thorow whom thou art thus rebuked.' 'That were lytyll avayle,' sayde sir Gawayne, 'for theire hedys had they 30

wherfore syre Gawayn sente to kyng Arthur for socour and that he hye hym for I am sore wounded and that oure prysoners may paye good oute of nombre And the messenger came to the kyng and told hym his message And anon the kyng dyd doo assemble his armye but anone or he departed the prysoners were comen and syre gawayn 5 and his felawes gate the felde and put the Romainys to flyght and after retorned and came with their felauship in suche wyse that no man of worship was loste of them sauf that syr Gawayn was sore hurte Thenne the kyng dyd do ransake his woundes and comforted hym And thus was the begynnyng of the fyrst iourney of the brytons and 10

81^v lorne, and I had wolde myself, and hit were shame to sle
 knyghtes whan they be yolden.' Than was there joy and
 game amonge the knyghtes of Rounde Table, and spoke of
 the grete prouesse^N that the messyngers ded that day
 5 thorow dedys of armys/

[1601] go on the morne whan hit was day the kyng callyd unto
 hym sir Cador of Cornuayle,^N and sir Clarrus of Clereounte,
 a clene man of armys/ and sir Cloudres, sir Clegis, two
 io olde noble knyghtes, and sir Bors, sir Berell, noble good
 men of armys, and also sir Bryan de les Ylyes, and sir
 Bedwere the bolde, and also he called sir Launcelot in
 heryng of all peple, and seyde, *I pray the, sir, as thow lovys
 me, take hede to thes other knyghtes and boldely lede thes
 presoners unto Paryse towne, there for to be kepte surely
 15 as they me love woll have. And yf ony rescowe befall, e
 moste I afrye the in me, as Jesu me helpe.'

Than sir Launcelot and sir Cador with thes other
 knyghtes attyred oute of their felyshyp ten thousand be
 tale of bolde men arayed of the beste of their company, and
 20 then they unfolde baners and let hem be displayed.

[1621] Now turne we to the Emperour of Rome that wyste by
 a spye whethir this presoners sholde wende. He callyd unto
 hym sir Edolf and sir Edward, two myghty kynges, and
^Nsir Sextore of Lybye, and senatours many/ and the kyng
 25 of Surr^e, and the senatoure of Rome Sawtre. All thes turned
 towarde Troyes with many proved knyghtes to betrappe
 the kynges sondismen that were charged with the presoners.

Thus ar oure knyghtes passed towarde Paryse. A busshe-
 mente lay before them of sixty thousand men of armys.
 30 'Now, lordis,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'I pray you, herkyns me

Romayns and ther were slayne of the Romayns moo than ten thousand
 and grete ioye and myrthe was made that nyghte in the hoost of kyng
 Arthur And on the morne he sente alle the prysoners in to parys
 vnder the garde of syre launcelot with many knyghtes & of syr Cador
 (7) 5 Now torne we to the Emperour of Rome whiche aspyed that these
 prysoners shold be sente to Parys and anone he sente to leye in a
 busschement certayne knyghtes and prynces with syxty thousand men
 for to rescowe his knyghtes and lordes that were prysoners And so
 on the morne as Launcelot and syre Cador chyuetayns and gouernours
 xo of all them that conueyed the prysoners as they sholde passe thurgh

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a whyle. I drede that in this woodys be leyde afore us many of oure enemyes. Therefore be myne advyse sende we three good knyghtes.' 'I assente me,' seyde sir Cador, and all they seyde the same, and were aggreed that sir Claryon and sir Clement the noble that they sholde dyscover the woodys, 5 bothe the dalys and the downys.

So forth rode thes three knyghtes and aspyed in the 82^r woodis men of armys rydyng on sterne horsys. Than sir [^49] Clegys cryed on lowde, 'Is there any knyght, kyng, other cayser, that dare for his lordis love that he servyth recountir 10 with a knyght of the Rounde Table? ^NBe he kyng other knyght, here is his recounter redy.'

^NAn erle hym answeyrd angirly agayne/ and seyde, [i66t] 'Thy lorde wennys with his knyghtes to wynne all the worlde! I trow your currage shall be aswaged in shorte 15 tyme.'

'Fye on the, ^Ncowarde 1' seyde sir Clegis, 'as a cowarde [l670 thou spekyste/ for, by Jesu, myne armys ar knowyn thorowoute all Inglonde and Bretayne, and I am com of olde barounes of auncetry noble, and sir Clegis is my name, *o a knyght of the Table Rounde. And frome Troy Brute brought myne elders.'

'Thou besemeste well,' seyde the kyng, 'to be one of the good be thy bryght browys, but for all that thou canst conjeoure other sey, there shall none that is here medyll ^{As} with the this tyme.'

Than sir Clegis returned fro the ryche kyng and rode [l706] streyghte to sir Launcelot and unto sir Cador and tolde hem what he had seyne in the woodis of the fayryste syght of men of armys to the numbir of sixty thousand. 'And 30 therefore, lordynges, fyght you behovys,^s other ellys shunte for shame, chose whether ye lykys.'

'Nay, be my fayth,' sayde sir Launcelot, 'to turne is no [r7^] tyme, for here is all olde knyghtes of grete worshyp that were never shamed. And as for me and my cousyns of my 35

a wode syr Laucelot sente certayne knyghtes tespye yf ony were in the woodes to lette them And whanne the said knyghtes cam in to the wood anone they aspyed and sawe the grete enbusshement and retorned and told syr Laucelot that ther lay in a wayte for them thre score thousand Romayns And thenne syr Launcelot with suche 5

bloode, we ar but late made knyghtes, yett wolde we be loth to lese the worshyp that oure eldyrs have deservyd.'

'Ye sey well,' seyde sir Cador and all thes knyghtes; 'of youre knyghtly wordis comfortis us all. And I suppose
5 here is none woll be glad to returne, and as for me,' seyde sir Cador, 'I had lever dye this day than onys to turne my bak.'

'Ye sey well,' seyde sir Borce, 'lette us set on hem freyshly, and the worshyp shall be oures, and cause oure
82^v io kyng to honoure us for ever and to gyff us lordshyppis and landys for oure noble dedys. And he that faynes hym to fyght, the devyl have his bonys! And who save any knyghtes for lycoure of goodys tylle all be done and know who shall have the bettir, he doth nat knyghtly, so Jesu me helpel*

15 Than anone sir Launcelot and sir Cador, tho two myghty dukis, dubbed knyghtys worshyp to wyne. Joneke was the fyrste, a juster full noble; sir Hectimer and sir Alyduke, bothe of Inglonde borne;^x and sir Hamerel and sir Hardolf, full hardy men of armys⁷; also sir Harry and sir Harygall
20 that good men were bothe.

'Now, felowys,* seyde sir Launcelot and sir Cador the
[1744] kene, 'com' hydir, sir Bedwere and sir Berel, take with you 'sir Raynolde and sir Edwarde that ar sir Roulondis chyldir/ and loke that ye take kepe to thes noble presoners.
25 What chaunce so us betyde, save them and yourself. This commaundement we geff you as ye woll answeere to oure soverayne lorde, and for ony stowre that ever ye se us bestadde ^Nstondys in your stale and sterte ye no ferther/
And yf hit befall that ye se oure charge is to mucche, than
30 recover yourself unto som kynde castell, and than ryde you faste unto oure kynge and pray hym of soccour, as he is oure kynde lorde.'

[1753] And than they fruyshed forth all at onys,^N of the bourelyest knyghtes that ever brake brede/^vwith mo than fyve hondred
35 at the formyst frunte/ and caste their speares in feawter all at onys, and save trumpettes there was no noyse ellys. Than knyghtes as he hadde and men of warre to the nombre of x M put them in araye and met wyth them and foughte with them manly and slewe and dretenchid many of the Romyans and slewe many knyghtes & admyrals of the party of the Romyans and sarasyns ther

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the Romaines oste remeved a lytyll, and the lorde that was kyng of Lybye, that lad all the formyste route, he keste his spere in feautyr and bare his course evyn to sir Berel, and strake hym thorow the gorge, that he and his horse felle to the grounde, and so he was brought oute of his lyff. 5

'Alas/ sayde sir Cadore, 'now carefull is myrie herte that now lyeth dede my cosyn that I beste loved.' He alyght off his horse and toke hym in his armys and ^s there com- 83^r maunded knyghtes to kepe well the corse/

Than the kyng craked grete wordys on lowde and seyde, 10 [1781] 'One of yon prowde knyghtes is leyde full lowe.'

'^Yondir kyng,' seyde sir Cador, 'carpis grete wordis/ But and I may lyve or this dayes ende ^NI shall countir with yondir kyng, so Cryste me helpe!"

'Sir,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'meve you nat to sore, but take 15 your spear in your honde and we shall you not fayle.'

Than sir Cador, sir Launcelot, and sir Bors, the good [1790] men of armys, thes three feawtyrd their sperys and threste into the myddys and ran thorowoute the grete oste twyse other three tymes, and whan their sperys were brokyn^v they *o swange oute their swerdis and slowe of noble men⁷ of armys mo than an hondred, and than they rode ayen to their ferys. Than alowde the kyng of Lybye cryed unto sir Cador, 'Well have ye revenged the deth of your knyght, for I have loste for one knyght an hondred by seven score.' *5

And therewith the batayle began to joyne, and grete [1809] slaughter there was on the Sarysens party, but thorow the noble prouesse of kyng Arthurs knyghtes ten were takyn and lad forth as presoners. That greved sore sir Launcelot, sir Cador, and sir Bors the brym. The kyng of Lybye be- 30 helde their dedis and sterte on a sterne horse and umbely-closed oure knyghtes and drove downe to the grounde many a good man, for there was sir Aladuke slayne, and also sir Ascamour sore wounded, and ^Nsir Herawde and sir Heryngale hewyn to pecis/ and sir Lovell was takyn, and 35

was slayne the kyng of lylve and thre grete lordes Aladuke herawde and heryngdale but syr Launcelot fought soo nobly that no man myght

4-6 W {sidenote} The deth of Sir Berel

34-P- 2i6» 3 W {sidenote} The deth of I I I . knyghtes Sir Aladuke Sir Herawde & Sir Heryngale

sir Lyonell also, and nere had sir Clegis, sir Cleremonde had nat bene, with the knyghthode of sir Launcelot: tho newe made knyghtes had be slayne everych one.

[1830] Than sir Cador rode unto the kyng of Lybye with a
 5 swerde well stelyd and smote hym an hyghe uppon the hede,
 that the brayne folowed. 'Now haste thou,' seyde sir Cador,
 'corne-boote agaynewarde, and the devyll have thy bonys that
 ever thou were borne!' Than the sowdan of Surre* was wood
 wroth, for the deth of that kyng grevid hym at his herte,
 83^v 10 and recomforted his peple and sette sore on oure knyghtes.

Than sir Launcelot and sir Bors encountyrs with hym
 sone, and within a whyle, as tellyth the romaynes, they had
 [1864] slayne of the Sarazens mo than fyve thousand. And sir Kay
 the kene had takyn a captayne, and Edwardde had takyn
 15 two erlys, and the sawdon of Surre* yeldid hym up unto sir
 Launcelot, and the senatur of Sautre yeldid hym unto sir Cador.

[1872] Whan the Romaynes and the Sarezens aspyed how the
 game yode they fledde with all hir myght to hyde there
 hedis. Than oure knyghtes folowed with a freysshe fare
 20 and slew downe of the Sarezens ^ron every syde"¹.

And sir Launcelot ded so grete dedys of armys that
 day that sir Cador and all the Romaynes had mervayle of
 his myght, for there was nother kyng, cayser, nother
 knyght that day myght stonde hym ony buffette. There-
 25 fore was he honoured dayes of his lyff, for never ere or that
 day was he proved so well, for he and sir Bors and sir Lyonel
 was but late afore at an hyghe-feste made all three knyghtes.

And thus were the Romaynes and the Sarezens slayne
 adowne clene, save a fewe were recovirde thereby into a
 [1882] 30 lytyll castell. And than the noble renckys of the Rounde
 Table, thereas the felde was, toke up hir good bodyes of
 the noble knyghtes and garte sende them unto kyng

endure a stroke of his hande but where he came he shewed his prowesse
 and myght for he slewe doune ryght on euery syde And the Romayns
 and sarasyns fledde from hym as the sheep fro the wulf or fro the
 lyon and putt them alle that abode alyue to flyght And so longe they
 5 fou^{te} that tydynge came to kyng Arthur And anone he graythed
 hym and came to the bataille and sawe his knyghtes how they had

7-8 W (sidenote) The deth of the kyng of lybye 20 W Sarezens and folowed
 etc. {see note}

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Arthure into the erthe to be caste. So they all rode unto Paryse and beleffte the presoners there with the pure proveste, and than they were delyverde into sure sauffgarde. Than every knyght toke a spere and dranke of the colde wyne, and than fersely in a brayde returned unto the kyng. 5

Whan the kyng his knyghtes sawe he was than mervelously rejoyced and cleyght knyght be knyght in his armys and sayde, 'AH the worshyp in the worlde ye weldel Be my fayth, there was never kyng sauff myselff that welded evir such knyghtes.*

10

'Sir,' seyde sir Cador, 'there was none of us that fayled othir, but of the knyghthode of sir Launcelot hit were mervayle to telle. And of his bolde cosyns ar proved full noble knyghtes, but of wyse wytte and of grete strengthe of his ayge sir Launcelot hath no felowe.'

15

Whan the kyng herde sir Cador sey such wordys he seyde, 'Hym besemys for to do such dedis.' And sir Cadore tolde Arthure whyche of the good knyghtis were slayne: 'the kyng of Lybye, and he slew the fyrste knyght on oure syde, that was sir Berell; and sir Aladuke was another, a noble man of armys, and sir Maurel and sir Mores that were two brethyrn, with sir Manaduke and sir Mandyff, two good knyghtes.'

20

Than the kyng 'wepte and'¹ with a keuerchoff wyped his eyen and sayde, 'Youre corrage and youre hardynesse nerehande had you destroyed, for and ye had turned agayne ye had loste no worshyp, for I calle hit but folly to abyde whan knyghtes bene overmacched.'

25

vaynquysshed the bataylle he embraced them knyght by kny3te in his armes and said ye be worthy to welde all your honour and Worship there was neuer kyng sauf my self that had so noble knyghtes Syre sayd Cador there was none of vs failled other but of the prowesse and manhode of syre Launcelot were more than wonder to telle and also of his cosyns whiche dyd that daye many noble feates of werre And also syre Cador tolde who of his knyghtes were slayne as syr beriel & other syr Morys and syr Maurel two good knyghtes thenne the kyng wepte* {MA 1920 the worthy kyng wrythes and wepede with his eygh[e]ne) arid dried his eyen with a keuerchyef & sayd your courage had nere hand destroyed yow For though ye had returned agayne ye had lost no worship For I calle hit folly knyghtes to abyde

10

'Not so,' sayde sir Launcelot, 'the shame sholde ever have bene oures.' 'That is trouthe,' seyde sir Clegis and sir Bors, 'for knyghtes ons shamed recoverys hit never.'

Now leve sir Arthure and his noble knyghtes and speke we of a senatoure that ascaped fro the batayle. Whan he com to Lucius the Emperour of Rome he seyde, 'Sir, withdraw the! What doste thou here in this marchis and [*954] to overren poore peple? Thou shalt wynne nothyng ellys, and if thou dele with kynge Arthure and his doughty io knyghtes thou wynnys naught ellys but grete strokys oute of mesure. For this day one of Arthurs knyghtes was worth in batayle an hondred of oures.'

'Fye on the,' seyde Lucyus, 'for cowardly thou spekyste! Yf my harmys me greve, thy wordys greveth me muche 15 more.' Than he called to hym his counceyle, men of noble bloode. So by all theire advyse he sent forth a knyght that 84^v [1971] hyght sir Leomye. He dressed his peple and hyghe hym he bade, and take hym of the beste men of armys many sad hundrethis, 'and go before, and we woll follow aftir'.

[1973] 20 But the kynge of their commynge was prevely warned, and than into Sessoyne he dressid his peple and forstalled the Romaines from the kyd castels and the walled townes. And there ^xsir Vyllers the valyaunte made his avow evyn byfore the kynge⁷ to take other to sle the vycounte of Rome, 25 or ellys to dye therefore.

Than the kynge commaunded sir Cadore to take hede whan they be ouermatched Nay sayd Launcelot and the other For ones shamed maye neuer be recouerd

(8) Now leue we kynge Arthur and his noble knyghtes whiche had wonne the felde and had brought theyre prysoners to parys and speke we of 5 a senatour whiche escaped fro the bataille and came to Lucius themperour & sayd to hym Syre emperour I adyse the for to withdrawe the what dost thou here thou shalt wynne noo thyng in these marches but grete strokes oute of al mesure For this day one of Arthurs knyghtes was worth in the batayll an hondred of ours Fy on the sayd Lucius 10 thou spekest cowardly for thy wordes greue me more than alle the losse that I had this day and anone he sende forth a kynge whiche hyghte syr leomye with a grete armye and badde hym hye hym fast to fore and he wold folowe hastely after kynge Arthur was warned pryuely & sente his peple to Sessoyne and toke vp the townes & castels 15 fro the Romainys Thenne the kyng commaunded syr Cadore to take

Bk v] Of King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius 219

to the rerewarde: 'And take renkys of the Rounde Table that the beste lykys, sauff sir Launcelot and sir Bors, with many mo othir. Sir Kay, sir Clegis shall be there als, and sir Marroke, sir Marhaulte shall be with me in fere, and all thes with mo other shall awayte uppon my persone.' Thus 5 kynge Arthure dispercled all his oste in dyverse partyes that they sholde nat aseape, but to fyght them behovys.

Whan the Emperour was entyrd into the vale of Sessoyne [2006] he myght se where kyng Arthure hoked in batayle with baners displayed. On every syde was he besette, that he 10 myght nat ascape but other to fyght other to yelde hym, there was none other boote. 'Now I se well,' seyde sir Lucyus, 'yondir tray tour hath betrayed me.' Than he redressis his knyghtes on dyverse partyes, and sette up a dragon with eglys many one enewed with sabyl, and than he lete blow 15 up with trumpettes and with tabours, that all the vale dyndled. And than he lete crye on lowde, that all men myght here: 'Syr, ye know well that the honoure and worshyp hath [2033] ever folowyd the Romaines. And this day let hit nevyr be loste for the defaughte of herte, for I se well by yondyr 2° ordynaunce this day shall dye much peple. And therefore do doughtly this day, and the felde is ours.' 85^r

Than anone the Welshe kyng was so nygh that he herde [2044]

the rereward & to take with hym certayne knyghtes of the round table and syre Launcelot syre Bors syr kay syre Marrok with syre Marhaus shalle awayte on our persone Thus the kynge Arthur disperplyd his hoost in dyverse partyes to thende that his enemyes shold not escape whanne the Emperour was entryd in to the vale of Sessoyne he myghte 5 see where kynge Arthur was enbatailled and his baner dysplayed and he was bysette round aboute with his enemyes that nedes he must fyghte or yelde hym for he myght not flee But sayd openly vnto the Romainys syrs I admoneste you that this day ye fyghte and acquyte yow as men and remembre how Rome domyneth and is chyef and hede 10 ouer alle the erthe* (MA 2035 that regnede in erthe) and vnyuersal world and suffre not these bretons thys day to abyde ageynste vs & ther with he dyd commaunde hys tropettes to blowe the bloody sownes in suche wyse that the ground trembled and dyndled Thenne the batails approuched and shoue and showted on bothe sydes and grete strokes 15

19 W crye on lowde with trumpettes and with tabours that all the vale dynded and than he lete cry on lowde {see note}

sir Lucyus. Than he dressed hym to the vycounte his avow
for to holde. His armys were full clene and therein was a
dolefull dragon, and into the vawarde he p(r)ykys hym with
styff spere in honde, and there he mette wyth^N the valyaunte
5 Vyllers hymself that was vycounte of Rome/ and there he
smote hym thorow the shorte rybbys with a speare, that the
bloode braste oute on every syde, and so fylle to the erthe
and never spake mo wordys aftir.

[2066] Than the noble sir Uwayne boldly approched and gyrde
10 thorowoute the Emperoures batayle where was the thyckest
prece, and slew a grete lorde by the Emperours standard,
and than flow to the baner and strake hit thorowoute with
his bryght swerde, and so takyth hit fro hem and rydyth with
hit away unto his felyship.

[2073] 15 Than sir Launcelot lepe forth with his stede evyn streyght
unto sir Lucyus, and in his wey he smote thorow a kynge
that stoode althirnexte hym, and his name was Jacounde,
a Sarezen full noble. And than he russhed forth unto sir
Lucyus and smote hym on the helme with his swerde,
20 that he felle to the erthe; and syth he rode thryse over
hym on a rowe, and so toke the baner of Rome and rode
with hit away unto Arthure hymself. And all seyde that
hit sawe there was never knyght dud more worshyp in his
dayes.

[2085] 25 Than dressed hym sir Bors unto a sterne knyght and
smote hym on the umbrell, that his necke braste. Than he
joyned his horse untyll a sterne gyaunte, and smote hym
thorow bothe sydys, and yet he slewe in his way turnyng
two other knyghtes.

[2095] 30 Be than the bowemen of Inglonde and of Bretayne began
85^v to shote, and these othir, Romaynes and Sarezens, shotte
with dartis and with crosse-bowys. There began a stronge
batayle on every syde and mucche slaughter on the Romaynes
party, and the Douchemen with quarels dud mucche harme,
35 for they were with the Romaynes with hir bowys of home.
And the grete gyauntes of Gene kyllled downe many
were smyten on bothe sydes many men oueithrowen hurte & slayh and
grete valyaunces prowesses and appertyces of werre were that day
shewed whiche were ouer long to recounte the noble feates of euery
man For they shold conteyne an hole volnme But in especyal kynge

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knyghtes, with clubbys of Steele crussed oute hir braynes.
Also they sqwatte oute the braynes of many coursers.

Whan Arthure had aspyed the gyauntes workes he cryed [²¹¹9]
on lowde that knyghtes myght here and seyde, 'Fayre
lordys, loke youre name be nat loste! Lese nat youre wor- 5
shyp for yondir bare-legged knavys, and ye shall se what I
shall do as for my trew parte.' He toke there oute Ex-
calyber ^xand gurdys towarde Galapas that grevid hym
moste/ ^xHe kut hym of by the kneis clenly there in sondir:'
'Now art thou of a syse,' seyde the kynge, 'lyke unto oure 1°
ferys,' and than he strake of his hede swyftely.

Than come in sir Cadore and sir Kay, sir Gawayne and
good sir Launcelot, sir Bors, sir Lyonel, and sir Ector de
Marys, and sir Ascamore the good knyght that never fayled
his lorde, sir Pelleas and sir Marhault that were proved 15
men of armys. All thes grymly knyghtes sette uppon the
gyauntys, and^s by the dyntys were dalte and the dome yoldyn/
they had felled hem starke dede of fyffty all to the bare erthe.

So forth they wente wyth the kynge, tho knyghtes of the [2135]
Rounde Table. Was never kyng nother knyghtes dud 20
bettir syn God made the worlde. They leyde on with longe
swerdys and swapped thorow braynes. Shyldys nother no
shene armys myght hem nat withstonde tyll they leyde on
the erthe ten thousand at onys. Than the Romaines reled
a lytyl, for they were somewhat rebuked, but kyng Arthure 25
with his pryce knyghtes preced sore aftir. 86^r

Than sir Kay, sir Clegis and sir Bedwere the ryche [2157]
encountyrs with them by a clyffsyde, and there they three by
good meanys slowe in that chace mo than fyve hondred.
And also sir Kay roode unto a kyng of Ethyope* and bare 30
hym thorow, and as he turned hym agayne towarde his

Arthur rode in the bataille exhortynge his knyghtes to doo wel and hym
self dyd as nobly with his handes as was possyble a man to doo he drewe
oute Excalibur his swerd and awayted euer where as the romayns were
thickest and moost greued his peple and anone he adressyd hym on that
parte and hewe and slewe doune ry:jt and rescued his peple and he slewe 5
a grete gyaunt named galapas whiche was a man of an huge quantyte
and heyghte he shorted hym and smote of bothe his legges by the knees
sayenge Now arte thou better* [MA 2128 handsomere in hye) of
a syse to dele with than thou were and after smote of his hede there syre

ferys a tyrraunte strake hym betwyxte the breste and the bowellys, and as he was hurte yet he turned hym agayne and smote the tbdir on the hede, that to the breste hit raughte, and seyde, 'Thoughe I dey of thy dente, thy praysyng
5 shall be lytyll.' Whan sir Clegys and sir Bedwere saw that sir Kay was hurt they fared with the Romaynes as grayhoundis doth with harys.

[2185] And than they returned ayen unto noble kynge Arthure and tolde hym how they had spedde. 'Sir kyng,' sayde sir
10 Kay, 'I have served the longe. Now bryng me unto som beryellys for my fadyrs sake, and commaunde me to dame Gwenyvere, thy goodly quene, and grete well ^Nmy worshipfull wyff that wratthed me never/ and byd hir for my love to worche for my soule.' Than wepte kynge Arthure
15 for routhe at his herte and seyde, 'Thou shalt lyve for ever, my herte thynkes.' And therewith the kynge hymself pulled oute the truncheone of the speare and made lechis to seche hym sykerly, and founde nother lyvir nor lungys nother bowelles that were attamed. And than the kyng
20 putte hym in hys owne tente with syker knyghtes and sayde, 'I shall revenge thy hurte and I may aryght rede.'

[2204] Than the kynge in this malyncoly metys with a kynge, and with Excalyber he smote his bak in sundir. Than in that haste he metys with anothir, and gurde hym in the
25 waste thorow bothe sydes. Thus he russed here and there ^Nthorow the thyckyst prees more than thirty tymes/

[2218] Than sir Launcelot, sir Gawayne and sir Lovelys son gerde oute one that one hande where Lucyus the Emperoure
86^v hymself in a launde stode. Anone as sir Lucyus sawe sir
30 Gawayne he sayde all on hyght, 'Thou art welcom iwys, for thou sekyst aftir sorow. Here thou shalt be sone overmacched!' Sir Launcelot was wroth at hys grymme wordys and gurde to hym with his swerde aboven uppon hys bryght helme, that the raylyng bloode felle doune to his feete.

[2226] 35 And sir Gawayne wyth his longe swerde leyde on faste, that three amerallys deyde thorow the dynte of his hondis. And so Lovel fayled nat in the pres; he slew a kynge and
gawayn foughte nobly and slewe thre admyrales in that bataill And

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a deuke that knyghtes were noble. Thari the Romaynes C«34j releved. Whan they sye hir lorde so hampred they chaced and choppedde doune many of oure knyghtes good, and in that rebukying they bare the bolde Bedwere to the colde erthe, and wyth a ranke swerde he was merveyulously wounded. Yet sir s Launcelot and sir Lovel rescowed hym blyve.

With that come in kynge Arthure with the knyghtes of ["4*] the Table Rounde and rescowed the ryche men that never were lyke to ascape at that tyme, for oftetymes thorow envy grete hardynesse is shewed that hath bene the deth of many «« kynd knyghtes; for thoughe they speke fayre many one unto other, yet whan they be in batayle eyther wolde beste be praysed.

Anone as kynge Arthure had a syght of the Emperour C²⁴⁴] Lucyus, for kynge nother for captayne he taryed no lenger. 15 And eythir with her swerdys swapped at othir. So sir Lucyus with his swerde hit Arthure overthwarte the nose and gaff hym a wounde nyghe unto the tunge. Sir Arthure was wroth and gaff hym another with all the myght that in his arme was leved, that frome the creste of his helme unto the *o bare pappys hit wente adoune, and so ended the Emperour. C²⁵⁵]

Than ^Nthe kynge mette with sir Cadore, his kene O²⁶¹] cousyn/ and prayde hym, 'Kylle doune clene for love of sir Kay, my foster-brother, and for the love of sir Bedwer that 87^r

so dyd alle the knyghtes of the round table Thus the bataill bitwene kynge Arthur and Lucius themperour endured longe Lucius had on his syde many sarasyns whiche were slayn and thus the bataille was grete and oftsydes that one party was at a fordele and anone at an afterdele whiche endured so longe tyl at the last kyng Arthur aspyed where 5 Lucius themperour fought and dyd wonder with his owne handes And anon he rode to hym And eyther smote other fyersly and atte last Lucyus smote Arthur thwart the vysage and gaf hym a large wound And whanne kyng Arthur felte hym self hurte anon he smote hym ageyne with Excalibur that it clefte his hede fro the somette of his hede 10 and stynted not tyl it cam to his breste And thenne themperour fyll doune dede and there ended his lyf And whan it was knownen that themperour was slayne anone alle the Romayns with all their hoost put them to flyght and kynge Arthur with alle his knyghtes folowed the chaas and slewe doune ryght alle them that they myghte atteyne 15

longe hath me served. Therefore save none for golde nothir for sylver: for they that woll accompany them with Sarezens, the man that wolde save them were lytyll to prayse. And therefore sle doune and save nother hethyn nothir Crystyn.'

5 Than sir Cadore, sir Clegis, (they) caughte to her swerdys', and sir Launcelot, sir Bors, sir Lyonel, sir Ector de Marys, they whyrled thorow many men of armys. And sir Gawayne, sir Gaherys, sir Lovell and sir Florens, his brothir that was gotyn of sir Braundyles systir uppon a mountayne,
10 all thes knyghtes russhed forth in a frunte with many mo knyghtes of the Rounde Table that here be not rehersed. They hurled over hyllys, valeyes, and clowys, and slow doune on every honde wondirfull many, that thousandis in an hepe lay thrumbelyng togedir.

15 But for all that the Romaines and the Sarezens cowde do other speke to y(e)lde themself there was none saved, but all yode to the swerde. For evir kynge Arthure rode in the thickest of the pres and raumped doune lyke a lyon many senatours noble. He wolde nat abyde uppon no poure man
20 for no maner of thyng, and ever he slow slyly and slypped to another tyll all were slayne to the numbir of a hondred thousand, and yet many a thousande ascaped thorow prevy frendys.

[2278] And than relevys the kynge with his noble knyghtes and
25 rensaked over all the feldis for his bolde barouns. And tho that were dede were buried as their bloode asked, and they that myght be saved there was no salve spared nother no deyntes to dere that myght be gotyn for golde other sylver. And thus he let save many knyghtes that wente never to
30 recover, but for sir Kayes recovir and of sir Bedwers the ryche was never man undir God so glad as hymself was.

And thus was the vycory gyuen to kynge Arthur & the tryumphe and there were slayne on the party of Lucius moo than an hondred thousand And after kyng Arthur dyd doo ransake the dede bodyes and dyd doo burye them that were slayne of his retenue euery man accordynge to
5 the state & degree that he was of And them that were hurte he lete the surgyens doo serche their hurtes and woundes and commaunded to spare no salues ne medecynes tyl they were hole Thenne the kyng rode straye to the place where themperour lucius lay dede and with

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Than the kynge rode streyte thereas the Emperoure lay, 87^v [2290]
and garte lyffte hym up lordely with barounes full bolde,
and the sawdon of Surre' and of Ethyope the kyng, and of
Egypte and of Inde two knyghtes full noble, wyth seventene
other kynges were takyn up als, and also syxty senatours 5
of Roome that were honoured full noble men, and all the
elders. The kynge let bawme all thes with many good
gummys and setthen lette lappe hem in syxtyfolde of sendell
large, and than lete lappe hem in lede that for chauffynge
other chongyng they sholde never savoure, and sytthen lete 10
close them in chestys full clenly arayed and their baners
abovyn on their bodyes, and their shyldys turned upwarde,
that eviry man myght knowe of what contray they were.

So on the morne they founde in the heth three senatours [2306]
of Rome. Whan they were brought to the kynge he seyde 15
thes wordis: 'Now to save your lyvys I take no force grete,
with that ye woll meve on my message unto grete Rome and
presente thes corses unto the proude Potestate and aftir
[shewe] hym my lettyrs and my hole entente. And telle hem
in haste they shall se me, and I trow they woll beware how 20
they bourde with me and my knyghtes.'

Than the Emperour hymself was dressed in a charyot, [2338]
and every two knyghtys in a charyot cewed aftir other,
and the senatours com aftir by cowplys in a corde. 'Now
sey ye to the Potestate and all the lordys aftir that I sende 25
hym he fond slayne the Sowdan of Surrey the kynge of Egypte and of
Ethyope whiche were two noble kynges with xvij other kynges of
dyuerse regyons and also syxty senatours of Rome al noble men whome
the kynge dyd do bawme and gomme with many good gommies aro-
matyk and after dyd do cere them in syxty fold of cered clothe of Sendale 5
and leyd them in chestys of leed by cause they shold not chauffe ne
sauoure and vpon alle these bodyes their sheldes with their armes and
baners were sette to thende they shold be knowen of what countrey
they were and after he fonde thre Senatours whiche were on lyue to
whome he sayd for to saue your lyues I wylle that ye take these dede 10
bodyes and carye them with yow vnto grete Rome and presente them
to the potestate on my behalue shewynge hym my letters and telle them
that I in my persone shal hastely be atte Rome And I suppose the
Romayns shalle beware how they shal demaunde ony trybute of me
And I commaunde yow to saye whan ye shal come to Rome to the 25
potestate and all the counceylle and Senate that I sende to them these

hem the trybet that I owe to Rome, for this is the trew trybet that I and myne elders have loste this ten score wyntyrs. And sey hem as mesemes I have sent hem the hole somme, and yf they thynke hit nat inowe, I shall
 5 amend hit whan that I com. And ferthermore I charge you to saye to them never to demaunde trybute ne taxe of me ne of my londes, for suche tresoure muste they take as happyns us here.'

88^r So on the morne thes senatours rayked unto Rome, and io within eyghtene dayes they come to the Potestate and tolde [2358] hym how they hadde brought the taxe and the trewage of ten score wynters' bothe of Ingelonde, Irelande, and of all the Est londys. 'For kyng Arthure commaundys you nother trybet nother taxe ye never none aske uppon payne
 15 of youre hedys, but yf youre tytil be the trewer than ever ought any of your elders. And for these causys we have foughtyn in Fraunce, and there us is foule happed/ for all is chopped to the deth bothe the bettir and the worse. Therefore I rede you store you wyth stuff, for war is at honde.
 20 For in the moneth of May this myscheff befelle in the contrey of Constantyne by the clere stremys, and there he

dede bodyes for the trybute that they haue demaunded And yf they be not content with these I shal paye more at my comynge for other trybute owe I none ne none other wylle I paye And me thynketh this suffyseth for Bretayne Irlond and al Almayne with germanye And
 5 ferthermore* I charge yow to saye to them that I commaunde them *vpon payne of theyre hedes neuer to demaunde trybute ne taxe of *me ne of my bondes* (S londes) (MA 2348-50 Bott byde them neuere be so bolde, whylls my blode regnes, Efte for to brawlle *pern* for my brode landez, Ne to aske trybut ne taxe be nakyn tytle, Bot
 10 syche tresoure as this, whilles myt ym lastez) Thenne with this charge and commaundement the thre Senatours afore sayd departed with alle the sayd dede bodyes leyng the body of Lucius in a carre* (MA 2355 Bekende them the caryage) couerd with tharmes of the Empyre al alone And after alwey two bodyes of kynges in a charyot and thenne
 15 the bodyes of the Senatours after them and soo wente toward Rome and shewed theyr legacyon & message to the potestate and Senate recountyng the bataylle done in Fraunce and how the feld was lost and moche people & Innumerable slayne wherfore they aduysed them in no wyse to meue no more warre ageynste that noble conqueroure Arthur For
 20 his myght and prowess is most to be doubted seen the noble kynges

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hyred us with his knyghtes and heled them that were hurte
that same day and to bery them that were slayne.'

Now turne we to Arthure witli his noble knyghtes that [2386]
entryth streyghte into Lushburne and so thorowe Flaundirs
and than to Lorayne. He laughte up all the lordshyppys, and 5
syththen he drew hym into Almayne and unto Lumbardy the
ryche, and ^Nsette lawys in that londe that dured longe aftir
^NAnd so into Tuskayne, and there the tirrauntys destroyed/
and there were captaynes full kene that kepte Arthurs com-
yng, and at treyte passages slew muche of his peple, and 10
there they vytayled and garnyssed many good townys.

But there was a cite* kepte sure defence agaynste Arthure [2416]
and his knyghtes, and therewith angred Arthure and seyde
all on hyght, 'I woll wyne this towne other ellys many a
doughty shall dye!' And than the kynge approached to the 15
wallis withoute shelde sauff his bare harneys. 'Sir,' seyde
sir Florence, 'foly thou workeste' for to nyghe so naked
this perleouse citeV 'And thow be aferde,' seyde kyng
Arthure, 'I rede the faste fle, for they wyne no worshyp
of me but to waste their toolys for there shall never harlot 20 88^v
have happe, by the helpe of oure Lord', to kille a crowned
kyng that with creyme is anoynted."

Than the noble knyghtes of the Rounde Table approached [2448-64]
unto the cite* and their horsis levys. They hurled on a
frunte streyght unto the barbycans, and there they slewe 25
downe all that before them stondys, and in that bray the
brydge they wanne; and had nat the garnyson bene, they had
wonne within the yatys and the cite wonne thorow wyght- [2472]
nesse of hondys. And than oure noble knyghtes withdrew
them a lytyll and wente unto the kynge and prayde hym to 3^o
take his (herborgage). And than he pyght his pavylyons of
and grete multytude of knyghtes of the round table to whome none
erthely prynce may compare

Now tome we vnto kynge Arthur and his noble knyghtes whiche (9)
after the grete bataylle acheued ageynste the Romainys entryd in to
Lorayne braban and Flaundres and sythen retorned in to hault Almayn 5
and so ouer the m5tayns in to lombardye and after in to Tuskane
wherin was a Cyte whiche in no wyse wold yelde them self ne obeye
wherfore kynge Arthur biseged it and lay longe aboute hit and gaf

palle, and plantys all aboute' the sege, and there he lette sett up suddeynly many engynes.

[2483] Than the kynge called unto hym sir Florens and seyde these wordys: 'My folk ys wexen feble for wantynge of
 5 vytayle, and hereby be forestes full fayre, and thereas oure foomen many And I am sure they have grete store of bestes. And thyder shall thou go to forrey that forestes, and with the shall go sir Gawayne, and sir Wysharde with sir Walchere, two worshypfull knyghtes ,with all the wyseste
 10 men of the Weste marchis/ Also sir Cleremount and sir Clegis that were comly in arriys and the captayne of Cardyff that is a knyght full good. Now go ye and warne all this felyshep that hit be done as I commaunde.'

So^N with that forth yode sir Florens, and his felyshyp was
 [2503] 15 sone redy, and so they rode thorow holtys and hethis, thorow foreste and over hyllys. And than they com into a lowe medow that was full of swete floures, and there thes noble knyghtes bay ted her [horses'''.

[2105] And in the grekyng of the day sir Gawayne hente his
 20 hors wondyrs for to seke. Than was he ware of a man armed walkynge a paase by a woodis ease by a revers syde, and his shelde braced on his sholdir, and he on a stronge horse

many assaultes to the Cyte And they within deffended them valyauntly
 Thenne on a tyme the kynge called syr florence a knyght and sayd to hym they lacked vytaylle and not ferre from hens ben grete forestes and woodes wherin ben many of myn enemyes with moche bestyayl I
 5 wyl that thou make the redy and goo thyder in foreyeng and take with the syr Gawayn my newew Syre wysshard syre Clegys Syre Cleremond and the Captayn of Cardef with other & brynge with yow alle the beestes that ye there can gete And anone these knyghtes made them redy and rode ouer holtys & hyllys thurgh forestes and woodes* (MA
 10 2503-4 Thorowe hopes and hymland, hillys and oper, Holtis and hare-woddes. *Malory probably had'*, thorow holtys and hillys thorow forestes and harewodes) tyl they cam in to a fayr medow ful of fayre floures and grasse And there they rested them & theyr horses* (/iTher stedisj MA 2509 peire.horses) alle that nyghte And in the spryngynge
 15 of the day in the next morne syre Gawayn took his hors and stale away* {MA 2513 weendes owtt) from his felauship to seke some aduentures And anon he was ware of a man armed walkynge his hors easily by a wodes syde and his sheld laced to his sholdre syttyng on a stronge

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rydys withoute man wyth hym save a boy alone that bare 89^r
a grymme speare. The knyght bare in his shelde of golde
glystrand three gryffons in sabylf and charbuckkle, the
cheff of sylver. Whan sir Gawayne was ware of that gay
knyght, than he gryped a grete spere and rode streyght 5
towardre hym on a stronge horse for to mete with that sterne
knyght where that he hoved. Whan sir Gawayne com hym
nyghe, in Englyshe he asked hym what he was. And that
other knyght answerde in his langage of Tuskayne and
sayde,

10

'Whother pryckyst thou, pylloure, that profers the so [2533]
large? Thou rgetest"¹ no pray, prove whan the lykys, for
my presoner thou shalt be for all thy proude lokys." 'Thou
spekyste proudly, seyde sir Gawayne, 'but I counseyle the
for all thy grymme wordis that thou gryppe to the thy gere is
or [gretter] grame falle."

Than hir launcis ^rand speres"¹ they handylde by crauff
of armys, and com on spedly with mil syker dyntes, and
there they shotte thorow shyldys and mayles, and thorow
there shene shuldyrs' they were thorowborne the brede 20
of an hande. Than were they so wroth that away wolde
they never⁷, but rathly russed oute their swerdys and
hyttys on their helmys with hatefull dyntys and stabbis
at hir stomakys with swerdys well steled So freyssshly

courser withoute ony man sauynge (S sauynge to) a page berynge a
myghty spere The knyght bare in his sheld thre gryffons of gold in
sable charbunde the chyef of syluer whan syre Gawayn aspyed this
gay knyght he fewtryd his spere and rode strait to hym and demaunded
of hym from whens that he was that other ansuerd and sayd he was of 5
Tuscane and demaunded of syre gawayn what profyrst thou proude
knyghte the so boldly here getest* (MA pykes) thou no praye thou
mayst proue wha thou wylt for thou shalt be my prysoner or thou departe
Thenne sayd gawayn thou auauntest the gretely and spekest proude
wordes I couceylle the for alle thy boost that thou make the redy and 10
take thy gere to the to fore gretter* (W or more) grame falle to the

Thenne they took theyr speres* (MA 2541-2 Than peire launces (10)
they lachen, thes lordlyche byernez, Laggen with longe speres) and
ranne eche at other with alle the myghte they had and smote eche other
thurgh their sheldes in to theyr sholders wherfore anone they pulled 15
oute their swerdes and smote grete strokes that the fyre sprange oute
of their helmes Thenne syre gawayne was al abashed and with

tho fre men fyghtes on the grounded ,whyle the flamynge
fyre flowe oute of hir helmys.

C*557] Than sir Gawayne was grevid wondirly sore and swynges
'Galantyne, his good swerde" and grymly he strykys, and
5 clevys the knyghtes shyld in sundir. And thorowoute the
thycke haubirke made of sure mayles, and the rubyes that
were ryche, he russhed hem in sundir, that men myght
beholde the lyvir and longes. ^N Than groned the knyght for
his grymme woundis and gyrdis to sir Gawayne' and
io awkewarde hym strykes, and brastyth the rerebrace and
the vawmbrace bothe, and kut thorow a vayne, that Gawayne
sore greved, for so worched his wounde that his wytte
chonged and therewithall his armure was all bloody berenne.

C*574] Than that knyght talked to sir Gawayne and bade hym
15 bynde up his wounde, 'or thy ble chonge ,for thou all
bebledis this horse and thy bryght wedys, for all the
barbers of Bretayne shall nat thy blood staunche For
who that is hurte with this blaade bleed shall he ever*.

0579] 'Be God,' sayde sir Gawayne, 'hit grevys me but lytyll,
20 yet shalt thou nat feare me for all thy grete wordis. Thow
trowyste with thy talkynge to tame my herte', but yet thou
betydys tene or thou parte hense but thou telle me in haste
who may stanche my bledynge.'

'That may I do, and I woll, so thou wolt succour me
galatyn his good swerd* (/Fhis swerde Galantynej MA 2558 Galuthe
his gude swerde) he smote thurgh shelde and thycke hauberke made of
thick maylles and al to russhed and brake the precious stones and made
hym a large wounde that men myghte see* (MA 2561 men myghte see)
5 bothe lyuer and long Thenne groned that knyght and adressyd hym
to syre Gawayn & with an awke stroke gaf hym a grete wound and kytte
a vayne whiche greued gawayn sore and he bledde sore Thenne the
knyghte sayd to syre Gawayn bynde thy wounde or thy blee chaunge
for thou bybledest al thy hors and thy fayre armes For alle the Barbours
10 of Bretayne shal not conne staunche thy blood For who someuer is
hurte with this blade he shalle neuer be staunched of bledynge Thenne
ansuerd gawayn hit greueth me but lytyl thy grete wordes shalle not
feare me ne lasse my courage but thow shalt suffre tene and sorow or
we departe but telle me in hast who maye staunche my bledynge That
15 may I doo sayd the knyght yf I wylle And so wyll I yt thou wylt
socoure and ayde me that I maye be crystned and byleue on god And

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that I myght be fayre crystynde and becom meke for my mysdedis. Now mercy I Jesu beseche, and I shall becom Crysten and in God stedfastly beleve, and thou mayste for thy manhode have mede to thy soule."

'I graunte,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'so God me helpe' to 5 [2589] fullfyll all thy desyre; thou haste gretly hit deservyd. So thou say me the eoth, what thou sought here thus sengly thyself alone, and what lorde or legeaunte thou art undir.'

'Sir,' he seyde, 'I hyght Priamus, and a prynce is my fadir, [2595] and he hath bene rebell unto Rome and overredyn muche of 10 hir londis. And my fadir is com of Alysaunder's bloode that was overleder of kynges, and of Ector also was he com by the ryght lyne; and many mo were of my kynrede, bothe Judas Macabeus and deuke Josue. And ayre I am alther-neste of Alysaunder and of Aufryke and of all the Oute 15 lies Yet woll I beleve on thy Lorde that thou belevyst on/ and take the for thy labour tresour inow. For I was so haute* in my herte I helde no man my pere so was I sente into this werre by the assente of my fadir with seven score knyghtes, and now I have encountred with one hath 20 geevyn [me of] fyghtyng my fylle. Therefore, sir knyght, 90* for thy kynges sake telle me thy name.'

'Sir,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'I am no knyght, but I have be {2620/ brought up in the wardrope with the noble kyng Arthure therof I requyre the of thy manhode and it shalle be grete meryte for thy soule I graunte said Gawayne so god helpe me taccomplysse alle thy desyre But fyrst telle me what thou soughtest here thus allone and of what londe and legeaunce thou arte of Syre he sayd my name is Pryamus and a grete prynce is my fader and he hath ben rebelle vnto 5 Rome and ouer ryden many of theyr londes My fader is lyneally descended of Alysaunder and of hector by ryght lynge And duke Iosue and Machabeus were of oure lygnage I am ryght enherytour of Alysaunder and auffryke and alle the oute yles yet wyl I byleue on thy lord that thou byleuest on And for thy laboure I shalle'yeue the tresour 10 ynough I was soo elate and hauteyn in my hert that I thought no man my pere ne to me semblable I was sente in to this werre with seven score knyghtes and now I haue encountred with the whiche hast gyuen to me of *fyghtyng my fylle wherfore syr knyghte I pray the to telle me what thou arte I am no knyght sayd gawayn I haue ben brought vp 15 in the garderope with the noble kyng Arthur many yeres for to take hede to his armour and his other araye and to poynte his paltockes that

wyntys and dayes for to take hede to his armoure and all his other wedis and to poynte all the paltokkys that longe to hymself and to dresse doublettis for deukys and erlys.' And at Yole he made me yoman and gaff me good gyfftyss/ more s than an hondred ponde and horse and harneyse rych.' And yf I have happe (to) my hele to serve my lyege lorde I shall be well holpyn in haste.'

[2632] 'A,' sayde sir Priamus, 'and his knavys be so kene, his knyghtes ar passynge good. Now for thy Kynges love of 10 Hevyn and for thy kyngys love, whether thou be knave other knyght, telle thou me thy name.'

'Be God,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'now woll I telle the soth. [2638] f" My name is syre Gawayn." I am knowyn in his courte and kyd in his chambir' and rolled with the ryche of the 15 Rounde Table/ and I am a deuke dubbed wyth his owne hondis. Therefore grucche nat, good sir, if me this grace is behappened:' hit is the goodnesse of God that lente me this strength.'

[2646] 'Now am I bettir pleased,' sayde sir Pryamus, 'than thou 20 haddest gyffme the Provynce and' Perysie the ryche, for I had levir have be toryn with four wylde horse than ony yoman had suche a loose wonne of me, other els ony page other prycker sholde wyne of me the pryce in this felde gotyn.

longen to hym self At yole last he made me yoman and gaf to me hors and harneys and an honderd pound in money And yf fortune be my frend I doubte not but to be wel auaunced and holpen by my lyege lord A sayd Pryamus yf his knauys be so kene and fyers his knyghtes ben pass- 5 ynge Now for the kynges loue of heuen whether thou be a knave or a knyghte telle thou me thy name By god sayd syre Gawayn Now wyl I saye the sothe my name is syre gawayn* (MA 2638 My name es sir Gawayne) and knowen I am in his courte and in his chambre and one of the knyghtes of the round table he dubbed me a duke with his 10 owne (S with owne) hand Therefore grutche not yf this grace is to me fortunad hit is the goodnesse of god that lente to me my strengthe Now am I better pleasyd sayd Pryamus than thou haddest gyuen to me al the prouynce and* (MA 2647 Thane I of Provynce warre prynce and of Paresche ryche) parys the ryche I had leuer to haue ben torn with 15 wylde horses than ony varlet had wonne suche loos or ony page or pryker shold haue had prys on me But now syre knyghte I warne the

6 W happe my hele (MA 2630 happe to my hele)
the the

20 W provynce of Perysie

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But now I warne the, sir knyght of the Rounde Table, here is by the deuke of Lorayne with his knyghtes, and the doughtyeste of Dolphyne landys with many Hyghe Duchemen and many lordis of Lumbardy, and the garneson of Godarde, and men of Westewalle, worshypfull kynges; 5 and of Syssoyne and of Southlonde Sarezyns many numbirde, and there named ar in rollys sixty thousand of syker men of armys.

'Therefore but thou hyghe the fro this heth, hit woll[2660] harme us both, and sore be we hurte never lyke to recover. io 90^T But take thou hede (to the) haynxman that he no home blow,' for and he do, than loke that he be hewyn on pecis: 'for here hovys at thy honde a hondred of good knyghtes that ar of my retynew and to awayte uppon my persone. For and thou be raught with that rought, raunsom nother rede golde' 15 woll they none aske.'

Than sir Gawayne rode over a water for to gyde hymself, [2668] and that worshypfull knyght hym folowed sore wounded. And so they rode tyll they com to their ferys that were baytand hir horsys in a low medow where lay many lordys 20 lenyng on there shyldys, 'with lawghyng and japyng and many lowde wordys. Anone as sir Wycharde was ware of sir Gawayne and aspyed that he was hurte he wente towarde hym wepyng and wryngyng his hondys.

Than sir Gawayne tolde hym how he had macched with 25 [2686] that myghty man of strengthe. 'Therefore greve yow nat, that here by is a duke of Lorayne with his armye and the noblest men of Dolphyne and lordes of lombardye with the gameson of godard and sarasyns of Southland ynombred Ix M of good men of armes wherfore but yf we hys vs hers it wylle harme vs bothe for we ben sore hurte neuer lyke to recouer but take hede to my page that he no home blowe 5 For yf he doo ther ben houynge fast by an C knyghtes awaytynge on my persone and yf they take the ther shall no raunson of gold ne syluer acquyte the Thenne syre gawayne rode ouer a water for to saue hym And the knyghte folowed hym and soo rode forthe tyl they came to his felawes whiche were in the medowe where they had ben al the 10 nyghte* (MA 2675 And some was sleghte one slepe with slaughte of pe pople) Anone as syre wychard was ware of syre gawayn and sawe that he was hurte he ranne to hym soroufully wepynge and demaunded of hym who had soo hurte hym and gawayn told how he had foughten with that man and eche of them hadde hurte other and how he had 15

good sir, for thoughe my shylde be now thirled and my sholdir shorne, yett thys knyght sir Pryamus hath many perelouse woundys/ But he hath salvys, he seyth, that woll hele us bothe. But here is new note in honde nere than ye
 5 wene, fore by an houre aftir none I trow hit woll noy us all.'

[2692] Than sir Pryamus and sir Gawayne alyght bothe and lette hir horsys bayte in the fayre medow. Than they lette brayde of hir basnettys and hir brode shyldys. Than eythir bled so muche that every man had wondir they myght sitte
 10 in their sadyls or stonde uppon erthe.

[2704] 'Now fecche me,' seyde sir Pryamus, 'my vyall that hangys by the gurdyll or my haynxman, for hit is full of the floure of the four good watyrs that passis from Paradyse, the mykyll fruyte in fallys that at one day fede shall us all.
 15 Putt that watir in oure fleysh where the syde is tamed, and we shall be hole within four houres.' Than they lette dense
 91* their woundys with colde whyght wyne, and than they lete anoynte them with bawme over and over, and holer men than they were within an houres space was never lyvyng syn God
 20 the worlde made.

[2713] So whan they were clensed and hole they broched barellys and brought them the wyne wyth brede and brawne and many ryche byrdys/ And whan they had etyn, 'than with a trompet they alle assembled to counceyle, and¹ sir Gawayne
 25 seyde, 'Lordynges, go to arrays!' And whan they were armed and assembled togedyrs, with a clere claryon callys them togedir to counceyle, and sir Gawayne of the case hem tellys.

'Now tell us, sir Pryamus, all the hole purpose of yondir

salues to hele them but I can telle yow other tydynges that soone we shal haue adoo with many enemyes Thenne syre pryamus and syre gawayn alyghted and lete their horses grase in the medowe and vnarmed them And thenne the blood ranne fresshly fro theyre woundes
 5 And pryamus toke fro his page a vyolle ful of the four waters that came oute of paradys and with certayne baume enoynted theyr woundes and wesse them with that water* (MA 2711 with clere watire) & within an houre after they were both as hole as euer they were And thenne with a trompet were they alle assembled to counceyle* (MA 2718-19
 10 With a clayroune clere, thire knyghtez togedyre, callys to concell) And there pryamus told vnto them what lordes and knyghtes had

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pryce knyghtes.' 'Sirs/ seyde sir Pryamus, 'for to rescow
me they have made a vowe, other ellys ^Nmanfully on this
molde to be marred all at onys/ ^VThis was the pure pur-
pose, whan I passed thens' ^Nat hir perellys, to preffme uppon
payne of their lyvys.'" 5

^N'Now, good men,* seyde sir Gawayne, 'grype up your [*7*5]
hertes/ ^Nand yf we g(et)tles go (thus) away hit woll greffe
oure kynge/ And sir Florens in this fyght shall here abyde
for to kepe the stale as a knyght noble, ^Nfor he was chosyn
and charged in chambir with the kynge/ ^Nchyfften of this 10
chekke and cheyff of us all/ ^NAnd whethir he woll fyght
other fle we shall folow aftir/ for as for me, ^Nfor all yondir
folkys faare forsake hem shall I never.'

^N'A, fadir!' seyde Florens, 'full fayre now ye speke/ 0735]
^Sfor I am but a fauntekyn to fraysted men of armys/ and 15
yf I ony foly do the faughte muste be youres. Therefore
lese nat youre worshyp. My wytt is but symple, and ye
ar oure allther governoure; therefore worke as ye lykys.'

'Now, fayre lordys,' seyde sir Pryamus, 'cese youre
wordys, I warne you betyme; for ye shall fynde in yondir 20
woodys many perellus knyghtes. They woll putte furth
beystys to bayte you oute or numbir, and ye ar fraykis in this
fryth nat paste seven hondred, ^Narid that is feythfully to
fewe to fyght with so many/ ^Xfor harlottys and haynxmen
wol helpe us but a lytyll/ ^Nfor they woll hyde them in haste 25 91'
for all their hyghe wordys.'

'Ye sey well,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'so God me helpe!'

sworne to rescowe hym and that without faille they shold be assailed
with many thousandes wherfor he counceilled them to withdrawe
them Thenne syre gawayn sayd it were grete shame to them to auoyde
withoutte ony strokes Wherfore I aduyse to take oure armes and to
make vs redy to mete with these sarasyns and mysbyleuyng men and 5
wyth the helpe of god we shal ouerthrowe them and haue a feyre day
on them And syre Florens shall abyde styll in thys felde to kepe the
stale as a noble knyghte and we shal not forsake yonder felawes Now
sayd Pryamus (S Pyramus) seasse your wordes for I warne yow ye shal
fynde in yonder woodes many peryllous knyghtes they wylle put forthe 10
beestes to calle yow on they be out of nombre and ye are not past vij
C whiche ben ouer fewe to fyght with soo many Neuertheles sayd syr

'Now, fayre sonne,' sayde sir Gawayne unto Florens, 'woll ye take youre felyshyp of the beste provyd men to the numbir of a hondred knyghtes and^N prestly prove yourself and yondir pray wyne ?" 'I assent me with good hert,' seyde Florence.

[*755] 5 ^NThan sir Florens called unto hym sir Florydas with fyve score knyghtes',^x and forth they flynged a faste tro(tt)e/ and the folke of the bestes dryvys. Than folowed aftir sir Florens with noble men of armys fully seven hondred, and one^v sir Feraunte of Spayne before on a fayre stede' ^Nthat
10 was fostred in Farmagos: the fende was his fadir/ ^sHe flyttys towarde sir Florens and sayde, 'Whother flyest thou/ false knyght?' Than ^Nsir Florens was fayne, and in feautyr castis his spere', ^Nand rydys towarde the rought and restys no lenger', and full but in the forehede he hyttys sir Feraunte
15 and brake his necke-bone.

[277^] Than Feraunte ^Nhis cosyn had grete care and cryed full lowde: 'Thou haste slayne a knyght and kynge anynted that or this tyme founde never frayke that myght abyde hym a buffette. Therefore ye shall dey, there shall none of you
20 ascape!' 'Fye on the,' seyde Florydas, 'thou eregned wrecche!' And therewith to hym he flyngis with a swerde, that ^Nall the fleysshe of his flanke he flappys in sundir/ that all the fylth of the freyke and many of his guttys fylle to the erthe.

[2784] 25 ^NThan lyghtly rydis a raynke for to rescowe that barowne⁷ that was borne in the Rodis, and rebell unto Cryste. ^NHe preceed in proudly and aftir-his pray wyndys/ But ^Nthe raynke Rycharde of the Rounde Table^{7N} on a rede stede rode

gawayn we shal ones encountre them and see what they can do and the beste shalle haue the vycory

/j j\ Thenne syre Florence callyd to hym syre florydas with an hondred knyghtes and droofe forth the herde of bestes Thenne folowed hym
5 vij hondred men of armes and syr Feraunt of spayne on a fayr stede came spryngynge oute of the woodes and came to syre Florence and axyd hym why he fledde Thenne syre Florence took his spere and rode ageynste hym and smote hym in the forhede and brake his necke bone
10 Thenne all thother were meued and thought to auenge the dethe of syr Feraunt and smote in emonge them and there was grete fyghte and

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hym agaynste' and threste hym thorow the shyld eyn to the herte. ^NThan he rored full rudely, but rose he nevermore/

^NThan alle his feerys mo than fyve hondred/ ^x felle uppon [*79*] sir Florence and on his fyve score knyghtes/ ^NThan sir 5 92^r Florens and sir Florydas in feautir bothe castys/ their spearys, and ^Nthey felled fyve at the frunte at the fyrste entrey and sore they assayled our folke and brake browys and brestys and felde many adowne.

^NWhan sir Pryamus, the pryse knyght, perceyved their 10 [2811] gamys' he yode to sir Gawayne and thes wordys seyde: 'Thy pryse men ar sore begone and put undir, for they ar oversette with Sarazens mo than fyve hondred. Now wolde thou suffir me for the love of thy God with a small parte of thy men to succoure hem betyme?' 15

^N'Sir, grucch ye nat,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'the gre is there [2819] owne/ ^xfor they mowe have gyrftys full grete igraunted of my lorde/ Therefore lette them fyght whylys hem lystes, the freysh knyghtes; for som of hem^N fought nat their fyllle of all this fyve wyntyre/ Therefore ^s woll nat styrre 20 wyth my stale half my steede length' ^Nbut yf they be stadde wyth more stuff than I se hem agaynste."

So by that tyme was sir Gawayne ware by the woodys [2825] syde men commynge woodly with all maner of wepon, for there rode ^N the erle of Ethelwolde havynge on eyther half 25 many hole thousandys; ^sand the deuke of Douchemen dressys hym aftir' and passis with Pryamus knyghtes. Than Gawayne, the good knyght, he chered his knyghtes [2851]

many slayne and leyd doune to grounde and syr Florence with his C knyghtes alwey kepte the stale and foughte manly Thenne whan Pryamus the good knyght perceyued the grede fyght he wente to syre Gawayn and badde hym that he shold goo and socoure his felauship whiche were sore bystad with their enemyes Syr greue yow not sayd 5 syre Gawayn For theyr gree shall be theirs I shall not ones meue my hors to them ward but yf I see mo than ther ben For they ben stronge ynough to matche them & with that he sawe an erle called syre Ethelwold and the duk of duchemen cam lepyng out of a wood with many thousades & pryamus kny[^]tes & cam straye vn to the bataylle thghe sir 10 gawayn comforted his knyghtes and bad them not to be abashed for al

and sayde, ^{N<}Greve you nat, good men, for yondir grete syght/ and^v be nat abaysshed of yondir boyes in hir bryghte weedis/ ^Nfor and we feyght in fayth the relde is ourys! *'

Than they haled up their brydyls and began walop, and
 5 by that they com nygh by a londys length they jowked
 [2875] downe with her hedys many jantyll knyghtes. A more
 jolyar joustynge was never sene on erthe. ^xThan the ryche
 men of the Rounde Table ran thorow the thykkeste/ with
 hir stronge sperys, that many a raynke for that prouesse ran
 10 into the grevys, and durste^N no knavys but knyghtes kene
 92^v of herte' fyght more in this felde, but fledde. ^{N<}Be God,'
 seyde sir Gawayne, 'this gladys my herte' ^xthat yondir
 gadlynges be gone, for they made a grete numbir/ ^NNow
 ar they fewer in the felde whan they were fyrst numbyrd'
 15 by twenty thousand, in feyth, for all their grete boste.'

[2889] Than Jubeaunce of Geane, a myghty gyaunte, he
 feautred his speare to sir Garrarde, a good knyght of Walys.
 He smote the Waylshe knyght evyn to the herte. Than our
 knyghtes myghtyly meddeled wyth hir myddylwarde. But
 20 anone at all assemble many Saresyns were destroyed, ^Nfor
 the soveraynes of Sessoyne were salved for ever/

[2916] By that tyme^v sir Pryamus, the good prynce, in the presence
 of lordys/ royall to his penowne he rode and lyghtly hit
 hentys, ^Nand rode with the royall rought of the Rounde
 25 Table/ and streyte all his retynnew folowed hym aftyr oute
 of the woode. They folowed as shepe oute of a folde, and
 streyte they yode to the felde and stood by their kynge
 lorde. ^NAnd sytthyn they sente to the deuke thes same
 wordis:'

shall be ours thgne they began to wallope & mette with their enemyes
 ther were mē" slayn & ouerthrowen on euery syde Thenne threstyd
 in amonge them the knyghtes of the table round and smote doune to
 the erthe alle them that wythstode them in soo moche that they made
 5 them to recuyelle & flee By god sayd syre Gawayn this gladeth my
 herte for now ben they lasse in nombre by xx M Thenne entryd in to
 the bataylle Iubaunce a geaunt and fought and slewe doune ryght and
 distressyd many of our knyghtes emonge whome was slayne syre
 Gherard a knyght of walys Thenne oure knyghtes toke herte to them*
 xo (MA 2903 Rade furth full earnestly) and slewe many sarasyns And
 thenne came in syr Priamus with his penon and rode with the knyghtes

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^N'Sir, we have bene thy sowdyars all this seven wynter', [2925]
and now we forsake the for the love of oure lyege lorde
Arthure, ^xfor we may with oure worshype wende where us
lykys/ for garneson nother golde have we none resceyved.'

'Fye on you, the devyll have your bonys! For suche 5
sowdyars I sette but a lytyll.'

Than the deuka dressys his Dowchmen streyte unto sir [2940]
Gawayne and to sir Pryamus. So they two grypied their
spearys, and at the gaynyste in he gurdys, wyth hir noble
myghtes. And there sir Pryamus ^Nmetyth with the mar- 10
quesse of Moyseslonde⁷ and smytyth hym thorow.

^NThan Chastelayne, a chylde of kyng Arthurs chambir/
^Nhe was a warde of sir Gawaynes of the Weste marchis/
^Nhe chasis to sir Cheldrake that was a chyfteyne noble',
and with his spere he smote thorow Cheldrake, and so 15 93^r
^Nthat chek that chylde cheved by chaunce of armys/ But
than they chaced that chylde, that he nowhere myght ascape,
for one with a swerde the halse of the chylde he smote in
too. Whan sir Gawayne hit sawe he wepte wyth all his herte
and inwardly he brente for sorow. 20

But anone Gotelake, a good man of armys, ^Nfor Chaste-
layne the chylde he chongyd his mode/ ^Nthat the wete
watir wente doune his chykyss/ Than sir Gawayne dressis [2971]
hym and to a deuke rydys, and sir Dolphyn the deuke droff
harde agaynste hym. But sir Gawayne hym dressyth with 25
a grete spere, that the grounden hede droff to his herte.
Yette he gate hit oute and ran to another one, sir Hardolf,
an hardy man of armys, and slyly in he lette hit slyppe
thorow, and sodeynly he fallyth to the erthe. Yet he slow
in the slade of men of armys mo than syxty with his hondys. 30

Than was sir Gawayne ware of the man that slew Chaste- [2979]
layne his chylde, and ^xswyffty with his swerde he smyttyth

of the round table and fought so manfully that many of their enemyes lost
theyr lyues And ther syr Pryamus slewe the Marquys of Moyses land
and syre gawayn with his felawes so quytte hem that they had the feld
but in that stoure was syr Chestelayne a chyld and ward of syre Gawayne
slayne wherfore was moche sorou made and his deth wes soone 5
auengyd Thus was the bataille ended and many lordes of lombardye

9-ii W (sidenote) The deth of the marquesse
deth of Chastelayne

18-19 W (sidenote) The

25-7 W (sidenote) The deth of Sir Dolphyn

hym thorow/ ^N'Now and thou haddyst ascaped withoutyn
 scathe, the scorne had bene oures!" And aftir sir Gawayne
 dressis hym unto the route and russhyth on helmys, and
 rode streyte to the rerewarde and so his way holdyth, and
 5 sir Pryamus hym allthernexste, gydyng hym his wayes.
 And there ^Nthey hurtleyth and hewyth downe hethyn
 knyghtes many/ and sir Florence on the other syde dud
 what he myght.

^N There the lordys of Lorayne and of Lumbardy both/
 io were takyn and lad away with oure noble knyghtes. ^x For
 suche a chek oure lordys cheved by chaunce of that were/
 that they were so avaunced, for hit avayled hem ever.

[3001] Whan sir Florence and sir Gawayne had the felde wonne,
 than they sente before fyve score of knyghtes, ^Nand her
 15 prayes and hir presoners passyth hem aftir/ And sir
 Gawayne in a streyte passage he hovyth tyll all the prayes
 were paste that streyte patthe that so sore he dredith. So
 they rode tyll they the cite* sawe, and ^Nsothly the same day
 93* with asawte hit was gotyn/

[J013] 20 Than sir Florence and sir Gawayne harborowed surely
 their peple, and ^xsytthen turnys to a tente and tellyth the
 kynge' ^xall the tale truly, that day how they travayled/ and
 how his ferse men fare welle all. 'And fele of thy foomen
 ar brought oute of lyff, and many worshypfull presoners ar
 25 yolden into oure handys. ^N But Chastelayne, thy chylde, is
 chopped of the hede/ yette slewe he a cheff knyghte his
 owne hondys this day.'

'Now thanked be God/ sayde the noble kynge, 'but I mer-
 vayle muche of that bourely knyght that stondyth by the, for
 30 hym semys to be a straungere, for presonere is he none lyke.'

'Sir,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'this is a good man of armys:

and sarasyns left dede in the feld Thenne syre florence and syre
 Gawayne herberowed surely theyr peple and token grete plente of
 bestyal of gold & syluer and grete tresour and rychesse and retorned
 vnto kyng Arthur whiche lay styl at the syege And whanne they came
 5 to the kynge they presented theyr prysoners and recounted theyre
 aduentures and how they had vaynquysshed theyre enemyes
 (1²) Now thanked be god sayd the noble kynge Arthur But what maner
 man is he that standeth by hym self hym sened no prysoner Syre sayd
 Gawayne this is a good man of armes he hath matched me but he is

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he macched me sore this day in the mournyng, and had nat his helpe bene (dethe) had I founden. And now is he yolden unto God and to me, sir kyng, for to becom Crysten and on good beleve. And whan he is crystynde and in the fayth belevys, there lyvyth nat a bettir knyght nor a nobler of his hondis.'

Than the kyng in haste crystynde hym fayre and lette conferme hym Priamus, as he was afore, and lyghtly lete dubbe hym a deuke with his hondys, and made hym knyght of the Table Rounde. 10

And anone the kyng lette cry asawte unto the towne, [3032] and there was rerynge of laddyrs and brekyng of wallys. ^NThe payne that the peple had was pyte* to se! ^NThan the [3044] duches hir dressed with damesels ryche/ ^Nand the countes of Clarysyn with hir clere maydyns/ ^Nthey kneled in their 15 kyrtyls there the kyng hovyth⁷ ^Nand besought hym of socoure for the sake of oure Lorde-' 'And sey us som good worde and cetyl thy peple ^xor the cite* suddeynly be with asawte wonne/ for than shall dye many a soule that grevid the never.' *o

The kyng ^ravalyd and ¹lyffte up his vyser with a knyghtly [3054] countenaunce, and kneled to hir myldely with full meke wordes and seyde, ^NShall none myssedo you, madam, that 94^r to me longis/ ^vfor I graunte the chartyrs and to thy cheff maydyns/ ^xunto thy chyldern and to thy chyft men in ²5

yolden vnto god and to me for to bycome Crysten had not he haue be we shold neuer haue rotorned wherfore I pray yow that he may be baptysed sor (*sic* S for) ther lyueth not a nobler man ne better knyght of his handes thenne the kyng lete hym anon be crystned and dyd doo calle hym his fyrste name Pryamus and made hym a duke and knyghte 5 of the table round And thenne anon the kyng lete do crye assaute to the cyte and there was rerynge of laddres brekyng of wallys and the dyche fylled that men with lytel payne my[^]t entre in to the cyte thgne cam out a duchesse & Clarysyn the countesse with many ladyes & damoyseles and knelyng bifore kyng Arthur requyred hym for the loue 10 of god to receyue the cyte & not to take it by assaute for thenne shold many gyltles be slayne thgne the kyng aualyd* (*IVof Walys*; *MAT<0\$* He weres his vesere) his vyser with a meke & noble coutenaunce & said madame ther shal none of my subgettys mysdoo you ne your

chambir/ that to the longis. ^NBut thy deuke is in daunger,
my drede ys the lesse/ But ye shall have lyvelode to leve
by as to thyne astate fallys.'

[3062] ^xThan Arthure sendyth on eche syde wyth sertayne
5 lordis/ ^Nfor to cese of their sawte, for the cite* was yolden,
and therewith the deukeis eldyst sonne com with the keyes
and kneled dpwne unto the kyng and besought hym of his
grace. ^NAnd there he cased the sawte by assente of his
lordis/ ^Nand the deuke was dressed to Dover with the
10 kynges dere knyghtes/ ^Nfor to dwelle in daunger and dole
dayes of his lyff/ ^NThan the kyng with his crowne on his
hede recoverde the citi' and the castell, ^xand the captaynes
and connestablys knew hym for lorde/ and there ^Nhe dely-
verde and dalte byfore dyverse lordis⁷ a dowre* for the
15 deuches and hir chyldryn. Than he made wardens to welde
all that londis.

[3092] And so ^x in Lorayne and Lumbardy he lodged as a lorde
in his owne/ ^Nand sette lawys in the londis as hym beste
lyked/ ^NAnd than at Lammass he yode, unto Lusarne he
20 sought/ ^Nand lay at his leyser with lykynges inowe/ ^vThan
he mevys over the mountaynes and doth many mervayles,
^Nand so goth in by Godarte that Gareth sonne wynnys/
^sThan he lokys into Lumbardy and on lowde spekyth:
^N'In yondir lykynges londis as lorde woll I dwelle.'⁷

[3112] 25 Sir Florence and sir Floridas that day passed with fyve
hondred good men of armys unto the cite of Virvyn. They
sought at the gaynyste and Meyde there a buysshement as
hem beste lykys/ So there •"yssued¹ oute of that cite* many

maydens ne to none that to yow longen but the duke shal abyde my
Iugement thenne anone the kyng commaunded to leue the assault
& anon the dukes oldest sone brought out the keyes & knelyng delyuerd
them to the kyng & bysought hym of grace & the kyng ceased the toun
5 by assent of his lordes & toke the due & sent hym to douer there for to
abyde prysoner terme of his lyf & assigned certayn rentes for the dower
of the duchesse & for her children Thenne he made lordes to rule tho
londes & lawes as a lord ought to do in his owne countrey & after he took
his iourney toward Rome & sent sir Florys & syr florydas to fore with
10 v C men of armes & they cam to the cyte of vrbyne & leid there a
bushment there as them semed most best for them & rode to fore the

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hundredthis and skyrmysshed wyth oure foreryders as hem
beste semed. ^sThan broke oute oure buysshemente and
the brydge wynnys/ and so rode unto their borowys with
baners up dysplayed. There fledde muche folke oute of W [3068]
numbir ^Nfor ferde of sir Florence and his fers knyghtes/ 5
Than ^Nthey busked up a baner abovyn the gatis/ and ^Nof sir
Florence in fayth so fayne were they never/

The kynge than hovyth on an hylle and lokyth to the [3074]
wallys and sayde, ^N' I se be yondir sygne the cite* is wonne.'
Than he lete make a cry thorow all the oste that ^xuppon 10
payne of lyffand lymme and also lesynge of his goodys' that
no lyegeman that longyth to his oste sholde lye be no
maydens ne ladyes nother no burgessis wyfF that to the cite*
longis. So whan this conquerroure com into the cite* he [3 "8]
passed into the castell, and there he lendis and ^Ncomfortis 15
the carefull men with many knyghtly wordis/ and made
there a captayne a knyght of his owne contrey, and the
commo(n)s accorded theretyll.

Whan the soveraynes of Myllayne herde that the cite* [3134]
was wonne they sente unto kynge Arthure ^vgrete sommys ao
of sylver, syxty horsys well charged/ and besought hym
as soverayne to have ruthe of the peple, and seyde they
wolde be sudgetes untill hym for ever ^Nand yelde hym
servyse and sewte surely for hir londys/ ^Nbothe for Pleas-
aunce ^rand Pavye¹ and Petresaynte and for the Porte 25
Trembyll/ and ^Nso mekly to gyfF ^ryerly"¹ for Myllayne
a myllyon of golde/ and ^Nmake homage unto Arthure

toune where anon yssued* (/^comj MA 3116 ischewis) out moche
peple & scarmusshed with the fore rydars thghe brake out the busshe-
ment & wan the brydge & after the toun & set vpon the wall's the
kynge's baner thghe cam the kynge vpon an hille & sawe the Cyte
& his baner on the wallys by whiche he knewe that the Cyte was 5
wonne & anone he sente & commaunded that none of his lyege men
shold defoule ne lygge by no lady wyf ne maide & whan he cam in
to the cyte he passid to the castel and comforted them that were in
sorow & ordeyned ther a captayn a kny3t of his own coutrey & whan
they of Melane herd that thylk cyte was w5ne they sent to kyng Arthur 10
grete s5mes of money* (MA 3136 golde) & besou^t hym as their lord
to haue pyte of them promysyng to be his subgettys for euer & yelde
to hym homage & fealte for the lades of plesafce & paueye* (MA 3141

all hir lyff tymes/ ^NThan the kynge by his counceyle
a conduyte hem sendys/ so to com in and know hym for
lorde.

[3150] ^NThan into Tuskayne he turned whan he tyme semed/
5 and ^Nthere he wynnys towrys and townys full hyghe/ and
^Nall he wasted in his warrys there he away ryddys. ^NThan he
spedys towarde Spolute with his spedfull knyghtys/ ^sand so
unto Vyterbe he vytayled his knyghtes/ ^Nand to the vale
of Vysecunte he devysed there to lygge' ^Nin that vertuose
10 vale amonge vynys full/ ^vAnd there he suggeournys, that
95^r soveraigne, with solace at his harte/ for to wete whether the
senatours wolde hym of succour beseke.

[3176] ^NBut sone after, on a Saturday, sought unto kynge Arthure'
all the senatoures that were on lyve and of the cunnyngst
15 cardynallis that dwelled in the courte, and ^vprayde hym of
pece and profird hym full large; ⁷ and besought hym as a
soverayne ^Nmoste governoure undir God for to gyff them
lycence' for syx wekys large, that they myght be assembled
all, and than in the cite* of Syon that is Rome callyd ^xto
*o crowne hym there kyndly, with crysmed hondys/ with
septure, for sothe, as an Emperoure sholde.

'I assente me,' seyde the kynge, 'as ye have devysed, and
[3*13] comly be Crystmas to be crowned, hereafter to reigne in
my asstate and to kepe my Rounde Table ^Nwith the rentys
25 of Rome to rule as me lykys/ and than, as I am avysed,
and for Pavy) petersaynt & the port of tremble & to gyue hym yerly*
(MA 3144 ilke a 3ere) a melyon'of gold al his lyf tyme thene he rydeth
in to Tuskane & wynneth tounes & castels & wasted al in his way that
to hym wil not obeye & so to spolute & viterbe & fro thens he rode in
5 to the vale of vycecoutte emong the vynes And fro thens he sente to
the senatours to wete whether they wold knowe hym for theyr lord
But soone after on a saterday came vnto kynge Arthur alle the senatours
that were left on lyue and the noblest Cardynals that thenne dwellyd
in Rome And prayd hym of pees and profered hym ful large And
10 bysought hym as gouernour to gyue lycence for vj wekes for to assemble
alle the Romayns And thenne to crowne hym Emperour with creme
as it bylongeth to so hyhe astate I assente sayd the kynge lyke as
ye haue deuysed and at crystemas there to be crowned and to holde
my round table with my knyghtes as me lyketh And thenne the
*5 senatours maade redy for his Intronysacyon And at the day appoynted
as the Romaunce telleth he came in to Rome and was crouned emperour

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to gete me over the sake see with good men of armys to
deme for His deth that for us all on the roode dyed.' [3217]

Whan the senatours had this answere, unto Rome they
turned and made rydy for his corownement in the moste
noble wyse. And at the day assigned, as the romaynes me 5
tellys, he was crowned Emperour by the Poopys hondis,
with all the royalte* in the worlde to welde for ever. There
they suggeoured that seson tyll aftir the tyme, and stabe-
lysshed all the londys frome Rome unto Fraunce, and gaff
londis and rentys unto knyghtes that had hem well deserved. 10
There was none that playned on his parte, ryche nothir
poore.

Than he commaunded sir Launcelot and sir Bors to take
kepe unto their fadyrs landys that kynge Ban and kynge
Bors welded and her fadyrs: 'Loke that ye take seyng in 15
all your brode londis, and cause youre lyege men to know
you as for their kynde lorde, and suffir never your soveraynte* 95^v
to be alledged with your subjectes, nother the soveraygne
of your persone and londys. Also the myghty kynge
Claudas I gyff you for to parte betwyxte you evyn, for to 20
mayntene your kynrede, that be noble knyghtes, so that ye
and they to the Rounde Table make your repeyre.' Sir
Launcelot and sir Bors de Gaynys thanked the kynge fayre
and sayde their hertes and servyse sholde ever be his owne.

'Where art thou, Priamus? Thy fee is yet behynde. *5
Here I make the and gyff the deukedom of Lorayne for ever
unto the and thyne ayres; and whan we com into Ingelonde,
for to purvey the of horse-mete, a fifty thousand quarterly,
for to mayntene thy servauntes. So thou leve not my felyship,
this gyffte ys thyne owne.' The knyght thankys the kynge 30
with a kynde wylle and sayde, 'As longe as I lyve my servys
is your owne.*

Thus the kynge gaff many londys. There was none that

by the popes hand with all the ryalte that coude be made And sudgeoned
there a tyme and establysshed all his londes from Rome in to Fraunce
and gaf londes and royammes vnto his seruauntes and knyghtes to
eueryche after his desert in suche wyse that none complayned ryche
ne poure & he gafe to syre Pryamus the duchye of Lorayne and he \$
thanked hym and sayd he wold serue hym the dayes of his lyf and after
made dukes and erles and made euery man ryche Thenne after this

wolde aske that myghte playne of his parte, for of rychesse and welth they had all at her wylle.

Than the knyghtes and lordis that to the kyng longis called a dounsayle uppon a fayre morne and sayde, 'Sir
5 kyng, we beseche the for to here us all. We ar undir youre lordship well stuffid, blyssed be God, of many thynges; and also we have wyffis weddid. We woll beseche youre good grace to reles us to sporte us with oure wyffis, for, worshyp be Cryste, this journey is well overcom.'

io 'Ye say well,' seyde the kyng, 'for inowghe is as good as a feste, for to attemte God overmuche I holde hit not wysedom. And therefore make you all redy and turne we into Ingelonde.'

96^r 15 Than there was trussynge of harneyse with caryage full noble. And the kyng toke his leve of the holy fadir the Pope and patryarkys and cardynals and senatoures full ryche, and leffte good governaunce in that noble cite* and all the contrays of Rome for to warde and to kepe on payne of deth, that in no wyse his commaundement be brokyn.
20 Thus he passyth thorow the contreyes of all partyes.

And so kyng Arthure passed over the see unto Sandwyche haven. Whan quene Gwenyvere herde of his commynge she mette with hym at London, and so dud all other quenys and noble ladyes. For there was never a solempner metyng
S in one cite togedyrs, for all maner of rychesse they brought with hem at the full.

alle his knyghtes and lordes assembled them afore hym and sayd blessyd be god your warre is fynnyshed and your conquest acheued in soo moche that we knowe none soo grete ne myghty that dar make warre ageynst yow wherfore we byseche you to retorne homeward and gyue vs
5 lycence to goo home to oure wyues fro whome we haue ben longe and to reste vs for your Iourney is fynnyshed with honour & worship (S woship) Thenne sayd the kyng ye saye trouthe and for to tempte god it is no wysedome And therfore make you redy and retorne we in to
io Englund Thenne there was trussyng of harneis and bagage and grete caryage And after lycence gyuen he retorned and commaunded that noo man in payne of dethe shold not robbe ne take vytaylle ne other thyng by the way but that he shold paye therfore And thus he came ouer the see and loded at sandwyche ageynste whome Quene Gweneuer his wyf came and mette hym and he was nobly receyued of alle his
X5 comyns in euery cyte and burgh and grete yeftes presented to hym at

BL V] *Of King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius 2*[^]

HERE ENDYTH THE TALE OF THE NOBLE KYNGE ARTHURE
THAT WAS EMPEROURE HYMSELF THOROW DYGNITY OF HIS
HONDYS.

AND HERE FOLOWYTH AFFTYR MANY NOBLE TALYS OF SIR
LAUNCELOT DE LAKE.

5

EXPLYCIT THE NoBLE TALE BETWYXT

KYNGE ARTHURE AND LUCIUS THE EMPELOUR OF ROME.

his home comyng to welcome hym with Thus endeth the fyfthe booke
of the conqueste that kynge Arthur hadde ageynste Lucius the Em-
peroure of Rome and here foloweth the syxth book whiche is of syr
Launcelot du lake

THE NOBLE TALE

OF

SIR LAUNCELOT DU LAKE

*[Winchester MS., ff. g6^r~ii3^ri
Caxton, Book VI*

CAXTON'S RUBRICS

- Ch. i. How syr Launcelot and syr Lyonel departed fro the courte
for to seek aventures and how syr Lyonel lefte hym slepyng
and was taken.
- „ 2. How syr Ector folowed for to seek syr Launcelot and how
he was taken by syr Turquyne.
- „ 3. How four quenes fonde Launcelot slepyng and how by
enchaument he was taken and ledde into a castel.
- „ 4. How syr Lancelot was deliverd by the meane of a damosel.
-) 5. How a knyght founde syr Launcelot lyeng in his lemmans
bedde and how syr Launcelot faught with the knyght.
- „ 6. How sir Launcelot was receyved of kyng Bagdemagus
doughter and he made his complaynte to hir fader.
- „ 7. How syr Launcelot byhaved hym in a tournament and how
he mette with syr Turquyn ledyng syr Gaheris.
- „ 8. How syr Launcelot and sy[r] Turquyn faught togyders.
- „ 9. How syr Turquyn was slayn and how syr Launcelot bad
syr Gaheris delyver al the prysoners.
- „ 10. How syr Launcelot rode with the damoyssel and slewe a
knyght that distressid al ladyes and also a vylayn that kept
a bridge.
- „ 11. How syr Launcelot slewe two geauntes and made a castel
free.
- 5> 12. How syr Launcelot rode disguysed in syr Kayes harnoys
and how he smote doun a knyght.
- 55 13. How syr Launcelot justed ayenst four knyghtes of the
Rounde Table and overthrewe theym.
- „ 14. How syr Launcelot folowed a brachet into a castel where he
fonde a dede knyght, and how he after was requyred of a
damoyssel to hele hir brother.
- „ 15. How sir Launcelot cam into the Chapel Peryllous and gate
there of a dede corps, a pyece of the cloth and a swerde.
- „ 16. How syr Launcelot at the request of a lady recoverd a faw-
con by whiche he was deceyved.
- „ 17. How syr Launcelot overtoke a knyght which chased hys
wyf to have sleyn hyr, and how he sayd to hym.
- „ 18. How syr Launcelot came to kyng Arthur? court and how
there were recounted al his noble feates and actes.

SONE aftir that kyng Arthure was com from Rome into 96^r (i)
 Singelonde, than all the knyghtys of the Rounde Table
 resorted unto the kyng and made many joustys and turne-
 mentes. And some there were that were but knyghtes
 encresed in armys and worshyp that passed all other of her 5
 felowys in prouesse and noble dedys, and that was well
 proved on many.

But in especiall hit was prevyd on sir Launcelot de Lake,
 for in all turnementes, justys, and dedys of armys, both for
 lyff and deth, he passed all other knyghtes, and at no tyme 10
 was he ovircom but yf hit were by treson other inchaunte- 96^v
 ment. So this sir Launcelot encresed so mervaylously in
 worship and honoure; therefore he is the fyrste knyght that
 the Frey[n]sh booke makyth me[n]cion of aftir kyng
 Arthure com frome Rome. Wherefore quene Gwennyvere 15
 had hym in grete favoure aboven all other knyghtis, and so
 he loved the quene agayne aboven all other ladyes dayes
 of his lyff, and for hir he dud many dedys of armys and
 saved her from the fyre thorow his noble chevalry.

Thus sir Launcelot rested hym longe with play and game; 20
 and than he thought hymself to preve in straunge adven-
 tures, and bade his nevew, sir Lyonell, for to make hym
 redy, 'for we muste go seke adventures'. So they mounted
 on their horses, armed at all ryghtes, and rode into a depe
 foreste and so into a playne. 25

So the wedir was hote aboute noone, and sir Launcelot
 had grete luste to slepe. Than sir Lyonell aspyed a grete
 appyll-tre that stode by an hedge, and seyde, 'Sir, yondir
 is a fayre shadow, there may we reste us and oure horsys.'

'Hit is trouthe,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'for this seven yere 30
 I was not so slepy as I am now.'

So there they alyted and tyed there horsys unto sondry
 treis, and sir Launcelot layde hym downe undir this appyll-
 tre, and his helmet undir his hede. And sir Lyonell

5 C •which encresed	C that they passed	9 C turnementys and Iustes
II C he was neuer ouercome	14 C frensshe	16-17 C and in certayne he
17-18 C ladyes damoyssels off	21 C preue hym self	2 3 C we two wylle seke
25 C a depe playne	28 C said broder yonder	29 C vs on ouref
C is wel saide faire broder said	C viij yere	30 34 C helmet he layd vnder

waked whyles he sl[e]pte. So sir Launcelot slepte passyng faste.

And in the meanewhyle com there three knyghtes rydyng, as faste fleyng as they myght ryde, and there folowed hem
 5 three but one knyght. And whan sir Lyonell hym sawe, he thought he sawe never so grete a knyght nother so well-farynge a man and well appareyld unto all ryghtes. So within a whyle this stronge knyght had overtakyn one of the three knyghtes, and there he smote hym to the colde erth, that he
 i^o lay styll; and than he rode unto the secunde knyght and smote hym so that man and horse felle downe. And so
 97^r streyte unto the thirde knyght, and smote hym behynde his horse ars a spere-lengthe; and than he alyght downe and rayned his horse on the brydyll and bounde all three
 is knyghtes faste with the raynes or theire owne brydelys.

Whan sir Lyonell had sene hym do thus, he thought to assay hym and made hym redy, and pryvaly he toke his horse and thought nat for to awake sir Launcelot, and so mounted uppon his hors and overtoke the strong knyght.
 20 He bade hym turne, and so he turned and smote sir Lyonell so harde that hors and man he bare to the erth. And so he alyght downe and bounde hym faste and threw hym overthwarte his owne horse as he had served the other three, and so rode with hem tyll he com to his owne castell. Than
 25 he unarmed them and bete them with thornys all naked, and aftir put them in depe preson where were many mo knyghtes that made grete dole.

(2) So whan sir Ector de Marys wyste that sir Launcelot was paste oute of the courte to seke adventures, he was wroth
 30 with hymself and made hym redy to seke sir Launcelot. And as he had redyn longe in a grete foreste, he mette with a man was lyke a foster.

'Fayre felow,' seyde sir Ector, 'doste thou know this contrey or ony adventures that bene nyghe here honde?'

1 C launcelot was a slepe 6 C grete a man neyther 12 C* knyghte he rode and
 13-14 S doune arayned 16 Csawe hym 17 Credy & styllly and pryuely
 18-20 C And whan he was mounted vpon his hors he ouertoke this strong knyght & bad hym torne and the other smote 23-5 C hors and soo he serued hem al foure & rode with hem away to his owne castel And whan he came there he garte vnarme them 27 C grete doloure 30 C hym self
 W hym selt 33-4 C* Ector knowest thou in thys cuntry ony aduentures that ben here nyghe hand

'Sir,* seyde the foster, 'this contrey know I well. And hereby within this myle is a stronge maner and well dyked, and by that maner on the lyffte honde there is a fayre fourde for horse to drynke off, and over that fourde there growys a fayre tre. And thereon hongyth many fayre 5 shyldys that welded somtyme good knyghtes, and at the bo[le] of the tre hongys a basyn of couper and latyne. And stryke uppon that basyn with the butte of thy spere three tymes, and sone aftir thou shalt hyre new tydynges; and ellys haste thou the fayreste [grace] that ever had knyghte 10 this many yeres that passed thorow this foreste.'

'Gramercy,' seyde sir Ector and departed. And com unto this tre and sawe many fayre shyldys, and amonge them all 97^v he sawe hys brothirs shyldes, sir Lyonell, and many mo that he knew that were of his felowys of the Rounde Table, 15 the whyche greved his herte, and promysed to revenge his brother. Than anone sir Ector bete on the basyn as he were woode, and than he gaff his horse drynke at the fourde.

And there com a knyghte behynde hym and bade hym *o com oute of the water and make hym redy. Sir Ector turned hym shortly, and in feawtir caste his spere and smote the other knyght a grete buffette, that his horse turned twyse abowte. 'That was well done,' seyde the stronge knyght, 'and knyghtly thou haste strykyn me.' And therewith he *s russhed his horse on sir Ector and caught hym undir his ryght arme and bare hym clene oute of the sadyll, and so rode with hym away into his castell and threw hym downe in myddyll of the floure.

Than this seyde T^^quyn seyde unto sir Ector, 'For 30 thou hast done this day more unto me than ony knyght dud this twelve yere, now woll I graunte the thy lyff, so thou wolt be sworne to be my trew presoner.'

4 C horses 7 W body of the tre C atte hoole of the tree {see note}
 10 W fayreste knyght 10— 11 C *fayrest grace that many a yere had euer knyght
 that passed 13 all not in C 15 C were his felawes 24 C This was
 26 C cley3te hym 28 C in to his owne halle & F {MS. Add. 10293, f. 281b}
 en sa tour 29-30 C* floore the name of thys knyghte was syre Turquyne than
 hesaidvnto JfTraquyri C Turquyne F Terriquan {see note} 33 trew
 not in Of C prysoner all thy lyf dayesf F {MS. Add. 10293, f. 281b-<)
 ne vous metrai jou ja en prison se vous me voles fiancier que vous de chaiens
 n'isteres mie sans congi6

'Nay,* sayde sir Ector, 'that woll I never promyse the but that I woll do myne advauntage.'

'That me repentis,' seyde sir Tarquyn. Than he gan unarme hym and bete hym with thornys all naked, and
5 sytthyn put hym downe into a depe dongeon, and there he knewe many of his felowys.

But whan sir Ector saw sir Lyonell, than made he grete sorow.

'Alas, brother!' seyde sir Ector, 'how may this be, and
10 where is my brothir sir Launcelot?'

'Fayre brother, I lefte hym on slepe, whan that I frome hym yode, undir an appil-tre, and what is becom of hym I can nat telle you.'

'Alas,' seyde the presoneres, 'but yf sir Launcelot helpe us
15 we shall never be delyverde, for we know now no knyght
98^r that is able to macch with oure maystir Tarquyne.'

(3) Now leve we thes knyghtes presoners, and speke we of
sir Launcelot de Lake that lyeth undir the appil-tre slepynge.
Aboute the none so there com by hym four queenys of
20 a grete astate; and for the hete sholde nat nyghe hem, there
rode four knyghtes aboute hem and bare a cloth of grene
sylke on four sperys betwyxte hem and the sonne. And the
quenys rode on four whyghte mulys.

Thus as they rode they herde a grete horse besyde them
25 grymly nyghe. Than they loked and were ware of a slepynge
knyght lay all armed undir an appil-tre. And anone as
they loked on his face they knew well hit was sir Launcelot,
and began to stryve for that knyght, and every of hem
seyde they wolde have hym to hir love. 'We shall nat
30 stryve,' seyde Morgan le Fay, that was kyng Arthurs
sister. 'I shall put an inchauntement uppon hym that he
shall nat awake of all this seven owres, and than I woll lede
hym away unto my castell. And whan he is surely within my
holde, I shall take the inchauntement frome hym, and than
35 lette hym chose whych of us he woll have unto peramour.'

3 W Traqyun (see note) 3-4 C he garte to vnarme 9 how may this be
and not in C 14 C the knyghtes yf not in Cf 18-19 ^c slepynge
euen aboute the noone there AT slepynge aboute the none so there . MS[^]
herde by them a grete hors grymly neye thenne were they ware 27 C these
quenys loked well not in C 28-9 Ceuerychone sayd 32 C awake
in syxe owres

So this enchauntement was caste uppon sir Launcelot, and than they leyde hym uppon his shyld and bare hym so on horsebak betwyxte two knyghtes, and brought hym unto the Castell Charyot; and there they leyde hym in a chambir colde, and at nyght they sente unto hym a fayre 5 dameselle with his souper redy idyght. Be that the enchauntement was paste.

And whan she com she salewed hym and asked hym what chere.

'I can not sey, fayre damesel,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'for 10 I wote not how I com into this castell but hit be by inchauntement.'

'Sir,* seyde she, 'ye muste make good chere; and yf ye 98* be suche a knyght as is seyde ye be, I shall telle you more to-morn be pryme of the day.'

'Gramercy, fayre damesel,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'of your good wylle.' 15

And so she departed, and there he laye all that nyght withoute ony comforte. And on the morne erly com thes four quenys passyngly well besene, and all they byddynge *o hym good morne, and he them agayne.

'Sir knyght,* the four quenys seyde, 'thou muste undirstonde thou art oure presonere, and we know the well that thou art sir Launcelot du Lake, kyng Banis sonne. And because that we undirstonde youre worthynesse, that thou 25 art the noblest knyght lyvyng, and also we know well there can no lady have thy love but one, and that is quene Gwenvere, and now thou shalt hir love lose for ever, and she thyne. For hit behovyth the now to chose one of us four, for I am quene Morgan le Fay, quene of the londe of Gore, 30 and here is the quene of North Galys, and the quetie of Estlonde, and the quene of the Oute lies. Now chose one of us, whyche that thou wolte have to thy peramour, other ellys to dye in this preson/

'This is an harde case,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'that other 35 I muste dye other to chose one of you. Yet had I lever dye

11-12 C by an enchauntement

14 C as it is

17 C wyl I requyre yow

19 C withoute comforte of ony body

23 C we here knowe

we 26 C And as we

a8-9 C thou shalt lose her for euer and she the

and therfore the behoueth now

33-4 C peramour for thou mayst not chese or

els in thys pryson to dye

35 C caaas

in this preson with worshyp than to have one of you to my peramoure, magre* myne hede. And therefore ye be answeryd: I woll none of you, for ye be false enchaunters. And as for my lady, dame Gwenyvere, were I at my lyberte*
 5 as I was, I wolde prove hit on youres that she is the treweste lady unto hir lorde lyvyng.

'Well/ seyde the quenys, 'ys ^{tn^s v o u r} answere, that ye woll refuse us?'

'Ye, on my lyff,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'refused ye bene
 10 of me.'
 99^r So they departed and leffte hym there alone that nlade grete sorow.

(4) So aftir that noone com the damesel unto hym with his dyner and asked hym what chere.

15 'Truly, damesel/ seyde sir Launcelot, 'never so ylle.*

'Sir/ she seyde, 'that me repentis, but and ye woll be ruled by me I shall helpe you oute of this dystresse, and ye shall have no shame nor velony, so that ye wol(d) [hold] my promyse.'

20 'Fayre damesel, I graunte you; but sore I am of thes quenys crauftis aferde, for they have destroyed many a good knyght.'

'Sir,' seyde she, 'that is soth, and for the renowne and bounte* that they here of you they woll have your love.

25 And, sir, they sey youre name is sir Launcelot du Lake, the floure of knyghtes, and they be passyng wroth with you that ye have refused hem. But, sir, and ye wolde promyse me to helpe my fadir on Tewysday nexte commynge, that hath made a turnemente betwyxt hym and the kynge of
 30 North Galys—for the laste Tewysday past my fadir loste the felde thorow three knyghtes of Arthurs courte—and yf ye woll be there on Tewysday next commynge and helpe my fadir, and to-morne be pryme by the grace of God I shall delyver you dene.*

35 'Now, fayre damesell,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'telle me your fadyrs name, and than shall I gyff you an answere.'

3 C* enchauntresses 5 C on you or on yours 13 C Ryght so at the noone
 15 C* fayre damoyssel sayd syre Launcelot in my lyf dayes neuer 18-19 W
 ye woll my C* ye hold me a promyse (see note) 20-1 C wil graunte yow
 and sore I am of these quenes sorceresses aferd 24 C they wold haue 31 yf
 not in C 33 C or pryme 35 C Fayre may den C telle me what is your

'Sir knyght,' she seyde, 'my fadyrs name is kynge Bagdemagus, that was foule rebuked at the laste turnemente.'

'I knowe your fadir well,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'for a noble kyng and a good knyght, and by the fayth of my body, your fadir shall have my servyse, and you bothe at that 5 [day]/

'Sir,' she seyde, 'gramercy, and to-morne loke ye be redy betymys, and I shall delyver you and take you your armoure, your horse, shelde and spere. And hereby wythin this ten myle is an abbey of whyght monkys, and there I pray you *o 99^v to abyde me, and thydir shall I brynge my fadir unto you/

'And all this shall be done/ seyde sir Launcelot, 'as I am trew knyght.'

And so she departed and come on the morne erly and founde hym redy. Than she brought hym oute of twelve »s lockys, and toke hym his armour and his owne horse; and lyghtly he sadyld hym and toke his spere in his honde, and so rode forth, and sayde, 'Damesell, I shall not fayle, by the grace of God.'

And so he rode into a grete foreste all that day, and never *o coude fynde no hygheway. And so the nyght fell on hym, and than was he ware in a slade of a pavylyon of rede sendele. 'Be my feyth,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'in that pavylyon woll I lodge all this nyght.' And so he there alyght downe, and tyed his horse to the pavylyon, and there he *5 unarmed hym. And there he founde a bed, and layde hym therein, and felle on slepe sadly.

Than within an owre there com that knyght that ought (\$) the pavylyon. He wente that his lemman had layne in that bed, and so he leyde hym adowne by sir Launcelot and 30 toke hym in his armys and began to kysse hym. And whan sir Launcelot felte a rough berde kyssyng hym he sterte oute of the bedde lyghtly, and the othir knyght after hym. And eythir of hem gate their swerdys in their hondis, and oute at the pavylyon dore wente the knyght of the pavylyon, 35

1 C fader is 4-5 C* body ye shalle haue my body redy to d~~o~~ your fader and
you seruyse at that *End of line in W* 7 C awayte ye 8 C* shal be she
that shal 10-n C you that ye me abyde 16 C 8c brou3t hym vnto
his armour & whan he was dene armed she brought hym vntyl his owne hors
17 C toke a grete spere 18 C fayre damoyse I shal not faile you 28-9 C
knyghte to whome the paelione ought And he 30 C doune besyde syr

and sir Launcelot folowed hym. And there by a lytyll slad sir Launcelot wounded hym sore nyghe unto the deth. And than he yelded hym to sir Launcelot, and so he graunted hym, so that he wolde telle hym why he com into the bed.

5 'Sir/ sayde the knyghte, 'the pavylyon is myne owne. And as this nyght I had assigned my lady to have slepte with hir, and now I am lykly to dye of this wounde.'

'That me repentyth,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'of youre hurte, but I was adrad of treson, for I was late begyled. And
:o therefore com on your way into youre pavylyon, and take youre reste, and as I suppose I shall staunche your bloode.'

100^r And so they wente bothe into the pavylyon, and anone sir Launcelot staunched his bloode.

Therewithall com the knyghtes lady that was a passynge
15 fayre lady. And whan [she] aspyed that her lorde Beileus was sore wounded she cryed oute on sir Launcelot and made grete dole oute of mesure. 'Pease, my lady and my love/ seyde sir Beileus, 'for this knyght is a good man and a knyght of adventures.' And there he tolde hir all the case
*o how he was wounded. 'And whan that I yelded me unto hym he laffte me goodly, and hath staunched my bloode.'

'Sir/ seyde the lady, 'I require the, telle me what knyght thou art, and what is youre name.'

'Fayre lady,' he sayde, 'my name is sir Launcelot du
25 Lake.'

'So me thought ever be youre speche,' seyde the lady, 'for I have sene you oftyn or this, and I know you bettir than ye wene. But now wolde ye promyse me of youre curtesye, for the harmys that ye have done to me and to my lorde,
30 sir Beileus, that whan ye com unto kyng Arthurs court for to cause hym to be made knyght of the Rounde Table? For he is a passyng good man of armys and a myghty lorde of londys or many oute iles.'

'Fayre lady,' sayde sir Launcelot, 'latte hym com unto
35 the courte the next hyghe feste, and loke ye com with hym, and I shall do my power; and he preve hym doughty or his hondis he shall have his desyre.'

1 C lytel (S lytyl) slake

6 C and there thys

7 C with me

19 C

knyght aduenturous

28 C now and ye wold

30 C whanne he cometh

36-7 Cf ye preue you doughty of your handes that ye shalle haue your desyre

So within a while the nyght passed and the day shone. Than sir Launcelot armed hym and toke his horse, and so he was taughte to the abbey.

And as sone as he come thydir the doughter of kyng (6) Bagdemagus herde a grete horse trotte on the pa[vy]mente, 5 and she than arose and yode to [a] wyndowe, and there she sawe sir Launcelot.' And anone she made men faste to take his horse frome hym, and lette lede hym into a stable; and hymself [was ledde] unto a chambir and unarmed hym. And this lady sente hym a longe gowne, and com herself 10 and made hym good chere; and she seyde he was the knyght in the worlde that was moste welcom unto hir. 100*

Than in all haste she sente for hir fadir Bagdemagus that was within twelve myle of that abbey, and afore evyn he come with a fayre felyshyp of knyghtes with hym. And 15 whan the kyng was alyght of his horse he yode streyte unto sir Launcelotte his chambir, and there he founde his doughtir. And than the kyng toke hym in his armys and eythir made other good chere.

Than sir Launcelot made his complaynte unto the kyng, 20 how he was betrayed; and how he was brother unto sir Lyonell, whyche was departed frome hym he wyste not where, and how his doughter had delyverde hym oute of preson. 'Therefore, while that I lyve, I shall do hir servyse and all hir kynrede.' 25

'Than am I sure of your helpe,' seyde the kyng, 'on Tewysday next commyng?'

'Yee, sir/ seyde sir Launcelot, 'I shall nat fayle you, for so have I promysed my lady youre doughter. But, sir, what knyghtes be tho of my lorde kyng Arthurs that were with 30 the kyng of North Galys?'

'Sir, hit was sir Madore de la Porte and sir Mordred and sir Gahalantyne that all forfared my knyghtes, for agaynste hem three I nother none of myne myght bere no strenghthe.'

1 C while as they thus talked the nyghte 2-3 C* and they taught hym to the
 Abbaye and thyder he rode within the pace of two owrys 4 C And soone
 asf syre launcelott came withyn the Abbeye yarde the 6 W to dwyndowe
 9 C in to a fayre chamber 10-11 C & anone she came her self And thene
 she made launcelot passyng good 18 Cenbraced syr Launcelot in hys armes
 21-2 Chow his broder syre lyonel was departed 24that«o//»C 3i-2CNorth-
 galys and the kyng said it was 33 Cgahalaytyn 34 CI nor my knyghtes

'Sir,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'as I here sey that turnement shall be here within this three myle of this abbay. But, sir, ye shall sende unto me three knyghtes of youres suche as ye truste, and loke that the three knyghtes have all whyght
5 sheldis and no picture on their shyldis, and ye shall sende me another of the same sewte; and we four wyll oute of a lytyll wood in myddys of bothe partyes com, and we shall falle on the frunte of oure enemyes and greve hem that we may. And thus shall I not be knowyn what maner a knyght
io I am.

So they toke their reste that nyght. And this was on the Sondag, and so the kynge departed and sente unto sir Launcelot three knyghtes with four whyght shyldys. And on the Tewysday they lodged hem in a lytyll leved wood
r 15 besyde thereas the turnemente sholde be. And there were scaffoldys and ^rholes¹, that lordys and ladyes myght beholde and gyff the pryse.

Than com into the fylde the kynge of North Galys with nyne score helmys, and than the three knyghtis of kyng
2° Arthurs stood by themself. Than com into the felde kynge Bagdemagus with four score helmys; and than they feautred their sperys and come togydys with a grete daysshe. And there was slayne of knyghtes at the fyrste recountir twelve knyghtes of kynge Bagdemagus parte, and syx of the kynge
25 of North Galys syde and party; and kynge Bagdemagus his party were ferre sette asyde and abak.

(7) Wyth that com in sir Launcelot, and he threste in with his spere in the thyckyst of the pres; and there he smote downe with one spere fyve knyghtes, and of four of them
30 he brake their backys. And in that thrange he smote downe the kynge of North Galys, and brake his thygh in that falle. All this doynge of sir Launcelot saw the three knyghtes of Arthurs, and seyde, 'Yondir is a shrewde geste, therefore have here ons at hym.' So they encountred, and sir Launce-

1 W pt pe 2 But sir not in C 5-6 C sheldes & I also & no paynture on the sheldes & we four will come out 7 com not in C 8 C falle in 9 C maner a not in C 16 W and towrys that C* and holes that F(MS. Add. 10293, f> 284a): firent li doy roy drechier loges en mi les pres ou il avoit fenestres as dames et as damoiseles {see note} 17 C to gyue 19 Ceyght score 21 C score of helmys 25 syde and not in C 27 Ccame syr Launcelot du lake 33 and seyde not in C C* gest sayd syre Madore de la port therfore

lot bare hym downe horse and man so that his sholdir wente oute of joynte.

'Now hit befallyth me,' seyde sir Mordred, 'to stirre me, for sir Mador hath a sore falle.' And than sir Launcelot was ware of hym, and gate a spere in his honde and mette 5 with hym. And sir Mordred brake his spere uppon hym; and sir Launcelo't gaff hym suche a buffette that the arson of the sadill brake, and so he drove over the horse taylor, that his helme smote into the erthe a foote and more, that nyghe his nek was broke, and there he lay longe in a swowe. 10

Than com in sir Gahalantyne with a grete spere, and sir Launcelot agaynste hym in all that they myght dryve, that bothe hir sperys to-braste evyn to their hondys; and than they flange oute with her swerdes and gaff many sore 101^v strokys. Than was sir Launcelot wroth oute of mesure, 15 and than he smote sir Gahalantyne on the helme, that his nose, erys and mowthe braste oute on bloode; and therewith his hede hynge low, and with that his horse ran away with hym, and he felle downe to the erthe.

Anone therewithall sir Launcelot gate a speare in his 20 honde, and or ever that speare brake he bare downe to the erthe syxtene knyghtes, som horse and man and som the man and nat the horse; and there was none that he hitte surely but that he bare none armys that day. And than he gate a spere and smote downe twelve knyghtes, and the 2\$ moste party of hem never throoff aftir. And than the knyghtes of the kyng of North Galys party wolde joust no more, and there the gre was gebyn to kyng Bagdemagus.

So eythir party departed unto his owne, and sir Launcelot rode forth with kyng Bagdemagus unto his castel. And 30 there he had passynge good chere bothe with the kyng and with his doughter, and they profyrde hym grete yefftes.

And on the morne he toke his leve and tolde the kyng that he wolde seke his brothir sir Lyonell that wente frome

2 C oute of lyth 3-4 C me to Iuste sayd Mordred for 4 And than *not in*
 C hym. with al theyre strength that they my3t dryue 12 C
 5 C a grete spere 8 C he flewe ouer 9 C butte in to 14-15 C many a grym
 stroke 16 C* galahantyne F Galehodin 17 C nose braste out on
 blood and eerys and mouthe bothe and ther with 20 C a greete spere 21 C
 that grete spere 23-4 C none but that he hyt surely he bare 25 C another
 grete spere 29 C his owne place 34 C wold goo and seke

hym whan he slepte. So he toke his horse and betaughte hem all to God, and there he seyde unto the kynges doughter, 'Yf that ye have nede any tyme of my servyse, I pray you let me have knowlecche, and I shall nat fayle you, as I am
5 trewe knyght.'

And so sir Launcelot departed, and by adventure he com into the same foreste there he was takynge his slepe before; and in the myddys of an hygheway he mette a damesel rydyng on a whyght palfray, and there eythir salewed
10 other.

'Fayre damesel,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'know y[e] in this contrey ony adventures nere hande?'

'Sir knyght,' seyde the damesel, 'here ar adventures nyghe, and thou durste preve hem.'

15 'Why sholde I not preve ?' seyde sir Launcelot. 'For for that cause com I hydir.'

'Welle,' seyde she, 'thou semyst well to be a good knyght,
102^r and yf thou dare mete with a good knyght I shall brynge the where is the beste knyght and the myghtyeste that ever
20 thou founde, so thou wolte telle me thy name and what knyght thou art.'

'Damesell, as for to telle you my name, I take no grete force. Truly, my name is sir Launcelot du Lake.'

'Sir, thou besemys well; here is adventures fast by that
25 fallyth for the. For hereby dwellyth a knyght that woll nat be overmacched for no man I know but ye do overmacche hym. And his name is sir Tarquyn. And, as I undirstonde, he hath in his preson of Arthurs courte good knyghtes three score and four that he hath wonne with his owne
30 hondys. But whan ye have done that journey, ye shall promyse me, as ye ar a trew knyght, for to go and helpe me and other damesels that ar dystressed dayly with a false knyght.'

'All youre entente, damesell, and desyre I woll fulfyll, 35 so ye woll brynge me unto this knyght.'

'Now, fayre knyght, com on youre way.'

1 C whan that he 3 that *not in C* 7 C was take slepyngf 11 W know you C* knowe ye 12 nere hande *not in C* 13-14 C aduentures nere hand and thou 15 C not preue aduentures 15-16 C launcelot for that 20 Ctelle me what is thy 24-5 Chere ben aduentures by that fallen 26 do *not in C* 31 C go with me and to helpe

And so she brought hym unto the fourde and the tre where hyng the basyn. So sir Launcelot lette his horse drynke, and sytthen he bete on the basyn with the butte of his spere tylle the bottum felle oute. And longe dud he so, but he sye no man. Than he rode endlonge .the gatys of 5 that maner nyghe halfe an howre.

And than was he ware of a grete knyght that droffe an horse afore hym, and overthwarte the horse lay an armed knyght bounden. And ever as they com nere and nere sir Launcelot thought he sholde know hym. Than was he ware 10 that hit was sir Gaherys, Gawaynes brothir, a knyght of the Table Rounde.

'Now, fayre damese!,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'I se yondir a knyght faste ibounden that is a felow of myne, and brother he is unto sir Gawayne. And at the fyrste begynnyng I 15 promyse you, by the leve of God, for to rescowe that knyght. But yf his maystir sytte the bettir in his sadyl, I shall 102* delyver all the presoners that he hath oute of daungere, for I am sure he hath two bretherne of myne presoners with hym.'

*o

But by that tyme that eythir had sene other they gryped theyre sperys unto them.

'Now, fayre knyght/ seyde sir Launcelot, 'put that wounded knyghte of that horse and lette hym reste a whyle, and lette us too preve oure strengthis. For, as hit is enfourmed 25 me, thou doyste and haste done me grete despyte, and shame unto knyghtes of the Rounde Table. And therefore now defende the!'

'And thou be of [the] Rounde Table/ seyde Terquyn, 'I de[fy] the and all thy felyshyp!' 3°

'That is overmuche seyde,' sir Launcelot seyde, of the at thys tyme.'

And than they put there sperys in their restys and (8) come togedyrs with hir horsis as faste as they myght ren; and aythir smote other in myddys of their shyldis, that both 35 their horsys backys braste undir them, and the knyghtes

4 C spere so hard with al his my3t tyl 4-5 C he dyd so but he sawe noo thyng
 10 C Thenne sir launcelot was ware 13-14 C yonder cometh a 17 C
 sytte better in the sadel 21 But not inC 2 5 C us two 26 C done grete
 30 W I desyre the 31-3 C sayd sayd syre launcelot Capitulum VIII And
 thfine

were bothe astoned. And as sone as they myght they
 avoyded their horsys and toke their shyldys before them and
 drew oute their swerdys and com togydir egirly; and eyther
 gaff other many stronge strokys, for there myght nothir
 5 shyldis nother harneyse holde their strokes.

And so within a whyle they had bothe many grymme
 woundys and bledde passyng grevously. Thus they fared
 two owres and more, trasyng and rasyng eyther othir where
 they myght hitte ony bare place. Than at the laste they were
 io brethles bothe, and stode lenyng on her swerdys.

'Now, felow,' seyde sir Terquyne, 'holde thy honde a
 whyle, and telle me that I shall aske of the.'

'Sey on,' seyde sir Launcelot.

Than sir Terquyn seyde, 'Thou art the byggyst man that
 is ever I mette withall, and the beste-brethed, and as lyke one
 knyght that I hate abovyn all other knyghtes. So be hit
 103^r that thou be not he, I woll lyghtly acorde with the, and for
 thy love I woll delyver all the presoners that I have, that is
 three score and four, so thou wolde telle me thy name. And
 20 thou and I woll be felowys togedys and never to fayle the
 whyle that I lyve.'

'Ye sey well,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'but sytthyn hit is so
 that I have thy frendeshyppe and may have, what knyght is
 that that thou hatyste abovyn all thyng?'

25 'Feythfully,' seyde sir Terquyn, 'his name is sir Launcelot
 de Lake, for he slowe my brothir sir Carados at the Dolerous
 Towre, that was one of the beste knyghtes on lyve; and
 therefore hym I excepte of alle knyghtes, for may I hym onys
 mete, the tone shall make an ende, I make myne avow. And
 30 for sir Launcelottis sake I have slayne an hondred good
 knyghtes, and as many I have maymed all uttirly, that they
 myght never aftir helpe themself, and many have dyed in
 preson. And yette have I three score and four, and all [shal]
 be delyverde, so thou wolte telle me thy name, so be hit
 35 that thou be nat sir Launcelot.'

1-2 C myghte auoyde theyre horses they took 6-7 C bothe grymly woundes
 8 Cor mo 12 C what I shal aske the 13 seyde sir Launcelot *notin* C 15-16 C
 and lyke on kny3t 20 C and I we wyl be 22 C it is wel sayd sayd
 23 C I may haue thy frendship what 24 C al other 26 C du lake
 26 C Caradusf F (MS. Add. 10293, f. 321c): Carados 27 C hest knyghtes
 28-9 CI ones mete with hym the one of vs shal make an ende of other I

'Now se I well,* seyde sir Launcelot, 'that suche a man I myght be, I myght have pease; and suche a man I myght[e be] that there sholde be mortall warre betwyxte us. And now, sir knyght, at thy requeste I woll that thou wete and know that I am sir Launcelot du Lake, kynge Bannys son 5 of Benwyke, and verry knyght of the Table Rounde. And now I defyghe the; and do thy beste!'

'A!' seyde sir Tarquyne, 'thou arte to me moste welcom of any knyght, for we shall never departe tylle the tone of us be dede.'

ro

Than they hurteled togedyrs as two wylde bullys, russhynge and laysshynge with hir shyldis and swerdys, that somtyme they felle bothe on their nosys. Thus they foughte style two owres and more and never wolde have reste, and sir Tarquyne gaff sir Launcelot many woundys, that all 15 the grounde thereas they faughte was all besparcled with 103^v bloode.

Than at the laste sir Terquyne wexed faynte and gaff (9) somewhat abakke, and bare his shyld low for wery. That aspyed sir Launcelot, and lepte uppon hym fersly and gate 20 hym by the bavoure of hys helmette and plucked hym downe on his kneis, and anone he raced of his helme and smote his necke in sundir.

And whan sir Launcelot had done this he yode unto the damesell and seyde, 'Damesell, I am redy to go with you *s where ye woll have me, but I have no horse.'

'Fayre sir,' seyde this wounded knyght, 'take my horse, and than lette me go into this maner and delyver all thes presoners.' So he toke sir Gaheris horse and prayde hym nat to be greved.

3°

'Nay, fayre lorde, I woll that ye have hym at your commaundement, for ye have bothe saved me and my horse. And this day I sey ye ar the beste knyght in the worlde,

3 C warre mortal 7 P doo Wh doe %C Turquyne launcelot thou
 8-9 C welcome that euer was knyghte 13 C ouer theyr 16 P besperkled
 JF/ibespeckled i9?shelde Whsheld 23-5W (sidenote): The deth of Terquyn
 by sir Launcelot 27-8 C sayd she take this wounded knyghtes hors and sende
 hym in to this manoyr and commaunde hym to delyuer all the (see note) 29-32 C
 Soo syr launcelot wente vnto Gaheryes and praid hym not to be agreued for to
 leue hym his hors Nay fayr lord said Gaheryes I wyll that ye take my hors atte
 your owne commaundement 33 R world Wh worlde

for ye have slayne this day in my syght the myghtyeste man
and the beste knyght excepte you that ever I sawe. But,
fayre sir,' seyde sir Gaherys, 'I pray you telle me your name.'

'Sir, my name is sir Launcelot du Lake that ought to
5 helpe you of ryght for kynge Arthurs sake, and in especiall
for my lorde sir Gawayne his sake, youre owne brother.
And whan that ye com within yondir maner, I am sure ye
shall fynde there many knyghtes of the Rounde Table; for
I have sene many of their shyldys that I know hongys on
io yondir tre. There is sir Kayes shyld, 'and sir Brandeles
shylde¹, and sir Galyhuddys shyld, and sir Bryan de
Lystenoyse his shyld, and sir Alydukis shyld, with many
mo that I am nat now avysed of, and sir Marhaus, and also
my too brethirne shyldis, sir Ector de Marys and sir
15 Lyonell. Wherefore I pray you grete them all frome me
and sey that I bydde them to take suche stuff there as they
fynde, that in ony wyse my too brethirne go unto the courte
and abyde me there tylle that I com, for by the feste of
Pentecoste I caste me to be there; for as at thys tyme I
104^r 20 muste ryde with this damesel for to save my promyse.'

And so they departed frome Gaherys; and Gaherys yode
into the maner, and there he founde a yoman porter kepyng
many keyes. Than sir Gaherys threw the porter unto the
grounde and toke the keyes frome hym; and hastely he
25 opynde the preson dore, and there he lette all the presoners
oute, and every man lowsed other of their bondys. And
whan they sawe sir Gaherys, all they thanked hym, for they
wente that he had slayne sir Terquyne because that he was
wounded.

30 'Not so, syrs/ seyde sir Gaherys, 'hit was sir Launcelot
that slew hym worshypfully with his owne hondys, and he
gretys you all well and prayeth you to haste you to the
courte. And as unto you, sir Lyonell and sir Ector de Marys,

1 *P* myghtyest *Wh* myghtest 2-3 *P* sawe & fayr syre *Wh* sawe & fore syre
6 *C*gawayns sake your owne derebroder 7 *P*manoyr *Wh* manayr 9 hongys
not in *C* 10-11 *C** shelde & sir braundes sheld and syr Marhaus sheld and syre
Galyndes shelde *F* mentions *Brandelis* (var.: *Brandalis*) among the prisoners delivered
by *Kay* (*MS. Add. 10293, f. 322b*) 13 and sir Marhaus not in *C* x\|*C*
and soo he 22 *P* manoir *Wh* manore 22-3 *C*kepyng ther many keyes Anone
with al syre 25-6 *C*lete oute all the prysoners 28 that he had slayne sir
Terquyne because not in *Cf* 30 *P* was *Wh* was 31 *C* handes I sawe it
with myn owne eyen and he

he prayeth you to abyde hym at the courte of kynge Arthure.'

'That shall we nat do,' seyde his bretherne. 'We woll fynde hym and we may lyve.'

'So shall I , ' seyde sir Kay, 'fynde hym or I com to the 5 courte, as I am trew knyght,'

Than they sought the house thereas the armour was, and than they armed them; and every knyght founde hys owne horse and all that longed unto hym. So forthwith there com a foster with four horsys lade with fatte venyson. 10 And anone sir Kay seyde, 'Here is good mete for us for one meale, for we had not many a day no good repaste.' And so that venyson was rosted, sodde, and bakyn; and so aftir souper som abode there all nyght. But sir Lyonell and sir Ector de Marys and sir Kay rode aftir sir Launcelot to 15 fynde hym yf they myght.

Now turne we to sir Launcelot that rode with the damesel (10) in a fayre hygheway.

'Sir,' seyde the damesell, 'here by this way hauntys a knyght that dystressis all ladyes and jantylwomen, and at 20 the Teste he robbyth them other lyeth by hem.

'What ?' seyde sir Launcelot, 'is he a theff and a knyght ? And a ravyssher of women ? He doth shame unto the Order of Knyghthode, and contrary unto his oth. Hit is pyte* that he lyvyth! But, fayre damesel, ye shall ryde on before 25104* youreself, and I woll kepe myself in coverte; and yf that he trowble yow other dystresse you I shall be your rescowe and lerne hym to be ruled as a knyght.'

So thys mayde rode on by the way a souffte amblynge pace, and within a whyle com oute a knyght on horsebafk] 30 owte of the woode and his page with hym. And there he put the damesell frome hir horse, and than she cryed. With that com sir Launcelot as faste as he myght tyll he com to the knyght, sayng, 'A, false knyght and traytoure unto knyghthode, who dud lerne the to distresse ladyes, damesels 35 and jantyllwomen ?

1-2 of kynge Arthure *not m C* 3 *P* sayd *Wh* says 5 *C* come at 6 *P* true *Wh* true 7 *C* Thenne alle tho knyghtes sought 9 *P* that *Wh* thet
9-10 *C* hym And whan this was done ther cam a foster (*Wh* soster) 13 *C* rosted
baken and soden 14 *C* al that nyghte 30 *W* horsbat *C** horsbak

Whan the knyght sy sir Launcelot thus rebukynge hym he answerde nat, but drew his swerde and rode unto sir Launcelot* And sir Launcelot threw his spere frome hym and drew his swerde, and strake hym suche a buffette on
5 the helmette that he claffe his hede and necke unto the throte.

'Now haste thou thy paymente that longe thou haste deserved!*

'That is trouth/ seyde the damesell, 'for lyke as Terquyn
10 wacched to dystresse good knyghtes, so dud this knyght attende to destroy and dystresse ladyes, damesels and jantyll-women; and his name was sir Perys de Foreste Savage.'

'Now, damesell,' seyde sir Launcelot 'woll ye ony more servyse of me V

15 'Nay, sir,' she seyde, 'at thys tyme, but Allmyghty Jesu preserve you wheresomever ye ryde or goo, for the curteyst knyght thou arte, and mekyste unto all ladyes and jantyl-women that now lyvyth. But one thyng, sir knyght, me-
thynkes ye lak, ye that ar a knyght wyveles, that ye woll nat
20 love som mayden other jantylwoman. For I cowde never here sey that ever ye loved ony of no maner of degr£, and that is grete pyte. But hit is noysed that ye love quene Gwenyvere, and that she hath ordeyned by enchauntemente that ye shall never love none other but hir, nother none
25 other damesell ne lady shall rejoyce you; whereffore] there
105^r be many in this londe, of hyghe astate and lowe, that make grete sorow.'

'Fayre damesell,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'I may nat warne peple to speke of me what hit pleasyth hem. But for to
30 be a weddyd man, I thynke hit nat, for than I muste couche with hir and leve armys and turnamentis, batellys and adventures. And as for to sey to take my pleasaunce with peramours, that woll I refuse: in prencipall for drede of God, for knyghtes that bene adventures sholde nat be
35 advoutrers nothir lecherous, for than they be nat happy nother fortunate unto the werrys; for other they shall be overcom with a sympler knyght than they be hemself,

4-10 W(rt^f»o/»):He«8irLauncelot8lewPery8deFore3tSaveage loCtodestroye
knyghtes i6Cpreserue Sperserue 2oCsorI 21 Cno maner degreef
34-6 Of that ben aduenturous or lecherous shal not be happy ne fortunate vnto

other ellys they shall sle by unhappe and hir cursednesse bettir men than they be hemself. And so who that usyth peramours shall be unhappy, and all thyng unhappy that is aboute them.'

And so sir Launcelot and she departed. And than he 5 rode in a depe foreste two dayes and more, and hadde straye lodgyng. So. on thp thirde day he rode on a longe brydge, and there sterte uppon hym suddeynly a passyng foule carle. And he smote his horse on the nose, that he turned aboute, and asked hym why he rode over that brydge with- <> oute lycence.

'Why sholde I nat ryde this way?' seyde sir Launcelotte, 'I may not ryde besyde.'

'Thou shalt not chose,' seyde the carle, and laysshed at hym with a grete club shodde with iron. Than sir Launcelot is drew his swerde and put the stroke abacke, and clave his hede unto the pappys.

And at the ende of the brydge was a fayre vyllage, and all peple, men and women, cryed on sir Launcelot and sayde, 'Sir knyght, a worse dede duddyst thou never for thyself, 20 for thou haste slayne the cheyff porter of oure castell.' Sir Launcelot lete hem sey what they wolde, and streyte he rode into the castelle.

And whan he come into the castell he alyght and tyed his horse to a rynge on the walle. And there he sawe a fayre 25 grene courte, and thydir he dressid hym, for there hym 105* thought was a fayre place to feyght in. So he loked aboute hym and sye muche peple in dorys and in wyndowys that sayde, 'Fayre knyghte, thou arte unhappy to com here!'

Anone withall there com uppon hym two grete gyauntis 30 (11) well armed all save there hedyfs], with two horryble clubbys in their hondys. Sir Launcelot put his shyld before hym and put the stroke away of that one gyaunte, and with hys swerde he clave his hede in sundir. Whan his felowe sawe that, he ran away as he were woode, and sir Launcelot aftir 35 hym with all his myght, and smote hym on the shuldir and clave hym to the navyll.

11 C his lycence 20 Sir knyght *notin*C 22-3 Che wente in to 28 hym
not in C 29 to com here *not in C* 35 C wood for fere of the horryble
 strokes

Than sir Launcelot wente into the halle, and there com afore hym three score of ladyes and damesels, and all kneled unto hym and thanked God and hym of his delyveraunce. 'For,' they seyde, 'the moste party of us have bene here this s seven yere presoners, and we have worched all maner of sylke workys for oure mete, and we are all grete jentylwomen borne. And blyssed be the tyme, knyght, that ever thou were borne, for thou haste done the moste worshyp that ever ded knyght in this worlde; that woll we beare io recorde. And we all pray you to telle us your name, that we may telle oure frendis who delyverde us oute of preson.'

'Fayre damesellys,' he seyde, 'my name is sir Launcelot du Laake/

'A, sir,' seyde they all, 'well mayste thou be he, for ellys 15 save yourself, as we demed, there myght never knyght have the bettir of thes jyauntis; for many fayre knyghtes have assayed, and here have ended. And many tymes have we here wysshed aftir you, and thes two gyauntes dredde never knyght but you.'

ao 'Now may ye sey,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'unto your frendys, and grete them all fro me; and yf that I com in 106^r ony of your marchys, shew me such chere as ye have cause. And what tresoure that there is in this castel I yeff hit you *5 for a rewarde for your grevaunces. And the lorde that is the ownere of this castel, I wolde he ressayved hit as is his ryght.'

'Fayre sir,' they seyde, 'the name of this castell is called Tyntagyll, and a deuke ought hit somtyme that had wedded fayre Igrayne, and so aftir that she was wedded to Uther 30 Pendragon, and he gate on hir Arthure.'

'Well/ seyde sir Launcelot, 'I undirstonde to whom this castel longith.' And so he departed frome them and be- taught hem unto God.

And than he mounted uppon his horse and rode into 35 many stronge countreyes and thorow many watyrs and valeyes, and evyll was he lodged. And at the laste by fortune hym happynd ayenste nyght to come to a fayre courtelage, and therein he founde an olde jantylwoman that

1-4 W (*sidenote*): Here sir Launcelot slew two Gyauntes in the castel of Tyntagil
 17 C assayed hit and 21 C* frendes how & who hath delyuerd you and grete
 W gretw 23 C there in this castel is 28 C & after wedded her

lodged hym with goode wyll; and there he had good chere for hym and his horse. And whan tyme was his oste brought hym into a garret over the gate to his bedde. There sir Launcelot unarmed hym and set his harneyse by hym and wente to bedde, and anone he felle on slepe. 5

So aftir there com one on horsebak and knocked at the gate in grete. haste* Whan sir Launcelot herde this he arose up and loked oute at the wyndowe, and sygh by the moone-lyght three knyghtes com rydyng aftir that one man, and all three laysshynge on hym at onys with swerdys; and that 10 one knyght turned on hem knyghtly agayne and defended hym. 'Truly,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'yondir one knyght shall I helpe, for hit were shame for me to se three knyghtes on one, and yf [he] be there slayne I am partener of his deth.' 15

And therewith he toke his harneys and wente oute at a wyndowe by a shete downe to the four knyghtes. And than sir Launcelot seyde on hyght, 'Turne you, knyghtis, unto me, and leve this feyghtyng with that knyght!' And than they three leffte sir Kay and turned unto sir Launcelot, 20 and assayed hym on every honde. 106*

Than sir Kay dressid hym to have holpen sir Launcelot. 'Nay, sir,' sayde he, 'I woll none of your helpe. Therefore, as ye woll have my helpe, lette me alone with hem.' Sir Kay for the plesure of that knyght suffyrd hym for to do his 25 wylle and so stode on syde. Than anone within seven strokys sir Launcelot had strykyn hem to the erthe.

And than they all three cryed, 'Sir knyght, we yelde us unto you as a man of myght makeles.'

'As to that, I woll nat take youre yeldyng unto me, but 30 so that ye woll yelde you unto thys knyght; and oh that covaunte I woll save youre lyvys, and ellys nat.'

'Fayre knyght, that were us loth, for as for that knyght, we chaced hym hydir, and had overcom hym, had nat ye bene. Therefore to yelde us unto hym hit were no reson.' 35

6 C So soone after 14 C* yf he be slayne 19 C your fyghtyng 20 C
alle thre 21 C* and there beganne grete bataylle for they alyghte al thre and strake
many grete strokes at syr launcelot and assaylled (S assayed) *Probably a homoeote-*
leuton in W 21 Ceury syde 26-7 C vi strokes 30 C that said sir
laffcelot I will 31 C vnto syr kay the Seneschal 33-4 C knyghte sayd
they that were we lothe to doo (we *not in S*) For as for syr kay we chaced

'Well, as to that, avyse you well, for ye may chose whether ye woll dye other lyve. For and ye be yolden hit shall be unto sir Kay.'

'Now, fayre knyght,' they seyde, 'in savyng of oure lyvys,
5 we woll do as thou commaundys us.'

'Than shall ye,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'on Whytsonday nexte commynge go unto the courte of kynge Arthure, and there shall ye yelde you unto quene Gwenyvere and putte you all three in hir grace and mercy, and say that sir Kay sente
io you thydre to be her presoners.'

'Sir/ they seyde, 'hit shall be done, by the feyth of oure bodyes, and we be men lyvyng.' And there they sware every knyght uppon his swerde, and so sir Launcelot suffyrd hem to departe.

15 And than sir Launcelot cnoocked at the gate with the pomell of his swerde; and with that come his oste, and in they entyrd, he and sir Kay.

'Sir,' seyde his oste, 'I wente ye had bene in your bed.'

'So I was, but I arose and lepe oute at my wyndow for
20 to helpe an olde felowe of myne.'

So whan they come nye the lyght sir Kay knew well hit was sir Launcelot, and therewith he kneled downe and
107^r thanked hym of all his kyndenesse, that he had holpyn hym twyse frome the deth.

25 'Sir/ he seyde,' I have nothyng done but that me ought for to do. And ye ar welcom, and here shall ye repose you and take your reste.' Whan sir Kay was unarmed he asked aftir mete. Anone there was mete fette for hym and he ete strongly. And whan he had sowped they wente to their
30 beddys and were lodged togydys in one bed.

So on the morne sir Launcelot arose erly and leffte sir Kay slepyng. And sir Launcelot toke sir Kayes armoure and his shyld and armed hym; and so he wente to the stable and sadyld his horse, and toke his leve of his oste and
35 departed. Than sone aftir arose sir Kay and myssid sir Launcelot, and than he aspyed that he had his armoure and his horse.

1 C that said laQcelot

4 C Fayre knyght thenne they

12 men *not in Cf*

12-15 W (*sidenote*): Here sir Launcelot bete iii knyghtes and rescowed sir Kay

17 C sir kay and he

19 CI was sayd sire launcelot But

28 C mete fette

hym

34 C and toke his hors and toke his leue

*

'Now, be my fayth, I know welle that he woll greve som of the courte of kyng Arthure, for on hym knyghtes woll be bolde and deme that hit is I, and that woll begyle them. And bycause of his armoure and shyld I am sure I shall ryde in pease.' And than sone sir Kay departed and thanked 5 his oste.

Now turne we unto sir Launcelot that had ryddyn longe (12) in a grete foreste. And at the laste he com unto a low countrey full of fayre ryvers and fayre meedys; and before hym he sawe a longe brydge, and three pavylyons stood thereon, of 10 sylke and sendell of dyverse hew. And withoute the pavylyons hynged three whyght shyldys on trounceouns of sperys, and grete longe sperys stood upryght by the pavylyons, and at every pavylyon dore stoode three freysh knyghtes.

And so sir Launcelot passed by hem and spake no worde. 15 But whan he was paste the three knyghtes knew hym and seyde hit was the proude sir Kay: 'He wenyth no knyght so good as he, and the contrary is oftyn proved. Be my fayth,' seyde one of the knyghtes, his name was sir Gawtere, 'I woll ryde aftir hym and assay hym for all his pryde; and ye may 20 beholde how that I spede.'

So sir Gawtere armed hym and hynged his shyld uppon his sholdir, and mounted uppon a grete horse, and gate his 107^v speare in his honde, and wallopte aftir sir Launcelot. And whan he come nyghe hym he cryed, 'Abyde, thou proude 25 knyght, sir Kay! for thou shalt nat passe all quyte.' So sir Launcelot turned hym, and eythir feautyrd their sperys and com togedyrs with all their myghtes. And sir Gawters speare brake, but sir Launcelot smote hym downe horse and man.

And whan he was at the erthe his brethyrn seyde, 'Yondir 30 knyght is nat sir Kay, for he is far bygger than he.'

'I dare ley my hede,' seyde sir Gylmere, 'yondir knyght hath slayne sir Kay and hath takyn hys horse and harneyse.'

'Whether hit be so other no,' seyde sir Raynolde, lette us mounte on oure horsys and rescow oure brothir, sir 35

1 C my seythes 9 C Ryuers and medowes 14 C fresshe squyers
 16-17 [^]t knyghtes sayden hym that hit was 18 Coftyme 19 Csyre
 gaunter zz C Soo this knyght syre Gaunter 30 C whan syr gaunter
 was Csaydechone to other yonder 31 Cbygger S bygger 34-5 C
 Raynold the thyrd broder lete vs now goo mounte vpon our 35—p. 276,
 1 C our broder sir Gaunter vpon payne

Gawtere. For payne of deth, we all shall have worke inow to macche that knyght; for ever mesemyth by his persone hit is sir Launcelot other sir Trystrams other sir Pelleas, the good knyght.

5 Than anone they toke their horsys and overtoke sir Launcelot. And sir Gylmere put forth his speare and ran to sir Launcelot, and sir Launcelot smote hym downe, that he lay in a sowghe. 'Sir knyght,' seyde sir Raynolde, 'thou arte a stronge man, and as I suppose thou haste slayne my
10 two bretherne, for the whyche rysyth my herte sore agaynste the. And yf I myght wyth my worshyppe I wolde not have ado with the, but nedys I muste take suche parte as they do. And therefore, knyght, kepe thyselfe!'

And so they hurtylde togydyrs with all their myghtes and
15 all to-shevird bothe there spearys, and than they drew hir swerdys and laysshed togydir egirly. Anone there[with]all arose sir Gawtere and come unto his brother sir Gyllymere, and bade hym aryse, 'and helpe we oure brothir, sir Raynolde, that yondir merveylously macchyth yondir good
20 knyght.' Therewithall they hurteled unto sir Launcelot. And whan he sawe them com he smote a sore stroke unto
108^r sir Raynolde, that he felle of his horse to the grounde, and than he caste to the othir two bretherne, and at two strokys he strake hem downe to the erthe.

25 Wyth that sir Raynolde gan up sterte with his hede all blody and com streyte unto sir Launcelot.

'Now let be,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'I was not far frome the whan thou were made knyght, sir Raynolde, and also I know thou arte a good knyght, and lothe I were to sle
30 the.'

'Gramercy,' seyde sir Raynolde, 'of your goodnesse, and I dare say as for me and my bretherne, [we] woll nat be loth to yelde us unto you, with that we know youre name; for welle we know ye ar not sir Kay.'

35 'As for that, be as be may. For ye shall yelde you unto dame Gwenyvere, and loke that ye be there on Whytsonday and yelde you unto hir as presoners, and sey that sir Kay

8 C in a swoune 12 suche *not in C* 16 W there all C there with 20 C* they lepte on theyr horses & hurtled 23 C he stroke to 31 C raynold as for your 33 C we knewe youre (S your) 35 C be it as it be maye

sente you unto hir.' Than they swore hit sholde be done, and [so] passed forth sir Launcelot, and ecchone of the bretherne halpe other as well as they myght.

So sir Launcelotte rode into a depe roreste, and there by (13) hym in a slade he sey four knyghtes hovyng undir an oke, 5 and they were of Arthurs courte: one was sir Sagramour le Desyrus, and sir Ector de Marys, and sir Gawayne, and sir Uwayne. And anone as these four knyghtes had aspyed sir Launcelot they wende by his armys that hit had bene sir Kay.

'Now, be my fayth,' sayde sir Sagramoure, 'I woll preve sir <> Kayes myght, * and gate his spere in his honde and com towarde sir Launcelot. Than sir Launcelot was ware of his commyng and knew hym well, and feautred his speare agaynste hym and smote sir Sagramoure so sore that horse and man wente bothe to the erthe. 15

'Lo, my felowys,' seyde sir Ector, 'yondir may ye se what a buffette he hath gyffen! Methynkyth that knyght is mucche bygger than ever was sir Kay. Now shall ye se what 1 may do to hym.'

So sir Ector gate his spere in his honde and walopte 2° towarde sir Launcelot, and sir Launcelot smote hym evyn thorow the shylde and his sholdir, that man and horse wente 108^v to the erthe, and ever his spere helde. 'Be my fayth/ sayde sir Uwayne, 'yondir is a stronge knyght, and I am sure he hath slayne Kay. And I se be his grete strengthe hit woll 25 be harde to macche hym.' And therewithall sir Uwayne gate his speare and rode towarde sir Launcelot. And sir Launcelot knew hym well and lette hi(s) horse renne on the playne and gaff hym suche a buffette that he was astooned, and longe he wyste nat where he was. 30

'Now se I welle,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'I muste encountir with that knyght,' and dressed his shylde and gate a good speare in his honde and lete renne at sir Launcelot with all his myght; and eyther knyght smote other in myddys of the shylde. But sir Gawaynes spere braste, and sir Launcelot 35

2 C nd echone

15 C man felle bothe

16 C sayd hef

17 gyffen

Methynkyth *not in C*21 evyn *not in C*22 his *not in C*

%%W and

lette hir horse renne on C and soo he mette hym on

32-4 C kny3t Thenne

he dressid hef his sheld and gate a good spere in his hand and syre launcelot knewe hym welf (< line 28) and thenne they lete renne theyr horses with all theyr myghtes and eyther

charged so sore uppon hym that his horse reversed up-so-downe, and mucche sorow had sir Gawayne to avoyde his horse. And so sir Launcelot passed on a pace and smyled and seyde, 'God gyff hym joy that this spere made, for
5 there cam never a bettir in my honde.'

Than the four knyghtes wente echone to other and comforted each other and seyde, 'What sey ye by this geste,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'that with one spere hath felde us all four?'

10 'We commaunde hym to the devyll,' they seyde all, 'for he is a man of grete myght.'

'Ye may say hit well,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'that he [is] a man of myght, for I dare ley my hede hit is sir Launcelot: I know hym well by his rydyng.'

is 'Latte hym go,* seyde sir Uwayne, 'for whan we com to the courte we shall wete.' Than had they much sorow to gete their horsis agayne.

(14) Now leve we there and speke we of sir Launcelot that rode a grete whyle in a depe foreste. And as he rode he
20 sawe a blak brachette sekyng in maner as hit had bene in the feaute of an hurte dere. And therewith he rode aftir
109^r the brachette and he sawe lye on the grounde a large feaute of bloode. And than sir Launcelot rode faster, and ever the brachette loked behynde hir, and so she wente thorow a
25 grete marys, and ever sir Launcelot folowed.

And than was he ware of an olde maner, and thydir ran the brachette and so over a brydge. So sir Launcelot rode over that brydge that was olde and feble, and whan he com in the myddys of a grete halle there he seye lye dede a
30 knyght that was a semely man, and that brachette lycked his woundis.

And therewithall com oute a lady wepyng and wryngyng hir hondys, and sayde, 'Knyght, to mucche sorow hast thou brought me.'

35 'Why sey ye so?' seyde sir Launcelot. 'I dede never this knyght no harme, for hydir by the feaute of blood this

7 and seyde *not in C**

8 with *not in Cf*

8-12 *W (sidenoti)* \ Here sir

Launcelot with one spere smote downe sir Sagramour sir Ector sir Uwayne and
sir Gawayne izCyemaywelsayeit i3-i4.Cknoweitby isCsayd

syre Gawaynf 16 *C* than shal we wete 18 *C* speke of 19-20 *C* forest

where he saw 23 *C* rode after And 33 *C* And thenne she sayd O knyghte

brachet brought me. And therefore, fayre lady, be nat dyspleased with me, for I am full sore agreved for your grevaunce.'

'Truly, sir,' she seyde, 'I trowe hit be nat ye that hath slayne my husbonde, for he that dud that dede is sore wounded and is never lykly to be hole, that shall I ensure hym.'

'What was youre husbondes name?' seyde sir Launcelot.

'Sir, his name was called sir Gylberd the Bastarde, one of the beste knyghtys of the worlde, and he that hath slayne hym I know nat his name.'

'Now God sende you bettir comforte,' seyde sir Launcelot.

And so he departed and wente into the foreste agayne, and there he mette with a damesell the whyche knew hym well. And she seyde on lowde, 15

'Well be ye founde, my lorde. And now I requyre you of your knyghthode helpe my brother that is sore wounded and never styntyth bledyng; for this day he fought with sir Gylberte the Bastarde and slew hym in playne batayle, and there was my brother sore wounded. And there is a lady, 20 a sorseres, that dwellyth in a castel here bysyde, and this day she tolde me my brothers woundys sholde never be hole 109^y tyll I coude fynde a knyght wolde go into the Chapel Perelus, and there he sholde fynde a swerde and a bloody cloth that the woundid knyght was lapped in; and a pece of 25 that cloth and that swerde sholde hele my brother, with that his woundis were serched with the swerde and the cloth.'

'This is a mervelouse thyng,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'but what is your brothirs name?' 30

'Sir,' she seyde, 'sir Melyot de Logyrs.'

'That me repentys,' seyde sir Launcelotte, 'for he is a felow of the Table Rounde, and to his helpe I woll do my power.*

Than she sayde, 'Sir, folow ye evyn this hygheway, and 35 hit woll brynge you to the Chapel Perelus, and here I shall

9 C syre Gylbert the bastard 23 CI coude fynde a knyght wold goo S
I coud fynde a knyght that wold go 26-7 C my broders woundea so that
31 C she sayd his name was syre Melyot de logurs 35 C Thenne syre said she
folowe euen

abyde tyll God sende you agayne. And yf you spede nat I know no knyght lyvyng that may encheve that adventure.'

(15) Ryght so sir Launcelot departed, and whan he com to the Chapell Perelus he alyght downe andtyed his horse unto
5 a lytyll gate. And as sone as he was within the chyrche-yerde he sawe on the frunte of the chapel many fayre ryche shyldis turned up-so-downe, and many of tho shyldis sir Launcelot had sene knyghtes bere byforehande. With that he sawe by hym there stonde a thirty grete knyghtes, more
10 by a yerde than any man that ever he had sene, and all they grenned and gnasted at sir Launcelot. And whan he sawe their countenaunce he dredde hym sore, and so put his shyld before hym and toke his swerde in his honde redy unto batayle.

15 And they all were armed all in blak harneyse, redy with her shyldis and her swerdis redy drawyn. And as sir Launcelot wolde have gone thorow them they skaterd on every syde of hym and gaff hym the way, and therewith he wexed bolde and entyrde into the chapel. And there
20 he sawe no lyght but a dymme lampe brennyng, and than was he ware or a corpus hyllid with a clothe of sylke. Than sir Launcelot stouped doune and kutte a pese away of that cloth, and than hit fared undir hym as the grounde had
110^r quaked a lytyll; therewithall he feared.

25 And than he sawe a fayre swerde lye by the dede knyght, and that he gate in his honde and hyed hym oute of the chapell. Anone as ever he was in the chapell-yerde all the knyghtes spake to hym with grymly voyces and seyde, 'Knyght, sir Launcelot, lay that swerde frome the or thou
30 shalt dye!'

'Whether that I lyve other dye,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'with no wordys grete gete ye hit agayne. Therefore fyght for hit and ye lyst.'

Than ryght so he passed thorowoute them.

35 And byyonde the chapell-yarde there mette hym a fayre damesell and seyde, 'Sir Launcelot, leve that swerde behynde the, other thou wolt dye for hit.'

1-2 C and but you spede I knowe

were al armed

16 C swerdes drawen

28 C a grymly voys

11 C grened S greued

23-4 C as the erthe had quaked

32 C noo grete word

'I leve hit not,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'for no thretyng.'

'No,' seyde she, 'and thou dyddyste leve that swerde quene Gwenyvere sholde thou never se.'

'Than were I a foole and I wolde leve this swerde.'

'Now, jantyll knyghte,' seyde the damesell, 'I requyre 5 the to kysse me but onys.'

'Nay,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'that God me forbede.'

'Well, sir,' seyde she, 'and thou haddyst kyssed me thy lyffdayes had be done. And now, alas,' she seyde, 'I have loste all my laboure, for I ordeyned this chapell for thy sake 10 and for sir Gawayne. And onys I had hym within me, and at that tyme he fought with this knyght that lyeth dede in yondir chapell, sir Gylberte the Bastarde, and at that tyme he smote the lyffte honde of sir Gylberte.'

'And, sir Launcelot, now I telle the: I have loved the this 15 seven yere, [but] there may no woman have thy love but quene Gwenyver; and sytthen I myght nat rejoyse the nother thy body on lyve, I had kepte no more joy in this worlde but to have thy body dede. Than wolde I have bawmed hit and sered hit, and so to have kepte hit my lyve 20 dayes; and dayly I sholde have clypped the and kyssed the, dispyte of quene Gwenyvere.'

'Ye sey well,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'Jesu preserve me frome your subtile crauftysl' And therewithall he toke his horse and so departed frome hir. And as the booke seyth, whan 25 sir Launcelot was departed she toke suche sorow that she deyde within a fourtenyete; and hir name was called Hallewes 110^Y the Sorseres, lady of the castell Nygurmous.

And anone sir Launcelot mette with the damesel, sir Melyottis systir, and whan she sawe hym she clapped hir 30 hondys and wepte for joy. And than they rode into a castell thereby where lay sir Melyot, and anone as sir Launcelot sye hym he knew hym, but he was passyng paale as the erthe for bledynge.

Whan sir Melyot saw sir Launcelot he kneled uppon his 35 kneis and cryed on hyghte: 'A, lorde, sir Launcelot, helpe

2 C dydest louef that swerde
knyght that lyeth there dede

maye not reioyce the to haue thy body on lyue

27 C within a fourten nyghte

Nygramous 36 C on hyghe 36—p. 282,1

11 C had syr Gawayne within

14 C of of sir Gylbert the bastard

17-18 CI

22 C* in despyte of Quene

27-8 C was Hellawes the sorceresse

28 C

11 C helpe me Anone syre launcelot

me anoneP Than sir Launcelot lepe unto hym and towched
his woundys with sir Gylbardys swerde, and than he wyped
his woundys with a parte of the bloody cloth that sir Gyl-
barde was wrapped in; and anone an holer man in his lyff
5 was he never.

And than there was grete joy betwene hem, and they made
sir Launcelot all the chere that they myghte. And so on the
morne sir Launcelot toke his leve and bade sir Melyot hyghe
hym 'to the courte of my lorde Arthure, for hit drawyth
10 nyghe to the feste of Pentecoste. And there, by the grace
or God, ye shall fynde me.' And therewith they departed.

(16) And so sir Launcelot rode thorow many stronge contrayes,
over mores and valeis, tyll by fortune he com to a fayre
castell. And as he paste beyonde the castell hym thought
15 he herde bellys rynge, and than he was ware of a faucon
com over his hede fleyng towarde an hyghe elme, and longe
lunes aboute her feete. And she flowe unto the elme to
take hir perche, the lunes overcast aboute a bowghe; and
whan she wolde have tane hir flyght she hynghe by the leggis
20 faste. And sir Launcelot syghe how (s)he hynghe, and behelde
the fayre faucon perygot; and he was sory for hir.

The meanewhyle cam a lady oute of a castell and cryed
on hyghe: 'A, Launcelot, Launcelot! as thow arte floure of
all knyghtes, helpe me to gete me my hauke; for and my
25 hauke be loste my lorde wolde destroy me, for I kepte the
hauke and she slypped fro me. And yf my lorde my hus-
111^r bande wete hit, he is so hasty that he wyll sle me.'

'What is your lordis name?' seyde sir Launcelot.

'Sir/ she seyde, 'his name is sir Phelot, a knyght that
30 longyth unto the kynge of North Galys.'

'Welle, fayre lady, syn that ye know my name and re-
quyre me of knyghthode to helpe, I woll do what I may to
gete youre hauke; and yet God knowyth I am an evyll
clymber, and the tre is passynge hyghe, and fewe bowys
35 to helpe me withall.'

And therewith sir Launcelot alyght and tyed his horse
to the same tre, and prayde the lady to onarme hym. And

2 C Gylbertes 3-4 C gylbert 7-10 W (*sidenote*): Here sir Launcelot heled sir
Melyot de Logyrs with sir Gylberde the Basterdis swerde 13 Couer marys
32 C helpe yow

so whan he was unarmed he put of all his clothis unto his shurte and his breche, and with myght and grete force he clambe up to the faucon and tyed the lunes to a grete rotyn boysh, and threwe the hauke downe with the buysh.

And anone the lady gate the hauke in hir honde; and therewithall com oute sir Phelot oute of the grevys suddenly, that was hir husbonde, all armed and with his naked swerde in his honde, and sayde, 'A knyght, sir Launcelot, now I have founde the as I wolde,' he stondyng at the boole of the tre to sle hym. 10

'A, lady!' seyde sir Launcelot, 'why have ye betrayed me?'

'She hath done,' seyde sir Phelot, 'but as I commaunded hir, and therefore there is none othir boote but thyne oure is com that thou muste dye.'

'That were shame unto the,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'thou an armed knyght to sle a nakyd man by treson.' 15

'Thou gettyste none other grace,' seyde sir Phelot, 'and therefore helpe thyself and thou can.'

'Truly,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'that shall be thy shame; but syn thou wolt do none other, take myne harneys with the and hange my swerde there uppon a bowghe that I may gete hit, and than do thy beste [to] sle me and thou can.' 20

'Nay,' seyde sir Phelot, 'for I know the bettir than thou wenyste. Therefore thou gettyst no wepyn and I may kepe the therefro.' *5

'Alas,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'that ever a knyght sholde dey wepynles!'

And therewith he wayted above hym and undir hym, and over hym above his hede he sawe a rowgh spyke, a bygge bowghe leveles. And therewith he brake hit of by the body, and than he com lowar, and awayted how his owrie horse stode, and suddenly he lepe on the farther syde of his horse froward the knyght. And than sir Phelot laysshed at hym egerly to have slayne hym, but sir Launcelot put away the stroke with the rowgh spyke, and therewith toke hym on the hede, that downe he felle in a sowghe to the grounde. 111 30 35

3 C clamme vp	4 C doune and it with allef	9 C wold and stode at the
bole	18 C thou canst	21 there <i>not in C</i>
nay	22-3 C thou canst Nay	
the hors	24-5 C kepe you	2a Couerhishedehesawearownsepyke
	32-3 C	
	34 C egerly wenyng to haue	35 Crounsepyk
	35-6 C *ther	

with he smote hym on the one syde of the hede that he felle doune

So than sir Launcelot toke his swerde oute of his honde and strake his necke in two pecys.

'Alas!' than cryed that lady, 'why haste thou slayne my husbonde?'

5 'I am nat causer,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'but with falshede ye wolde have had me slayne with treson, and now hit is fallyn on you bothe.'

And than she sowned as though she wolde dey. And therewith sir Launcelot gate all his armoure as well as he
10 myght and put hit uppon hym for drede of more resseite, for he dredde hym that the knyghtes castell was so nyghe hym; and as sone as he myght he toke his horse and departed, and thanked God that he had escaped that harde adventure.

(17) 15 So sir Launcelot rode many wylde wayes thorowoute morys and mares, and as he rode in a valay, he sey a knyght chasyng a lady with a naked swerde to have slayne hir. And by fortune, as this knyght sholde have slayne thys lady, she cryed on sir Launcelot and prayde hym to rescowe
20 her.

Whan sir Launcelot sye that myschyff, he toke his horse and rode betwene hem, sayynge,

'Knyght, fye for shame, why wolte thou sle this lady? Shame unto the and all knyghtes!'

25 'What haste thou to do betwyxte me and my wyf? I woll sle her magre thyne hede.'

'That shall ye nat,' sayde sir Launcelot, 'for rather we woll have ado togydys.'

'Sir Launcelot,' seyde the knyght, 'thou doste nat thy
30 parte, for thys lady hath betrayed me.'

'Hit is not so,' seyde the lady, 'truly, he seyth wronge on me. And for bycause I love [and] cherysshe my cousyn
112^r jarmayne, he is jolowse betwyxte me and hym; and as I mutte answeere to God there was never sene betwyxte us
35 none suche thynges. But, sir,' seyde the lady, 'as thou arte called the worshypfullyest knyght of the worlde, I requyre

2-3 C his neck fro the body Thenne cryed the lady Alias why 5 C for with
6 C had slayne mef 10 C more resortef 11 C dredde that 12 hym
not in C 16 morys and not in C W mares and many wylde wayes 24 C
Thou dost shame 25 C wyf sayd the knyght I 33 W jarmayne and he
3 3-4 C hym and me And as I shalle 34-5 C threef was neuer synne betwyxe vs But

the of trewe knyghthode, kepe me and save me, for whatsomever he sey he woll sle me, for he is withoute mercy.'

'Have ye no doute: hit shalle nat lye in his power.'

'Sir,' seyde the knyght, 'in your syght I woll be ruled as ye woll have me.' And so sir Launcelot rode on the one syde 5 and she on the other syde. And he had nat redyn but a whyle but the kriyght bade sir Launcelot turne hym and loke behynde hym, and seyde, 'Sir, yondir com men of armys aftir [us] rydyng.'

And so sir Launcelot turned hym and thought no treson; 10 and therewith was the knyght and the lady on one syde, and suddeynly he swapped of the ladyes hede.

And whan sir Launcelot had aspyed hym what he had done, he seyde and so called hym: 'Traytoure, thou haste shamed me for evir!' And suddeynly sir Launcelot alyght is of his horse and pulde oute his swerde to sle hym. And therewithall he felle to the erthe and gryped sir Launcelot by the thyghes and cryed mercy.

'Fye on the,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'thou shamefull knyght! Thou mayste have no mercy: therefore aryse and fyghte 20 with me!'

'Nay,' sayde the knyght, 'I woll never aryse tylle ye graunte me mercy.'

'Now woll I proffyr the fayre: I woll unarme me unto my shyrte and my swerde in my honde, and yf thou can sle 25 me, quyte be thou for ever.'

'Nay, sir, that woll I never.'

'Well,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'take this lady and the hede, and bere [it] uppon the; and here shalt thou swere uppon my swerde to bere hit allwayes uppon thy bak and never to 30 reste tyll thou com to my lady, quene Gwennyver.'

'Sir, that woll I do, by the feyth of my bo[d]y.'

'Now what is youre name?'

'Sir, my name is sir Pedy[v]ere.'

'In a shamefull oure were thou borne,' seyde sir Launcelot. 35

3 C doubte sayd launcelot it shal 6-7 C on the other he had 9-10 W
aftir hym rydyng C* after vs rydyng 14 so not in C 16 Cf hrs swerd
24 C fayr said launcelot 25 C* sherte and I wylle haue nothyng vpon me but
my sherte and my swerd andf my hand (*homoeoteleuton* in W7) 27 C sir said
Pedyuere that 31 my lady not in C 32 W my boby C* my body
33 C Now said launcelot telle me what is 34 W Pedyner C Pedyuere

So sir Pedyvere departed with the lady dede and the hede togydir, and founde the quene with kynge Arthure at Wynchestir; and there he tolde all the trouthe.

'Sir knyght,' seyde the quene, 'this is an horryble dede
5 and a shamefull, and a grete rebuke unto sir Launcelot, but
natwythstondyng his worshyp is knowyn in many dyverse
contreis. But this shall I gyff you in penaunce: make ye
as good skyffte as ye can, ye shall bere this lady with you
on horsebak unto the Pope of Rome, and of hym resseyve
10 youre penaunce for your foule dedis. And ye shall nevyr
reste one nyght thereas ye do another, and ye go to ony
bedde the dede body shall lye with you/

This oth he there made and so departed. And as hit
tellyth in the Frenshe booke, whan he com unto Rome the
15 Pope there bade hym go agayne unto quene Gwenyver, and
in Rome was his lady buried by the Popys commaunde-
ment. And after thys knyght sir Pedyvere fell to grete
goodnesse and was an holy man and an hermyte.

(18) Now turne we unto sir Launcelot du Lake that com home
20 two dayes before the feste of Pentecoste, and the kynge and
all the courte were passyng fayne. And whan Gawayne, sir
Uwayne, sir Sagramoure, and sir Ector de Mares sye sir
Launcelot in Kayes armour, than they wyste well that hit
was he that smote hem downe all wyth one spere. Than
25 there was lawghyng and smylyng amonge them, and ever
now and now com all the knyghtes home that were presoners
with sir Terquyn, and they all honoured sir Launcelot.

Whan sir Gaherys herde hym speke he sayde, 'I sawe
all the batayle from the begynnynge to the endynge,' and
30 there he tolde kynge Arthure all how hit was and how sir
113^r Terquyn was the strongest knyght that ever he saw excep[t]e
sir Launcelot; and there were many knyghtes bare hym
recorde, three score.

Than sir Kay tolde the kynge how sir Launcelot rescowed
35 hym whan he sholde have bene slayne, and how 'he made
the threejcnynghes yelde hem to me and nat to hym*. And

1C the dede lady 2 togydir not inC 6-11W [sidenote): Here sir Launcelot
made sir Pedyvere bere the dede body of the lady to quene Gwenyvere 13 C
there he 17 knyght not in C 21 C fayne of his comynge 26-7 C
that sir Turquyn hadde prysoners and 27 Chonoured and worshipped syre
launcelot 28 C* herd them 33 C nyghe thre score 34 C had rescowed

there they were all three and bare recorde. 'And by Jesu,'
seyde sir Kay, 'sir Launcelot toke my harneyse and leffte me
his, and I rode in Goddys pece and no man wolde have ado
with me.*

Anone therewith com three knyghtes that fought with sir 5
Launcelot at the longe brydge; and there they yelded them
unto sir Kay, and sir Kay forsoke them and seyde he fought
never with hem. 'But I shall ease your hertes,' seyde sir
Kay, 'yondir is sir Launcelot that overcam you/ Whan
they wyste that, they were glad. 10

And than sir Melyot de Logrys come home and tolde
hym and the kyng how sir Launcelot had saved hym frome
the deth, and all his dedys was knowyn: how the quenys
sorserers four had hym in preson, and how he was delyverde
by the kyng Bagdemagus doughter. 15

Also there was tolde all the grete armys that sir Launcelot
dud betwyxte the two kynges, that ys for to say the kyng
of North Galys and kyng Bagdemagus: all the trouth sir
Gahalantyne dud telle, and sir Mador de la Porte, and sir
Mordred, for they were at the same turnement. 20

Than com in the lady that knew sir Launcelot whan that
he wounded sir Belleus at the pavylyon; and there at the
requeste of sir Launcelot sir Belleus was made knyght of
the Rounde Table.

And so at that tyme sir Launcelot had the grettyste name 25
of ony knyght of the worlde, and moste he was honoured
of hyghe and lowe.

EXPLICIT A NOBLE TALE OF SIR LAUNCELOT DU LAKE.

2 C Kay by cause syr launcelot 3 C his I rode 12 hym and *not in C*
13-14 C how foure quenes sorceresses had 16 C* alle the (*not in S*) grete dedes
of armes 2 2, 2 3 C syr Belly us 2 8 C Explicit the noble tale of syr Launcelot
du lake whiche is the vi book Here foloweth the tale of syr Gareth of Orkeney that
was called Beaumayns by syr kay and is the seuenth book

THE TALE
OF
SIR GARETH OF ORKENY
THAT WAS CALLED
BEWMAYNES

*[Winchester MS., ff. 113^v-148^r;
Caxton, Book VII]*

CAXTON'S RUBRICS

- Ch. 1. How Beaumayns came to kyng Arthurs courte and demaunded thre petycyons of kyng Arthur.
- „ 2. How syr Launcelot and syr Gawayn were wroth by cause syr Kaye mocqued Beaumayns, and of a damoyssel whyche desyred a knyght to fyght for a lady.
- „ 3. How Beawmayns desyred the batayl and how it was graunted to hym, and how he desyred to be made knyght of sir Launcelot.
- „ 4. How Beaumayns departed, and how he gate of syr Kaye a spere and a shelde, and how he justed and faughte wyth syr Launcelot.
- „ 5. How Beaumayns tolde to syr Launcelot his name, and how he was dubbed knyght of syr Launcelot and after overtooke the damoyssel.
- „ 6. How Beaumayns fought and slewe two knyghtes at a passage.
- „ 7. How Beaumayns faught with the knyght of the Blacke Laundes and faught with hym tyl he fyl down and deyed.
- „ 8. How the brother of the knyght that was slayn mette wyth Beaumayns and faught with Beaumayns tyl he was yelden.
- „ 9. How the damoyssel ever rebuked Beaumayns and wold not suffre hym to syt at hir table but callyd hym kychyn boye.
- „ 10. How the thyrd brother callyd the Rede Knyght justed and faughte ayenst Beaumayns, and how Beaumayns overcame hym.
- „ 11. How syr Beaumayns suffred grete rebukes of the damoyssel, and he suffred it pacyently.
- „ 12. How Beaumayns faughte wyth syr Persaunt of Ynde and made hym to be yelden.
- „ 13. Of the godelye comynycacyon bytwene syr Persaunt and Beaumayns, and how he tolde hym that his name was syr Gareth.
- „ 14. How the lady that was bysyged had worde fro hyr syster how she had brought a knyght to fyght for hyr and what bataylles he had achyeved.
- „ 15. How the damoyssel and Beaumayns came to the syege and came to a sykamor tree, and there Beaumayns blewe an home and thenne the Knyght of the Rede Laundes cam to fyght wyth hym.
- „ 16. How the two knyghtes mette togyders, and of their talkyng, and how they began theyr batayl.

- Ch. 17. How after longe fyghtyng Beaumayns overcame the knyght and wold have slayn hym, but atte request of the lordes he saved his lyf nad made hym to yelde hym to the lady.
- „ 18. How the knyght yelded hym and how Beaumayns made hym to goo unto kyng Arthurs court and to crye sir Lancelot mercy.
- „ 19. How Beaumayns came to the lady and whan he came to the castel the yates were closed ageynst hym, and of the wordes that the lady sayd to hym.
- „ 20. How syr Beaumayns rode after to rescowe his dwarfe and came into the castel where he was.
- „ 21. How syr Gareth otherwyse callyd Beaumayns came to the presence of his lady, and how they toke acqueyntance, and of their love.
- „ 22. How at nyght cam an armed knyght and faught with sir Gareth and he sore hurt in the thyghe smote of the knyghtes heed.
- „ 23. How the sayd knyght came ageyn the next nyght and was beheded ageyn, and how at the feste of Pentecost al the knyghtes that syr Gareth had overcome came and yelded hem to kyng Arthur.
- „ 24. How kyng Arthur pardoned them and demaunded of them where syr Gareth was.
- „ 25, 26. How the quene of Orkeney came to thisfeste of Pentecoste and sir Gawayn and his brethern cam to aske hir blessing.
- „ 27. How kyng Arthur sente for the lady Lyonas, and how she lete crye a tournoye at hir castel whereas came many knyghtes.
- „ 28. How kyng Arthur wente to the tornoyment with his knyghtes, and how the lady receyved them worshypfuUy, and how the knyghtes encountred.
- „ 29. How the knyghtes bare them in the batayl.
- „ 30. Yet of the sayd tornoyment.
- „ 31. How syr Gareth was espyed by the herowdes and how he escaped oute of the felde.
- „ 32. How syr Gareth came to a castel where he was wel lodged and he justed with a knyght and slewe hym.
- „ 33. How syr Gareth fought wyth a knyght that helde within his castel thirty ladyes and how he slewe hym.
34. How syr. Gawayn and syr Gareth fought eche ayenst other, and how they knewe eche other by the damoyssel Lynet.
- „ 35. How syr Gareth knowleched that they loved eche other to kyng Arthur and of thappoyntement of their weddyng.
- „ 36. Of the grete ryalte and what offycers were made at the feste of the weddynge, and of the justes at the feest.

HERE FOLOWYTH SIR GARETHIS TALE OF ORKENEY THAT WAS
CALLYD BEWMAYNES BY SIR KAY

IN Arthurs dayes, whan he helde the Rounde Table moste 113^v(I)
plenoure, hit fortun-ed the kynge commaunded that the
hyghe feste of Pentecoste sholde be holden at a cite and a 5
castell, in tho dayes that was called Kynke Kenadonne,
uppon the sondys that marched nyghe Walys. So evir the
kynge had a custom that at the feste of Pentecoste in especiall
afore other festys in the yere, he wolde nat go that day to
mete unto that he had herde other sawe of a grete mervayle. 10
And for that custom all maner of strange adventures com
byfore Arthure, as at that feste before all other festes.

And so sir Gawayne, a lytyll tofore the none of the day of
Pentecoste, aspyed at a wyndowe three men uppon horsebak
and a dwarfe uppon foote. And so the three men alyght, and 15
the dwarff kepte their horsis, and one of the men was hyghar
than the tothir tweyne by a foote and an half. Than sir
Gawayne wente unto the kyng and sayde, 'Sir, go to your
mete, for here at hande commyth strange adventures.*

So the kynge wente unto his mete with many other 20
kynges, and there were all the knyghtes of the Rounde
Table, onles that ony were presoners other slayne at re-
countyrs. Than at the hyghe feste evermore they sholde
be fulfylled the hole numbir of an hondred and fyffty, for
than was the Rounde Table fully complysshed. 25

Ryght so com into the halle two men well besayne and
rychely, and uppon their sholdyrs there lened the goodlyest
yonge man and the fayreste that ever they all sawe. And he
was large and longe and brode in the shuldyrs, well-vysaged,
and the largyste and the fayreste handis that ever man sye. 30
But he fared as he myght nat go nothir bere hymself but
yf he lened uppon their shuldyrs. Anone as the kynge saw
hym there was made peas and rome, and ryght so they yode
with hym unto the hyghe deyse withoute seyyng of ony
wordys. 35

Than this yonge muche man pullyd hym abak and easily

3 C Whan Arthur held his round table 6 C the whiche in tho dayes was
called 20 C So Arthur 21-2 C there were all the knyghtes of the
round table only tho that were prysoners or slayn 32 C Anone as Arthur
36 C moche yong man 36—p. 294,1 C* easily stretched vp streyghte.

streighte upryght, seynge, 'The moste noble kyng, kyng
 Arthure! God you blysse and all your fayre felyshyp, and
 114r in especiall the felyshyp of the Table Rounde. And for this
 cause I come hydir, to pray you and requyre you to gyff me
 5 three gyftys. And they shall nat be unresenable asked but
 that ye may worshypfully graunte hem me, and to you no
 grete hurte nother losse. And the fyrste do[n]e and gyffte
 I woll aske now, and the tothir two gyfftes I woll aske this
 day twelve-monthe, wheresomever ye holde your hyghe
 10 feste.' 'Now aske ye,' seyde kyng Arthure, 'and ye shall
 have your askynge.'

'Now, sir, this is my petycion at this feste, that ye woll
 geffme mete and drynke suffyciauntly for this twelve-monthe,
 and at that day I woll aske myne other two gyfftyes.'

15 'My fayre son/ seyde kyng Arthure, 'aske bettyr, I
 counseyle the, for this is but a symple askyng; for myne
 herte gyvyth me to the gretly, that thou arte com of men of
 worshyp, and gretly my conceyte fayleth me but thou shalt
 preve a man of ryght grete worshyp.'

20 'Sir,' he seyde, 'thereof be as be may, for I have asked
 that I woll aske at this tyme.'

'Well,' seyde the kyng, 'ye shall have mete and drynke
 inowe, I nevir forbade hit my frynde nother my foo. But
 what is thy name, I wolde wete?'

25 'Sir, I can nat tell you.'

'That is mervayle,' seyde the kyng, 'that thou knowyste
 nat thy name, and thou arte one of the goodlyest yonge men
 that ever I saw.'

Than the kyng betoke hym to sir Kay the Styewarde, and
 30 charged hym that he had of all maner of metys and drynkes
 of the beste, and also that he had all maner of fyndynge as
 though he were a lordys sonne.

'That shall lytyll nede,' seyde sir Kay, 'to do suche coste
 uppon hym, for I undirtake he is a vylayne borne, and
 35 never woll make man, for and he had be com of jantyllmen,
 he wolde have axed horse and armour, but as he is, so he
 askyth. And sythen he hath no name, I shall gyff hym a

1-2 C vp streighte sayeng kyng Arthur 7 W dome C* done 21 at this
 tyme *not in Cf* 27-8 Cf thou arte the goodlyest yong man one that euer I sawe
 34 C dare vndertake 35 C had com 36 C axed of you

name whyche shall be called Beawmaynes, that is to say
 Fayre Handys. And into the kychyn I shall brynge hym,
 and there he shall have fatte browes every day that he shall 114^v
 be as fatte at the twelve-monthe ende as a porke hog.'

Ryght so the two men departed and lefte hym with sir Kay 5
 that scorned and mocked hym. Thereat was sir Gawayne (2)
 wroth. And in especiall sir Launcelot bade sir Kay leve
 his mockyng, 'for I dare ley my hede he shall preve a man
 of grete worshyp.'

'Lette be,' seyde sir Kay, 'hit may not be by reson, for 10
 as he is, so he hath asked.*

'Yett beware,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'so ye gaff the good
 knyght Brunor, sir Dynadans brothir, a name, and ye called
 hym La Cote Male Tayle, and that turned you to anger
 aftirwarde.' 15

'As for that,' seyde sir Kay, 'this shall never preve none
 suche, for sir Brunor desyred ever worshyp, and this
 desyryth ever mete and drynke and brotthe. Uppon payne
 of my lyff, he was fosterde up in som abbey, and howsomever
 hit was, they fayled mete and drynke, and so hydir he is 20
 com for his sustynaunce.'

And so sir Kay bade gete hym a place and sytte downe
 to mete. So Bewmaynes wente to the halle dore and sette
 hym downe amonge boyes and laddys, and there he ete
 sadly. And than sir Launcelot aftir mete bade hym com to 25
 his chambir, and there he sholde have mete and drynke
 inowe, and so ded sir Gawayne; but he refused them all,
 for he wolde do none other but as sir Kay commaunded hym,
 for no profyr.

But as towchyng sir Gawayne, he had reson to proffer 30
 hym lodgyng, mete, and drynke, for that proffer com of
 his bloode, for he was nere kyn to hym than he wyste off;
 but that sir Launcelot ded was of his grete jantylnesse and
 curtesy.

So thus he was putt into the kychyn and lay nyghtly as 35
 the kychen boyes dede. And so he endured all that twelve-
 monthe and never dyspleased man nother chylde, but all-
 wayes he was meke and mylde. But ever whan he saw ony

10 C by no reason

12 Yett *not in C*

18 C desyreth breed and drynke

32-3 C wyste But that as syre

35-6 C as the boyes of the kechen dyd

justyng of knyghtes, that wolde he se and he myght. And
 ever sir Launcelot wolde *gyft* hym golde to spende and
 115^r clothis, and so ded sir Gawayne. And where there were ony
 mastryes doynge, thereat wolde he be, and there myght none
 5 caste barre nother stone to hym by two yardys. Than
 wolde sir Kay sey, 'How lykyth you my boy of the kychyn ?'

So this paste on tyll the feste of Whytsontyde, and at that
 tyme the kyng hylde hit at Carlyon, in the moste royallyst
 wyse, that myght be, lyke as he dud yerely. But the kyng
 10 wolde no mete ete uppon Whytsonday untill he harde of
 som adventures.

Than com there a squire unto the kyng and seyde, 'Sir,
 ye may go to your mete, for here commyth a damesell with
 som strange adventures.' Than was the kyng glad and sette
 15 hym doune.

Ryght so there cam a damesell unto the halle and salewed
 the kyng and prayde hym of succoure.

'For whom ?' seyde the kyng, 'What is the adventure ?'

'Sir,' she seyde, 'I have a lady of grete worshyp to my
 20 sustir, and she is beseged with a tirraunte, that she may nat
 oute of hir castell. And bycause here ar called the noblyst
 knyghtes of the worlde, I com to you for succoure.'

'What is youre lady called, and where dwellyth she ? And
 who is he and what is his name that hath beseged her ?'

25 'Sir kyng,' she seyde, 'as for my ladyes name that shall
 nat ye know for me as at thys tyme, but I lette you wete she
 is a lady off grete worshyp ana of grete londys; and as for
 that tyrraunte that besegyth her and destroyeth hir londys,
 he is kallyd the Rede Kn[y]ght of the Rede Laundys.'

30 'I know hym nat,' seyde the kyng.

'Sir,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'I know hym well, for he is one
 of the perelest knyghtes of the worlde. Men sey that he
 hath seven mennys strengthe, and from hym I ascapyd
 onys full harde with my lyff.'

35 'Fayre damesell,' seyde [the] kyng, 'there bene knyghtes
 here that wolde do hir power for to rescowe your lady, but
 bycause ye woll not telle hir name nother where she

4 C maystryes done
 and renomme and she
 lady and

10-11 C herd some aduentures
 20 C tyraunte so that she

19-20 C worship
 23 C What heteth your

dwellyth, therefore none of my knyghtes that here be nowe shall go with you be my wylle.'

'Than muste I seke forther,' seyde the damesell.

So with thes wordys com Beawmaynes before the kyng (3) whyle the damesell was there, and thus he sayde: 5

'Sir kyng, God tha[n]ke you, I have bene this twelve-monthe in your kychyn and have had my full systynaunce. And now I woll aske my other two gyfftyes that bene behynde.'

'Aske on now, uppon my perell,' seyde the kynge.

'Sir, this shall be my fyrste gyffte of the two gyfftis: that 10 ye woll graunte me to have this adventure of this damesell, for hit belongyth unto me.'

'Thou shalt have it,' seyde the kynge, 'I graunte hit the.'

'Than, sir, this is that other gyffte that ye shall graunte me: that sir Launcelot du Lake shall make me knyght, for 15 of hym I woll be made knyght and ellys of none. And whan I am paste I pray you lette hym ryde aftir me and make me knyght whan I requyre hym.'

'All thys shall be done,' seyde the kynge.

'Fy on the,' seyde the damesell, 'shall I have none but one 20 that is your kychyn knave?' Than she wexed angry and anone she toke hir horse.

And with that there com one to Bewmaynes and tolde hym his horse and armour was com for hym, and a dwarff had brought hym all thyng that neded hym in the rycheste 25 wyse. Thereat the courte had mucche mervayle from whens com all that gere. So whan he was armed there was none but fewe so goodly a man as he was.

And ryght so he cam into the halle and toke his leve of kyng Arthure and sir Gawayne and of sir Launcelot, and 30 prayde hym to hyghe aftyr hym. And so he departed and rode after the damesell, but there wente many aftir to beholde (4) how well he was horsed and trapped in cloth of golde, but he had neyther speare nother shyld.

3 Cf must I speke further

4 C came before the kynge Beaumayns

8 C

my two yeffes

9 C Aske vpon

10 C my two gyftes fyrst that

14-15 that ye shall graunt me *not in C*

15 C that ye shal bydde Launcelot

du lake to make

21-2 C kechyn page thenne was she wrothe and toke her

hors and departed

24-5 C and there was the dwarf come with all thyng

26 C al the court

29 C ryght soo as

31 C prayed that he wolde

hyhe

Than sir Kay seyde all opynly in the halle, 'I woll ryde aftir my boy of the kychyn to wete whether he woll know me for his bettir.'

116^r ' Yet,' seyde sir Launcelot and sir Gawayne, 'abyde at home.'

5 So sir Kay made hym redy and toke his horse and his speare and rode aftir hym. And ryght as Beawmaynes overtake the damesell, ryght so com sir Kay and seyde,

'Beawmaynes! What, sir, know ye nat me ?'

Than he turned his horse and knew hit was sir Kay that
10 had done all the dyspyte to hym, as ye have herde before.

Than seyde Beawmaynes, 'Yee, I know you well for an unjantyll knyght of the courte, and therefore beware of me!*

Therewith sir Kay put his spere in the reest and ran streyght uppon hym, and Beawmaynes com as faste uppon
15 hym with his swer[d]e [in his hand, and soo he putte away his spere with his swerde,] and with a foyne threste hym thorow the syde, that sir Kay felle downe as he had bene dede. Than Beawmaynes alyght down and toke sir Kayes shylde and his speare and sterte uppon his owne horse and
20 rode his way.

All that saw sir Launcelot and so dud the damesell. And than he bade his dwarff sterte uppon sir Kayes horse, and so he ded. By that sir Launcelot was com, and anone he profyrde sir Launcelot to juste, and ayther made hem redy
25 and com togydir so fersly that eyther bare other downe to the erthe and sore were they brused. Than sir Launcelot arose and halpe hym frome his horse, and than Beawmaynes threw his shylde frome hym and profyrd to fyght wyth sir Launcelot on foote.

30 So they russed togydyrs lyke two borys, trasyng and traversyng and foynyng the mountenaunce of an houre. And sir Launcelot felte hym so bygge that he mervayled of his strengthe, for he fought more lyker a gyaunte than a knyght, and his fyghtyng was so passyng durable
35 and passyng perelous. For sir Launcelot had so much

1 C al open 2 C boye in the kechyn 10 C the despyte as 11 C
Ye sayd beumayns I knowe yow 15-16 C* his swerd in his hand and soo
he putte away his spere with his swerd and with (*homoeoteleuton* in W) 18 C
dede & he alyght 22-5 W (*sidenote*): Here Beawmaynes had all moste
skyne sir Kay 30-1 C tracynge rasyng and foynyng to the mounten-
aunce

ado with hym that he dred hymself to be shamed, and seyde,

'Beawmaynes, feyght nat so sore! Your quarell and myne is nat grete but we may sone leve of.'

'Truly that is trouth,' seyde Beawmaynes, 'but hit doth me 5 116^ good to fele your myght. And yet, my lorde, I shewed nat the utteraunce.'

'In Goddys name,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'for I promyse (5) you be the fayth of my body I had as muche to do as I myght have to save myself fro you unshamed, and therefore have 10 ye no dought of none erthely knyght.'

'Hope ye so that I may ony whyle stonde a preved knyght?'

'Do as ye have done to me,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'and I shall be your warraunte.' 15

'Than I pray you,' seyde Beawmaynes, 'geffme the Order of Knyghthod.'

'Sir, than muste ye tell me your name of ryght, and of what kyn ye be borne.'

'Sir, so that ye woll nat dyscover me, I shall tell you my 20 name.'

'Nay, sir,' seyde sir Launcelotte, 'and that I promyse you by the feyth of my body, untyll hit be opynly knowyn.'

Than he seyde, 'My name is Gareth, and brothir unto sir Gawayne of fadir syde and modir syde.' 25

'A, sir, I am more gladder of you than I was, for evir me thought ye sholde be of grete bloode, and that ye cam nat to the courte nother for mete nother drynke.'

Than sir Launcelot gaff hym the Order of Knyghthode; and than sir Gareth prayde hym for to departe, and so he to 30 folow the lady.

So sir Launcelot departed frome hym and come to sir Kay, and made hym to be borne home uppon his shyld; and so he was heled harde with the lyff. And all men scorned sir Kay, and in especiall sir Gawayne. And sir Launcelot 35 seyde that hit was nat his parte to rebuke no yonge

4 C may leue of 9-10 C as I myght to saue 12-13 C a proued knyghte
sayde Beaumayns 14 to me *not in C* 18 of ryght *not in C* 20-1 C
shal sayd Beaumayns 25-6 C of fader and moder A syr said Lanncelot
30-2 C departe and lete hym goo Soo syre launcelot

man: Tor full lytyll knowe ye of what byrthe he is com of,
and for what cause he com to the courte.*

And so we leve of sir Kay and turne we unto Beawmaynes.
Whan that he had overtakyn the damesell, anone she seyde,
5 'What doste thou here? Thou stynkyst all of the kychyn,
thy clothis bene bawdy of the grece and talow. What
117' wenyste thou?' seyde the lady, 'that I woll alow the for
yondir knyght that thou kylde? Nay, truly, for thou
slewyst hym unhappyly and cowardly. Therefore turne
10 agayne, thou bawdy kychyn knave! I know the well, for
sir Kay named the Beawmaynes. What art thou but a
luske, and a turner of brochis, and a ladyll-waysher?'

'Damesell,' seyde sir Beawmaynes, 'sey to me what ye
woll, yet woll nat I go fro you whatsomever ye sey, for I
15 have undirtake to kyng Arthure for to encheve your
adventure, and so shall I fynyssh hit to the ende, other ellys
I shall dye therefore.*

'Eye on the, kychyn knave! Wolt thou fynyssh myne
adventure? Thou shalt anone be mette withall, that thou
20 woldyst nat for all the broth that ever thou souped onys to
loke hym in the face.'

'As for that, I shall assay,' seyde Beawmaynes.

So ryght thus as they rode in the wood there com a man
fleyng all that ever he myght.

25 'Whother wolt thou?' seyde Beawmaynes.

'A, lorde,' he seyde, 'helpe me, for hereby in a slade is
six theffis that have takyn my lorde and bounde hym sore,
and I am aferde lest that they woll sle hym.'

'Brynge me thydir,' seyde Beawmaynes.

30 And so they rode togydirs unto they com thereas was the
knyght bounden; and streyte he rode unto them and strake
one to the deth, and than another, and at the thirde stroke
he slew the thirde, and than the other three fledde. And he
rode aftir them and overtoke them, and than they three
35 turned agayne and assayled sir Beawmaynes harde, but at

1-2 C ful lytel knewe hef of what byrth he is comen and 3 C leue sir kay
6-7 C* talowe that thou gaynest in kyng Arthurs kechyn wenest thou sayd she that
I alowe the 7 W alow the the 8 C kylllest 10 C kechyn page
13-14 C ye wylle I wylle not goo 20 C soupest 22 As for that *not in C*
26-7 C are syxe theues 27-8 C bounde hym soo I am 31 C and thenne
he rode 33 C the thyrdde theef 34 C thenne tho thre theues

the laste he slew them and returned and unbounde the knyght.

And the knyght thanked hym and prayde hym to ryde with hym to his castell there a lytyll besyde, and he sholde worshipfully rewarde hym for his good dedis. 5

'Sir,' seyde Beawmaynes, 'I woll no rewarde have. Sir, this day I was made knyght of noble sir Launcelot, and therefore I woll no rewarde have but God rewarde me. And also I must folowe thys damesell.'

So whan he com nyghe to hir she bade hym ryde uttir, 10 'for thou smellyst all of the kychyn. What wenyst thou? That I have joy of the for all this dede? For that thou haste done is but myssehappe, but thou shalt se sone a syght that shall make the to turne agayne, and that lyghtly.'

Than the same knyght rode aftir the damesell and prayde 15 hir to lodge with hym all that nyght. And because hit was nere nyght the damesell rode with hym to his castell and there they had grete chere. And at souper the knyght sette sir Beawmaynes afore the damesell.

'Fy, fy,' than seyde she, 'sir knyght, ye ar uncurtayse to 20 sette a kychyn page afore me. Hym semyth bettir to styke a swyne than to sytte afore a damesell of hyghe parage.'

Than the knyght was ashamed at hir wordys, and toke hym up and sette hym at a sydebourde and sate hymself before hym. So all that nyght they had good chere and 25 myrry reste.

And on the morne the damesell toke hir leve and thanked (6) the knyght, and so departed and rode on hir way untill they come to a grete foreste. And there was a grete ryver and but one passage, and there were redy two knyghtes on the farther 30 syde to lette the passage.

'What sey[st th]ou?' seyde the damesell, 'woll ye macche yondir two knyghtis other ellys turne agayne?'

'Nay,' seyde sir Bewmaynes, 'I woll nat turne ayen, and they were six mo!' 35

And therewithall he rushed unto the watir, and in

1o C bad hym ryde fro her

11 C kechyn Wenest thou

12 C this dede

that 13 C nys but myshappen the

13 sone *not in C*

15 C* same

knyght whiche was rescowed of the theues

27 C the damoisel & he took

their leue

3 i-z C* lette them the passage what saist thou

W what sey you

myddys of the watir eythir brake her sperys uppon other to
 their hondys. And than they drewe their swerdis and smote
 egirly at othir. And at the laste sir Beawmaynes' smote the
 othir uppon the helme, that his hede stoned, and therewithall
 5 he felle downe in the watir and there was he drowned. And
 than he spored his horse, uppon the londe, and therewithall
 the tother knyght felle uppon hym [and] brake his spere.
 And so they drew hir swerdys and fought longe togydys,
 but at the laste sir Beawmaynes clevid his helme and his
 10 hede downe to the shuldys. And so he rode unto the
 118^r damesell and bade hir ryde furth on hir way.

'Alas,' she seyde, 'that ever suche a kychyn payge sholde
 have the fortune to destroy such two knyghtes. Yet thou
 wenyste thou haste done doughtyly? That is nat so; for the
 15 fyrste knyght his horse stumbled and there he was drowned
 in the watir, and never hit was be thy force nother be thy
 myghte. And the laste knyght, by myshappe thou camyste
 behynde hym, and by myssefortune thou slewyst hym.'

'Damesell,' seyde Beawmaynes, 'ye may sey what ye
 20 woll, but whomsomever I have ado withall, I truste to God
 to serve hym or I and he departe, and therefore I recke nat
 what ye sey, so that I may wyne your lady.'

'Fy, fy, foule kychyn knave! Thou shalt se knyghtes that
 shall abate thy boste.'

25 'Fayre damesell, gyff me goodly langgage, and than my
 care is paste, for what knyghtes somever they be, I care nat,
 ne I doute hem nought.'

'Also,' seyde she, 'I sey hit for thyne avayle, for yett
 mayste thou turne ayen with thy worshyp; for and thou
 30 folow thou arte but slayne, for I se all that evir thou doste
 is by mysseadventure and nat by preues of thy hondys.'

'Well, damesell, ye may sey what ye woll, but where-
 somever ye go I woll folow you.'

So this Beawmaynes rode with that lady tyll evynsonge,
 35 and ever she chydde hym and wolde nat reste. So at the
 laste they com to a blak launde, and there was a blak

7-10 W (*sidenote*): Here sir Bewmaynes slew two knyghtes at a passage 12 suche
 not in C 13 C that fortune 13-14 C* suche two dou3ty knyghtes thou
 wenest 18 C slewe hym 21 I and not in C 30 C* folowe me
 31 C is but by 34 C euensong tyme 35-6 C reste And they cam

hauthorne, and thereon hyng a baner, and on the other syde there hyng a blak shyld, and by hit stode a blak speare, grete and longe, and a grete blak horse covered wyth sylk, and a blak stone faste by. Also there sate a knyght all armed (7) in blak harneyse, and his name was called the Knyght of 5 the Blak Laundis.

This damesell, whan she sawe that knyght, she bade hym fle downe that valey, for his hors was nat sadeled.

'Gramercy,' seyde Beawmaynes, 'for allway ye wolde have me a cowarde.' 10 118^v

So whan the Blak Knyght saw hir he seyde, 'Damesell, have ye brought this knyght frome the courte of kynge Arthure to be your champyon?'

'Nay, fayre knyght, this is but a kychyn knave that was fedde in kyng Arthurs kychyn for almys.' 15

Than sayde the knyght, 'Why commyth he in such aray? For hit is shame that he beryth you company.'

'Sir, I can not be delyverde of hym, for with me he rydyth magre my hede. God wolde,' seyde she, 'that ye wolde putte hym from me, other to sle hym and ye may, for he is 20 an unhappy knave, and unhappyly he hath done this day thorow myssehappe; for I saw hym sle two knyghtes at the passage of the watir, and other dedis he ded beforne ryght mervaylouse and thorow unhappynesse.'

'That mervayles me,' seyde the Blak Knyght, 'that ony 25 man of worshyp woll have ado with hym.'

'Sir, they knewe hym nat,' seyde the damesell, 'and for bycause he rydyth with me they wene that he be som man of worshyp borne.'

'That may be,' seyde the Blak Knyght; 'howbehit as ye 30 say that he is no man of worshyp borne, he is a full lykly persone, and full lyke to be a stronge man. But this muche shall I graunte you,' seyde the knyght, 'I shall put hym downe on foote, and his horse and harneyse he shall leve with me, for hit were shame to me to do hym ony more harme.' 35

Whan sir Beawmaynes harde hym sey thus, he seyde,

'Sir knyght, thou arte full large of my horse and harneyse 1

4 Cf sat knyghte 5 C name was pe 10-11 C coward with that the blak
knyghte whanne she came nyghe hym spak & sayd 12 frome the courte
not in C 22 for nat in C 23 C besornef ryght 31 borne not in C

I lat the wete hit coste the nought, and whether thou lyke well othir evyll, this launde woll I passe magre thyne hede, and horse ne harneyse gettyst thou none of myne but yf thou wynne hem with thy hondys. Therefore lat se what
5 thou canste do.'

'Seyste thou that?' seyde the Blak Knyght, 'now yelde thy lady fro the! For hit besemed never a kychyn knave to ryde with such a lady.'

'Thou lyst!' seyde Beawmaynes, 'I am a jantyllman io borne, and of more hyghe lynage than thou, and that woll I preve on thy body!'

Than in grete wretth they departed their horsis and com togydys as hit had bene thundir, and the Blak Knyghtes speare brak, and Beawmaynes threste hym thorow bothe
15 sydis. And therewith his speare brake and the truncheon was left styлле in his syde. But nevirtheles the Blak Knyght drew his swerde and smote many egir strokys of grete myght, and hurte Bewmaynes full sore. But at the laste the Blak Knyght, within an owre and an half, he felle downe of
ao his horse in a sowne and there dyed.

And than sir Bewmaynes sy hym so well horsed and armed, than he alyght downe and armed hym in his armour, and so toke his horse and rode aftir the damesell. Whan she sawe hym com she seyde,

25 'Away, kychyn knave, oute of the wynde, for the smelle of thy bawdy clothis grevyth me! Alas!' she seyde, 'that ever such a knave sholdeby myssehappe sle so good a knyght as thou hast done! But all is thyne unhappynesse. But hereby is one that shall pay the all thy paymente, and
30 therefore yett I rede the flee.'

'Hit may happyn me,' seyde Bewmaynes, 'to be betyn other slayne, but I warne you, fayre damesell, I woll nat fie away nothir leve your company for all that ye can sey; for ever ye sey that they woll sle me othir bete me, but how-
35 somever hit happenyth I ascape and theyJye on the grounde. And therefore hit were as good for you to holde you styлле

1-2 C whether hit lyketh the or not this launde 3 W of of myne 7 C
kechyn page 21-2 W (sidenote): Thedeth of the blak knyght slayne by the
handis of Bewmaynes 24 C come nyghe 28 C but alle thys is 29 that
not in C 30 CI counceyll the flee 34 C wil kille me

thus all day rebukying me, for away wyll I nat tyll I se the
uttermuste of this journey, other ellys I woll be slayne othir
thorowly betyn. Therefore ryde on your way, for folow you
I woll, whatsoever happyn me.'

Thus as they rode togydys they sawe a knyght comme 5 (8)
dryvande by them, all in grene, bothe his horse and his
harneyse. And whan he com nye the damesell he asked hir,

'Is that my brothir the Blak Knyght that ye have
brought with you?'

'Nay, nay/ she seyde, 'this unhappy kychyn knave hath 10
slayne thy brothir thorow unhappynes.' H9^v

'Alas!' seyde the Grene Knyght, '[that] is grete pyte* that
so noble a knyght as he was sholde so unhappily be slayne,
and namely of a knavis honde, as ye say that he is. A,
traytoure!' seyde the Grene Knyght, 'thou shalt dye for 15
sleyng of my brothir! He was a full noble knyght, and his
name was sir Perarde.'

'I defye the/ seyde sir Bewmaynes, 'for I lette the wete,
I slew hym knyghtly and nat shamfully,*

Therewithall the Grene Knyght rode unto an home that 20
was grene, and hit hyngge uppon a thorne. And there he
blew three dedly motis, and anone there cam two damesels
and armed hym lyghtly. And than he toke a grete horse,
and a grene shyld, and a grene spere; and than they ran
togydys with all their myghtes and brake their sperys unto 25
their hondis.

And than they drewe their swerdys and gaff many sad
strokys, and eyther of them wounded other full ylle, and at
the laste at an ovirtwarte stroke sir Bewmaynes with his
horse strake the Grene Knyghtes horse uppon the syde, that 30
he felle to the erthe. And than the Grene Knyght voyded
his horse delyverly and dressed hym on foote. That sawe
Bewmaynes, and therewithall he alyght and they russed
togydys lyke two myghty kempys a Tonge whyle, and sore
they bledde bothe. 35

Wyth that come the damesell and seyde, 'My lorde, the
Grene Knyght, why for shame stonde ye so longe fyghtyng
with that kychyn knave? Alas! hit is shame that evir ye

1 CI feef
not in C

3 C *touly* beten
29 C at an ouerthwartf Beaumayns

4 me not in C

17 C Pereard :8 sir
32 C his hors lightly

were made knyght to se suche a lad to macche you, as the wede growyth over the corne.'

Therewith the Grene Knyght was ashamed, and therewithall he gaff a grete stroke of myght and clave his shyld
5 thorow. Whan Beawmaynes saw his shyld clovyn asundir he was a lytyll ashamed of that stroke and of hir langage.

And than he gaff hym suche a buffette uppon the helme that he felle on his kneis, and so suddeynly Bewmaynes pulde hym on the grounde grovelynge. And than the Grene
10 Knyght cryed hym mercy and yelded hym unto Bewmaynes and prayde hym nat to sle hym.

'All is in vayne,' seyde Bewmaynes, 'for thou shalt dye but yf this damesell that cam with me pray me to save thy lyff,' and therewithall he unlaced his helme lyke as he
15 wolde sle hym.

'Fye uppon the, false kychyn payge! I woll never pray the to save his lyff, for I woll nat be so muche in thy daunger.'

'Than shall he dye,' seyde Beawmaynes.

'Nat so hardy, thou bawdy knave!' seyde the damesell,
20 'that thou sle hym.'

'Alas!' seyde the Grene Knyght, 'suffir me nat to dye for a fayre worde spekyng. Fayre knyght,' seyde the Grene Knyght, 'save my lyfe and I woll forgyff the the deth of my brothir, and for ever to becom thy man, and thirty
25 knyghtes that hold of me for ever shall do you servyse.'

'In the devyls name,' seyde the damesell, 'that suche a bawdy kychyn knave sholde have thirty knyghtes servyse and thyne!'

'Sir knyght,' seyde Bewmaynes, 'all this avaylyth the
30 nought but yf my damesell speke to me for thy lyff,' and therewithall he made a semblaunte to sle hym.

'Lat be,' seyde the dameselle, 'thou bawdy kychyn knave! Sle hym nat, for and thou do thou shalt repente hit.'

'Damesell,' seyde Bewmaynes, 'your charge is to me a
35 plesure, and at youre commaundemente his lyff shall be saved, and ellis nat.' Than he said, 'Sir knyght with the grene armys, I releyse the quyte at this damesels requeste,

1-2 C matche suche a knyghte as the wede ouer grewe the 17 C will nener 22 C word may saue me 27-8 C the and thyrty knyghtesseruyse 29-32 W(sidenote): Here sir B. overcome the Grene Knyght 30 C with me 32 kychyn not in C

for I woll nat make hir wroth, for I woll fulfyllle all that she chargyth me.'

And than the Grene Knyght kneled downe and dud hym homage with his swerde. Than sayde the damesell,

'Me repentis of this Grene Knyghtes damage, and of your 5
brothirs deth, the Blak Knyght, for of your helpe I had grete
mystir; for I drede me sore to passe this foreste.'

'Nay, drede you nat,' seyde the Grene Knyght, 'for ye
all shall lodge with me this nyght, and to-morne I shall
helpe you thorow this forest.' 10

Soo they toke their horsys and rode to his maner that was 120^v
faste by. And ever this damesell rebuked Bewmaynes and (9)
wolde nat suffir hym to sitte at hir table, but as the Grene
Knyght toke hym and sate with hym at a syde table.

'Damesell, mervayle me thynkyth,' seyde the Grene 15
Knyght, 'why ye rebuke this noble knyghte as ye do, for
I warne you he is a full noble man, and I knowe no
knyght that is able to macche hym. Therefore ye do grete
wronge so to rebuke hym, for he shall do you ryght goode
servyse. For whatsomever he makyth hymself he shall 20
preve at the ende that he is com of full noble blood and of
kynge lynage.'

'Fy, fy!' seyde the damesell, 'hit is shame for you to sey
hym suche worshyp.'

'Truly,' seyde the Grene Knyght, 'hit were shame to me 25
to sey hym any dysworshyp, for he hath provid hymself a
bettir knyght than I am; and many is the noble knyght that
I have mette withall in my dayes, and never or this tyme
founde I no knyght his macche.'

And so that nyght they yood unto reste, and all nyght 30
the Grene Knyght commaundede thirty knyghtes prevyly
to wacche Bewmaynes for to kepe hym from all treson.

[And so on the morn] they all arose and herde their
masse and brake their faste. And than they toke their

1 C wrothe I wille fulfyllle

5 C me repenteth grene knyghte of your domage

12 C fast there besyde

C euer she rebuked

14-15 C sat hym at a

syde table Merueylle

16 C knyght to the damoyseil

17 C you damoyseil

he is a full noble knyght

18 that *not in* C

19 so *not in* C

20 C yef

shall

23-4 C saye

of hym

26 Csey of hym

27-9 CI am yet haue I

mett with many knyghtes in my dayes and neuer or this tyme haue I fond no

knyght his matche

33 C* And soo on the morne they

horsis and rode their way, and the Grene Knyght conveyed hem thorow the foreste. Than the Grene Knyght seyde,

'My lorde, sir Bewmaynes, my body and this thirty knyghtes shall be allway at your somouns, bothe erly and
5 late at your callynge, and whothir that ever ye woll sende us.'

'Ye sey well,' seyde sir Bewmaynes, 'whan that I calle uppon you ye muste yelde you unto kynge Arthure, and all your knyghtes, if that I so commaunde you.'

'We shall be redy at all tymes,' seyde the Grene Knyght.

10 'Fy, fy uppon the, in the devyls name!' seyde the damesell, 'that ever any good knyght sholde be obedyent unto a kychyn knave!'

So than departed the Grene Knyght and the damesell,
12 I^r and than she seyde unto Bewmaynes,

is 'Why folowyste thou me, kychyn knave? Caste away thy shyld and thy spere and fle away. Yett I counseyle the betyme, or thou shalt sey ryght sone "Alas!" For and thou were as wyght as sir Launcelot, sir Tristrams or the good knyght sir Lamerok, thou shalt not passe a pace here that is
20 called the Pace Perelus.'

'Damesell,' seyde Bewmaynes, 'who is aferde let hym fle, for hit were shame to turne agayne syth I have ryddyn so longe with you.'

'Well,' seyde she, 'ye shall sone, whether ye woll or woll
*5 not.'

(10) So within a whyle they saw a whyght towre as ony snowe, well macchecolde all aboute and double-dyked, and over the towre gate there hynge a fyfty shyldis of dyvers coloures. And undir that towre there was a fayre medow, and therein
30 was many knyghtes and squyres to beholde, scaffoldis and pavylons; for there, uppon the morne, sholde be a grete turnemente.

And the lorde of the towre was within his castell, and loked oute at a wyndow and saw a damesell, a dwarfF, and
35 a knyght armed at all poyntis.

'So God me helpe,' seyde the lorde, 'with that knyght woll I juste, for I see that he is a knyght arraunte.'

3-4 C Beaumanys I & these thyrtty knyghtes 6 C it is wel said 8-9 C yf that ye so commaunde vs We 11 W eny 17-19 C* for were thou as wy3te as euer was wade or Laucelot Trystram or the good knyghte syr lamaryk (see note)

And so he armed hym and horsed hym hastily. Whan he was on horsebak with his shyld and his spere, hit was all rede, bothe his horse and his harneyse and all that to hym belonged. And whan that he com nyghe hym he wente hit had be his brother the Blak Knyght, and than lowde he 5 cryed and seyde,

'Brothir, what do ye here in this marchis ?'

'Nay, nay,' seyde the damesell, 'hit is nat he, for this is but a kychyn knave that was brought up for almys in kynge Arthurs courte.' 10

'Neverthesse,' seyde the Rede Knyght, 'I woll speke with hym or he departe.'

'A,' seyde this damesell, 'this knave hathe slayne your brother, and sir Kay named hym Bewmaynes; and this horse and this harneyse was thy brothirs, the Blak Knyght. 15 Also I sawe thy brothir the Grene Knyght overcom of his hondys. But now may ye be revenged on hym, for I may nevyr be quyte of hym.'

Wyth this every knyght departed in sundir and cam togydir all that they myght dryve. And aythir of their 20 horsis felle to the erthe. Than they avoyde theire horsis and put their shyldis before hem and drew their swerdys, and eythir gaff other sad strokys now here now there, trasynge, traversynge, and foynynge, rasynge and hurlyng lyke two borys, the space of two owrys. Than she cryde on hyght to the 25 Rede Knyght:

'Alas, thou noble Rede Knyght! Thynke what worship hath evermore folowed the! Lette never a kychyn knave endure the so longe as he doth!'

Than the Rede Knyght waxed wroth and doubled his 30 strokes and hurte Bewmaynes wondirly sore, that the bloode ran downe to the grounde, that hit was wondir to see that stronge batayle. Yet at the laste Bewmaynes strake hym to the erthe. And as he wolde have slayne the Rede Knyght, he cryed, 35

'Mercy, noble knyght, sle me nat, and I shall yelde me to the wyth fyffty knyghtes with me that be at my commaundemente, and forgyff the all the dispyte that thou

haste done to me, and the deth of my brothir the Blak Knyght, and the wynnyng of my brothir the Grene Knyght.'

'All this avaylyth nat,' seyde Beawmaynes, 'but if my -damesell pray me to save thy lyff.' And therewith he made
5 semblaunte to stryke of his hede.

'Let be, thou Bewmaynes, and sle hym nat, for he is a noble knyght, and nat so hardy uppon thyne hede but that thou save hym,'

Than Bewmaynes bade the Rede Knyght to stonde up,
10 'and thanke this damesell now of thy lyff.' Than the Rede Knyght prayde hym to se his castell and to repose them all that nyght. So the damesell graunte hym, and there they had good chere.

122^r But allwayes this damesell seyde many foule wordys unto
15 Bewmaynes, whereof the Rede Knyght had grete mervayle. And all that nyght the Rede Knyght made three score knyghtes to wacche Bewmaynes, that he sholde have no shame nother vylony.

And uppon the morne they herde masse and dyned, and
ao the Rede Knyght com before Bewmaynes wyth his three score knyghtes, and there he profyrd hym his omage and feawte at all tymes, he and his knyghtes to do hym servyse.

'I thanke you,' seyde Bewmaynes, 'but this ye shall graunte me: whan I calle uppon you, to com before my
25 lorde, kynge Arthure, and yelde you unto hym to be his knyghtes.'

'Sir,' seyde the Rede Knyght, 'I woll be redy and all my felyship at youre somouns.'

So sir Bewmaynes departed and the damesell, and ever
30 she rode chydyng hym in the fowleste maner wyse that she cowde.

(11) 'Damesell,' seyde Bewmaynes, 'ye ar uncurteyse so to rebuke me as ye do, for mesemyth I have done you good servyse, and ever ye thretyn me I sjiall be betyn wyth
35 knyghtes that we mete, but ever for all your boste they all lye in the duste or in the myre. Arid therefore y pray you,

10 and the wynnyng of my brothir the Grene Knyght *not in Cf* 9-II(side-note): Here sir Bewmaynes overcom the Rede Knyght 9 C badde the reed knyghte stand up 11-12 C and to be there al nyghte 13 C mery chere 27, 35 all *not in C* 30-1 wyse that she cowde *not in C* 35-6 W all all lye

rebuke me no more, and whan ye se me betyn or yoldyn as recreaunte, than may you bydde me go from you shamfully, but erste, I let you wete, I woll nat departe from you; for than I were worse than a foole and I wolde departe from you all the whyle that I wyne worshyp.' 5

'Well,' seyde she, 'ryght sone shall mete the a knyght that shall pay the all thy wagys, for he is the moste man of worshyp of the worlde excepte kyng Arthure.'

'I woll well,' seyde Bewmaynes, 'the more he is of worshyp the more shall be my worshyp to have ado with «o hym.'

Than anone they were ware where was afore them a cyte rych and fayre, and betwyxte them and the cit⁶, a myle and more, there was a fayre medow that semed new mowyn, 122^T and therein was many pavyllons fayre to beholde. 15

'Lo,' seyde the damesell, 'yondir is a lorde that owyth yondir cite, and his custom is, whan the wedir is fayre, to lye in this medow, to juste and to turnay. And ever there is aboute hym fyve hondred knyghtes and jantyllmen of armys, and there is all maner of gamys that ony jantyllmen 20 can devyse.'

'That goodly lorde,' seyde Bewmaynes, 'wolde I fayne se.'

'Thou shalt se hym tyme inowe,' seyde the damesell. And so as she rode nere she aspyed the pavelon where the lorde was. 25

'Lo!' seyde she, 'syeste thou yondir pavylyon that is all of the coloure of inde?' And all maner of thyng that there is aboute, men and women and horsis, trapped shyldis and sperys, was all of the coloure of inde. 'And his name is sir Parsaunte of Inde, the moste lordlyest knyght that ever 30 thou lokyd on.'

'Hit may well be,' seyde sir Bewmaynes, 'but be he never so stoute a knyght, in this felde I shall abyde tyll that I se hym undir his shyld.'

'A, foole!' seyde she, 'thou were bettir to flee betymes.' 35

'Why?' seyde Bewmaynes. 'And he be suche a knyght as ye make hym he woll nat sette uppon me with all his men,

3 C but fyrste 3-4 C for I were 6-7 C soone ther shall mete a knyght shal
paye 13-14 Ca myle and an (S a) half there 24-5Cwherehewas 31C
lokest on 35 Cbetter flee 37-p. 312,1 C* men or with his v C knyghtes For

for and there com no more but one at onys I shall hym nat fayle whylys my lyff may laste.'

'Fy, fyl' seyde the damesell, 'that evir suche a stynkyng kychyn knave sholde blowe suche a bostel'

5 'Damesell,' he seyde, 'ye ar to blame so to rebuke me, for I had lever do fyve batayles than so to be rebuked. Lat hym com and than lat hym doo his worste.'

'Sir,' she seyde, 'I mervayle what thou art and of what kyn thou arte com; for boldely thou spekyst and boldely
io thou haste done, that have I sene. Therefore, I pray the
123^r save thyself and thou may, for thyne horse and thou have had grete travayle, and I drede that we dwelle ovirlonge frome the seege; for hit is hens but seven myle, and all perelous passage[s] we are paste sauff all only this passage,
15 and here I drede me sore last ye shall cacche som hurjte. Therefore I wolde ye were hens, that ye were nat brused nothir hurte with this stronge knyght. But I lat you wete this sir Persaunte of Inde is nothyng of myght nor strength unto the knyght that lyeth at the seege aboute my
20 lady.'

'As for that,' seyde Bewmaynes, 'be as be may, for sytthen I am com so nye this knyght I woll preve his myght or I departe frome hym, and ellis I shall be shamed and I now withdrawe fro hym. And therefore, damesell, have ye
25 no doute: by the grace of God, I shall so dele with this knyght that within two owrys after none I shall delyver hym, and than shall we com. to the seege be daylyght.'

'A, Jesu! mervayle have I,' seyde the damesell, 'what maner a man ye be, for hit may never be other but that ye
30 be com of jantyll bloode, for so fowle and so shamfully dud never woman revyle a knyght as I have done you, and ever curteysly ye have suffyrde me, and that com never but of jantyll bloode.'

'Damesell,' seyde Bewmaynes, 'a knyght may lytyll do
35 that may nat suffir a jantyllwoman, for whatsomever ye seyde unto me I toke none hede to your wordys, for the more ye seyde the more ye angred me, and my wretthe I wrekid

2 C lyf lasteth

9 C for *not in C*

11 C thou mayst

19 C leid the

21 C be it as

24 C withdrawe me

28 C O Ihesu

29 C neuer ben

otherwise

30 C a noble blood

31 C woman rule

35 Ca damoisel for

uppon them that I had ado withall. The mysseyng that ye
 mysseyde me, in my batayle furthered me much and caused
 me to thynke to shewe and preve myselffe at the ende what
 I was, for peraventure, thoughe hit lyst me to be fedde in
 kynge Arthures courte, I myght have had mete in other 5
 placis, but I ded hit for to preve my frendys, and that shall 123^v
 be knowyn another day whether that I be a jantyllman borne
 or none; for I latte yow wete, fayre damesell, I have done
 you jantyllmannys servyse, and peraventure bettir servyse
 yet woll I do or I departe frome you.' 10

'Alas!' she seyde, 'fayre Bewmaynes, forgyff me all that
 I have mysseyde or done ayenste you.'

'With all my wyll,' seyde he, 'I forgeff hit you, for ye dud
 nothyng but as ye sholde do, for all youre evyll wordys
 pleased me. Damesell,' seyde Bewmaynes, 'syn hit lykyth 15
 you to sey thus fayre unto me, wote ye well hit gladdyth
 myne herte gretly, and now mesemyth there is no knyght
 lyvyng but I am able inow for hym.'

Wyth this sir Persaunte of Inde had aspyed them as (12)
 they hoved in the fylde, and knyghtly he sente unto them 20
 whether he cam in warre or in pece.

'Sey to thy lorde I take no force but whether as hym
 lyste.'

So the messyngere wente ayen unto sir Persaunte and
 tolde hym all his answeere. 25

'Well, than I woll have ado with hym to the utteraunce!'
 and so he purveyede hym and rode ayenste hym.

Whan Bewmaynes sawe hym he made hym redy, and
 [there they] mette with all theire myghtes togedir as faste as
 their horse myght ren, and braste their spearys eythir in 30
 three pecis, and their horsis felle downe to the erthe. And
 delyverly they avayded their horsis and put their shyldis
 before them and drew their swerdys and gaff many grete
 strokys, that somtyme they hurled so togydir that they felle
 grovelyng on the grounde. 35

1 C* with al And therfor alle 4-5 Cf though I had mete in kyng Arthurs
 kechyn yet I my3t haue had mete ynou3 6 C but alle that I dyd it for to
 preue & assaye my 8 for not in C 13 C alle my herte 22 C lord said
 beaumayns 22-3 C lyst hym self 28-9 C and ther they mette with all that
 euer theyr horses myght renne 31-2 C* horses rassed so to gyders that bothe
 their horses felle dede to the erthe & ly3tly they auoyded (*homoeoteleuton in W?*)

Thus they fought two owrys and more, that there shyldes and hawbirkes were all forhewyn, and in many placis [were they] wounded. So at the laste sir Bewmaynes smote hym thorow the coste of the body, and than he retrayed hym here
5 and there and knyghtly maynteyned his batayle longe tyme.

And at the laste, though hym loth were, Beawmaynes smote sir Persaunte abovyn uppon the helme, that he felle
124^r grovelynge to the erthe, and than he lepte uppon hym overthwarte and unlaced his helme to have slayne hym. Than
10 sir Persaunte yelded hym and asked hym mercy. Wyth that com the damesell and prayde hym to save his lyff.

'I woll well,' he seyde, 'for hit were pyte this noble knyght sholde dye.'

'Gramercy,' seyde sir Persaunte, 'for now I wote well hit
15 was ye that slew my brother, the Blak Knyght, at the Blak Thome. He was a full noble knyght! His name was sir Perarde. Also, I am sure that ye ar he that wan myne other brother, the Grene Knyght: his name is sir Pertholepe. Also ye wan my brother the Rede Knyght, sir Perymones. And
20 now, sir, ye have wonne me. This shall I do for to please you: ye shall have homage and feawte* of me and of an hondred knyghtes to be allwayes at your commaundemente, to go and ryde where ye woll commaunde us.'

And so they wente unto sir Persauntes pavylyon and
25 dranke wyne and ete spycis. And afterwarde sir Persaunte made hym to reste uppon a bedde untyll supper tyme, and aftir souper to bedde ayen. So whan sir Bewmaynes was a-bedde—sir Persaunte had a doughter, a fayre lady of eyghtene yere of ayge—and there he called hir unto hym
30 and charged hir and commaunded hir uppon his blyssyng to go unto the knyghtis bed:

'And lye downe by his syde and make hym no strange chere but good chere, and take hym in your armys and kysse hym and loke that this be done, I charge you, as ye woll
35 have my love and my good wylle.'

So sir Persauntis doughter dud as hir fadir bade hir, and

2-3 C in many stedys they were wounded 11 hym *not in C* 12 he seyde *not in C*
14-17 W (*sidenote*): Here sir Bewmaynes overcom sir Persaunte of Inde
14 C For certeynly now 20 C now syn ye haue wonne these 28 Cf had a lady a faire doubter
33 C thyne armes 35 P my boue R my loue

so she yode unto sir Bewmaynes bed and pryvyly she dis-
poyled hir and leyde hir downe by hym. And than he awooke
and sawe her and asked her what she was.

'Sir,' she seyde, 'I am sir Persauntis doughter that by the
commaundemente of my fadir I am com hydir.' 5

'Be ye a pusell or a wyff?'

'Sir' she seyde, 'I am a clene maydyn.'

'God deffende me,' seyde he, 'than that ever I sholde
defoyle you to do sir Persaunte suche a shame! Therefore
I pray you, fayre damesell, aryse oute of this bedde, other to 124^v
ellys I woll.'

'Sir,' she seyde, 'I com nat hydir by myne owne wyll, but
as I was commaunded.'

'Alas!' seyde sir Bewmaynes, 'I were a shamefull knyght
and I wolde do youre fadir ony disworshyp.' 15

" But so he kyste her, and so she departed and com unto
sir Persaunte hir fadir and tolde hym all how she had sped.

'Truly,' seyde sir Persaunte, 'whatsomever he be he is com
of full noble bloode.'

And so we leve hem there tyll on the morne. 20

And so on the morne the damesell and sir Bewmaynes (13)
herde masse and brake there faste and so toke their leve.

'Fayre damesell,' seyde sir Persaunte, 'whothirwarde ar
ye away ledyng this knyght?'

'Sir,' she seyde, 'this knyght is goynge to the Castell 25
Daungerous thereas my systir is beseged.'

'Aha,' seyde sir Persaunte, 'that is the Knyghte of the
Rede Launde whyche is the moste perelyste knyght that
I know now lyvyng and a man that is wythouten mercy,
and men sey that he hath seven mennes strength. God save 30
you, sir Bewmaynes, frome that knyght, for he doth grete
wronge to that lady, and that is grete pyte", for she is one of
the fayreste ladyes of the worlde, and mesemyth that your
damesell is hir sister. Ys nat your name Lyonet?'

'Sir, so I hyght, and my lady my sister hyght dame 35
Lynes.'

6 C Be ye a mayde or a wyf 8 me *not in*C 10 I pray you *not in* Cf 12 C
not to you by 16 Cand so he 25-7 Cf knyghte is goyng to the sege that
besyegeth my systir in the castle Daungerus A a sayd 31 C you said he to
Beaumayns 34-6 C Lynet said he ye sir said she and my lady my sisters name
is dame Lyonesse

'Now shall I tell you,' seyde sir Persaunte, 'this Rede Knyght of the Rede Laundys hath layne longe at that seege, well-nye this two yerys, and many tymes he myght have had hir and he had wolde, but he prolongyth the tyme to this
 5 entente, for to have sir Launcelot du Lake to do batayle with hym, or with sir Trystrams, othir sir Lamerok de Galys, other sir Gawayne, and this is his tarynge so longe at the sege. Now, my lorde,' seyde sir Persaunt of Inde, 'be ye stronge and of good herte, for ye shall have ado with
 10 a good knyght.'

'Let me dele,' seyde sir Bewmaynes.

125^r 'Sir,' seyde this damesell Lyonet, 'I requyre you that ye woll make this jauntyllman knyght or evir he fyght with the Red Knyght.'

15 'I woll, with all myne herte,' seyde sir Persaunte, 'and hit please hym to take the Order of Knyghthode of so symple a man as I am.'

'Sir,' seyde Bewmaynes, 'I thanke you, for I am bettir spedde, for sertay[n]ly the noble knyghte sir Launcelot
 20 made me knyght.'

'A,' seyde sir Persaunte, 'of a more renomed man myght ye nat be made knyghte of, for of all knyghtes he may be called cheff of knyghthode, and so all the worlde seythe that betwyxte three knyghtes is departed clerely knyghthode,
 25 that is sir Launcelot du Lake, sir Trystrams de Lyones and sir Lamerok de Galys. Thes bere now the renowne, yet there be many other noble knyghtis, as sir Palomydes the Saresyn and sir Saphir, his brothir, also sir Bleobrys and sir Blamour de Ganys, his brothir; also sir Bors de Ganys,
 30 and sir Ector de Marys, and sir Percivale de Galys. Thes and many mo bene noble knyghtes, but there be none that bere the name but thes three abovyn seyde. Therefore God spede you well,' seyde sir Persaunte, 'for and ye may macche that Rede Knyght ye shall be called the fourth of
 35 the worlde.'

'Sir,' seyde Bewmaynes, 'I wolde fayne be of good fame and of knyghthode. And I latte you wete, I am com of

8-12 Cf Now my lord syre Persaunt of ynde saide the damoyssel Lynet I requyre you
 18 C* thanke you for your good wil for 26 C now the renomnee
 2 8 C sir Saseref his 31-2 C none J* passe J* iij aboue said 3 7 CI cam (SI am)

good men, for I dare say my fadir was a nobleman. And so that ye woll kepe hit in cloce and this damesell, I woll tell you of what kynne I am com of.'

'We woll nat discover you/ seyde they bothe, 'tylle ye commaunde us, by the fayth we owe to Jesu.' 5

'Truly,' than sayde he, 'my name is sir Gareth of Orkenay, and kynge Lott was my fadir, and my modir is kyng Arthurs sister, hir name is dame Morgawse. And sir Gawayne ys my brothir, and sir Aggravayne and sir Gaherys, and I am 125 yongeste of hem all. And yette wote nat kynge Arthure 10 nother sir Gawayne what I am.'

So the booke seyth that the lady that was beseged had (14) worde of hir sisteris comyng by the dwarff, and a knyght with hir, and how he had passed all the perelus passages.

'What maner a man is he?' seyde the lady. 15

'He is a noble knyght, truly, madam,' seyde the dwarff, 'and but a yonge man, but he is as lykly a man as ever ye saw ony.'

'What is he, and of what kynne,' seyde the lady, 'is he com, and of whom was he made knyght?'

'Madam,' seyde the dwarff, 'he was kynges son of 20 Orkeney, but his name I woll nat tell you as at this tyme; but wete you well, of sir Launcelot was he made knyght, for of none other wolde he be made knyght, and sir Kay named hym Bewmaynes.'

'How ascaped he,' seyde the lady, 'frome the brethyrn of 25 sir Persaunte?'

'Madam,' he seyde, 'as a noble knyght sholde. First he slew two bretherne at a passage of a watir.'

'A!' seyde she, 'they were two good knyghtes, but they were murtherers. That one hyght sir Gararde le Breuse and 30 that other hyght sir Arnolde le Bruse.'

'Than, madam, he recountird at the Blak Knyght and slew hym in playne batayle, and so he toke his hors and his armoure and fought with the Grene Knyght and wanne hym in playne batayle. And in lyke wyse he served the 35 Recje Knyght, and aftir in the same wyse he served the Blew Knyght and wanne hym in playne batayle.'

3-4 CI am We 5 C owe vnto god 18-19 C is he sayd the damoyssel and
of what kynne is he comen 20 C he is the kynges 30 C Gherard de
breusse 31 C Arnolde leBrewse 32 Crecountred with the

'Than,' sayde the lady, 'he hath overcom sir Persaunte of Inde that is one of the noblest knyghtes of the worlde?'

"Trewly, madam,' seyde the dwarff, 'he hath wonne all the four bretherne and slayne the Blak Knyght, and yet he dud
5 more tofore: he overthrew sir Kay and leffte hym nye dede
126^r uppon the grounde. Also he dud a grete batayle wyth sir Launcelot, and there they departed on evyn hondis. And than sir Launcelot made hym knyght.'

'Dwarff,' seyde the lady, 'I am gladde of thys tydynges.
10 Therefore go thou unto an hermytage of myne hereby and bere with the of my wyne in too flagons of sylver—they ar of two galons—and also two caste of brede, with the fatte venyson ibake and deynte foules; and a cuppe of golde here I delyver the that is ryche of precious stonys. And bere is all this to myne hermytage and putt hit in the hermytis hondis.

'And sytthyn go thou to my sistir and grete her welle, and commaunde me unto that jantyll knyght, and pray hym to ete and drynke and make hym stronge, and say hym I
20 thanke hym of his curtesy and goodnesse that he wolde take uppon hym suche labour for me that never ded hym bounte" nother curtesy. Also pray hym that he be of good herte and corrage hymself, for he shall mete with a full noble knyght, but he is nother of curtesy, bounty, nother jantyl-
25 nesse; for he attendyth unto nothyng but to murther, and that is the cause I can nat prayse hym nother love hym.'

So this dwarff departed and com to sir Persaunt where he founde the damesell Lynet and sir Bewmaynes, and there he tolde hem all as ye have herde. And than they toke their
30 leve, but sir Persaunte toke an amblynge hakeney and conveyed them on their wayes and than betoke he them unto God.

And so within a lytyll whyle they com to the hermytage, and there they dranke the wyne and ete the venyson and the
35 foulys bakyn. And so whan they had repasted them well the dwarff retourned ayen with his vessell unto the castell. And there mette wyth hym the Rede Knyght of the Rede

2 that is *not* in C 2-3 C world & Jt dwarf said he hath 10 C in an
10-11 Chere by and there shalt thou bere 13 C veneson bakef 14 Cryche
andprecious ipCsayye 23 hymself *not* in C 3i-2Cbeleftehemtogod

Laundys and asked hym from whens he com and where he had ben.

'Sir,' seyde the dwarff, 'I have bene with my ladyes sistir of the castell, and she hath bene at kynge Arthurs courte and brought a knyght with her.' 5

'Than I acompte her travayle but lorne, for though she had 126' brought with hir sir Launcelot, sir Trystrams, sir Lameroke, othir sir Gawayne, I wolde thynke myselfe good inowe for them all.'

'Hit may well be,' seyde the dwarff, 'but this knyght hathe 10 passed all the perelouse passages and slayne the Blak Knyghte and other two mo, and wonne the Grene Knyght, the Rede Knyght, and the Blew Knyght.'

'Than is he one of thes four that I have before rehersyd?'

'He is none of thes,' seyde the dwarff, 'but he is a kynges 15 son.'

'What is his name? ' seyde the Rede Knyght of the Rede Laundis.

'That woll I nat tell you, but sir Kay on scorne named hym Bewmaynes.' 20

'I care nat,' seyde the knyght, 'whatsomevir he be, for I shall sone delyver hym, and yf I overmacche hym he shall have a shamfull deth as many othir have had.'

'That were pyte,' seyde the dwarff, 'and hit is pyte that ye make suche shamfull warre uppon noble knyghtes.' 25

Now leve we the knyght and the dwarff and speke we of (15) Bewmaynes that all nyght lay in the hermytage. And uppon the morne he and the damesell Lynet harde their masse and brake their faste, and than they toke their horsis and rode thorowoute a fayre foreste. And than they com to 30 a playne and saw where was many pavylons and tentys and a fayre castell, and there was muche smoke and grete noyse.

And whan they com nere the sege sir Bewmaynes aspyed on grete trees, as he rode, how there hynged full goodly armed 35 knyghtes by the necke, and their shyldis about their neckys with their swerdis and gylte sporys uppon their helys. And

so there hynghe nyghe a fourty knyghtes shamfully with full
ryche armys. Than sir Bewmaynes abated his countenance
and seyde, 'What menyth this?'

'Fayre sir,' seyde the damesell, 'abate nat youre chere for
S all this syght, for ye muste corrage youreself, other ellys ye
127' bene all shente. For all these knyghtes com hydir to this
sege to rescow my sistir dame Lyones, and whan the Rede
Knyght of the Rede Launde had overcom hem he put them
to this shamefull deth withoute mercy and pyte. And in the
io same wyse he woll serve you but yf ye quyte you the bettir.'

'Now Jesu defende me,' seyde sir Bewmaynes, 'frome
suche vylans deth and shondeshyp of harmys, for rathir
than I sholde so be faryn withall I woll rather be slayne in
playne batayle.'

is 'So were ye bettir/ seyde the damesell, 'for trust nat, in
hym is no curtesy, but all goth to the deth other shamfull
mourther. And that is pyteV seyde the damesell, 'for he is
a full lykly man and a noble knyght of proues, and a lorde
of grete londis and of grete possessions.'

20 'Truly,' seyde sir Bewmaynes, 'he may be well a good
knyght, but he usyth shamefull customys, and hit is mer-
vayle that he enduryth so longe, that none of the noble
knyghtes of my lorde Arthurs have nat dalte with hym.'

And than they rode unto the dykes and sawe them
25 double-dyked wyth full warly wallys, [and there were lodged
many grete lordes nyghe the wallys,] and there was grete
noyse of mynstralsy. And the see bete uppon that one syde
of the wallys where were many shyppis and marynars noyse
with hale and how.

30 And also there was faste by a sygamoure tre, and thereon
hynghe an home, the grettyst that ever they sye, of an
olyvauntes bone, and this Knyght of the Rede Launde hath
honged hit up there to this entente, that yf there com ony
arraunte knyghte he muste blowe that home and than woll
35 he make hym redy and com to hym to do batayle.

'But, sir, pray you,' seyde the damesell, 'blow ye nat the
home tyll hit be hygh none, for now hit is aboute pryme,

12 C shenship of armes
the damesell not in C
and possessions

13 C wolde rather be slayn manly in
18 C* man wel made of body and a ful noble
33 to this entente not in C

17 seyde

19 C

36 CI pray you

and now encresyth his myght, that as men say he hath seven mennys strength.'

'A! fy for shame, fayre damesell! Sey ye nevir so more to me, for and he were as good a knyght as ever was ony 127^v I shall never fayle hym in his moste myght, for other I wyll 5 wyne worshyp worshypfully othir dye knyghtly in the felde.'

And therewith he spored his horse streyte to the sygymoure tre and so blew the home egirly that all the seege and the castell range thereoff. And than there lepe oute 10 many knyghtes oute of their tentys and pavylyons, and they within the castell loked ovir the wallys and oute at wyndowis.

Than the Rede Knyght of the Rede Laundis armed hym hastely and too barouns sette on his sporys on his helys, and all was blood-rede: his armour, spere, and shyld. And an 15 erle buckled his helme on his hede, and than they brought hym a rede spere and a rede stede. And so he rode into a lytyll vale undir the castell, that all that were in the castell and at the sege myght beholde the batayle.

'Sir,' seyde the damesell Lynet unto sir Bewmaynes, 'loke 20 (1 ye be glad and lyght, for yondir is your dedley enemy, and at yondir wyndow is my lady, my sistir dame Lyones.'

'Where?' seyde Bewmaynes.

'Yondir,' seyde the damesell, and poynted with her fyngir. 25

'That is trouth,' seyde Bewmaynes, 'she besemyth afarre the fayryst lady that ever I lokyd uppon, and truly,' he seyde, 'I aske no better quarell than now for to do batayle, for truly she shall be my lady and for hir woll I fyght.'

And ever he loked up to the wyndow with glad coun- 30 tenaunce, and this lady dame Lyones made curtesy to hym downe to the erth, holdynge up bothe her hondys. Wyth that the Rede Knyghte calle unto Bewmaynes and seyde,

'Sir knyght, leve thy beholdyng and loke on me, I coun- 35 sayle the, for I warne the well, she is my lady, and for hir I have done many stronge batayles.'

1 Cencreaced 4 ony *not in C* 11 many *not in C* 32 C doune dof
the erthe with holdynge vp bothe theirf handea 33-5 CBeaumayns leue syr
knyghte thy lokynge and behold me

128^r 'Geff thou so have done,' seyde Bewmaynes, 'mesemyth hit was but waste laboure, for she lovyth none of thy felyshyp, and thou to love that lovyth nat the is but grete foly. For and I undirstoode that she were nat ryght glad of my
 5 commynge I wolde be avysed or I dud batayle for hir; but I undirstonde by the segynge of this castell she may forbere thy felyshyp. And therefore wete thou well, thou Rede Knyght, I love hir and woll rescow hir, othir ellys to dye therefore.'

10 'Sayst thou that?' seyde the Rede Knyght. 'Mesemyth thou oughtyste of reson to beware by yondir knyghtes that thou sawyste hange on yondir treis.'

'Fy for shame!' seyde Bewmaynes, 'that ever thou sholdyst sey so or do so evyll, for in that thou shamest thyself
 15 and all knyghthode, and thou mayste be sure there woll no lady love the that knowyth the and thy wykked customs. And now thou wenyste that the syght of tho honged knyghtes shulde feare me? Nay, trully, nat so! That shamefull syght cawsyth me to have courrage and hardynesse ayenstfe the]
 20 muche more than I wolde have agaynste the and thou were a well-ruled knyght,'

'Make the redy,' seyde the Rede Knyght, 'and talke no more with me.'

Than they putt their sperys in the reste and com togedys
 25 with all the myght that they had bothe, and aythir smote other in the myddys of their shyldis, that the paytrels, sursynglys and crowpers braste, and felle to the erthe bothe, and the raynys of their brydyls in there hondys. And so they lay a grete whyle sore astoned, that all that were in the
 30 castell and in the sege wente their neckys had bene broste.

Than many a straunger and othir seyde that the straunge knyght was a bygge man and a noble jouser, 'for or now we sawe never no knyght macche the Rede Knyght of the Rede Laundys.' Thus they seyde bothe within and withoute.

128^v 35 Than lyghtly and delyverly they avoyded their horsis and putt their shyldis afore them and drew their swerdys and

4 ryght *not in C* 9 therefore *not in C* 11 C oughte 15 all *not in C*
 19 W ayenst thou C ageynste the 20 muche *not in C* 22-3 C no
 lenger 24 C* Thenne syre Beaumayns badde the damoyseil goo from hym
 and thenne they putte 30 C ben broken 35 and delyverly *not in C*

ran togydyrs lyke two fers Lyons, and eythir gaff othir suche two buffettys uppon their helmys that they reled bakwarde bothe two stredys. And than they recoverde bothe and hew grete pecis of othyr harneyse and their shyldys, that a grete parte felle in the fylde. 5

And than thus they fought tyll hit was paste none, and (17) never wolde stynte tyll at the laste they lacked wynde bothe, and than they stoode waggyng, stagerynge, pantynge, blowynge, and bledynge, that all that behelde them for the moste party wepte for pyte. So whan they had rested them 10 a whyle they yode to batayle agayne, trasyng, traversynge, foyngynge, and rasyng as two borys. And at som tyme they toke their bere as hit had bene two rammys and horled togydyrs, that somtyme they felle grovelynge to the erthe; and at som tyme they were so amated that aythir toke others 15 swerde in the stede of his owne.

And thus they endured tyll evynsonge, that there was none that behelde them myght know whethir was lyke to wynde the batayle. And theire armoure was so forhewyn that men myght se their naked sydis, and in other placis 20 they were naked; but ever the nakyd placis they dud derende. And the Rede Knyghte was a wyly knyght in fyghtyng, and that taught Bewmaynes to be wyse, but he abought hit full sore or he did aspye his fyghtynge.

And thus by assente of them both they graunted aythir 25 othir to reste, and so they sette hem downe uppon two mollehyllys there besydys the fyghtynge place, and eythir of them unlaced othir helmys and toke the colde wynde, for aythir of their pagis was faste by them to com whan they called them to unlace their harneyse and to sette hem on 30 agayne at there commaundemente. And than sir Bew- 129^r maynes, whan his helme was off, he loked up to the wyndowe, and there he sawe the fayre lady dame Lyones, and she made hym suche countenaunce that his herte waxed lyght and joly. 35

And therewith he bade the Rede Knyght of the Rede

4 C of theire harneis	8 C scaterynge pontyng	11-12 C tracyng racyng
foynyng as two bores	13 C toke their renne	15 C so amasedf
euensong tyme	19 C fer hewen	17 C
fyghtyng taughte syr Beaumayns	22-3 C knyght of werre and his wyly	
in C	28 C unlaced his helme	30 them not
31-2 C thenne whan syr Beaumayns helme was of		

Laundes make hym redy, 'and lette us do oure batayle to the utteraunce.' 'I woll well,' seyde the knyght. And than they laced on their helmys, and avoyded their pagys, and yede togydys and fought freyssshly. But the Rede Knyght
 5 of the Rede Laundys wayted hym at an overthwarte and smote hym withpn the honde,] that his swerde felle oute of his honde. And yette he gaff hym another buffette uppon the helme, that he felle grovellynge to the erthe, and the Rede Knyghte felle over hym for to holde hym downe.

10 Than cryed the maydyn Lynet on hyght and seyde, 'A, sir Bewmaynes! Where is thy corrayge becom ? Alas! my lady my sister beholdyth the, and she shrekys and wepys so that hit makyth myne herte hevy.'

Whan sir Bewmaynes herde hir sey so, he abrayded up
 15 with a grete myght, and gate hym uppon hys feete, and lyghtly he lepe to his swerde and gryped hit in his honde and dowbled his pace unto the Rede Knyght, and there they fought a new batayle togydir.

But sir Bewmaynes than doubled his strokys and smote
 20 so thykke that his swerde felle oute of his honde. And than he smote hym on the helme, that he felle to the erthe, and sir Bewmaynes felle uppon hym and unlaced his helme to have slayne hym. And than he yelded hym and asked mercy and seyde with a lowde voyce, 'A, noble knyght!
 25 I yelde me to thy mercy!'

Than sir Bewmaynes bethought hym on his knyghtes that he had made to be honged shamfully, and than he seyde,

'I may nat with my worship to save thy lyff for the shame-
 30 full de[the]s that thou haste caused many full good knyghtes to dye.'

129^Y 'Syr,' seyde the Rede Knyght, 'holde youre hande and ye shall knowe the causis why I putte hem to so shameful a deth.'

35 'Sey on!' seyde sir Bewmaynes.

'Sir, I loved onys a lady fayre, and she had hir bretherne

3-4 C laced vp their helmes and their pages auoyded & they stepte to gyders
 6 C within the hand (see note) 10 Con hyghe O syr 12-13 Cshe sobbeth
 and wepeth that maketh 14 Cabrayed 16 Che lepte 20 C that he smote
 the swerd oute 22-5 W \sidenote)\ Here sir Bewmaynes overcom the Rede
 Knyght of the Rede Laundys 30 W dedys 36 Cones a lady a faire damoisel

slayne, and she tolde me hit was sir Launcelot du Lake othir
 ellys sir Gawayne, and she prayed me as I loved hir hertely
 that I wolde make hir a promyse by the faythe of my knyght-
 hode for to laboure in armys dayly untill that I had mette
 with one of them, and all that I myght overcom I sholde put 5
 them to vylans deth. And so I ensured her to do all the
 vylany unto Arthurs knyghtes, and that I sholde take
 vengeance uppon all these knyghtes. And, sir, now I woll
 telle the that every day my strengthe encresyth tylle none
 untill I have seven mennys strength.' 10

Than cam there many erlys and barowns and noble (18)
 knyghtes and prayde that knyght to save his lyff, 'and take
 hym to your presoner.' And all they felle uppon their kneis
 and prayde hym of mercy that he wolde save his lyff.

'And, sir,' they all seyde, 'hit were fayrer of hym to take 15
 omage and feaute and lat hym holde his londys of you than
 for to sle hym, for by his deth ye shall have none advauntage,
 and his myssededys that he done may not be undone. And
 therefore make ye amendys for all partyes, and we all woll
 becom youre men and do you omage and feauteY 20

'Fayre lordys,' seyde Bewmaynes, 'wete you well I am
 full loth to sle this knyght, neverthelesse he hath done
 passynge ylle and shamefully. But insomuche all that he
 dud was at a ladyes requeste I blame hym the lesse, and so
 for your sake I woll relece hym, that he shall have his lyff 25
 uppon this covenante: that he go into this castell and yelde
 hym to the lady, and yf she woll forgyff and quyte hym I
 woll well, with this he make hir amendys of all the trespasse
 that he hath done ayenst hir and hir landys. And also, whan
 that is done, that he goo unto the courte of kyng Arthur 30
 and that he aske sir Launcelot mercy and sir Gawayne for 130^r
 the evyll wylle he hath had ayenst them.'

'Sir,' seyde the Rede Knyght, 'all this woll I do as ye com-
 maunde me, and syker assuraunce and borowysye shall have.'

So whan the assurauns was made he made his omage and 35
 feauti, and all the erlys and barouns with hym.

1 C and she said hit 4 C vnto I mette 6 C* vylaynous dethe and this is
 the cause that I haue putte alle these knyghtes to dethe and soo (*homoeoteleuton* in WT)
 7 C kynge Arthurs 9-10 C none and al this tyme haue I 17 for not
 in C 19 C therfor he shal make amendys to al 26 C goo within the castel
 30 C ye goo 31 C ye aske 32 C wil ye haue 34 me not in C

And than the maydyn Lynet com to sir Bewmaynes and unarmed hym and serched his woundis and staunched the blood, and in lyke wyse she dud to the Rede Knyght of the Rede Laundis. And there they suggeoured ten dayes in s there tentys. And ever the Rede Knyght made all his lordis and servauntys to do all the plesure unto sir Bewmaynes that they myght do.

And so within a whyle the Rede Knyghte yode unto the castell and putt hym in her grace, and so she resseyved hym io uppon sufryciaunte surete* so that all her hertys were well restored of all that she coude complayne. And than he departed unto the courte of kynge Arthure, and there opynly the Rede Knyght putt hymself in the mercy of sir Launcelot and of sir Gawayne; and there he tolde opynly 15 how he was overcom and by whom, and also he tolde all the batayles frome the begynnyng to the endynge.

'Jesu mercy!' seyde kynge Arthure and sir Gawayne, 'we mervayle muche of what bloode he is com, for her is a noble knyght.'

20 'Have ye no mervayle,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'for ye shall ryght well know that he is com of full noble bloode, and as for hys myght and hardynesse, there bene but full few now lyvyng that is so myghty as he is, and of so noble prouesse.'

25 'Hit semyth by you,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'that ye know his name and frome whens he com.'

'I suppose I do so,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'or ellys I wolde not have yeffyn hym the hyghe Order of Knyghthode, but he gaff me suche charge at that tyme that I woll never 3° discover hym untyll he requyre me, or ellis hit be knowyn opynly by som other.'

9) Now turne we unto sir Bewmaynes that desyred [of] dame Lynet that he myght se hir lady.

'Sir,' she seyde, 'I wolde ye saw hir fayne.'

35 Than sir Bewmaynes all armed toke his horse and his spere and rode streyte unto the castell, and whan he com

2-3 C stynted his blood 5 ever not in C 6-7 C pleasyre that they myghte
vnto 8yre Beaumayns 10 that not inC ziC wel wete 22 full not in C
23-4 C and so noble of prouesse 26 C* come and of what blood he is
28 C thordre of kny3thode 29 CI shold neuer 33 C* her syster his lady
34 C I wold fayne ye sawe her 35 C armed hym and toke

to the gate he founde there men armed, and pulled up the drawbrygge and drew the portcolyse.

Than he mervayled why they wolde nat suffir hym to entir, and than he loked up to a wyndow and there he sawe fayre dame Lyones that seyde on hyght, 5

'Go thy way, sir Bewmaynes, for as yet thou shalt nat have holy my love unto the tyme that thou be called one of the numbir of the worthy knyghtes. And therefore go and laboure in worshyp this twelve-monthe, and than ye shall hyre newe tydyngis.' 10

'Alas! fayre lady,' seyde sir Bewmaynes, 'I have nat deserved that ye sholde shew me this straungenesse. And I hadde wente I sholde have had ryght good chere with you, and unto my power I have deserved thanke. And well I am sure I have bought your love with parte of the beste 15 bloode within my body.'

'Fayre curteyse knyghte,' seyde dame Lyonesse, 'be nat displeased, nother be nat overhasty, for wete you well youre grete travayle nother your good love shall nat be loste, for I consyder your grete laboure and your hardynesse, your 20 bounte* and your goodnesse as me ought to do. And therefore go on your way and loke that ye be of good comforte, for all shall be for your worshyp and for the best; and, pard£, a twelve-monthe woll sone be done. And trust me, fayre knyght, I shall be trewe to you and never betray you, but 25 to my deth I shall love you and none other.'

And therewithall she turned frome the wyndowe, and sir Bewmaynes rode awaywarde from the castell makynge grete dole. And so he rode now here, now there, he wyste nat whother, tyll hit was durke nyght. And than hit happened 30 hym to com to a pore mannys house, and there, he was herborowde all that nyght. But sir Bewmaynes had no reste, but walowed and wrythed for the love of the lady of that castell.

And so uppon the morne he toke his horse and rode 35 untyll undyrn, and than he com to a brode watir, and there

1 Cmany men	2 Cdrewe the porte doose	3 Cmerueilled he	5 Cthe fair
Lyones	Con hyghe	18 Cdispleasyd nor ouer hasty	20-1 Ctrauail &
labour your bounte	25 Cneuertebitrayeyou	29-30 C rode here and	
there & wyste not ne where he rode tyl	34 C the castel	36-p. 328, 1 C*	

water and there by was a grete lodge and there he

he alyght to slepe and levde his hede uppon hys shyld and betoke his horse to the dwarff and commaunded the dwarff to wacche all nyght.

Now turne we to the lady of the same castell that thought
5 muche uppon Bewmaynes. And than she called unto hir sir Gryngamoure, hir brother, and prayde hym in all maner, as he loved hir hertely, that he wolde ryde afftir sir Bewmaynes :

'And ever have ye wayte uppon hym tyll ye may fynde
io hym slepyng, for I am sure in his hevynesse he woll alyght adowne in som place and lay hym downe to slepe. And therefore have ye youre wayte uppon hym in prevy maner, and take his dwarff and com your way wyth hym as faste as ye may: for my sistir Lynet tellyth me that he can telle is of what kynrede he is com of. And in the meanewhyle I and my sistir woll ryde untill your castell to wayte whan ye brynge with you the dwarff, and than woll I have hym in examinacion myself, for tyll I know what is his ryght name and of what kynrede he is commyn shall I never be myrry »o atmyherte.'

'Sistir,' seyde sir Gryngamour, 'all this shall be done aftir your entente.' And so he rode all that other day and the nyght tyll he had lodged hym. And whan he sawe sir Bewmaynes faste on slepe he com styilly stalkyng behynde
*s the dwarff and plucked hym faste undir his arme and so rode his way with hym untill his owne castell. And this sir Gryngamoure was all in blak, his armour and his horse and all that tyll hym longyth. But ever as he rode with the dwarff
13 V towarde the castell he cryed untill his lorde and prayde hym
30 of helpe. And therewyth awoke sir Beawmaynes, and up he lepte lyghtly and sawe where the blak knyght rode his way wyth the dwarff, and so he rode oute of his syght.

(20) Than sir Bewmaynes put on his helme and buckeled on

12-13 Chym and in the preuyest manere ye can take 13-14 C* as faste as euer ye maye or syr Beaumayns awake For 15 C come and what is his ryghte name 17 C thenne whan ye haue broughte hym vnto your Castel I wyll haue 18 for not in Cf C vnto the tyme that I 23-4 C* tulle that he fond syre Beaumayns lyenge by a water and his hede vpon his shelde for the slepe And thenne whanne he sawe syre Beaumayns 26 C he rode awaye with hym as faste as euer he myghte vnto 27-8 C Gryngamoure arnes were all black and that 30 S for helpe 31 C the Gryngamorff Wway way 34-p. 329, 1 C buckeled his

his shyld and toke his horse and rode afftir hym all that
 ever he myght, thorow mores and fellys and grete sloughis,
 that many tymes his horse and he plunged over their hedys
 in depe myres, for he knewe nat the way but toke the
 gayneste way in that woodenesse, that many tymes he was 5
 lyke to peryshe. And at the laste hym happened to com to
 a fayre grene way,* and there he mette with a poore man of
 the contray and asked hym whether he mette nat with a
 knyght uppon a blak horse and all blak harneyse, and a
 lytyll dwarff syttyng behynde hym with hevy chere. 10

'Sir,* seyde the poore man, 'here by me com sir Grynga-
 moure the knyght with suche a dwarff, and therefore I rede
 you nat to folow hym, for he is one of the perelyst knyghtes
 of the worlde, and his castell is here nerehonde but two
 myle. Therefore we avyse you, ryde nat aftir sir Grynga- 15
 mour but yf ye owe hym good wylle.'

So leve we sir Bewmaynes rydyng toward the castell, and
 speke we of sir Gryngamoure and the dwarff. Anone as
 the dwarff was com to the castell dame Lyonesse and dame
 Lynet, hir systir, asked the dwarff where was his mastir *o
 borne and of what lynage was he com. 'And but yf thou
 telle me,' seyde dame Lyonesse, 'thou shalt never ascape
 this castell but ever here to be presonere.'

'As for that,' seyde the dwarff, 'I feare nat gretly to telle
 his name and of what kynne he is commyn of. Wete you well, 25
 he is a kynges son and a quenys, and his fadir hyght kynge
 Lot of Orkeney, and his modir is sistir to kyng Arthure, 132^r
 and he is brother to sir Gawayne, and his name is sir Gareth
 of Orkenay. And now I have tolde you his ryght name, I
 pray you, fayre lady, lat me go to my lorde agayne, for he 30
 woll never oute of this contrey tyll he have me agayne; and
 yf he be angry he woll do harme or that he be stynted, and
 worche you wrake in this contrey.'

'As for that, be as be may.'

'Nay/ seyde sir Gryngamoure, 'as for that thretyng, we 35
 woll go to dynere.'

2-3 C marys and feldes and grete dales that 8 C* countreye whom he salewed &
 12 C* dwerf mornynge as ye saye & 14 C here nyhe 21 C he was 26-7
 and a quenys and his fadir hyght kynge Lot of Orkeney *not in* Cf 28 C broder
 to the good knyghte of syre Gawayne 3 2 Cdo moche harme 34-6 C As for
 that thretyng sayd syr Gryngamore be it as it be may We wille goo (*see note*)

And so they wayshed and wente to mete and made hem mery and well at ease. Bycause the lady Lyonesse of the Castell Perelus was there, they made the gretter joy.

'Truly, madam,' seyde Lynet unto hir sistir, 'well may
5 he be a kyngys son, for he hath many good tacchis: for he is curtyese and mylde, and the moste sufferynge man that ever I mette withall. For I dare sey there was never jantyllwoman revyled man in so foule a maner a[s] I have rebuked hym. And at all tymes he gaff me goodly and meke answers agayne.'

xo And as they sate thus talkynge there cam sir Gareth in at the gate with hys swerde drawyn in his honde and cryed alowde that all the castell myght hyre: 'Thou traytour knyght, sir Gryngamoure! delyver me my dwarff agayne, or by the fayth that I owghe to God and to the hygh Ordre
15 of Knyghthode I shall do the all the harme that may lye in my power 1'

Than sir Gryngamour loked oute at a wyndow and seyde, 'Sir Gareth of Orkenay, leve thy bostyng wordys, for thou gettyst nat thy dwarff agayne.'

20 'Than, cowarde knyght,' seyde Gareth, 'brynge hym with the, and com and do batayle with me, and wyne hym and take hym.'

'So woll I do,' seyde sir Gryngamoure, 'and me lyste, but for all thy grete wordys thou gettyst hym nat.'

25 ⁴A, fayre lady,' seyde dame Lynet, 'I wolde he hadde his dwarff agayne, for I wolde he were nat wroth: for now he hath tolde me all my desyre, I kepe no more of the dwarff. And also, brother, he hath done muche for me and delyverde me from the Rede Knyght of the Rede Laundis. And
30 therefore, brother, I owe hym my servyse afore all knyghtes lyvyng, and wete you well that I love hym byfore all othyr knyghtes lyvyng, and full fayne I wolde speke with hym. But in no wyse I wolde nat that he wyste what I were but as I were anothir strange lady.'

35 'Well, sistir,' seyde sir Gryngamour, 'sythen that I know no[w] your wyll I woll obey me now unto hym.'

3 Perelus not in C %C reulyd man 11 C* with an angry countenance
and his swerd 12 C here hit sayeng 14 C owe to the ordre 15-17 C
harme that I can Thenne 20 C* Thou coward 25 C* fayr broder said
dame Lyones I wold 31-2 C before al other and 33 nat not in C«
35 sistir not in C 36 me not in C

And so therewith he wente downe and seyde, 'Sir Gareth,
I cry you mercy, and all that I have myssedone I woll
amende hit at your wylle. And therefore I pray you that
ye wolde alyght and take suche chere as I can make you in
this castell.' 5

'Shall I have my dwarff?' seyde sir Gareth.

'Yee, sir, and all the plesure that I can make you, for as
sone as your dwarff tolde me what ye were and of what
kynde ye ar com and what noble dedys ye have done in
this marchis, than I repented me of my dedys.' 10

Than sir Gareth alyght, and there com his dwarff and toke
his horse.

'A, my felow!' seyde sir Gareth, 'I have had muche
adventures for thy sake!'

And so sir Gryngamoure toke hym by the honde and ledde 15
hym into the halle where his owne wyff was. And than com (21)
forth dame Lyones arayde lyke a prynces, and there she
made hym passyng good chere and he hir agayne, and they
had goodly langage and lovely countenaunce.

And sir Gareth thought many tymes: 'Jesu, wolde that 20
the lady of this Castell Perelus were so fayre as she is 1' And
there was all maner of gamys and playes, of daunsyng and
syngyng, and evermore sir Gareth behelde that lady. And
the more he loked on her, the more he brenned in love, that
he passed hymself farre in his reson. And forth towardys 25
nyght they yode unto souper, and sir Gareth myght nat
ete, for his love was so hoote that he wyst nat were he was.

And thes lokys aspyed sir Gryngamour, and than aftir 133^r
souper he called his sistir dame Lyonesse untyll a chambir
and sayde, 30

'Fayre sistir, I have well aspyed your countenaunce be-
twyxe you and this knyght, and I woll, sistir, that ye wete
he is a full noble knyght, and yf ye can make hym to abyde
here I woll do hym all the plesure that I can, for and ye
were bettir than ye ar, ye were well bewared uppon hym.' 35

'Fayre brother,' seyde dame Lyonesse, 'I undirstond

1-2 C ryght ther with al he wente doun vnto syr Gareth aud (S and) said syr I crye
7 Calle the pleasaunce that 10 me not in C i 3 C had many 16 Wrong
chapter-number in C: xxii instead of TOO. 19-20 C countenaunce to gyder And
23-5 C And euer the more syre Gareth bihelde that lady the more he loued her and
so he brenned in loue that he was past hym self in his reason 28 C at after

well that the knyght is a good knyght and com he is oute
of a noble house. Natwithstondyng I woll assay hym bettir,
howbehit I am moste beholde to hym of ony erthely man,
for he hath had grete labour for my love and passed many
5 dangerous passagis.'

Ryght so sir Gryngamour wente unto sir Gareth and
seyde, 'Sir, make ye good chere, for ye shall have none
other cause, for this lady my sistir is youres at all tymes,
hir worshyp saved, for wete you well she lovyth you as well
io as ye do hir and better, yf bettir may be.'

'And I wyste that,' seyde sir Gareth, 'there lyved nat a
gladder man than I wolde be.'

'Uppon my worshyp,' seyde sir Gryngamoure, 'truste
unto my promyse. And as long as hit lykyth you ye shall
*5 suggeourne with me, and this lady shall be wyth us dayly and
nyghtly to make you all the chere that she can.'

'I woll well/ seyde sir Gareth, 'for I have promysed to
be nyghe this contray this twelve-monthe, and well I am
sure kynge Arthure and other noble knyghtes woll fynde
20 me where that I am wythin this twelve-monthe, for I shall
be sought and founden yf that I be on lyve.'

And than sir Gareth wente unto the lady dame Lyonesse
and kyssed hir many tymes, and eythir made grete joy of
other, and there she promysed hym hir love, sertaynly to
25 love hym and none other dayes of hir lyff. Than this lady
dame Lyonesse by the assent of hir brother tolde sir Gareth
all the trouthe what she was," and how she was the same lady
that he dud batayle fore, and how she was lady of the Castell
133^v Perelus. And there she tolde hym how she caused hir
(22) 30 brother to take away his dwarff, 'for this cause: to know the
sertayne, what was your name and of what kyn ye were
com.' And than she lette fette before hym hir systir Lynet
that had ryddyn with hym many a wysom way. Than was
syr Gareth more gladder than he was tofore.

35 And than they trouthe-plyghte other to love and never to
fayle whyle their lyff lastyth. And so they brente bothe in
hoote love that they were acorded to abate their lustys

1-2 Cis good & come he is of 3Cbeholdyng 22Cthan the noble knyghte
syre 22-3 C* Lyones whiche he thfine moche loued & kyst 31 Ccertaynte
32 C lete fette 32-3 C hym Lynet the damoyssel that 3 7 hoote not in C

secretly. And there dame Lyonesse counceyled sir Gareth to slepe in none other place but in the halle, and there she promysed hym to com to his bed a lytyll afore mydnyght.

This counceyle was nat so prevyly kepte but hit was undirstonde, for they were but yonge bothe and tendir of 5 ayge and had nat used suche craufftis toforne. Wherefore the damesell Lyonctt was a lytyll dysplesed; and she thought hir sister dame Lyonesse was a lytyll overhasty that she myght nat abyde hir tyme of maryage, and for savyng of hir worshyp she thought to abate their hote lustis. And she 10 lete ordeyne by hir subtile craufftes that they had nat their intentys neythir with othir as in her delytes untill they were maryed.

And so hit paste on. At aftir souper was made a clene avoydaunce, that every lorde and lady sholde go unto his 15 reste. But sir Gareth seyde playnly he wolde go no farther than the halle, for in suche placis, he seyde, was conveny-aunte for an arraunte knyght to take his reste in. And so there was ordayned grete cowchis and thereon fethir beddis, and there he leyde hym downe to slepe. And within a *© whyle came dame Lyonesse wrapped in a mantell furred with ermyne, and leyde hir downe by the sydys of sir Gareth. And therewithall he began to clyppe hir and to kysse hir.

And therewithall he loked before hym and sawe an armed »s knyght with many lyghtes aboute hym, and this knyght had a longe gysarne in his honde and made a grymme countenance to smyte hym. Whan sir Gareth sawe hym com 134* in that wyse he lepte oute of his bedde and gate in his hande a swerde and lepte toward that knyght. And whan the 30 knyght sawe sir Gareth com so fersly uppon hym he smote hym with a foyne thorow the thycke of the thygh, that the wounde was a shafftemonde brode and had cutte a-too many vaynes and synewys. And therewithall sir Gareth smote hym uppon the helme suche a buffette that he felle grovel- is yng, and than he lepe over hym and unlaced his helme and smote off his hede from the body. And than he bled so faste

6 C none suche 9 Csauyng their 22Cdounbesydessyr 23 to clyppe
 hir and *not in Cf* 25 C and there he apperceyued and sawe come an armed
 25-6 sawe ... hym and *repeated in C* C Gysarme 30 C lepte strayte toward

that he myght notstonde, but so he leyde hym downe upon his bedde and there he sowned and lay as he had bene dede.

Than dame Lyonesse cryed alowde that sir Gryngamoure
5 harde hit and com downe; and whan he sawe sir Gareth so shamefully wounded he was sore dyspleased and seyde,

'I am shamed that this noble knyght is thus dishonoured. Sir,' seyde sir Gryngamour, 'how may this be that this noble knyght is thus wounded?'

io 'Brothir,' she seyde, 'I can nat telle you, for hit was nat done by me nother by myne assente, for he is my lorde and I am his, and he muste be myne husbonde. Therefore, brothir, I woll that ye wete I shame nat to be with hym nor to do hym all the plesure that I can.'

15 'Sistir,' seyde Gryngamour, 'and I woll that ye wete hit and Gareth bothe that hit was never done by me, nother be myne assente this unhappy dede was never done.'

And there they staunched his bledyng as well as they myght, and grete sorow made sir Gryngamour and dame
*o Lyonesse. And forthwithall com dame Lyonett and toke up the hede in the syght of them all, and anoynted hit with an oyntemente thereas hit was smyttyn off, and in the same wyse [s]he ded to the othir parte thereas the hede stake. And then she sette hit togydirs, and hit stake as faste as
*5 ever hit ded. And the knyght arose lyghtly up and the damesell Lyonett put hym in hir chambir.

All this saw sir Gryngamour and dame Lyonesse, and
134^v so ded sir Gareth, and well he aspyed that hit was dame Lyonett that rode with hym thorow the perelouse passages.

30 'A, well, damesellP seyde sir Gareth, 'I wente ye wolde nat have done as ye have done.'

'My lorde sir Gareth,' seyde Lyonett, 'all that I have done I woll avowe hit, and all shall be for your worshyp and us all.'

35 And so within a whyle sir Gareth was nyghe hole and

4-5 C that her brodersyr Gryngamor herd and 7 Cf thus honoured 8-9 C* hou may this be that ye be here and thys noble knyghte wounded 16 C syr Gareth 17 C assente that this vnhappy dede was done 20, 28-9 C Dame Lynet 26 C Lynet 30 CI wende woldf 32 C My lord Gareth said Lynet 33-4 C auowe and alle that I haue done shal be for youre honoure and worship and to vs alle

waxed lyght and jocunde, and sange and daunced. Tha[n]
 agayne sir Gareth and dame Lyonesse were so hoote in
 brennyng love that they made their covenantes at the
 tenth nyght aftir, that she sholde com to his bedde. And
 because he was wounded afore, he leyde his armour and his 5
 swerde nygh his beddis syde.

And ryght as she promysed she com. And she was nat (23)
 so sone in his bedde but she aspyed an armed knyght
 commynge towarde the bed, and anone she warned sir
 Gareth. And lyghtly thorow the good helpe of dame 10
 Lyonesse he was armed, and they hurled togydys with
 grete ire and malyce all aboute the halle. And there was
 grete lyght as hit had be the numbir of twenty torchis bothe
 byfore and behynde. So sir Gareth strayned hym so that his
 olde wounde braste ayen on-bledynge. But he was hote 15
 and corragyous and toke no kepe, but with his grete forse
 he strake downe the knyght and avoyded hys helme and
 strake of his hede.

Than he hew the hede uppon an hondred pecis, and whan
 he had done so he toke up all tho pecis and threw them oute *
 at a wyndow into the dychis of the castell. And by this done
 he was so faynte that unnethis he myght stonde for bledynge,
 and by than he was allmoste unarmed he felle in a dedly
 sowne in the floure.

Than dame Lyonesse cryed, that sir Gryngamoure herde »5
 her, and when he com and founde sir Gareth in that plyght
 he made grete sorow. And there he awaked sir Gareth and
 gaff hym a drynke that releved hym wondirly well. But the 135^r
 sorow that dame Lyonesse made there may no tunge telle,
 for she so fared with herself as she wolde have dyed. 30

Ryght so come this damesell Lyonett before hem all, and
 she had sette all the gobbettis of the hede that sir Gareth had
 throwe oute at the wyndow, and there she anoynted hit as she
 dud tofore, and put them to the body in the syght of hem all.

'Well, damesell Lyonett,' seyde sir Gareth, 'I have nat 35
 deserved all this dyspyte that ye do unto me.'

i-a C sange daunced and gamed and he and dame Lyones i W That 9 C
 bedde there with alle she 14 C soo thatf syr 19 C in an 25 C soo
 that 26 her not in C yi S goblets C gobbets 33-5 Cenoynted hem*
 as she had done to fore & set them to gyder ageyn wel damoisel Lynet

'Sir knyght,' she seyde, 'I have nothyng done but I woll avow hit, and all that I have done shall be to your worship and to us all.'

Than was sir Gareth staunched of his bledynge, but the
5 lechis seyde there was no man that bare the lyff sholde heale hym thorowly of his wounde but yf they heled them that caused the stroke by enchauntemente.

So leve we sir Gareth there wyth sir Gryngamour and his sisters, and turne we unto kyng Arthure that at the nexte
10 feste of Pentecoste [helde his feste.] There cam the Grene Knyght and fyfty knyghtes with hym, and yeldyd them all unto kynge Arthure. Than there com the Rede Knyghte and his brother and yelded them to kynge Arthure wyth three score knyghtes with them. Also there com the Blew
is Knyght and his brother and yelded hem to kyng Arthure. And the Grene Knyghtes name was sir Partholype, and the Rede Knyghtes name was sir Perymones, and the Blew Knyghtes name was sir Persaunte of Inde.

Thes three bretherne tolde kynge Arthure how they were
ao overcom by a knyght that a damesell had with hir, and she called hym sir Bewmaynes.

'Jesu!' seyde the kyng, 'I mervayle what knyght he is and of what lynage he is com. Here he was with me a twelve-monthe and poorely and shamefully he was fostred. And
*5 sir Kay i[n] scorne named hym Bewmaynes.'

So ryght as the kynge stode so talkyng with thes three
135* bretherne there com sir Launcelot du Lake and tolde the kyng that there was com a goodly lorde with fyve hondred knyghtys with hym. Than the kyng was at Carlyon, for
30 there was the feste holde, and thidir com to hym this lorde and salewed the kyng with goodly maner.

'What wolde ye?' seyde kynge Arthure, 'and what is your erande?'

'Sir,' he seyde, 'I am called the Rede Knyght of the Rede

1-2 C do but I will auowe And 6 W hym thorowly of of C hym thorou oute of
10 C* Pentecost helde his feest and there 11 C knyght with fyfty knyghtes and
12-13 C* reed knyghte his broder and yelded hym 13 C Arthur and 14 C
with hym 14-15 C* blewe knyghte broder to them with an hondred knyghtes &
yelded hem 16 sir not inC 17 sirnotin C i8CPersant zoshsnotinC
21 sir not in C 28-9 C with vi C knyghtes 29-30 C kynge wente oute off
Carlyon for there was the feest and there came 34~P- 337> 1 C my namef (S
naname) is the reed knyghte of the reed laundes but my name is

Laundis, but my name is sir Ironsyde; and, sir, wete you well, hydir I am sente unto you frome a knyght that is called sir Bewmaynes, for he wanne me in playne batayle hande for hande, and so ded never knyght but he that ever had the bettir of me this twenty wyntir. And I am commaunded 5 to yelde me to you at your wyll.'

'Ye ar welcom,' seyde the kynge, 'for ye have bene longe a grete foo of owres to me and to my courte, and now, I truste to God, I shall so entrete you that ye shall be my frende.' 10

'Sir, bothe I and thes fyve hondred knyghtes shall all-ways be at your sommons to do you suche servyse as may lye in oure powers.'

'Gramercy,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'I am muche beholdyng unto that knyght that hath so put his body in devoure to 15 worshyp me and my courte. And as to the, sir Ironsyde, that is called the Rede Knyght of the Rede Laundys, thou arte called a perelouse knyght, and yf thou wolte holde of me I shall worshyp the and make the knyght of the Table Rounde, but than thou muste be no man-murtherer.' 20

'Sir, as to that, I have made my promyse unto sir Bewmaynes nevermore to use such customs, for all the shamefull customs that I used I ded hit at the requeste of a lady that 1 loved. And therefore I muste goo unto sir Launcelot and unto sir Gawayne and aske them forgyffnesse of the evyll 25 wyll I had unto them; for all tho that I put to deth was all only for the love of sir Launcelot and of sir Gawayne.'

'They bene here,' seyde the kynge, 'before the. Now may ye sey to them what ye woll.' 136^r

And than he kneled downe unto sir Launcelot and to sir 30 Gawayne and prayde them of forgeffnesse of his enmyte" that he had ayenste them.

Than goodly they seyde all at onys, 'God forgyff you and (24) we do. And we pray you that ye woll telle us where we may fynde sir Bewmaynes.' 35

'Fayre lorde,' sayde sir Ironsyde, 'I can nat telle you, for

2 C of a knyght	4 C neuer no knyght	5 C xxx wynter the whiche com-
maunded	8 of owres <i>not in C</i>	12 suche <i>not in C</i>
said	15 C put soo C deuoyre	20 C no more a murtherer
promysed	28 C here now said	32 C that euer he
		34 we <i>not in C-f</i>

hit is full harde to fynde hym: for such yonge knyghtes as he is, whan they be in their adventures, bene never abydyng in no place.'

But to sey the worshyp that the Rede Knyght of the Rede
5 Laundys and sir Persaunte and his bretherne seyde by hym, hit was mervayle to hyre.

'Well, my fayre lordys,' seyde kyng Arthure, 'wete you well I shall do you honour for the love of sir Bewmaynes, and as sone as ever I may mete with hym I shall make you
ro all uppon a day knyghtes of the Table Rounde. And as to the, sir Persaunte of Inde, thou hast bene ever called a full noble knyght, and so hath evermore thy three bretherne bene called. But I mervayle,' seyde the kyng, 'that I here nat of the Blak Knyght, your brother. He was a full noble
15 knyght.'

'Sir,' seyde Pertolype the Grene Knyght, 'sir Bewmaynes slew hym in a recountir with hys spere. His name was sir Perarde.'

'That was grete pyteV seyde the kyng, and so seyde
20 many knyghtes, for thes four brethyrne were full well knowyn in kyng Arthures courte for noble knyghtes, for longe tyme they had holdyn werre ayenst the knyghtes of the Rownde Table.

Than Partolype the Grene Knyght tolde the kyng that
25 at a passage of the watir of Mortayse there encountird sir Bewmaynes with too bretherne that ever for the moste party kepte that passage, and they were two dedly knyghtes. And there he slew the eldyst brother in the watir and
136^v smote hym uppon the hede suche a buffette that he felle
30 downe in the watir and there was he drowned. And his name was sir Garrarde le Brewse. And aftir he slew the other brother uppon the londe: hys name was sir Arnolde le Brewse.

(25,26) So than the kyng [and they] wente to mete and were
35 served in the beste maner. And as they sate at the mete there com in the quene of Orkenay with ladyes and knyghtes

2 C he is one \$-6 C* and his broder said of Beaumayns it was (see note)
9 may not in C 10 C vpon one day 11 P of Inde R 0 Inde 12-13 C
soo haue euer ben thy thre bretheren called 18 C Perard 24-5 C Thenne
sayd Pertolepe the grene knyghte to the kyng atte a 31 C Garard 30 C
he was 34 C Capitulum XXVI (XXV .omitted)

a grete numbir. And than sir Gawayne, sir Aggravayne, and sir Gaherys arose and wente to hir modir and salewed hir uppon their kneis and asked hir blyssynge, for of twelve yere before they had not sene hir.

Than she spake uppon hyght to hir brother kynge 5
 Arthure: 'Where have ye done my yonge son, "sir Gareth? For he was here amongyst you a twelve-monthe, and ye made a kychyn knave of hym, the whyche is shame to you all. Alas! Where have ye done myn owne dere son that was my joy and blysse?' 10

'A, dere modir,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'I knew hym nat'

'Nothir I , ' seyde the kynge, 'that now me repentys, but, thanked be God, he is previd a worshypfull knyght as ony that is now lyvyng of his yerys, and I shall nevyr be glad tyll that I may fynde [hym].' 15

'A, brothir!' seyde the quene, 'ye dud yourself grete shame whan ye amongyst you kepte my son in the kychyn and fedde hym lyke an hogge.'

'Fayre sistir,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'ye shall ryght well wete that I knew hym nat, nother no more dud sir Gawayne, 20
 nothir his bretherne. But sytthe hit is so,' seyde the kynge, 'that he thus is gone frome us all, we muste shape a remedy to fynde hym. Also, sistir, mesemyth ye myght have done me to wete of his commynge, and than, if I had nat done well to hym, ye myght have blamed me. For whan he com 25
 to this courte he cam lenynge uppon too mennys sholdyrs as though he myght nat have gone. And than he asked me 137^r
 three gyfftyes; and one he asked that same day, and that was that I wolde gyff hym mete inowghe that twelve-monthe. And the other two gyfftyes he asked that day twelve-monthe, 30
 and that was that he myght have the adventure of the damesel Lyonett; and the thirde, that sir Launcelet sholde make hym knyght whan he desyred hym. And so I graunted hym all [his] desyre. And many in this courte mervayled that he desyred his systynaunce for a twelve- 35

2 modir *not in C* 3-4 *C in xv* yere they 5 *Cspak on* hyghe 7 For
not in C 9 owne *not in C* 11 *CO* dere 12 *C Nor I* 16 *C** quene
 vnto kyng Arthur and vnto syr Gawayne and to alle her sones ye dyd 18 *C a*
 poure hog 20-1 *C not nor* nomore ... nor 21 *S it* Chit 22 *C is* thus
 2& *C day* that 30 *C day a* twelue moneth 32 *CLynet* *C thyrd* was that
 34 *W all myf* desyre *C** alle his desyre

monthe, and thereby we demed many of us that he was nat com oute of a noble house.*

'Sir,' seyde the quene of Orkenay unto kynge Arthure her brother, 'wete you well that I sente hym unto you ryght
5 well armed and horsed and worshypfully besene of his body, and golde and sylver plente* to spende.'

'Hit may be so,' seyde the kyng, 'but thereof sawe we none, save that same day that he departed frome us knyghtes tolde me that there com a dwarff hyder suddeynely and
10 brought hym armour and a good horse full well and rychely beseyne. And thereat all we had mervayle, frome whens that rychesse com. Than we demed all that he was com of men of worshyp.'

'Brother,' seyde the quene, 'all that ye sey we beleve hit,
15 for ever sytthen he was growyn he was [mervaylously wytted, and ever he was] feythfull and trew of his promyse. But I mervayle,' seyde she, 'that sir Kay dud mok and scorne hym and gaff hym to name Bewmaynes; yet sir Kay,' seyde the quene, 'named hym more ryghteously than he wende,
*0 for I dare sey he is asfayrean handid man^r and wel disposed^l, and he be on lyve, as ony lyvyng.'

'Sistir,' seyde Arthure, 'lat this langage now be styлле, and by the grace of God he shall be founde and he be within this seven realmys. And lette all this passe and be myrry,
*5 for he is preved to a man of worshyp, and that is my joy.'
(27) Than seyde sir Gawayne and his bretherne unto kynge
137^y Arthure, 'Sir, and ye woll gyff us leve we woll go seke oure brother.'

'Nay,' sayde sir Launcelot, 'that shall not nede.' And so
30 seyde sir Bawdwyn of Brytaygne. 'For as by oure advyse, the kynge shall sende unto dame Lyonesse a messyngere and pray hir that she wolle com to the courte in all haste that she may. And doute ye nat she woll com, and than she may gyff you the beste counceyle where ye shall fynde sir Gareth.'

\$ of not in S 7 so not in C IICweal 12Ccamethatwe 14-15CI
byleue for 15-16 C* he was merueillously wytted and euer he was feythful (*homoeoteleuton* in W; see note) 17-18 C mocke hym and scorne hym and gaf hym that name
20-I C* I dare saye and he be on lyue he is as fair an handed man and wel disposed
as ony is lyuyng (see note) 22 P Syref said Arthur lete (Rf Arthurle te)
24 C to be 26 kynge not in C 29 Cshalle ye not 30 C Bawdewyn of
Bretayne 1 W lyonesse for as by oure avyse a messyngere 34 C fynde hym

"This is well seyde of you,' seyde the kynge.

So than goodly lettyrs were made, and the messyngere sente forth, that nyght and day wente tyll he com to the Castell Perelous. And than the lady, dame Lyonesse, was sente fore thereas she was with sir Gryngamour, hir brother, 5 and sir Gareth. And whan she undirstoode this messyngere she bade hym ryde on his way unto kynge Arthure, and she wolde com aftir in all the moste goodly haste.

Than she com unto sir Gryngamour and to sir Gareth, and tolde hem all how kyng Arthure hadde sente for hir. 10

'That is because of me,' seyde sir Gareth.

'Now avyse ye me,' seyde dame Lyonesse, 'what I shall sey, and in what maner I shall rule me.'

'My lady and my love,' seyde sir Gareth, 'I pray you in no wyse be ye aknowyn where I am. But well I wote my 15 modir is there and all my bretherne, and they woll take uppon hem to seke me: I woll that they do. But this, madam, I woll ye sey and avyse the kynge whan he questyons with you of me: than may ye sey this is your avyse, that and hit lyke his good grace, ye woll do make a cry ayenst the 20 Assumpcion of Oure Lady, that what knyght that prevyth hym beste, he shall welde you and all your lande. And yf so be that he be a wedded man that Wynnes the degre*, he shall have a coronall of golde sette with stonys of vertu to the valew of a thousand pound, and a whyght jarfawcon.' 25

So dame Lyonesse departed. And to com off and to breff this tale, whan she com to kynge Arthure she was nobly resseyved, and there she was sore questyonde of the kynge and of the quene of Orkeney. And she answerde where sir 138^r Gareth was she coude not tell, but this muche she seyde 30 unto kynge Arthure:

'Sir, by your avyse I woll let cry a turnemente that shall be done before my castell at the Assumpcion of oure Lady;

6 C this message 8 the moste *not in C* 9-10 C Thenne whan she came to syr Gryngamor and to sir Gareth she told 12 C what shalle I 17 CI wote wel that 18 C wold ye sayd and aduysed the kynge whan he questyoned 20-1 C ayenst the feest of thassumpcion 21 C knyghte there preueth 23-4 C a wedded man that his wyff shall the degre and a coronal of gold besette with stones (see note) 26 C Lyones 26-7 to com off and to breff this tale whan she *not in C* 27 C where she was 30 C thus moche 31 kynge *not in C* 32 by your avyse *not in C* 33 C AssumpciQU (S Assumpcion)

and the cry shall be this, that you, my lorde Arthure, shall be there and your knyghtes, and I woll purvey that my knyghtes shall be ayenste youres; and than I am sure I shall hyre of sir Gareth.'

5 'This is well avysed,' seyde kynge Arthure.

And so she departed; and the kynge and she made grete provysion to the turnemente.

Whan dame Lyonesse was com to the He of Avylyon—that was the, same ile thereas hir brother, sir Gryngamour,
10 dwelled—than she tolde hem all how she had done, and what promyse she had made to kynge Arthure.

'Alas!' seyde sir Gareth, 'I have bene so sore wounded with unhappynesse sitthyn I cam into this castell that I shall nat be able to do at that turnemente lyke a knyght; for I was
15 never thorowly hole syn I was hurte.'

'Be ye of good chere,' seyde the damesell Lyonett, 'for I undirtake within this fyftene dayes to make you as hole and as lusty as ever ye were.'

And than she leyde an oynemente and salve to hym as
20 hit pleased hir, that he was never so freyshe nother so lusty as he was tho.

Than seyde the damesell Lyonett, 'Sende you unto sir Persaunte of Inde, and assumpne hym that he be redy there with hole assomons of knyghtes, lyke as he made his promyse.
25 Also that ye sende unto Ironsyde that is knyght of the Rede Laundys, and charge hym that he be there with you wyth his hole somme of knyghtes; and than shall ye be able to macche wyth kynge Arthure and his knyghtes.'

So this was done and all knyghtes were sente fore unto
30 the Castell Perelous. Than the Rede Knyght answerde and sayde unto dame Lyonesse and to sir Gareth,

'Ye shall undirstonde that I have bene at the courte of kynge Arthure, and sir Persaunte of Inde and his brotherne,
138^v and there we have done oure omage as ye comaunded us.

35 Also,' seyde sir [Ironsyde], 'I have takyn uppon me with

8 CLyones 12 Cben S been sore *not in C* 16 CLynet 19 CSc a salve
20-2 pleasyd to her that he was neuer so fressh nor soo lusty Thenne 23-5 C
Persaunt of ynde and assomone hym and his knyghtes to be here with you as they
haue promysed Also 2 5-6 C syr Ironsyde that is the reed knyghte of the reed
laundys 26 C be redy with you 31 C Lyones 31-2 C Gareth Madame &
my lord syr Gareth ye shal 35 W Also seyde sir Garethf C Also syr Ironsyde* sayd

sir Persaunte of Inde and his bretherne to holde party agaynste my lorde sir Launcelot and the knyghtes or that courte, and this have I done for the love of my lady, dame Lyonesse, and you, my lorde sir Gareth.'

⁴'Ye have well done,' seyde sir Gareth, 'but wete ye well, 5 we shall be full sore macched with the most© nobleste knyghtes of the worlde: therefore we muste purvey us of good knyghtes where'we may gete hem.'

'Ye sey well,' seyde sir Persaunte, 'and worshypfully.'

And so the cry was maade in Ingelonde, Walys, Scot- 10 londe, Irelande, and Cornuayle, and in all the Oute lies, and in Bretayne and many contrayes, that at oure Lady Day, the Assumpcion next folowynge, [men] sholde com to the Castell Perelus besyde the He of Avylon, and there all knyghtes, whan they com there, sholde chose whethir them lyste to be 15 on the one party with the knyghtes of the Castell, other to be with kyng Arthur on the tothir party. And two monthis was to the day that the turnamente sholde be.

And so many good knyghtys that were at hir large helde hem for the moste party all this tyme ayenste kyng Arthure 20 and the knyghtes of the Rounde Table: and so they cam in the syde of[the] castell. And sir Epynogrys was the fyrste, and he was the kynges son of Northumbirlande; and sir Palamydes the Saresyn was another, and sir Safere and sir Segwarydes, hys bretherne—but they bothe were crystynde 25 —and sir Malegryne, and sir Bryan de les lies, a noble knyght, and sir Grummor and Grummorson, two noble knyghtes of Scotland, and sir Carados of the Dolowres Towre, a noble knyght, and sir Terquyne his brother, and sir Arnolde and sir Gauter, two bretherne, good knyghtes of Cornuayle. 30

Also there com sir Trystrams de Lyones, and with 139^r hym sir Dynas the Senesciall, and sir Saduk. But this

4 C Lyones 6 C moost noble 8 W may may gete 9 C That is wel said said Persaunt 10-nC England walis and Scotland Ireland Cornewaille 12 C in many Cat the feest of our lady i3Cnextcomynghmen*shold i4.CAuylyon 14-16 C there al the knyghtes that ther came shold haue the choyse whether them lyst to be on the one party 16-17 C castel or on the other party with kyng 19 C 8c so ther cam many 20 all this tyme not in C 21 and so they not in C 22 C of them of the *castel For syr Epynogrus 2 5 C his broder 26 C Malegryne another Cdes les Ilelys 27-8 Cf Grummor grummorsun a good knyghte of Scotland 29CTurquyn C Arnold 31 CTrystram de lyones 32 Dynadasf the seneschal

sir Trystrams was nat at that tyme knyght of the Rounde Table; but he was at that tyme one of the beste knyghtes of the worlde. And so all thes noble knyghtes accompanied hem with the lady of the Castell, and with
 5 the Rede Knyght of the Rede Laundys. But as for sir Gareth, he wolde nat take uppon hym but as othir meane knyghtis.

(28) Than turne we to kynge Arthure that brought wyth hym sir Gawayne, Aggravayne, Gaherys, his brethern; and than
 10 his newewys, as sir Uwayne le Blaunche Maynes, and sir Agglovale, sir Tor, sir Percivale de Galys, sir Lamerok de Galys. Than com sir Launcelot du Lake with his bretherne, newewys, and cosyns, as sir Lyonell, sir Ector de Marys, sir Bors de Gaynys, and sir Bleobrys de Gaynes, sir Blamour
 15 de Gaynys and sir Galyhodyn, sir Galyhud, and many mo of sir Launcelottys kynne; and sir Dynadan, sir La Cote Male Tayle, his brother, a knyght good, and sir Sagramoure le Desyrus, sir Dodynas le Saveage; and all the moste party of the Rounde Table.

20 Also there cam with kynge Arthure thes kynges: the kyng of Irelande, kynge Angwysauns, and the kynge of Scotlonde, kynge Carados, and kynge Uryens of the londe of Gore, and kynge Bagdemagus and his son sir Mellyagauns, and sir Galahalte, the noble prync^e—all thes prynces
 25 and erlys, barowns and noble knyghtes, as sir Braundyles, sir Uwayne les Avoutres, and sir Kay, sir Bedyvere, sir Melyot de Logres, sir Petypace of Wynchilsd, sir Gotlake— all thes com with kynge Arthure and mo that be nat here rehersid.

30 Now leve we of thes knyghtes and kynges, and lette us speke of the grete aray that was made within the castell and aboute the castell; for this lady, dame Ly[o]nesse, ordayned
 139* grete aray uppon hir party for hir noble knyghtys, for all

6 C hym more but 8-9 C And thenne ther cam with kynge Arthur sir Gawayn
 1 o as *not in C* C maynys 11 C and syre Lamorrak 14-15 and sir Bleobrys
 de Gaynes, sir Blamour de Gaynys *not in Cf* 16 C Launcelots blood 17 C
 a good knyghte 17-18 C Sagramore a good knyght And al 20 C these
 knyghtesf 21 C Agwysauncef (FAnguins) 23-4 C Melyaganusf C Galahault
 24-5 C these kynges prynces and Erles Barons and other noble 27 C Petypase
 of wynkelsee C Godelake 28-9 C that can not ben reherced 30 C
 kynges and knyghtes 32 c aboute the castel for bothe partyes the lady Dame
 Lyones W Lynesse

maner of lodgyng and vytayle that cam by londe and by watir,
that there lacked nothyng for hir party, nother for the othir
party, but there was plenty to be had for golde and sylver for
kyng Arthure and all his knyghtes. And than there cam
the herbygeours frome kyng Arthure for to herborow hym 5
and his kyngys, deukis, erlys, barons, [and] knyghtes.

Than sir Gareth prayde dame Lyonesse and the Rede
Knyght of the Rede Laundys, and sir Persaunte and his
bretherne, and sir Gryngamour, that in no wyse there sholde
none of them telle his name, and make no more of hym than 10
of the leste knyght that there was: 'for,' he seyde, 'I woll
nat be knowyn of neythir more ne lesse, nothir at the
begynnynge nother at the endyng.'

Than dame Lyones seyde unto sir Gareth, 'Sir, I wolde
leve with you a rynge of myne; but I wolde pray you, as 15
ye love me hertely, lette me have hit agayne whan the
turnemente is done: for that rynge encresyth my beawte*
muche more than hit is of myself. And the vertu of my rynge
is this: that that is grene woll turne to rede, and that that is
rede woll turne in lyknesse to grene, and that that is blewe 20
woll turne to whygnte, and that that is whyght woll [turne]
in lyknesse to blew; and so hit woll do of all maner of
coloures; also who that beryth this rynge shall lose no bloode.
And for grete love I woll gyffyou this rynge.'

'Gramercy,' seyde sir Gareth, 'myne owne lady. For this *5
rynge is passynge mete for me; for hit woll turne all maner
of lyknesse that I am in, and that shall cause me that I shall
nat be knowyn.'

Than sir Gryngamour gaff sir Gareth a bay coursor that
was a passynge good horse. Also he gaff hym good armour 30
and sure, and a noble swerde that somtyme sir Gringamours
fadir wan uppon an hethyn tyrraunte. And so thus every
knyght made hym redy to that turnemente.

And kyng Arthure was commyn two dayes tofore the 140'
Assumpcion of Oure Lady; and there was all maner of 35

2-3 Cother but there 8-9 Cand his broder loCtellenot 14-15 CI wylle
lene you a rynge but 18 Cof hymself 19 this *notin*C 19-22 Citwill
tome to reed and that is reede it wil tome in lykenes to grene And that is blewe
it wil tome to (S in) lykenes of whyte and that is whyte it wil tome in lykenes to blewe
23 C bereth my rynge 26 Chit S it 35-p. 346,1 C al maner of Royalte of al
mynstralsye

royalty, of all maner of mynstralsy that myght be founde. Also there cam quene Gwenyvere and the quene of Orkeney, sir Garethis mother.

And uppon the Assumpcion day, whan masse and matyns
 5 was done, there was herodys with trumpettis commaunded to blow to the felde. And so there com oute sir Epyngryns, the kynges son of Northumbirlande, frome the castell; and there encountryrde with hym sir Sagramoure le Desyrous, and eythir of them brake there sperys to theire handis. And
 10 than com in sir Palomydes oute of the castell; and there encountryrd with hym sir Gawayne, and eythir of them smote other so harde that bothe good knyghtes and their horsis felle to the erthe. And than the knyghtes of eythir party rescowed other.

15 Than cam in sir Safer and sir Segwarydes, bretherne to Palamydes; and there encountryrd sir Aggravayne with sir Safer, and sir Gaherys encountryrd with sir Segwarydes. So sir Safer smote downe sir Aggravayne. And sir Malegryne, a knyght of the castell, encountryrd with sir Uwayne le
 20 Blaunche Maynes, and smote downe sir Malegryne, that he had allmoste broke his necke.

(29) Than sir Bryan de les lies, and Grummor and Grummorson, knyghtes of the castell, encountryrde with sir Agglovale, and sir Tor smote them of the castell downe.

25 Than com in sir Carados of the Dolowres Towre, and sir Terquyne, knyghtes of the castell; and there encountryrd with hem sir Percivale de .Galys, and sir Lamerok, his brother; and there [encountryrd sir Percivale with sir Carados, and eyther brake their speres unto their handes, and than
 30 sir Terquyne with sir Lamerok, and eyther] smote downe othir, hors and man, to the erthe; and eythir partyes rescowed other and horsed them agayne.

And sir Arnolde and sir Gawter, knyghtes of the castell,

1 maner of *not in C* 5 Cwere done 18 C* doune Agrauayne syr Gawayns broder and sir Segwarydes syr Saferys broder And sir Malgryne 20 C maynys And there syre Vwayne gaf syr Malgryn a falle that 22 Cf Grummor grummorsum 23 encountryrde *not in Cf* 24 C* and syre Tor smote doun syr Gromere Gromorsonf to the erth W and smote 27-31 C syr Persyuale de galys & syr Launcelotf de galys that were two bretheren And there encountred syr Percyuale with syre Caradus and eyther brake their speres vnto their handes & thennesyr Turquyn with syre Lamerak and eyther of hem smote doune others hors and allef to the (*homoeoteleuton in W*) 31W ~~ech~~ othir {see note} 33 C Gautere

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encountird wyth sir Brandyles and sir Kay; and thes four knyghtes encountryrde myghtely, and brake their sperys to theyre handis.

Than com in sir Trystrams, sir Saduk, and sir Dynas, knyghtes of the castell; and there encountryrd with sir 5 140^v Trystrams sir Bedyvere, and sir Bedyvere was smyttyn to the erthe bothe horse and man. And sir Sadoke encountryrde wyth sir Petypace, and there sir Sadoke was overthrowyn. And there sir Uwayne les Avoutres smote downe sir Dynas the Senesciall. 10

Than com in sir Persaunte of Inde, a knyght of the castell; and there encountryrde with hym sir Launcelot du Lake, and there he smote sir Persaunte, horse and man, to the erthe. Than com in sir Pertolype frome the castell; and there encountryrde with hym sir Lyonell, and there sir 15 Pertolype, the Grene Knyght, smote downe sir Lyonell, brothir to sir Launcelot.

And all this was marked wyth noble herrodis, who bare hym beste, and their namys.

And than com into the felde sir Perimones, the Grene 20 Knyght, sir Persauntis brothir, that was a knyght of the castell; and he encountryrde wyth sir Ector de Marys, and aythir of hem smote other so harde that hir sperys and horsys and they felle to the erthe.

And than com in the Rede Knyght of the Rede Laundis 25 and sir Gareth, frome the castell; and there encountryrde with hem sir Bors de Gaynys and sir Bleobrys. And there the Rede Knyght and sir Bors smote other so harde that hir sperys braste and their horsys felle grovelynge to the erthe. Than sir Blamour brake another spere uppon sir Gareth; 30 but of that stroke sir Blamour felle to the erthe.

That sawe sir Galyhuddyn, and bade sir Gareth kepe hym; and sir Gareth smote hym anone to the erthe. Than sir Galyhud gate a spere to avenge his brother; and in the same wyse sir Gareth served hym. And in the same maner 35 sir Gareth served sir Dynadan and his brother, sir La Kote

6 Cand there 13 Csyr Persauntsf hors and man 14 in *not in C* 18C
marked by 23-4 C that bothe their horses and they felle 30 C brake his spere
31-a C erthe whan syr Galyhondyn (S Galyhoudyn) sawe that he bad sir gareth
35-6 C hym & sir Dynadan

Male Tayle, and sir Sagramoure le Desyrus, and sir Donyas le Saveage: all these knyghtes he bare hem downe with one speare.

141^r Whan kynge Anguyshauns of Irelande sawe sir Gareth
5 fare so, he mervayled what knyght he was; for at one tyme he semed grene, and another tyme at his gayne-commynge hym semed blewe. And thus at every course that he rode too and fro he chonged whyght to rede and blak, that there myght neyther kynge nother knyght have no redy cognys-
10 shauns of hym.

Than kynge Anguyshaunce, the kynge of Irelande, encountryrde with sir Gareth, and there sir Gareth smote hym frome his horse, sadyll and all. And than com in kynge Carados of Scotlonde, and sir Gareth smote hym downe
15 horse and man; and in the same wyse he served kynge Uryens of the londe of Gore. And than come in sir Bagdemagus, and sir Gareth smote hym downe horse and man to the erthe; and kynge Bagdemagus son, sir Mellyyagauns, brake a spere uppon sir Gareth myghtyly and knyghtly.

*o And than sir Galahalte the noble prynce cryed on hyght: 'Knyght with the many coloures, well haste thou justed! Now make the redy, that I may juste with the!'

Sir Gareth herde hym, and gate a grete spere, and so they encountryrde togydir, and there the prynce brake his spere;
25 but sir Gareth smote hym uppon the buff syde of the helme, that he reled here and there, and had falle downe had nat his men recoverde hym.

'So God me helpe,' seyde kynge Arthure, 'that same knyght with the many coloures is a good knyght/ Where-
30 fore the kynge called unto hym sir Launcelot and prayde hym to encountir with that knyght.

'Sir,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'I may well fynde in myne herte for to forbere hym as at this tyme, for he hath had travayle inowe this day. And whan a good knyght doth so well uppon
35 som day, hit is no good knyghtes parte to lette hym of his

i C Sagramor desirus
Anguins)

2 C All these he bare doun

4 C AguyssaOcef (F

5-6 C what he myght be J* one tyme semed

6-7 C ageyne

comyng he semed blewe

8-10 C chaunged his colour so that ther myghte

neyther kynge nor knyghte haue redy conguyssaunce (S congyssaunce) of hym

11 C syr Anguyssaunce

18 C Melyganusf (F Meleagans)

23 C he gat

25 C the lyfte syde

26 C he had falle

worshyp, and namely whan he seyth a good knyghte hath done so grete labur. For peraventure,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'his quarell is here this day, and peraventure he is beste beloved with this lady of all that bene here: for I se well he 141^T paynyth hym and enforsyth hym to do grete dedys. And 5 therefore,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'as for me, this day he shall have the honour: thoughe hit lay in my power to put hym frome hit, yet wolde I nat.'

Than whan this was done there was drawynge of swerdys, (30) and than there began a sore turnemente. And there dud 30 sir Lameroke mervaylus dedys of armys; and bytwyxe sir Lameroke and sir Ironsyde, that was the Rede Knyght of the Rede Laundys, there was a stronge batayle. And sir Palomydes and sir Bleobrys, betwyxte them was full grete batayle. And sir Gawayne and sir Trystramsmett; and there 15 sir Gawayne had the worse, for he pulled sir Gawayne frome his horse, and there he was longe uppon foote and defouled.

Than com in sir Launcelot, and he smote sir Terquyn, and he hym. And than cam therein sir Carados, his brother, and bothe at onys they assayed hym, and he as the moste 20 noblyst knyght of the worlde worshypfully fought with hem bothe and helde them hote, that all men wondred of the nobles of sir Launcelot.

And than com in sir Gareth, and knew that hit was sir Launcelot that fought with tho perelous knyghtes, and parted 25 them in sundir; and no stroke wolde he smyte sir Launcelot. That aspyed sir Launcelot and demed hit sholde be the good knyght sir Gareth.

And than sir Gareth rode here and there and smote on the ryght honde and on the lyffte honde, that all folkys 30 myght well aspye where that he rode. And by fortune he mette with his brother, sir Gawayne; and there he put hym to the wors, for he put of his helme. And so he served fyve or six knyghtes of the Rounde Table, that all men seyde he put hym in moste payne and beste he dud his dever. 35

For whan sir Trystrams behylde hym how he fyrste

1 good *not in C* 8 *CI* wold not 13-15 *C* & betwix syre Palamides & Bleoberys there was a strong batail 22 and helde them hote *not in Cf* 25-6 *C** with tho two peryllous knyghtes And thenne syr Gareth came with his good hors and hurtled hem in sonder 26 *C* smyte to syr Launcelot 32-3 *C* put syr Gawayne to the 35 *C* his deuoyr

justed and aftir fought so welle with a swerde, than he rode
 142^r unto sir Ironsyde and to sir Persaunte of Inde, and asked
 hem be their fayth what maner a knyght yondir knyght is
 that semyth in so many dyvers coloures. 'Truly mesemyth,'
 '5 seyde sir Trystrams, 'that he puttyth hymself in grete
 payne, for he never sesyth.'

'Wote nat ye what he is ?' seyde Ironsyde.

'No,' seyde sir Trystrams.

'Than shall ye knowe that this is he that lovyth the lady
 10 of the castell, and she hym agayne. And this is he that
 wanne me whan I beseged the lady of this castell; and this
 is he that wanne sir Persaunte of Inde and his three
 brethirne.'

'What is his name ?' seyde sir Trystrams, 'and of what
 15 bloode is he com ?'

'Sir, he was called in the courte of kynge Arthure Bew-
 maynes, but his ryght name is sir Gareth of Orkeney,
 brother unto sir Gawayne.'

'By my hede,' seyde sir Trystrams, 'he is a good knyght
 20 and a bygge man of armys: and yf he be yonge, he shall
 preve a full noble knyght.'

'Sir, he is but a divide,' he seyde, 'and of sir Launcelot
 he was made knyght.'

'Therefore is he mucche the bettir,' seyde sir Trystrams.
 25 And than sir Trystrams, sir Ironsyde, and sir Persaunte
 and his bretherne rode togydys for to helpe sir Gareth.
 And than there was many sadde strokis, and than sir Gareth
 rode oute on the tone syde to amende his helme.

Than seyde his dwarff, 'Take me your rynge, that ye lose
 30 hit nat whyle that ye drynke.' And so whan he had drunkyn
 he gate on hys helme, and egirly toke his horse and rode into
 the felde, and leffte his rynge with his dwarff: for the dwarf
 was glad the rynge was frome hym, for than he wyste well
 he sholde be knowyn.

35 And whan sir Gareth was in the felde, all folkys sawe
 hym well and playnly that he was in yealow colowres. And

3 C knyghte is yonder knyght 5 W hymselfe 10 C she gymf (S hym)
 11 Cwannne(s wanne) 12 is not in Cf 15-16 C come he was 19 Cf kni3t
 knyght 22 Sir not in C C child they all saide 24 C mykel the better
 24 sir not in C 26 C his broder 27 C there were gyuen many strong strokes
 32 C and the dwerf 35 C And thenne whan

there he raced of helmys and pulled downe knyghtes, that
 kyng Arthure had mervayle what knyght he was. For the
 kyng sawe by his horse that hit was the same knyght, 142*
 'but byfore he was in so many coloures, and now he is but (31)
 in one coloure, and that is yolowe.' 5

'Now goo,' seyde kyng Arthure unto dyvers -berowdys,
 and bede hem, 'Ryde aboute hym, and aspye yf ye can se what
 maner of knyght he is; for I have spered of many knyghtes
 this day that is uppon his party, and all sey that they knowe
 hym nought.' 10

But at the laste an herrowde rode nyghe sir Gareth as he
 coude, and there he sawe wryten aboute his helme in golde,
 seyng: 'This helme is sir Garethis of Orkeney.' Than
 the heroude cryed as he were woode, and many herowdys
 with hym: 'This is sir Gareth of Orkenay in the yealow 15
 arrays!'

Thereby all the kynges and knyghtes of kyng Arthurs
 party behelde and awayted; and than theypresed all knyghtes
 to beholde hym, and ever the herrowdys cryed and seyde:
 'This is sir Gareth, kyng Lottys son of Orkeney!' 20

And whan sir Gareth aspyed that he was discoverde, than
 he dowbled his strokys and smote downe there sir Sagra-
 moure and his brother sir Gawayne.

'A, brother,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'I wente ye wolde have
 smyttyn me.' 25

So whan he herde hym sey so, he thrange here and there,
 and so with grete payne he gate oute of the pres, and there
 he mette with his dwarff.

'A, boy!' seyde sir Gareth, 'thou haste begyled me fowle
 this day of my ryng. Geff hit me faste, that I may hyde my 30
 body withall!' And so he toke hit hym; and than they all
 wyst [not] where he was becom.

And sir Gawayne had in maner aspyed where sir Gareth

3 C by his heref 5 C colour that is yelowe 7 bede hem *not in C* yf
 ye can se *not in C* 8 of *not in C* C knyght S knyghte 9 C that ben vpon
 10-11 C hym not And so an heroude 13 seyng *not in C* 17-18 C thatf
 by all kynges and knyghtes of Arthurs beheld hym & awayted 18 knyghtes
not in C 19 and seyde *not in C* 20 C gareth of Orkeney kyng Lots sone
 22 there *not in C* 24 CO broder 24-6 C ye wolde not haue stryken me so
 whan (*see note*) 29 C O boye 30 C day that thou kepte my ryng
 Gyue it me anone ageyn that 32 JTwyste

rode, and than he rode aftir with all his myght. That aspyed sir Gareth and rode wyghtly into the castell. For all that sir Gawayne coude do, he wyste nat where he was becom.

And whan sir Gareth wyste that sir Gawayne was paste,
5 he asked the dwarff of beste counsaile.

'Sir/ seyde the dwarff, 'mesemyth hit were beste, now that ye ar ascaped frome spyyng, that ye sende my lady,
143^r dame Lyones of the castell, hir rynge.'

'Hit is well avysed,' seyde sir Gareth. 'Now have hit 10 here and bere hit her, and sey that I recommaunde me unto hir good grace; and sey hir I woll com whan I may, and pray hir to be trewe and faythfull to me as I woll be to hir.'

'Sir,' seyde the dwarff, 'hit shall be done as ye commaunde me.'

15 And so he rode his way and dud his erande unto the lady. Than seyde she, 'Where is my knyght, sir Gareth ?'

'Madam, he bade me sey that he wolde nat be longe frome you/

And so lyghtly the dwarff com agayne unto sir Gareth
20 that wolde full fayne have had a lodgyng, for he had nede to be reposed.

And than fell there a thundir and a rayne, as hevyn and erthe sholde go togydir. And sir Gareth was nat a lytyll wery, for of all that day he had but lytyll reste, nother his
25 horse nor he. So thus sir Gareth rode longe in that foreste untill nyght cam; and ever hit lyghtend and thundirde as hit had bene wylde.

At the laste by fortune he cam to a castell, and there he herde the waytis uppon the wallys.

(32) 30 Than sir Gareth rode unto the barbycan of the castell, and prayed the porter fayre to lette hym into the castell.

The porter answerde ungoodly agayne and sayde, 'Thou gettyste no lodgyng here.'

'Fayre sir, sey not so, for I am a knyght of kynge Arthurs;
35 and pray the lorde and the lady of this castell to gyff me herborow for the love of kynge Arthour.'

2-3 C rode lyghtely in to the forest* (cf. I. 25) that syr Gawayn wist not where
8 of the castell *not in C* 10 C to her *n-izC* and I pray her to be 14 me
not in C 16 C she said 17 C Madam said the dwerf he 25 C this syr
Gareth rode soo longe 27 C ben woode

Than the porter wente unto the douches and tolde hir how there was a knyght of kyng Arthures wolde have herborow.

'Latte hym in,' seyde the douches, 'for I woll se that knyght. And for kyng Arthurs love he shall nat be her- 5 borowles.'

Than she yode up into a towre over the gate witfr turchis ilyght. Whan sir Gareth saw that lyght he cryed on hyghe:

'Whethir thou be lorde or lady, gyaunte other champyon, I take no forse, so that I may have herborow as for this 10 nyght: and yf hit be so that I muste nedis fyght, spare me nat to-morne whan I have rested me; for bothe I and myne 143' horse be wery.'

'Sir knyght,' seyde the lady, 'ye speke knyghtly and boldely; but wete you well the lorde of this castell lovyth nat kyng 15 Arthure nother none of hys courte, for my lorde hath ever bene ayenste hym. And therefore thou were bettir nat to com within his castell; for and thou com in this nyght, thou muste com undir this fourme, that wheresomever thou mete hym, by fylde other by strete, thou muste yelde 20 the to hym as presonere.'

'Madam,' seyde sir Gareth, 'what is your lorde and what is his name?'

'Sir, my lordys name is the deuke de la Rouse.'

'Well, madam,' seyde sir Gareth, 'I shal promyse you in 25 what place I mete youre lorde I shall yelde me unto hym and to his good grace, with that I undirstonde that he woll do me no shame. And yf I undirstonde that he woll, I woll relece myself and I can with my spere and my swerde.'

'Ye say well,' seyde the deuches. 30

Than she lette the drawbrygge downe; and so he rode into the halle and there he alyght, and the horse was ladde into the stable. And in the halle he unarmed hym and seyde,

'Madam, I woll nat oute of this halle this nyght. And whan hit is daylyght, lat se who woll have ado with me; than 35 he shall fynde me redy.'

7-8 C with greete torche lyght 8 Cthat torche lyght 10 as for *not in C*
 13 C ben wery 14 C thou spekest 15 C wete thou 19 C in vnder
 suche fourme ao C mete my lord by stygh or by strete 28 C no harme
 CI wil I (S I wil) 32 C his hors 35 than *notin C*

Than was he sette unto souper and had many good
 dysshis. Than sir Gareth lysted well to ete, and full knyghtly
 he ete his mete and egirly. Also there was many a fayre
 lady by hym, and som seyde they never sawe a goodlyer man
 5 nothir so well of etyng. Than they made hym passyng
 good chere; and shortly, whan he had souped, his bedde was
 made there, and so he rested hym all nyght.

And in the morne he herde masse and brake hys faste,
 and toke his leve at the douches and at them all, and thanked
 10 hir goodly of hir lodgyng and of hir good chere. And than
 she asked hym his name.

'Truly, madam/ he seyde, 'my name is sir Gareth of
 144* Orkeney, and som men call me Bewmaynes.'

Than knew she well hit was the same knyght that faught
 15 for dame Lyonesse.

So sir Gareth departed and rode up unto a mountayne,
 and there mette hym a knyght, his name was sir Bendaleyne.
 And he seyde to sir Gareth,

'Thou shalt nat passe this way, for other thou shalt juste
 20 with me othir ellys be my presonere.'

'Than woll I juste,' seyde sir Gareth. And so they lette
 their horsis ren, and there sir Gareth smote hym thorowoute
 the body, and sir Bendelayne rode forth to his castell there
 besyde, and there dyed.

25 So sir Gareth wolde have rested hym fayne. So hit happed
 hym to com to sir Bendalaynes castell. Than his knyghtys
 and servauntys aspyed that hit was he that had slayne there
 lorde. Than they armed twenty good men and com oute
 and assayed sir Gareth. And so he had no spere, but his
 30 swerde, and so he put his shyld afore hym, and there they
 brake ten sperys uppon hym. And they assayed hym
 passyngly sore, but ever sir Gareth defended hym as a
 knyght.

(33) So whan they sawe they myght nat overcom hym they
 35 rode frome hym, and toke their councyle to sle his horse.
 And so they cam in uppon sir Gareth, and so with hir sperys

2 full *not in C* 11-13 C asked gymf his name Madame he saide truly my name
 is Gareth of Orkeney 17 CBendelayne 18 he *notinC* zzCThenme wille
 I 25-6 Crested hym and he cam rydyng to Bendalaynis castel 28 Coute
 S out 31 C assailed hemf 36 hir *not in C*

they slewe his horse, and than they assayled hym harde. But whan he was on foote there was none that he raught but he gaff hym such a buffette that he dud never recover. So he slew hem by one and one tyll they were but four; and there they fledde. And sir Gareth toke a good horse that 5 was one of theires and rode his way. Than he rode a grete pace tyll that he cam to a castell, and there he herde muche mournyng of ladyes arid jantyllwomen. So at the laste there cam by hym a payge. Than he asked of hym,

'What noyse is this that I hyre within this castell?' 10

'Sir knyght,' seyde the payge, 'here be within this castell thirty ladyes, and all they be wydowys. For here is a knyght 144* that waytyth dayly uppon this castell, and he is callyd the Browne Knyght wythoute Pyte\ and he is the perelust knyght that now lyvyth. And therefore, sir,' seyde the 15 payge, 'I rede you fle.'

'Nay,' seyde sir Gareth, 'I woll nat fle, though thou be aferde of hym.'

Than the payge saw where cam the Browne Knyght, and sayde, 'Lo yondir he commyth!' 20

'Lat me dele with hym,' seyde sir Gareth. And whan aythir of othir had a syghte, they let theire horsis ren, and the Browne Knyght brake his spere, and sir Gareth smote hym thorow the body, that he overthrewe to the grounde sterke dede. So sir Gareth rode into the castell and prayde the ladyes 25 that he myght repose hym.

'Alas!' seyde the ladyes, 'ye may nat be lodged here.'

'Yes, hardely, make hym good chere,' seyde the payge, 'for this knyght hath slayne your enemy.'

Than they all made hym good chere as lay in theire power. 30 But wete you well they made hym good chere, for they myght none other do, for they were but poore.

And so on the morne he wente to masse and there he sawe the thirty ladyes knele and lay grovelyng uppon dyverse toumbis, makynge grete dole and sorow. Than sir Gareth 35 knew well that in tho tombis lay their lordys.

8 at the laste *not in C* 9-10 C page what noyse is this said syr gareth that I here
 11 C here ben 19-20 C knyghte loo said the page yonder 23 C thorou oute
 28 Yes hardely *not in C* 28-30 W {sidenote}: How sir Gareth slew the Browne
 Knyght 28 P omits sig. p iiiii 32 C otherwyse doo

'Fayre ladyes,' seyde sir Gareth, 'ye rnuste at the next feste be at the courte of kynge Arthure, and sey that I, sir Gareth, sente you thydir.'

'Sir, we shall do your commaundemente,' seyde the ladyes.

5 So he departed; and by fortune he cam to a mountayne, and there he founde a goodly knyght that bade hym,' Abyde, sir knyght, and juste with me !'

'What ar ye ?' seyde sir Gareth.

'My name is,' he seyde, 'called deuke de la Rowse.'

10 'A, sir, ye ar the same knyght that I lodged onys within your castell, and there I made promyse unto youre lady that 1 sholde yelde me to you.'

'A,' seyde the deuke, 'arte thou that proude knyght that profyrde to fyght with my knyghtes ? Therefore make the 15 redy, for I woll have ado wyth you.'

So they let their horsis renne, and there sir Gareth smote the deuke downe frome his horse: but the deuke lyghtly 145^r avoyded his horse and dressed his shyld and drew his swerde, and bade sir Gareth alyght and fyght with hym.

20 So he dud alyght, and they dud grete batayle togedyrs more than an houre, and eythir hurte other full sore. But at the laste sir Gareth gathe the deuke to the erthe, and wolde have slayne hym; and than he yelded hym.

'Than muste ye go,' seyde sir Gareth, 'unto kynge 25 Arthure, my lorde, at the next hyghe feste, and sey that I, sir Gareth, sente you thydir.'

'We shall do this,' seyde the deuke, 'and I woll do you omage and feaute wyth an hondredsom of knyghtes with me, and all the dayes of my lyff to do you servyse where ye 30 woll commaunde me.'

(34) So the deuke departed, and sir Gareth stode there alone. And as he stode he sey an armed knyght on horsebak commynge towarde hym. Than sir Gareth mownted uppon horsebak, and so withoute ony wordis they ran togedir as

2 C feeste of Pentecost 3-4 C thyder we shal doo this said the ladyes 5 C monntayne (S mountayne) 9 C is said he the duke 14 C proferest
21 But *not in C* 23 C yelded hym to hym 24-5 Csyr Arthur 26-7 C
sir Gareth of Orkeney sente you vnto hym hit shal be done said the duke 28 C an
C kny^tes 31-2 C alone and there he sawe 32 on horsebak *not in C*
33-p. 357, 1 C* Gareth toke the dukes shelde and mounted vpon horsbak and soo
withoute bydyng they ranne to gyder as it had ben the thonder

thundir. And there that knyght hurte sir Gareth undir the syde with his spere, and than they alyght and drewe there swerdys and gaff grete strokys, that the bloode trayled downe to the grounde; and so they fought two owres.

So at the laste there com the damesell Lyonette that som 5 men calle the damesell Savyage. And she com rydyngge uppon an ambelynge mule, and there she cryed all on hygh: 'Sir Gawayne! leve thy fyghtyngge with thy brothir, sir Gareth!' And whan he herde hir sey so, he threwe away his shyld and his swerde, and ran to sir Gareth and toke 10 hym in his armys, and sytthen kneled downe and asked hym mercy.

'What ar ye,' seyde sir Gareth, 'that ryght now were so stronge and so myghty, and now so sodeynly is yelde to me?'

'A, sir Gareth, I am your brother, sir Gawayne, that for 15 youre sake have had grete laboure and travayle.'

Than sir Gareth unlaced hys helme, and kneled downe to hym and asked hym mercy. Than they arose bothe, and braced eythir othir in there armys, and wepte a grete whyle or they myght speke; and eythir of them gaff other the 20 pryse of the batayle, and there were many kynde wordys betwene them.

'Alas! my fayre brother,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'I ought of 145^v ryght to worshyp you, and ye were nat my brother, for ye have worshipte kynge Arthure and all his courte, for ye 25 have sente mo worshypfull knyghtes this twelve-monthe than fyve the beste of the Rounde Table hath done excepte sir Launcelot.'

Than cam the lady Savyaige, that was the lady Lyonet that rode with sir Gareth so long; and there she dud staunche 30 sir Gareths woundis and sir Gawaynes.

'Now what woll ye do?' seyde the damesell Savyaige. 'Mesemyth hit were beste that kynge Arthure had wetyngge of you bothe: for your horsis ar so brused that they may not beare.'

35

'Now, fayre damesell,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'I pray you
 3 downe *not in C* \$C ther S there 5-6 C Lynet... saueage 8 C syr
 Gawayne syr Gawayne 14-15 Csodenly yelde you tome O Gareth 16-17 C
 grete sorou and labour Thenne 18-19 C rose both and enbraced 23-4 C
 gawayn perde I owe of ryghte 27 C than syxe the best 29, 32 C the
 damoyssel saueage 29 C Lynet 33 C me semeth that it were wel do Jt Arthur

ryde unto my lorde, myne unkle kyng Arthure, and tell hym what adventure is betydde me here; and I suppose he woll nat tary longe.'

Than she toke hir mule and lyghtly she rode to kyng
 5 Arthure, that was but two myle thens. And whan she had tolde hir tydynge to the kyng, the kyng bade, 'Gete me a palefreyP And whan he was on horsebak he bade the lordys and ladyes com aftir and they wolde; and there was sadelyng and brydelyng of quenys and prynces horsis, and
 10 well was he that sonne myght be redy.

So whan the kyng cam there, he saw sir Gawayne and sir Gareth sitt uppon a lytyll hyllys syde. Than the kyng avoyded his horse, and whan he cam nye to sir Gareth he wolde a spokyn and myght nat, and therewyth he sanke
 15 downe in a sowghe for gladnesse.

And so they sterte unto their uncle and requyred hym of his good grace to be of good comforte. Wete you well the kyng made grete joy! And many a peteuous complaynte he made to sir Gareth, and ever he wepte as he had bene
 20 a chylde.

So with this com his modir, the quene of Orkeney, dame Morgawse, and whan she saw sir Gareth redyly in the vysage she myght nat wepe, but sodeynly felle downe in
 146^r a sowne and lay there a grete whyle lyke as she had bene
 25 dede. And than sir Gareth recomforted hir in suche wyse that she recovirde and made good chere.

Than the kyng commaunded that all maner of knyghtes that were undir his obeysaunce sholde make their lodgyng ryght there, for the love of his two newewys. And so hit
 30 was done, and all maner of purveyars purveyde, that there lacked nothyng that myght be gotyn for golde nother sylver, nothir of wylde nor tame.

And than by the meanys of the damesell Saveaige sir Gawayne and sir Gareth were heled of their woundys; and

2 Cadventure is to me betyd here 4 C lyghtly she came to 6-7 C told
 hym tydynge the kyng bad gete hym a palfrey 7 C was vpon his bak he
 badde 8 C after who that wold 9-10 C quenes horses and prynces horses
 & wel was hym that soonest 11 C there as they were he sawe 13 to not
 in C 14 C wold haue spoken but he myghte not . 20-1 C chylde With that
 22 CMorgause 25 C recomforted his moder 30 C* of purveaunce
 31-3 C gotten of tame nor wylde for gold or sylver And

there they suggeoured eyght dayes. Than seyde kyng
Arthure unto the damesell Saveaige,

'I mervayle that youre sistyr, dame Lyonesse, comyth
nat hydir to me; and in especiall that she commyth nat to
vysyte hir knyght, my nevewe, sir Gareth, that hath had so
muche travayle for hir love.'

'My lorde,' seyde the damesell Lyonette, 'ye muste of
your good grace holde hir excused, for she knowyth nat that
my lorde sir Gareth is here.'

'Go ye than for hir,' seyde kyng Arthure, 'that we may
be apoynted what is beste to done accordynge to the plesure
of my nevewe.'

'Sir,' seyde the damesell, 'hit shall be do.' And so she
rode unto hir sistir, and as lyghtly as she myght make hir
redy she cam on the morne with hir brother, sir Grynga-
mour, and with hir fourty knyghtes.

And so whan she was com she had all the chere that
myght be done bothe of the kyng and of many other
knyghtes and also quenys. And amonge all thes ladyes she
was named the fayryst and pyereles. Than whan sir Gareth
mette with hir, there was many a goodly loke and goodly
wordys, that all men of worship had joy to beholde them.

Than cam kyng Arthure and many othir kynges, and
dame Gwenyvere and quene Morgawse, his modir; and
there the kyng asked his nevew, sir Gareth, whether he
wolde have this lady as peramour, other ellys to have hir to
his wyff.

'My lorde, wete you well that I love hir abovyn all ladyes
lyvynges.'

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'Now, fayre lady,' sayde kyng Arthure, 'what sey ye ?'

'My moste noble kyng,' seyde dame Lyonesse, 'wete
you well that my lorde, sir Gareth, ys to me more lever to
have and welde as my husbonde than ony kyng other prynce
that is crystyned; and if I may nat have hym, I promyse
you I woll never have none. For, my lorde Arthure,' seyde
dame Lyonesse, 'wete you well he is my fyrste love, and he

3 C Lyones 4 C not here to 7 C Lynet 10 ye *not in C* 14-15 C
made her redy & she 18-19 R many other kynges and quenys P many other
(kynges and quenys *omitted*) 20-1 Cf Gawayn sawe her 24-5 C Gweneuer
& the quene of Orkeney And there 26 C peramour or to haue her 31 My
not in C C Lyones

shall be the laste; and yf ye woll suffir hym to have his wyll and fre choyse, I dare say he woll have me.'

'That is trouthe,' seyde sir Gareth, 'and I have nat you and welde you as my wyff, there shall never lady nother
5 jantyllwoman rejoyse me.'

'What, newewe?' seyde the kynge, 'Is the wynde in that dore ? For wete you well I wolde nat for the stynte [of] my crowne to be causer to withdraw your hertys. And wete you well ye can nat love so well but I shall rather encrece hyt to than discrece hit; and also ye shall have my love and my lordeshyp in the uttirmuste wyse that may lye in my power/ And in the same wyse seyde sir Garethys modir.

So anone there was made a provision for the day of maryaige, and by the kynges advyse hit was provyded that hit
15 sholde be at Mychaelmasse folowyng, at Kyng Kenadowne, by the seesyde; for there is a plenteuouse contrey. And so hit was cryed in all the placis thorow the realme.

And than sir Gareth sente his somons to all tho knyghtes and ladyes that he had wonne in batayle tofore, that they sholde be
20 at his day of maryage at Kyng Kenadowne, by the seesyde.

And than dame Lyonesse and the damesell Lyonet wyth sir Gryngamour rode to their castell, and a goodly and a ryche rynge she gaff to sir Gareth, and he gaff hir another. And kynge Arthure gaff hir a ryche bye of golde, and so
25 she departed.

147^r And kynge Arthure and his felyshyp rode towarde Kyng Kenadowne; and sir Gareth brought his lady on the way, and so cam to the kynge agayne, and rode wyth hym. Lorde, the grete chere that sir Launcelot made of sir Gareth
30 and he of hym! For there was no knyght that sir Gareth loved so well as he dud sir Launcelot; and ever for the moste party he wolde ever be in sir Launcelottis company.

For evir aftir sir Gareth had aspyed sir Gawaynes con-
ductions, he wythdrewe hymself fro his brother sir Gawaynes
35 felyship, for he was evir vengeable, and where he hated he wolde be avenged with murther: and that hated sir Gareth.

4 C weld not you 9 Cf you con not 13 C thenne there was 15, 27 C
kynkenadon 16 C is a (a *not in S*) plentyful 20 C kynkenadon by the
sandes 21 CLyones ... Lynet 24 C ryche bee 30 C there was neuer no
32 C he wolde be 33 Cfor after

So hit drew faste to Mychaelmas, that hydir cam the lady (36)
dame Lyonesse, the lady of the Castell Perelus, and hir
sister, the damesell Lyonet, with sir Gryngamour, her
brother, with hem; for he had the conduyte of thes ladyes.
And there they were lodged at the devyse of kyng Arthure. 5

And uppon Myghelmas day the bysshop of Caunturbyry
made the weddyng betwene sir Gareth and dame Lyonesse
with grete solempnyte\ And kyng Arthure made sir
Gaherys to wedde the damesell Saveage, dame Lyonet.
And sir Aggravayne kyng Arthure made to wedde dame 10
Lyonesseis neese, a fayre lady; hir name was dame Lawrell.

And so whan this solempnyte* was done, than com in
the Grene Knyght, sir Pertolope, with thirty knyghtes; and
there he dud omage and feaute* to sir Gareth, and all thes
knyghtes to holde of hym for evermore. Also sir Pertolope 15
seyde,

'I pray you that at this feste I may be your chambirlyne.'

'With good wyll,' seyde sir Gareth, 'syth hit lyke you to
take so symple an offyce.'

Than com in the Rede Knyght wyth three score knyghtes 20
with hym, and dud to sir Gareth omage and feaute, and all
tho knyghtes to holde of hym for evermore. And than sir
Perimones prayde sir Gareth to graunte hym to be his chyeff
butler at the hygh feste. 'I woll well,' seyde sir Gareth, 147*
'that ye have this offyce and hit were bettir.' 25

Than com in sir Persaunte of Inde wyth an hondred
knyghtes with hym, and there he dud omage and feaute,
and all his knyghtes sholde do hym servyse and holde their
londis of hym for evir. And there he prayde sir Gareth to
make hym his sewear cheyff at that hyghe feste. 'I woll 30
well/ seyde sir Gareth, 'that ye have hit and hit were bettir.'

Than com in the deuke de la Rouse with an hondred
knyghtes with hym; and there he dud omage and feaute*
to sir Gareth, and so to holde there londis of hym for ever-

1-2 Cand thyder came dame Lyones 1-3 W (sidenote)-. The weddyng of
sir Gareth and of sir Aggravayne his brothir 3 C Lynet 6 C Caunterbury
8 sir not in C 9-11 C saueage that was dame Lynet and kyng Arthur made syr
Agrauayne to wedde dame Lyones nees 11 C Laurel 12 Csolemnacion
18 Ca good Cit lyketh 19 C onf offyce 22-3 C this syr Perymonyes
24 C that hyghe 26 C Persant 30 C at the feest I will (5 wil) 32 C
dukdef la rowse 34-p- 362, 1 C for euer And

more. And he requyred sir Gareth that he myght serve hym of the wyne that day of the hyghe feste. 'I woll well,' seyde sir Gareth, 'and hit were bettir.'

Than cam the Rede Knyght of the Rede Laundis that 5
hyght sir Ironsyde, and he brought with hym three hondred knyghtes; and there he dud omage and feaute, and all tho knyghtes to holde their londys of hym for ever. And than he asked of sir Gareth to be his kerver. 'I woll well,' seyde sir Gareth, 'and hit please you.'

10 Than com into the courte thirty ladyes, and all they semed wydows; and tho ladyes brought with hem many fayre jantyllwomen, and all they kneled downe at onys unto kynge Arthure and unto sir Gareth; and there all tho ladyes tolde the kynge how that sir Gareth had delyverde them fro the 15
Dolorous Towre, and slew the Browne Knyght withoute Pyte: 'and therefore all we and oure ayres for evermore woll do omage unto sir Gareth of Orkeney.*

So than the kynges, quenys, pryncis, erlys, barouns, and many bolde knyghtes wente to mete; and well may ye wete 20
that there was all maner of plente* and all maner revels and game, with all maner of mynstralsy that was used tho dayes.

Also there was grete justys three dayes, but the kynge wolde nat suffir sir Gareth to juste, because of his new bryde; for, as the Freynsh boke seyth, that dame Lyonesse desyred 148^r 25
of the kynge that none that were wedded sholde juste at that feste.

So the fyrste day there justed sir Lameroke de Gelys, for he [o]verthrewe thirty knyghtes and dud passyng mervelus dedis of armys. And than kynge Arthure made sir Per- 30
saunte and his bretherne knyghtes off) the Rounde Table to their lyvys ende, and gaff hem grete landys.

Also the secunde day there justed sir Trystrams beste, and he overthrew forty knyghtes, and dud there mervelus dedis of armys. And there kynge Arthure made sir Ironsyde, 35
that was the Rede Knyght of the Rede Laundys, a knyght of the Table Rounde to his lyvis ende, and gaff hym grete landis.

2 C day at that feest 4 C came in 11 C tho thyrtty ladyes 14 had
not in C 18 C prynces & erlys 20-1 C there were al maner (S manere) of
mete plentiuously alle manere rulesf and games with al manere of mynstralsy
27 C lamerak de Galys 28 W euerthrewe C ouerthrewe C passyng
merueillously 30 W ot the rounde C of the round

Than the thirde day there justed sir Launcelot, and he overthrew fyfty knyghtes and dud many dedis of armys, that all men wondird. And there kynge Arthure made the deuke de la Rowse a knyght of the Table Rounde to his lyvys ende, and gaff hym grete londis to spende. 5

But whan this justis was done, sir Lameroke and sir Trystrams departed suddeynly and wolde nat be knowyn; for the whych kyng Arthure and all the courte was sore dysplesid.

And so they helde the courte fourty dayes with grete w solempnyte\ And thus sir Gareth of Orkeney was a noble knyght, that wedded dame Lyonesse of the Castell Parelus. And also sir Gaheris wedded her sistir, dame Lyonette, that was called the damesell Saveaige. And sir Aggravayne wedded dame Lawrell, a fayre lady wyth grete and myghty 15 londys, wyth grete ryches igyffyn wyth them, that ryally they myght lyve tyll their lyvis ende.

AND I PRAY YOU ALL THAT REDYTH THIS TALE TO PRAY FOR HYM THAT THIS WROTE, THAT GOD SENDE HYM GOOD DELYVERAUNCE SONE AND HASTELY. AMEN. 20

HERE ENDYTH THE TALE OF SIR GARETH OF ORKENEY.

1 C launcelot du lake 2 C many merueyllous dedes 3 C wondred on hym 7 C knowmf 11-12 C And this syr Gareth was a noble knyghte and a wel rulyd and fayr langaged Thus endeth this tale of syr Gareth of Orkeney that wedded dame Lyones of the castel peryllous 13-14 C Lynet... saueage 15-21 C Laurel a fayr lady and grete and myghty landes with grete rychesse gaf with them kyng Arthur that ryally they myght lyue tyl their lyues ende Here foloweth the viii book the which is the first book of sir Tristram de Lyones & who was his fader 8c his moder & hou he was borne and fosteryd And how he was made knyghte

THE BOOK
OF
SIR TRISTRAM DE LYONES

*[Winchester MS., f. I48^v-346^v;
Caxton, Books FIII-XII]*

ISODE THE FAIR

*[Wmckester MS., ff. 14g>-i8i'i
Caxton, Book VIII, eh. 1-37]*

CAXTON'S RUBRICS

1. How syr Trystram de Lyones was borne and how his moder deyed at his byrthe, wherfore she named hym Tristram.
2. How the stepmoder of syr Trystram had ordeyned poyson for to have poysened syr Trystram.
3. How syr Trystram was sente into Fraunce and had one to governe hym named Governayle, and how he lernyd to harpe, hawke, and hunte.
4. How syr Marhaus came out of Irelande for to aske trewage of Cornewayle, or ellys he wold fyght therfor.*
5. How Trystram enterprysed the bataylle to fyght for the trewage of Cornwayl and how he was made knyght.
6. How syr Trystram arryved into the ilond for to furnysshe the bataylle with syr Marhaus.
7. Hoow syr Tristram faught ayenst syr Marhaus and achyved his batayl, and how syr Marhaus fledde to his shyppe.
8. How syr Marhaus after that he was arryved in Irelande dyed of the stroke that syr Trystram had gyven to hym, and how Trystram was hurte.
9. How syr Trystram was put to the kepyng of La Bele Ysoude fyrst to be helyd of hys wounde.
10. How syr Trystram wanne the degree at a tournoyment in Irelande, and there made Palomydes to bere no harnoys in a yere.
11. How the quene espyed that syr Tristram had slayn hir broder syr Marhaus by his swerde and in what jeopardy he was.
12. How syr Trystram departed fro the kyng and La Bele Isoude out of Irelande for to come into Cornewayl.
13. How syr Trystram and kyng Marke hurted eche other for the lovef of a knyghtes wyf.
14. How syr Trystram laye wyth the lady, and how her husbond faught wyth syr Trystram.
15. How syr Bleoberis demaunded the fayrest lady in kyng Marks court, whom he toke awaye, and how he was foughten with.
16. How syr Trystram faught wyth two knyghtes of the Rounde Table.
17. How syr Tristram** faught with syr Bleoberis for a lady, and how the lady was put to choyse to whome she wold goo.
18. How the lady forsoke syr Tristram and abode with syr Bleoberis, and how she desyred to goo to hyr husbond.
19. How kyng Mark sent syr Trystram for La Beale Isoude toward Ireland, and how by fortune he arryved into Englund.

* S therefor fC lone S loue ** C Tristcum

20. How kyng Anguysshe of Irelande was somoned to come to kyng Arthurs courte for treason.
21. How syr Trystram rescowed a chylde fro a knyght, and how Governayle tolde hym* of kyng Anguysshe.
22. How syr Trystram faught for syr Anguysshe and overcame hys adversarye, and how his adversarye wold never yelde hym.
23. How syr Blamor desyred Trystram to slee hym, and how syr Tristram spared hym, and how they took appoyntement.
24. How syr Tristram demaunded La Bele Isoude for kynge Mark, and how syr Trystram and Isoude dronken the love drynke.
25. How syr Tristram and Isoude were in pryson, and how he faughte for hir beaute" and smote of another ladyes hede.
26. How syr Trystram faught wyth syr Breunor and atte laste smote of his hede.
27. How syr Galahad fought wyth syr Tristram, and how syr Tristram yelded hym and promysed to felaushyp with Lancelot.
28. How syr Launcelot mette with syr Carados beryng awaye sir Gawayn, and of the rescows of syr Gawayn.
29. Of the weddyng of kyng Marke to La Beale Isoude, and of Brangwayn, hyr mayde, and of Palamydes.
30. How Palamydes demaunded quene Isoude, and how Lambegus rode after to rescowe hyr, and of th' escape of Isoude.
31. How syr Trystram rode after Palamydes and how he fonde hym and faught wyth hym, and by the moyne of Isoude the batayl seced.
32. How syr Trystram brought quene Isoude home, and of the debate of kyng Marke and syr Trystram.
33. How syr Lamerok justed wyth thirty knyghtes, and syr Tristram atte requeste of kyng Mark smote his hors down.
34. How syr Lamerok sente an home to kyng Marke in despyte of syr Trystram, and how syr Trystram was dryven into a chapel.
35. How syr Tristram was holpen by his men, and of quene Isoude which was put in a lazarcotef, and how Tristram was hurt.
36. How syr Trystram served in warre the kyng Howel of Brytayne and slewe hys adversarye in the felde.
37. How syr Suppynabyles tolde syr Trystram how he was deffamed in the courte of kyng Arthur.

HERE BEGYNNYTH THE FYRSTE BOKE OF SYR TRYSTRAMS DE
LYONES, AND WHO WAS HIS FADIR AND HYS MODYR, AND HOW
HE WAS BORNE AND FOSTYRD, AND HOW HE WAS MADE KNYGHT
OF KYNGE MARKE OF CORNUAYLE

THERE was a kyng that hyght Melyodas, and he was 5 (i)
lorde of the contrey of Lyones. And this Melyodas
was a lykly knyght as ony was that tyme lyvyng. And by
fortune he wedded kyng Markis sister of Cornuayle, and
she was called Elyzabeth, that was called bothe good and
fayre. 10

And at that tyme kyng Arthure regned, and he was hole
kyng of Ingelonde, Walys, Scotlonde, and of many othir
realmys. Howbehit there were many kynges that were
lordys of many contreyes, but all they helde their londys of
kyng Arthure; for in Walys were two kynges, and in the 15
Northe were many kynges, and in Cornuayle and in the
Weste were two kynges; also in Irelande were two or three
kynges, and all were undir the obeysaunce of kyng Arthure;
so was the kyng of Fraunce and the kyng of Bretayne, and
all the lordshyppis unto Roome. 20

So whan this kyng Melyodas had bene with his wyff,
wythin a whyle she wexed grete with chylde. And she was
a full meke lady, and well she loved hir lorde and he hir
agayne, so there was grete joy betwyxte hem.

So there was a lady in that contrey that had loved kyng 25
Melyodas longe, and by no meane she never cowde gete
his love. Therefore she let ordayne uppon a day as kyng
Melyodas rode an-huntyng, for he was a grete chacer of
dere, and there by enchauntemente she made hym chace an
harte by hymself alone tyll that he com to an olde castell, 30
and there anone he was takyn presoner by the lady that
loved hym.

Whan Elyzabeth, kyng Melyodas his wyff, myssed hir 149^r
lorde she was nyghe oute of hir wytte, and also, as grete with
chylde as she was, she toke a jantylwoman with hir and ran 35
into the foreste suddeynly to seke hir lorde. And whan she

was farre in the foreste she myght no farther, but ryght there she gan to travayle faste of hir chylde, and she had many grymly throwys, but hir jantyllwoman halpe hir all that she myght.

5 And so by myracle of Oure Lady of Hevyn she was delyverde with grete paynes, but she had takyn suche colde for the defaute of helpe that the depe draughtys of deth toke hir, that nedys she muste dye and departe oute of thys worlde; there was none othir boote. Whan this quene
10 Elyzabeth saw that she myght nat ascape she made grete dole and seyde unto hir jantyllwoman,

'Whan ye se my lorde, kynge Melyodas, recommaunde me unto hym and tell hym what paynes I endure here for his love, and how I muste dye here for his sake for defawte
15 of good helpe, and lat hym wete that I am full sory to departe oute of this worlde fro hym. Therefore pray hym to be frende to my soule. Now lat me se my lytyll chylde for whom I have had all this sorrow.'

And whan she sye hym she seyde thus: 'A, my lytyll son,
20 thou haste murderd thy modir! And therefore I suppose thou that arte a murtherer so yonge, thow arte full lykly to be a manly man in thyne ayge; and bycause I shall dye of the byrth of the, I charge my jantyllwoman that she pray my lorde, the kynge Melyodas, that whan he is crystened let
25 calle hym Trystrams, that is as muche to say as a sorowfull byrth.'

And therewith the quene gaff up the goste and dyed. Than the jantyllwoman leyde hir undir an umbir of a grete tre, and than she lapped the chylde as well as she myght fro colde.
30 Ryght so there cam the barowns of kynge Melyodas folowyng aftir the quene. And whan they sye that she was dede and undirstode none othir but that the kynge was J^v destroyed, than sertayne of them wolde have slayne the chylde bycause they wolde have bene lordys of that contrey of
35 Lyonesse. But than, thorow the fayre speche of the jantyllwoman and by the meanys that she made, the moste party

1-2 C ferther for she byganne
was none other bote thenne she made
the gentylwoman that thou pray
not in C

32 that not in C

3 but not in C
14 C gis|
29 C for cold

10 C sawe that ther
love 23 CI charge
30 of kynge Melyodas

of the barowns wolde nat assente thereto. But than they latte cary home the dede quene and muche sorow was made for hir.

Than this meanewhyle Merlyon had delyverde kynge Melyodas oute of preson on the morne aftir his quene was dede. And so whan the kynge was com home the moste 5 party of the barowns made grete joy, but the sorow-that the kynge made for his quene there myght no tonge tell. So than the kynge let entyre hir rychely, and aftir he let crystyn his chylde as his wyff had commaunded byfore hir deth. And than he lette calle hym Trystrams, 'the sorowfull-borne 10 chylde.'

Than kynge Melyodas endured aftir that seven yere withoute a wyff, and all this tyme Trystrams was fostred well. Than hit befelle that the kynge Melyodas wedded kynge Howellys of Bretaynes doughter, and anone she had 15 chyldirne by kynge Melyodas. Than was she hevy and wroth that hir chyldirne sholde nat rejoyse the contrey of Lyonesse, wherefore this quene ordayned for to poyson yong Trystrams.

So at the laste she let poyson be putt in a pees of sylver 20 in the chambir where Trystrams and hir chyldir were togydys, unto that entente that whan Trystrams were thirsty he sholde drynke that drynke. And so hit felle uppon a day the quenys son, as he was in that chambir, aspyed the pyese with poyson, and he wente hit had bene good drynke; 25 and because the chylde was thirsty he toke the pyese with poyson and dranke rrely, and therewith the chylde suddaynly braste and was dede.

So whan the quene of MeKyod as wyste of the deth of hir sone, wete you well that she was hevy; but yet the kynge 30 undirstood nothyng of hir treson. Notwythstondyng the quene wolde not leve by this, but effte she lette ordeyne more poyson and putt hit in a pyese. And by fortune kyng 150^r Mel'yod¹as, hir husbonde, founde the pyese with wyne wherein was the poyson, and as he that was thirstelew toke the 35 pyse for to drynke; and as he wolde have drunken thereof the

1 CAndthenne 2 Cmochedole 13 Cwas nourysshed ao at
the laste not inC 21 C where as 29 Cf quene Melyodas* W Melodyas
C* Melyodas F Meliadus 32 Cleue this 35 W Melodyas {see note} 29
35 Candhethatwasmochethursty 36 Cdrynketheroute

quene aspyed hym and ran unto hym and pulde the pyse
from hym sodeynly. The kynge mervayled of hir why she
ded so and remembred hym suddaynly how hir son was
slayne with poyson. And than he toke hir by the honde and
5 sayde,

'Thou false traytours! Thou shalt telle me what maner
of drynke this is, other ellys I shall sle the!' And therewith
he pulde oute his swerde and sware a grete othe that he
sholde sle hir but yf she tolde hym the trouthe.

10 'A! mercy, my lorde,' she seyde, 'and I shall telle you all.'
And than she tolde hym why she wolde have slayne Trys-
trams, because her chyldir sholde rejoyse his londe.

'Well,' seyde the Kynge, 'and therefore ye shall have the
lawe.' And so she was dampned by the assente of the
15 barownes to be brente.

And ryght as she was at the fyre to take hir excussion
this same yonge Trystrams kneled byfore his fadir kynge
Melyodas and besought hym to gyff hym a done.

'I woll well,' seyde the kynge.

20 Than seyde yonge Trystrams, 'Geff me the lyff of your
quene, my stepmodir.'

'That is unryghtfully asked,' seyde the kynge Melyodas,
'for thou oughte of ryght to hate hir, for she wolde have
slayne the with poyson, and for thy sake moste is my cause
25 that she sholde be dede,'

'Sir,' seyde Trystrams, 'as for that, I beseche you of your
mercy that ye woll forgyff hir. And as for my parte, God
forgyff hir and I do. And hit lyked so muche your hyghe-
nesse to graunte me my boone, for Goddis love I requyre you
30 holde your promyse.'

'Sytthen hit is so/ seyde the kynge, 'I woll that ye have
hir lyff,' and sayde: 'I gyff hir you, and go ye to the fyre and
take hir and do with hir what ye woll.'

150^T So this sir Trystramys wente to the fyre, and by the
35 commaundemente of the kynge delyverde hir from the deth.
But afftir that kynge MeKyod[^]as wolde never have ado with

2 of hir *not in C* 3-4 C hym how her sone was sodenly slayne 13 C
kynge Melyodas 15 C brent and thenne was ther made a grete fyre 17 this
same *not in C* his fadir *not in C* 18 C hym a bone 24 C with that poy-
son and she myghte haue hadde her wille And for 27 C forgyue hit her
32 C lyf thenne said the kynge I gyue her to you

hir as at bedde and at bourde. But by the meanys of yonge Trystrams he made the kyng and hir accorded, but than the kyng wolde nat suffir yonge Trystrams to abyde but lytyll in his courte.

And than he lett ordayne a jantyllman that was well 5 (3) lerned and taught, and his name was Governayle, and than he sente yonge Tristrams with Governayle into Fraunce to lerne the langage and nurture and dedis of armys. And there was Trystrams more than seven yere. So whan he had lerned what he myght in tho contreyes, than he com 10 home to his fadir kyng Melyodas agayne.

And so Trystrams lerned to be an harper passyng all other, that there was none suche called in no contrey. And so in harpyng and on instrumentys of musyke in his youthe he applyed hym for to lerne. And aftir, as he growed in myght 15 and strength, he laboured in huntynge and in hawkynge—never jantyllman more that ever we herde rede of. And as the booke seyth, he began good mesures of blowynge of beestes of venery and beestes of chaace and all maner of vermaynes, and all the tearmys we have yet of hawkynge and huntynge. 20 And therefore the booke of [venery, of hawkynge and huntynge is called the booke of] sir Trystrams.

Wherefore, as me semyth, all jantyllmen that beryth olde armys ought of ryght to honoure sir Tristrams for the goodly tearmys that jantyllmen have and use and shall do unto the 25 Day of Dome, that thereby in a maner all men of worshyp may discever a jantyllman frome a yoman and a yoman frome a vylayne. For he that jantyll is woll drawe hym to jantyll tacchis and to folow the noble customys of jantyllmen.

Thus Trystrams enduryd in Cornewayle unto that he was 30 stronge and bygge, unto the ayge of eyghtene yere. And than kyng Melyodas had grete joy of yonge Trystrams, and so had the quene his wyff for ever after in hir lyff, because sir Trystrams saved hir frome the fyre: she ded never 151^r hate hym more afftir, but ever loved hym and gaf hym many 35 grete gyfftyss; for every astate loved hym where that he wente.

1 C good meanes 3-4 C to abyde no lenger in 9-10 C* yeres And
 thenne whanne he wel couthe speke the langage and hadde lerned all that he myght
 16-17 C haukyng so that neuer 20 C alle these 21-2 *homoeoteleuton* in W
 25 do not in C 27-8 C and from a yoman a vylayne 29 C the
 custommes of noble gentylmen 31 C of the age 35 C gaf Trystram

(4) Than hit befelle that kynge Angwysh of Irelande sente unto kynge Marke of Cornwayle for his trwayge that Cornuayle had payde many wyntyrs, and (att) that tyme kynge Marke was behynde of the trwayge for seven yerys.

5 And kynge Marke and his barownes gaff unto the messyngers of Irelande thes wordis and answeere that they wolde none pay, and bade the messyngers go unto their kynge Angwysh, 'and tell hym we woll pay hym no trwayge, but tell youre lorde, and he woll allwayes have trwayge of us
10 of Cornwayle, bydde hym sende a trusty knyght of his londe that woll fyght for his ryght, and we shall fynde another for to defende us.'

So the messyngers departed into Irelande, and whan kynge Angwysh undyrstoode the answeere of the messyngers
15 he was wrothe. And than he called unto hym sir Marhalt, the good knyght that was nobly proved and a knyght of the Rounde Table. And this Marhaltt was brother unto the quene of Irelande. Than the kyng seyde thus:

'Fayre brother, sir Marhalt, I pray you go unto Come-do wayle for my sake to do batayle for oure trwayge that we of ryght ought to have. And whatsomevir ye spende, ye shall have sufficiauntely more than ye shall nede.'

'Sir,' seyde sir Marhalte, 'wete you well that I shall nat be loth to do batyle in the ryght of you and your londe with
*5 the beste knyght of Table Rounde, for I know them for the moste party what bene their dedis. And for to avaunce my dedis and to encrece my worshyp I woll ryght gladly go unto this journey.'

So in all haste there was made purvyaunce for sir Mar-
30 halte, and he had all thyng that hym neded, and so he
151^v departed oute of Irelande and aryved up in Cornwayle evyn by Castell of Tyntagyll. And whan kynge Marke undirstood that he was there aryved for to fyght for Irelande, than made kynge Marke grete sorow, whan he undirstood that the
35 good knyght sir Marhalt was com; for they knew no knyght that durste have ado with hym, for at that tyme sir Marhalte was called one of the famuste knyghtes of the worlde.

3 W all 1 2-1 3 C* defende oure ryght With this ansuer the 15 C wonderly wroth
CMarhaus 20-1 W of ryght that we of ryght 28 C journeye for oure ryghte
32 C fast by 35 C good and noble 37 C famoset and renoumed knyghtes

And thus sir Marhalte abode in the see, and every day he sente unto kynge Marke for to pay the trwayge that was behynde seven yere, other ellys to fynde a knyght to fyght with hym for the trewayge. This maner of message sir Marhalte sente unto kynge Marke. 5

Than they of Cornwayle lete make cryes that what knyght that wolde fyght for to save the trwayge of Cornwayle he shold be rewarded to fare the bettir, terme of his lyrT. Than som of the barowns seyde to kynge Marke and counceyled hym to [sende to] the courte of kynge Arthure for to seke 10 sir Launcelott du Lake that was that tyme named for the mervaylyste knyght of the worlde.

Than there were other barownes and seyde that hit was laboure in vayne, bycause sir Marhalte was a knyght of Rounde Table; therefore ony of hem wolde be loth to have 15 ado with other, but yf hit were so that ony knyght at his owne rekeyste wolde fyght disgysed and unknowyn. So the kynge and all his barownes assentyd that hit was no boote to seke aftir no knyght of the Rounde Table.

This meanewhyle cam the langayge and the noyse unto 20 kynge Melyodas how that sir Marhalte abode faste by Tyntagyll, and how kynge Marke cowde fynde no maner of knyght to fyght for hym.

So whan yonge Trystrams herde of thys he was wroth and sore ashamed that there durste no knyght in Cornwayle have 25 ado with sir Marhalte of Irelande. Therewithall Trystrams 152^r(5) wente unto his fadir kynge Melyodas and asked hym counceyle what was beste to do for to recovir Cornwayle frome bondage.

'For, as me semyth,' seyde Trystrams, 'hit were shame 30 that sir Marhalte, the quenys brother of Irelande, sholde go away onles that he were foughtyn withall.'

'As for that,' seyde kynge Melyodas, 'wete you well, sonne Trystramys, that sir Marhalte ys called one of the beste knyghtes of the worlde, and therefore I know no 35 knyght in this contrey is able to macche hym.'

5 C sente dayly 6 C cryes in euery place 8 C rewarded soo that he sholde fare
 13 C* somme other Barons that counceyllid the Kynge not to doo soo & said 1 8-T 9 Cseke ony knyght 21 C abode bataillie 25 W
 Cornwayle durste have 28-9 Cfrom truage 35 C worlde and knyghte
 of the table round And therefore 36 C that is able to matche with hym

'Alas,' seyde sir Trystrams, 'that I were nat made knyght!
And yf sir Marhalte sholde thus departe into Irelande, God
let me never have worshyp! And, sir,' seyde Tristrams, 'I
pray you, gyff me leve to ryde to kynge Mark. And so ye
5 woll nat be displesed, of kynge Marke woll I be made
knyght.'

'I woll well,' seyde kynge Melyodas, 'that ye be ruled as
yours corrage woll rule you.'

Than Trystrams thanked his fadir, and than he made hym
10 redy to ryde into Cornwayle.

So in the meanewhyle there com^r a messenger withⁿ lettyrs
of love fro kynge Faramon of Fraunces doughter unto syr
Trystrams that were petuous lettyrs, but in no wyse
Trystrams had no joy of hir lettyrs nor regarde unto hir.
15 Also she sente hym a lytyll brachet that was passynge fayre.
But whan the kynges doughter undirstoode that Trystrams
wolde nat love hir, as the booke seyth, she dyed^r for sorow¹.
And than the same squyre that brought the lettyrs and the
brachet cam ayen unto sir Trystrams, as aftir ye shall [here]
20 in the tale folowyng.

So aftir this yonge Trystrames rode unto hys erne, kynge
Marke of Cornwayle, and whan he com there he herde sey
that there wolde no knyght fyght with sir Marhalt.

'Sir', seyde Trystrams, 'yf ye woll gyff me the Ordre of
25 Knyghthode I woll do batayle with sir Marhalte.'
152^v 'What are ye?' seyde the kynge, 'and frome whens be ye
com?'

'Sir,' seyde Trystrames, 'I com frome kynge Melyodas
that wedded your systir, and a jantylman, wete you welle,
30 I am.'

So kyng Marke behylde Trystrams and saw that he was

1 C that I am not 4-5 C and 300 ye be not 9 C fader moche 11 Cf. *F*
(*MS. B.N.fr. 103/.* 32" col. 2): si regardent et voient venir ung escuier tout seul
regardant et chevauchant apres eulx qui portoit etc. 13-14 C* letters & in them
were wryten many complayntes of loue but syre Tristram 13-15 W (*sidenote*): How
the kynge of Frauncis doughter sente to sir Trystrames a fayre brachette 17 C*
dyed for sorow *F* (*MS. B.N.fr. 103 f. 3?* col. 1): qui d'amours meurent 20 folow-
yng not in C 23-4 C* Marhaus Thenne yede sir Tristram unto his erne and
sayd syre 25-8 (*see note*) W with sir Marhalt what ar ye seyde the kynge and
frome whens be ye com sir seyde Trystrams yf ye woll gyff me the ordre of knyght-
hode I woll do batayle with sir Marhalte what ar ye seyde the kynge and from whens
be ye com sir seyde Trystrames I com frome kynge Melyodas

but a yonge man of ayge, but he was passyngly well made and bygge.

'Fayre sir,' seyde the kyng, 'what is your name and where were ye borne?'

'Sir. my name is Trystrams, and in the contrey of Lyonesse 5 was I borne.'

'Te sey well,' seyde the kyng, 'and yf ye woll do this batayle I shall make you knyght.'

'Therefore cam I to you,' seyde Trystrams, 'and for none 10 other cause.*'

But than kyng Marke made hym knyght, and therewithall anone as he had made hym knyght he sente unto sir Marhalte that he had founde a yonge knyght redy for to take the batayle to the utteraunce.

'Hit may well be so,' seyde sir Marhalte, 'but tell kyng 15 Marke I woll nat fyght with no knyght but he be of blood royall, that is to seye owther kynges son othir quenys son, borne of pryncis other of pryncesses.'

Whan kyng Marke undirstoode that, he sente for sir Trystrams de Lyones and tolde hym what was the answeere of 20 sir Marhalte. Than seyde sir Trystrams,

'Sytthen that he seyth so, lat hym wete that I am commyn of fadir syde and modir syde of as noble bloode as he is; for, sir, now shall ye know that I am kyng of Melyodas sonne, borne of your owne sister dame Elyzabeth that dyed in the 25 foreste in the byrth of me.'

'A, Jesu!' seyde kyng Marke, 'ye ar welcom, fayre newew, to me.'

Than in all the haste the kyng horsed sir Trystrams and armed hym on the beste maner that myght be gotyn forgolde 30 othir sylver. And than kyng Marke sente unto sir Marhalte and dud hym to wete that a bettir man borne than he was hymself sholde fyght with hym, 'and his name ys sir Trystrams de Lyones, begotyn of kyng Melyodas and borne of 153^r kyng Markys sistir.' Than was sir Maftalte gladde and 35 blyeth that he sholde feyght with suche a jantylman.

5 C Syre sayd he ageyne my
haus with letters that said that
lete horse.
born man

12-13 C* he sente a messenger unto syre Mar-
18 C prynce or pryncesse
30 C in the best maner that myghte be had or gotten

29 C kyng
31 C

And so by the assente of kynge Marke they lete ordayne that they sholde fyght within an ilonde nyghe sir Marhaltes shyppis. And so was sir Trystrames put into a vessell, bothe his horse and he and all that to hym longed, bothe for his
 5 body and for his horse, that he lacked nothyng. And whan kynge Marke and his barownes of Cornwayle behelde how yonge sir Trystrams departed with suche a caryage to feyght for the ryght of Cornwayle, there was nother man nother woman of worshyp but they wepte to se and undirstonde so
 10 yonge a knyght to jouparte* hymself for their ryght.

(6) So, to shortyn this tale, whan syr Trystrams aryved within the ilonde he loked to the farther syde, and there he sawe at an ankyr six othir shyppis nyghe to the londe, and undir the shadow of the shyppys, uppon the londe, there hoved the
 15 noble knyght sir Marhalte of Irelande. Than sir Trystrams commaunded to have his horse uppon the londe. And than Governayle, his servaunte, dressed hys harneys at all maner of ryghtes, and than sir Trystrams mounted uppon his horse.

20 And whan he was in his sadyll well apparayled, and his shyld dressed uppon his sholdir, so sir Trystrams asked Governayle, 'Where is this knyght that I shall have ado withall?'

'Sir,' seyde Governayle, 'se ye hym nat? I wente that ye
 25 had sene hym, for yondir he hovyth undir the umbir of his shyppys on horseback, with his spere in his honde and his shyld uppon his sholdyr.'

'That is trouthe,' seyde sir Trystrams, 'now I se hym.'

Than he commaunded Governayle to go to his vessayle
 30 agayne, 'and commaunde me unto myneerne, kynge Marke,
 153^T and pray hym, yf that I be slayne in this batayle, for to entere my body as hym semyth beste. And as for me, lette hym wete I woll never be yoldyn for cowardyse, and if I be slayne and fle nat, they have loste no trewayge for me. And yf so
 35 be that I fle other yelde me as recreaunte, bydde myneerne bury me never in Crystyn buryellys. And uppon thy lyff,'

5 C horse Syre Trystram lacked 13 othir *not in C* 16-17 C commaunded
 his seruaunt gouernail to brynge his hors to the land and dresse 18 C thenne
 whan he had soo done he mounted 25 C hym yonder 28 C see hym
 welynouj 29 C his seruaunt Gouernayle 33 C neuer yelde me 34 C
 not thenne they

seyde sir Trystrams unto Govirnayle, 'that thou com nat nyghe this ilonde tyll that thou see me overcom or slayne, other ellis that I wyne yondir knyght.* So they departed sore wepyng.

And than sir Marhalte avysed sir Trystrames and seyde 5 (7) thus:

'Yonge knyght, sir Trystrams, what doste thou here? Me sore repentys of thy corrayge; for wete thou well, I have bene assayed with many noble knyghtes, and the beste knyghtes of this londe have bene assayed of myne hondys, to ana also the beste knyghtes of the worlde I have macched them. And therefore, be my counceyle, returne ayen unto thy vessell.'

'A, fayre knyght and well proved,' seyde sir Trystrams, 'thou shalt well wete I may nat forsake the in this quarell. 15 For I am for thy sake made knyght, and thou shalt well wete that I am a kynges sonne, borne and gotyn uppon a quene. And suche promyse I have made at my newewys requeste and myne owne sekyng that I shall fyght with the unto the uttirmuste and delyvir Cornwayle frome the olde trewage. 20 And also wete thou well, sir Marhalte, that this ys the gretteste cause that thou coragyst me to have ado with the, for thou arte called one of the moste renomed knyghtes of the worlde. And bycause of that noyse and fame that thou haste thou gevyst me corrayge to have ado with the, for 25 never yett was I proved with good knyght. And sytthen I toke the Order of Knyghthode this day, I am ryght well pleased, and to me moste worshyp, that I may have ado wyth suche a knyght as thou arte. And now wete thou well, syr 154^r Marhalte, that I caste me to geete worshyp on thy body. 30 And yf that I be nat proved, I truste to God to be worshypfully proved uppon thy body, and to delyver the contrey of Cornwayle for ever fro all maner of trewayge frome Irelande for ever.'

Whan sir Marhalte had herde hym sey what he wolde, he 35 seyde thus agayne:

'Fayre knyght, sytthen hit is so that thou castyste to wyne

3 C soo eyther departed from other 9 with many noble knyghtes *not in C*
 14 C And faire knyght and wel preued knyght 27 ryght *not in C* 28 and
 to me moste worshyp *not in C* 29 C so good a knyght as

worshyp of me, I lette the wete worshyp may thou none loose by me *gyff* thou may stonde me three strokys. For I lat the wete, for my noble dedis proved and seyne kynge Arthure made me knyght of the Table Roundel'

5 Than they began to feauter there sperys, and they mette so fersly togydys that they smote aythir other downe, bothe horse and man. But sir Marhalte smote sir Trystrams a grete wounde in the syde with his spere.

And than they avoyded their horsis and pulde oute their
10 swerdys, and threwe their shyldis afore them, and than they laysshed togydys as men that were wylde and corrageous. And whan they had strykyn togydys longe, that there armys fayled, than they leffte their strokys and foyned at brestys and vysours. And whan they sawe that hit myght
15 nat prevayle them, than they hurteled togedys lyke rammys to beare eythir othir downe.

Thus they fought styлле togydirs more than halffe a day, and eythir of them were wounded passynge sore, that the blood ran downe Tresshly"¹ frome them uppon the grounde.
20 By than sir Trystramys wexed more fyerser than he dud, and sir Marhalte fyebled, and sir Trystramys ever more well-wynded and bygger. And with a myghty stroke he smote
154^T sir Marhalte uppon the helme suche a buffette that hit wente thorow his helme and thorow the coyffe of Steele and thorow
25 the brayne-panne, and the swerde stake so faste in the helme and in his brayne-panne that sir Trystramys pulled three tymes at his swerde or ever he myght pulle hit oute frome his hede.

And there sir Marhalte felle downe on his kneis, and the
30 edge of his swerde leffte in hys brayne-panne. Andsuddeynly sir Marhalte rose grovelynge and threw his swerde and his shyld frome hym, and so he ran to his shyppys and fledde his way. And sir Trystramys had ever his shelde and his swerde, and whan sir Trystramys saw sir Marhalte withdrow
35 hym he seyde,

'A, sir knyght of the Rounde Table! Why withdrawyst

7 Chore and all 12-13 Cf soo to gyder longe thenne they lefte 17 to-
gydirs *not in C* 19 W ran downe passynge sore F (MS. B.N.fr. 103/. 35* col.
3): si qu'ilz perdent de leur sang a grant foison 20-2 C more fressher than
syr Marhaus and better wynded and bygger 26 C pulled thryes 29-30 C
knees the edge of Tristrams swerd

thou the? Thou doste thyself and thy kynne grete shame,
for I am but a yonge knyght: or now I was never preved.
And rather than I sholde withdraw me frome the, I had
rathir be hewyn in pyese-mealys.'

Sir Marhalte answerde no worde, but yeode his way sore 5
gronyng.

'Well, sir knyght/ seyde sir Trystrams, 'I promyse the
thy swerde and thy shelde shall be myne, and thy shyld
shall I were in all placis where I ryde on myne adventures,
and in the syght of kyng Arthure and all the Rounde Table.' 10

So sir Marhalte and hys felyshyp departed into Irelande. (8)
And as sone as he com to the kynge, his brother, they serched
his woundis, and whan his hede was serched a pyese of sir
Trystrams swerde was therein founden, and myght never
be had oute of his hede for no leche-craffte. And so he dyed 15
of sir Trystramys swerde, and that pyse of the swerde the
quene, his sistir, she kepte hit for ever with hir, for she
thought to be revenged and she myght.

Now turne we agayne unto sir Trystrames that was sore
wounded and sore forbledde, that he myght nat within a lytyll 20
whyle stonde. Whan he had takyn colde (he coude) unnethe
styrre hym of hys lymmes, and than he sette hym downe
sofftely uppon a lytyll hylle and bledde faste. Than anone 155^r
com Governayle, his man, with his vessell, and the kynge and
the moste party of his barownes com with procession ayenst 25
sir Trystrames.

And whan he was commyn unto the londe kynge Marke
toke hym in his armys, and he and sir Dynas the Senescyall
lad sir Tristram into the castell of Tyntagyll; and than
was he cerched in the beste maner and leyde in his bed. 30
And whan kynge Marke saw his woundys he wepte hertely,
and so dud all his lordys. 'So God me helpe,' seyde kynge
Marke, 'I wolde nat for all my londys that my newew dyed.'

So sir Trystrames lay there a moneth and more, and ever
he was lyke to dey of the stroke that sir Marhalte smote hym 35
fyrste wyth the spere; for, as the Frenshe booke seyth, the

4 C hewen in C pyeces 11 C Anon sir 13-17 W (*sidenote*): Here is the deth
of sir Marhalte knyght of the Table Rounde by sir Trystrames 15 C for no
surgeons 17 Csyster kepte 20 Cful sore bled 21 Cf whyle when
he had take cold unnethe W colde &f unnethe (*see note*) 21 C and the kynge
and

spere-hede was invenymed, that sir Trystrams myght nat be hole. Than was kynge Marke and all hys barownes passynge hevy, for they demed none other but that sir Trystrames sholde nat recover. Than the kynge lette sende
 5 for all maner of lechis and surgeons, bothe unto men and women, and there was none that wolde behote hym the lyff.

Than cam there a lady that was a wytty lady, and she seyde playnly unto the kynge Marke and to sir Trystrames and to all his barownes that he sholde never be hole but yf
 10 that sir Trystrames wente into the same contrey that the venym cam fro, and in that contrey sholde he be holpyn, other ellys never; thus seyde the lady unto the kynge. So whan the kynge undirstood hit he lette purvey for syr Trystrames a fayre vessell and well vytayled, and therein
 15 was putt sir Trystrames, and Governayle wyth hym, and sir Trystrames toke his harpe with hym. And so he was putt into the see to sayle into Irelande.

And so by good fortune he aryved up in Irelande evyn faste by a castell where the kynge and the quene was. And
 2° at his aryvayle he sate and harped in his bedde a merry lay:
 155^v suche one herde they never none in Irelande before that tyme. And whan hit was tolde the kynge and the quene of suche a syke knyght that was suche an harper, anone the kynge sente for hym and lette serche hys woundys, and than
 25 he asked hym his name. And than he answerde and seyde,
 'I am of the contrey of Lyones, and my name is Tramtryste, that was thus wounded in a batayle as I fought for a ladies ryght.'

'So God me helpe/ seyde kynge Angwysh,' ye shall have
 30 all the helpe in this londe that ye may have here. But in Cornwayle but late I had a grete losse as ever had kynge, for there I loste the beste knyght of the worlde. His name was sir Marhalte, a full noble knyght and knyght of the Table Rounde.*

35 And there he tolde sir Tramtryste wherefore sir Marhalte was slayne. So sir Tramtryste made sembelaunte as he had bene sory, and bettir he knew how hit was than the kynge.

7 C was a ryght wyse lady

9-10 C but yf sire

23 syke not in C

*5 and seyde not in C 30-1 C But I lete you wete in Cornewaile I had 35 C syr Trystra

36 C Syr Trystram

Than the kyng for grete favour made Tramtryste to be (9)
 put in his doughtyrs awarde and kepyng, because she was a
 noble surgeon. And whan she had serched hym she founde
 in the bottom of his wounde that therein was poyson, and so
 she healed hym in a whyle. 5

And therefore sir Tramtryste kyste grete love to La Beale
 Isode, for she was at that tyme the fayrest lady and maydyn
 of the worlde. And there Tramtryste lerned hir to harpe
 and she began to have a grete fantasy unto hym.

And at that tyme sir Palomydes ^rthe Sarasyn¹ drew unto 10
 La Beale Isode and profirde hir many gyfftyes, for he loved
 hir passyngly welle. All that aspyed Tramtryste, and full
 well he knew Palomydes for a noble knyght and a myghty
 man. And wete you well sir Tramtryste had grete despyte
 at sir Palomydes, for La Beale Isode tolde Tramtryste that 15
 Palomydes was in wyll to be crystynde for hir sake. Thus
 was the[r] grete envy betwyxte Tramtryste and sir Palo-
 mydes.

Than hit befelle that kyng Angwysh lett cry a grete justis
 and a grete turnemente for a lady that was called the lady of ao 156^r
 the Laundys, and she was ny cosyn unto the kyng. And
 what man wanne her, four dayes [after] sholde wedde hir
 and have all hir londis. This cry was made in Ingelonde,
 Walys, and Scotlonde, and also in Fraunce and in Bretayne.

So hit befelle uppon a day, La Beale Isode com unto 25
 Tramtryste and tolde hym of this turnemente. He answerde
 and sayde, 'Fayre lady, I am but a feeble knyght, and but
 late I had bene dede, had nat your good ladyshyp bene.
 Now, fayre lady, what wolde ye that I sholde do in this
 mater? Well ye wote, my lady, that I may nat juste.' 30

'A, Tramtryste P seyde La Beale Isode, 'why woll ye
 nat have ado at that turnemente? For well I wote that sir
 Palomydes woll be there and to do what he may. And
 therefore, sir Tramtryste, I pray you for to be there, for
 ellys sir Palomydes ys lyke to wyne the degreV 35

'Madam, as for that, hit may be so, for he is. a proved

2 Cdoughters ward 10 *F* (MS. B.N.fr. 103/. 3g^r col. 1): c'estoit Palamedes,
 le bon chevalier sarrasin, qui onques n'avoit este" chrestien C* sir Palamydes the
 sarasyn was in that countrey and wel cherysshed with the kyng and the quene
 And every day syr Palamydes drewe 13 C knewe he 22 C thre dayes
 26 Csyr Tramtryst 32 For not in C 33 C shall be 34 sir iwfwC

knyght and I am but a yonge knyght and late made, and the fyrste batayle that ever I ded hit myssehappyed me to be sore wounded, as ye se. But and I wyste that ye wolde be my bettir lady, at that turnemente woll I be, on this coveaunte:

5 so that ye woll kepe my counceyle and lette no creature have knowlech that I shall juste but yourself and suche as ye woll to kepe youre counceyle, my poure person shall [I] jouparte* there for youre sake, that peradventure sir Palomydes shall know whan that I com.'

io Thereto seyde La Beale Isode, 'Do your beste, and as I can/ seyde La Beale Isode, 'I shall purvey horse and armour for you at my devyse.'

'As ye woll, so be hit,' seyde sir Tramtryste, 'I woll be at your commaundement.'

«5 So at the day of justys there cam sir Palomydes with a blacke shyld and he ovirthrew many knyghtes, that all people had mervayle; for he put to the warre sir Gawayne,
156^v Gaherys, Aggravayne, Bagdemagus, Kay, Dodynas le Savyaige, Sagramour le Desyrous, Gunrete le Petyte, and
20 Gryfflet le Fyse de Du—all thes the fyrste day sir Palomydes strake downe to the erthe. And than all maner of knyghtes were adrad of sir Palomydes, and many called hym the Knyght with the Blacke Shylde; so that sir Palomydes had grete worshyp.

25 Than cam kynge Angwyshe unto Tramtryste and asked hym why he wolde nat juste.

'Sir,' he seyde, 'I was but late hurte and as yett I dare nat aventure.'

Than there cam the same squyre that was sente frome
30 the kynges doughter of Fraunce unto sir Tramtryste, and whan he had aspyed sir Trystrames he felle flatte to his feete. And that aspyed La Beale Isode, what curtesy the squyre made to Tramtryste. And therewithall suddeynly sir Trystrames ran unto the squyre—his name was called Ebes
35 le Renownys—and prayde hym hartely in no wyse to telle his name.

2 ever not in C 4 on this coveaunte not in C 17 C merveylle of hym C
putte to the werse 19 C Gumret 20 C fyse de dieu 28 C aenture
me 29 C came there 30 C syr Trystram 33 C unto syr Trystram
34-5 C his squyer whos name was Hebes (Ef Heles) le renoumes

'Sir,' seyde Hebes, 'I woll nat discovir your name but yf ye commaunde me.'

Than sir Trystramys asked hym what he dede in this (10) contreys.

'Sir,' he seyde, 'I com hydir with sir Gawayne for to be 5 made knyght, and yf hit please you of your hondis that I may be made knyght.'

'Well, awayte on me as to-morne secretly, and in the fylde I shall make you knyght.'

Than had La Beale Isode grete suspeccion unto Tram- 10 tryste that he was som man of worshyp preved, and therewith she comforted herselfe and kyste more love unto hym, for well she demed he was som man of worshyp.

And so on the morne sir Palomydes made hym redy to com into the fylde, as he dud the fyrste day, and there he 15 smote downe the Kynge with the Hondred Knyghtes and the kynge of Scottis. Than had La Beale Isode ordayned and well arayde sir Tramtryste with whyght horse and whyght armys, and ryght so she lette put hym oute at a prevy 157* postren, and he cam so into the felde as hit had bene a bryght 20 angell. And anone sir Palomydes aspyed hym, and therewith he feautred hys spere unto sir Trystramys and he agayne unto hym, and there sir Trystrams smote downe sir Palomydes unto the erthe.

And than there was a grete noyse of people: som seyde 25 sir Palomydes had a fall, som seyde the knyght with the blacke shylde hath a falle. And wete you well La Beale Isode was passyng gladde. And than sir Gawayne and his felowys nine had mervayle who hit myght be that had smitten downe sir Palomydes. Than wolde there none juste 30 with Tramtryste, but all that there were forsoke hym, moste and leste.

Than sir Trystramys made Hebes a knyght and caused to put hymself forth, and dud ryght well that day. So aftir that sir Hebes helde hym with sir Trystrams. 35

And whan sir Palomydes had reseved hys falle, wete

3 C in those 8 Well *not* in C 12-14 Ef unto hym than she had done tofore And soo 18-19 Cf in whyte hors and harneis And ryght 20 C8c soo he came 29 C what knyghte it myght 33 C caused hym to 34-5 C after sir Hebes 36 C this falle

ye well that he was sore ashamed, and as prevayly as he myght he withdrew hym oute of the fylde. All that aspyed sir Tramtryste, and lyghtly he rode aftir sir Palomydes and overtoke hym and bade hym turne, for bettir he wolde assay 5 hym or ever he departed. Than sir Palomydes turned hym and eythir laysshed at other with their swerdys; but at the fyrste stroke sir Trystrames smote downe sir Palomydes and gaff hym suche a stroke uppon the hede that he felle to the erthe.

So than sir Trystrams bade hym yelde hym and do his 10 commaundemente, other ellis he wolde sle hym. Whan sir Palomydes behylde hys countenaunce he drad his buffettes so that he graunted all his askynges.

'Well/ seyde sir Tramtryste, 'this shall be youre charge: fyrst, uppon payne of youre lyff, that ye forsake my lady, 157" 15 La Beale Isode, and in no maner of wyse that ye draw no more to hir; also, this twelve-monthe and a day that ye bere none armys nother none harneys of werre. Now promysse me this, othir here shalt thou dye.'

'Alas,' seyde sir Palomydes, 'for ever I am shamed!' 20 Than he sware as sir Trystrames had commaunded hym. So for dispyte and angir sir Palomydes kut of his harneyse and threw them away.

And so sir Trystrames turned agayne to the castell where was La Beale Isode, and by the way he mette wyth a damesell 25 that asked aftir sir Launcelot that wan the Dolorous Garde; and this damesell asked sir Trystrames what he was, for hit was tolde her that hit was he that smote downe sir Palomydes by whom the ten knyghtes of Arthures were smyttyn downe. Than the damesell prayde sir Trystrames to telle 30 her what he was and whether that he were sir Launcelot du Lake, for she demed that there was no knyght in the worlde that myght do suche dedis of armys but yf hit were sir Launcelot.

'Wete you well that I am nat sir Launcelot, fayre damesell, 35 for I was never of suche proues. Butin God is all: He may make me as good a knyght as that good knyght sir Launcelot is.*

3 C syre Trystram

17 C none armour

32 that *not in C*

I am not syr launcelot

9 C badde yelde

19 C ashamed

34 C Fayre damoyssel sayd syr Trystram wete ye well that

35 C al that

10 Cor els 13 Cf said said

25 C dolorous gard worshipfully

36 is *not in C*

'Now, jantyll knyght, put up thy vyser V

And whan she behylde his vysage she thought she sawe never a bettir mannys vysayge nothir a bettir-farynge knyght. So whan the damesell knew sertaynly that he was nat sir Launcelot, than she toke hir leve and departed frome hym. 5

And than sir Trystrames rode prevayly unto the posterne where kepte hym La Beale Isode, and there she made hym grete chere and thanked God of his good spede.

So anone within a whyle the kynge and the quene and all the courte undirstood that hit was sir Tramtryste that smote 10 downe sir Palamydes, and than was he muche made of, more 158^r than he was tofore. Thus was sir Tramtryste longe there (10 well cherysshed with the kynge and wyth the quene, and namely with La Beale Isode.

So uppon a day the quene and La Beale Isode made a 15 bayne for sir Tramtryste, and whan he was in his bayne the quene and Isode, hir doughter, romed up and downe in the chambir the whyles Governayle and Hebes attendede uppon Tramtryste. The quene behelde his swerde as hit lay uppon his bedde, and than at unhappis the quene drew oute his 20 swerde and behylde hit a long whyle. And bothe they thought hit a passynge fayre swerde, but within a foote and an halff of the poynte there was a grete pyese thereof oute-brokyn of the edge. And whan the quene had aspyed the gappe in the swerde she remembirde hir of a pyese of a 25 swerde that was founde in the braynne-panne of sir Marhalte that was hir brother.

'Alas!' than seyde she unto hir doughter La Beale Isode, 'this is the same traytoure knyght that slewe my brother, thyne erne.' 30

Whan Isode herdc her sey so she was passynge sore abaysshed, for passynge well she loved Tramtryste and full well she knew the crewelnesse of hir modir the quene.

So anone therewithall the quene wente unto hir owne chambir and sought hir cofyr, and there she toke oute the 35 pyese of the swerde that was pulde oute of sir Marhaltys brayne-panne aftir that he was dede. And than she ran wyth

i C knyght said she 9-10 and all the courte *not in C* 18 C and there
whyles 20 C by vnhap 26-7 C Marhaus the good knyght that 36-7 C
Marhaus hede

that pyese of iron unto the swerde, ^rand whanne she putte
that pyese of stele and yron unto the swerde¹ hit was as
mete as hit myght be as whan hit was newe brokyn.

And than the quene gryped that swerde in hir honde
5 fersely, and with all hir myght she ran streyght uppon
158^v Tramtryste where he sate in his bayne. And there she had
ryved hym thorowe, had nat sir Hebes bene: he gate hir in
his armys and pulde the swerde frome her, and ellys she had
thirste hym thorowe.

to So whan she was lette of hir evyll wyll she ran to the
kyng her husbonde and seyde, 'A, my lorde!' On hir
kneys knelynge, she seyde, 'Here have ye in your house that
traytoure knyght that slewe my brother and your servaunte,
the noble knyght sir MarhalteP

15 'Who is that?' seyde the kyng, 'and where is he?'

'Sir,' she seyde, 'hit is sir Tramtryste, the same knyght
that my doughter helyd.*

'AlasP seyde the kyng, 'therefore I am ryght hevvy, for
he is a full noble knyght as ever I sawe in fylde. But I charge
20 you,' seyde the kyng, 'that ye have nat ado with that knyght,
but lette me dele with hym.'

Than the kyng wente into the chambir unto sir Tram-
tryste, and than was he gone unto his owne chambir, and
the kyng founde hym all redy armed to mownte uppon his
25 horse. So whan the kyng sawe hym all redy armed to go
unto horsebacke, the kyng seyde,

'Nay, Tramtryste, hit woll nat avayle to compare ayenste
me. But thus muche I shall do for my worship and for thy
love: in so muche as thou arte wythin my courte, hit were no
30 worship to sle the; therefore upon this conduction I woll gyff
the leve for to departe frome this courte in savyte\ so thou
wolte telle me who was thy fadir and what is thy name, and
also yf thou slewe sir Marhalte, my brother.*

1-2 C* swerd that laye vpon the bedde And whane she putte that pyece of stele and
yron vnto the swerd hit was F (MS. B.N. fr. 103 f. 43* col. 2): Et la royne si
oeuvre son eserin et desvelope la piece de l'espee qui avoit este^r trouvee en la teste du
Morhoult, si lui adjoint, si y fut tout a point comment celle qui en avoit [estl]
esgrunee a l'estendre [esteurdre ?] (homoeoteleuton in W) 7 C Hebes gotten her

11 C kyng Anguyssh

11-12 Csayde on her knees O my lorde here haue ye

20 C the kyng to the quene

23 owne not in C

27 Ccompare the

33 also

not in C

'Sir,' seyde Tramtryste, 'now I shall **tell** you **all the trouthe**. (12)
 My fadyrs name ys sir Melyodas, kyng of Lyonesse, and
 my modir hyght Elyzabeth, that was sister unto kyng
 Marke of Cornwayle. And my modir dyed of me in the
 foreste, and because thereof she commaunded or she dyed 5
 that whan I was crystened they sholde crystyn me Trys-
 trames. And because I wolde nat be knowyn in this contrey
 I turned my name and let calle me Tramtryste. And for the
 trwage of Cornwayle I fought, for myne emys sake and for 159^r
 the ryght of Cornwayle that ye had be possessed many yerys. 10
 And wete you well,' seyde sir Trystrames unto the kyng,
 'I dud the batayle for the love of myne uncle kyng Marke
 and for the love of the contrey of Cornwayle, and for to
 encrece myne honoure: for that same day that I fought with
 sir Marhalte I was made knyght, and never or than dud I no 15
 batayle with no knyght. And fro me he wente alyve and
 leffte his shylde and his swerde behynde hym.'

'So God me helpe!' seyde the kyng, 'I may nat sey but
 ye dud as a knyght sholde do and as hit was youre parte to
 do for your quarell, and to encrece your worship as a knyght 20
 sholde do. Howbehit I may nat mayntayne you in this
 contrey with my worship but that I sholde displese many of
 my barownes and my wyffand my kynne.'

'Sir,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'I thanke you of your good
 lordeship that I have had within here with you, and the 25
 grete goodnesse my lady your doughter hath shewed me.
 And therefore,' seyde sir Trystramys, 'hit may so be that ye
 shall wyne more be my lyff than be my deth, for in the
 partyes of Ingelonde hit may happyn I may do you servyse
 at som season that ye shall be glad that ever ye shewed me 30
 your good lordshyp. Wyth more I promyse you, as I am
 trewe knyght, that in all placis I shall be my lady your
 doughtyrs servaunte and knyght in all ryght and in wronge,
 and I shall never fayle her to do as muche as a knyght may
 do. Also I beseche your good grace that I may take my 35
 leve at my lady youre doughter and at all the barownes and
 knyghtes.'

6 CI were 10 C had ~~possessed~~ 17 hym not in C 19, 21 do not in C
 22 C onles that many of not in C 23 C her kyn 25 C had with you
 here 27 Cso happen that 29 Cscruyse 33 allnotinC

'I **woll** well,* seyde the kyng.

Than sir Trystrames wente unto La Beale Isode and toke his leve. And than he tolde what he was, and how a lady tolde hym that he sholde never be hole 'untyll I cam into this S contrey where the poyson was made, wherethorow I was nere my deth, had nat your ladyshyp bene/

159^v 'A, jantyll knyght!' seyde La Beale Isode, 'full wo I am of thy departyng, for I saw never man that ever I ought so good wyll to, and therewithall she wepte hertyly.

10 'Madam,' seyde sir Trystramys, 'ye shall undirstonde that my name ys sir Trystrames de Lyones, gotyn of a kyng and borne of a quene. And I promyse you faythfully, I shall be all the dayes of my lyffyour knyght.'

'Gramercy,' seyde La Beale Isode, 'and I promyse you 15 there agaynste I shall nat be maryed this seven yers but by your assente, and whom that ye woll I shall be maryed to hym and he woll have me, if ye woll consente thereto.'

And than sir Trystrames gaff hir a rynge and she gaff hym another, and therewith he departed and com into the 20 courte amonge all the barownes.

And there he toke his leve at moste and leste, and opynly he seyde amonge them all,

'Fayre lordys, now hit is so that I must departe. If there be ony man here that I have offended unto, or that ony man 25 be with me greved, lette hym complayne hym here afore me or that ever I departe, and I shall amende hit unto my power. And yf there be ony man that woll proffir me wronge other sey me wronge, other shame me behynde my back, sey hit now or ellys never, and here is my body to make hit 30 good, body ayenste body!'

And all they stood styll—there was nat one that wolde sey one worde. Yett were there som knyghtes that were of the quenys bloode and of sir Marhaltys blood, but they wolde nat meddyll wyth hym.

1 W woll woll C wille wel 3 C leue of her C* and how he had
chaunged his name by cause he wold not be knowen & hou a lady 4 Cf he p'
shold neuer be hole tyl he cam 7 C O gentyl 11-12 C gotten of kyng
Melyodas and borne of his quene 16-17 C^{to} whome that ye wille I shalle be
maryed to hym wylle I haue and he wille haue me yf ye wil consente 19-20 C*
departed fro her leuyng her makynge grete dole and lamentacion and he streyghte
wente vnto the Courte 25 C lete complayne hym 28 C say of me

So sir Trystramys departede and toke the see, and with (13)
good wynde he aryved up at Tyntagyll in Cornwayle. And
whan kyng Marke was hole in hys prosperity there cam
tydynges that sir Trystrames was aryved, and hole of his
woundis. Thereof was kyng Marke passynge glad, and so 5
were all the barownes.

And whan he saw hys tyme he rode unto his fadir, kyng
Melyodas, and there he had all the chere that the kyng and
the quene coude make hym. And than largely kyng
Melyodas and his quene departed of their londys and goodys 10 160^r
to sir Trystrames. Than by the lysence of his fadir he re-
turned ayen unto the courte of kyng Marke.

And there he lyved longe in grete joy longe tyme, untill
at the laste there befelle a jolesy and an unkyndenesse
betwyxte kyng Marke and sir Trystrames, for they loved 15
bothe one lady, and she was an erlys wyff that hyght sir
Segwarydes. And this lady loved sir Trystrames passyngly
well, and he loved hir agayne, for she was a passynge fayre
lady and that aspyed sir Trystrames well. Than kyng
Marke undirstode that and was jeluse, for kyng Marke *o
loved hir passyngly welle.

So hit befelle uppon a day, this lady sente a Hwarff unto
sir Trystrames and bade hym, as he loved hir, that he wolde
be with hir the nexte nyght folowyng.

'Also she charged you that ye com nat to hir but yf ye be 25
well armed.' For her lorde was called a good knyght.

Sir Trystrames answerde to the dwarff and seyde, 'Re-
commaunde me unto my lady and tell hir I woll nat fayle,
but I shall be with her the terme that she hath sette me,' and
therewith the dwarff departed. ^ ^ 30

And kyng Marke aspyed that the dwarff was with sir
Trystrames uppon message frome Segwarydes wyff. Than
kyng Marke sente for the dwarff, and whan he was comyn
he made the dwarff by force to tell hym all why and wherefore
that he cam on message to sir Trystrames, and than he tolde 35
hym.

'Welle,' seyde kyng Marke, 'go where thou wolte, and

7-8 W his fadir kyng Melyodas his fadir C his fadir kyng Melyodas 24 C
ny3t nexte 29 Clwille 29-30 Cand with this ansuer the 35-7 Cfromf
sire Tristram Now said kyng Marke (and than he tolde hym *not in C*)

uppon payne of deth that thou sey no worde that thou spake with me.'

So the dwarff departed ^rfrom the kynge¹, and that same nyght that the steavyn was sette betwyxte Segwarydes wyff
5 and sir Trystrames, so kynge Marke armed and made hym redy and toke two knyghtes of his counceyle with hym. And so he rode byfore for to abyde by the wayes for to wayte uppon sir Trystrames.

And as sir Trystrames cam rydyng uppon his way with
160^v io his speare in his hande, kynge Marke cam hurlyng uppon hym and hys two knyghtes suddeynly, and all three smote hym with their sperys, and kynge Marke hurt sir Trystrames on the breste ryght sore. And than sir Trystrames feautred his spere and smote kynge Marke so sore that he russhed
15 hym to the erthe and brused hym, that he lay styll in a sowne; and longe hit was or he myght welde hymselff. And than he ran to the one knyght and effte to the tothir, and smote hem to the colde erthe, that they lay styll.

And there[with]all sir Trystrames rode forth sore
*o wounded to the lady and founde hir abydyng hym at a
(14) postren, and there she welcommed hym fayre, and eyther halsed other in armys. And so she lette putt up his horse in the beste wyse, and than she unarmed hym, and so they soupede lyghtly and wente to bedde with grete joy and
25 plesaunce. And so in hys ragynge he toke no kepe of his greve wounde that kynge Marke had gyffyn hym, and so sir Trystrames bledde bothe the over-shete and the neyther-sheete, and the pylowes and the hede-shete.

And within a whyle there cam one before, that warned her
30 that hir lorde sir Segwarydes was nerehonde within a bowe-drawght. So she made sir Trystrames to aryse, and [so he] armed hym and toke his horse and so departed. So by than was sir Segwarydes, hir lorde, com, and whan he founde hys bedde troubled and brokyn he wente nere and loked by
35 candyll lyght and sawe that there had leyne a wounded knyght.

3 F (MS. B.N. fr. 103 f. 45* col. 1): Aunt se part le nain de la chambre du roy
7 C waye 10 C hurtlyng 14 C his vnkel kynge Marke 16 C or
euer he t6 C grene wound '27 C bebled 27-8 C nether & pelowes
31-2 C*800 he armed 32-3 C By thenne was come segwarydes her lord and
34 C her bedde troubled & broken and wente W brokyn And so he wente

'A, false traytours!' he seyde, 'why haste thou betrayde me?' And therewithall he swange oute a swerde and seyde, 'But yf thou telle me ^{r_w}ho hath bene here¹, now shalt thou dey!'

'A, my lorde, mercy!' seyde the lady, and helde up hir 5 hondys, 'and sle me nat, and I shall tell you all who hath bene here.'

Than anone seyde Segwarydes, 'Sey and tell me the trouthe.'

Anone for drede she seyde, 'Here was sir Trystrames with 10 me, and by the way, as he come to me-warde, he was sore 161" wounded.'

'A, false traytours! Where is he becom?'

'Sir,' she seyde, 'he is armed and departed on horsebacke 15 nat yett hens halff a myle.'

'Ye sey well', seyde Segwarydes.

Than he armed hym lythtly and gate his horse and rode aftir sir Trystrames the streyght wey unto Tyntagyll, and within a whyle he overtoke sir Trystrams. And than he [b]ade hym 'turne, false traytoure knyght!' And therewith- 20 all Segwarydes smote sir Trystrames with a speare, that hit all to-braste, and than he swange oute hys swerde and smote faste at sir Trystrames.

'Sir knyght,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'I counceyle you smyte no more! Howbehit for the wrongys that I have done *s you I woll forbere you as longe as I may.'

'Nay,' seyde Segwarydes, 'that shall nat be, for other thou shalt dye othir ellys I.'

Than sir Trystrames drew oute his swerde and hurled his horse unto hym freysshely, and thorow the waste of the 30 body he smote sir Segwarydes, that he felle to the erthe in sowne.

And so sir Trystrames departed and leffte hym there. And so he rode unto Tyntagyll and toke hys lodgyng secretely, for he wolde nat be know that he was hurte. Also 35 sir Segwarydes men rode aftir their master and brought

3 W telle me all now shalt thou *F* (MS. B.N./r. 103 f. 45* col. 2). 'Bites moy qui il est' 6 C handes sayeng 8-9 C Telle anone said segwarydes to me alle the trouthe 18 C Tristram that rode streyght 19-20 W he made hym 20 C* Knyghte and syr Tristram anon torned hym ageynst hym And 30 C fyersly 36 C* maister whome they fond lyenge in the feld sore wounded and

hym home on his shyld; and there he lay longe or he were hole, but at the laste he recoverde.

Also kynge Marke wolde nat be a-knowyn of that he had done unto sir Trystramys whan he mette that nyght; and 5 as for sir Trystramys, he knew nat that kynge Marke had mette with hym. And so the kynge com ascawnce to sir Trystrames to comforte hym as he lay syke in his bedde. But as longe as kynge Marke lyved he loved never aftir sir Trystramys. So aftir that, thoughe there were fayre speche, 10 love was there none.

And thus hit paste on many wykes and dayes, and all was forgyfryn and forgetyn, for sir Segwarydes durste nat have 16 V ado with sir Trystrames because of his noble proues, and also because he was newew unto kynge Marke. Therefore he 15 lette hit overslyppe, for he that hath a prevy hurte is loth to have a shame outewarde.

(iS) Than hit befelle uppon a day that the good knyghte sir Bleoberys de Ganys, brother unto sir Blamore de Ganys and nye cosyne unto the good knyght syr Launcelot de Lake, 20 so this sir Bleoberys cam unto the courte of kyng Marke, and there he asked kynge Marke to gyff hym a bone, 'what gyffte that I woll aske in this courte.'

Whan the kynge herde hym aske so he mervayled of his askynge, but bycause he was a knyght of the Round Table *5 and of a grete renowne, kynge Marke graunted hym his hole askynge. Than seyde sir Bleoberys,

'I woll have the fayreste lady in your courte that me lyst to chose.'

'I may nat say nay,' seyde kynge Marke, 'now chose hir 30 at your adventure.'

And so sir Bleoberys dud chose sir Segwarydes wyf, and toke hir by the honde, and so he wente his way with her. And so he toke his horse, and made sette her behynde his squyer and rode uppon hys way.

3s Whan sir Segwarydes herde telle that his lady was gone with a knyght of kynge Arthures courte, than he armed

3-4 C of that sir Tristram and he hadde mette 6 W com ascawnce com
C kynges astauncef (see note) 8-9 C neuer sire Trystram after that though
9 C there was 11 on not in C 21 C of kynge Marke 22 C that
he wold aske in his courte 25 C renomme 33 C gart sette

hym and rode after that knyght to rescow his lady. So whan sir Bleoberys was gone with this lady kynge Marke and alle the courte was wroth that she was had away.

Than were there sertayne ladyes that knew that there was grete love betwene sir Trystrames and her, and also that 5 lady loved sir Trystrames abovyn all othyr knyghtes. Than there was one lady that rebuked sir Trystrams in the horrybelyst wyse, and called hym cowarde knyght, that he wolde for shame of hys knyghthode to se a lady so shamefully takyn away fro his uncklys courte; but she mente that eythir «o of hem loved other with entyre herte. But sir Trystrames 162* answered her thus:

'Fayre lady, hit is nat my parte to have ado in suche maters whyle her lorde and husbonde ys presente here. And yf so be that hir lorde had nat bene here in this courte, than for the 15 worshyp of this courte peraventure I wold have bene hir champyon. And yf so be sir Segwarydes spede nat well, hit may happyn that I woll speke with that good knyght or ever he passe far fro this contrey.'

Than within a while com sir Segwarydes squyres and *o tolde in the [courte that] theyre master was betyn sore and wounded at the poynte' of deth: as he wolde have rescowed his lady, sir Bleoberys overthrewe hym and sore hath wounded hym. Than was kynge Marke hevy thereof, and all the courte. Whan sir Trystrames herde of this he was ashamed 25 and sore agreved, and anone he armed hym and yeode to horsebacke, and Governayle, his servaunte, bare his shyld and his spere.

And so as syr Trystrames rode faste he mette with sir Andret, his cosyn, that by the commaundement of kynge 30 Marke was sente to brynge forth two knyghtes of Arthures courte that rode by the contrey to seke their adventures.

Whan sir Trystrames sawe sir Andret he asked hym, 'What tydynges?'

'So God me helpe,' seyde sir Andret, 'there was never 35 worse with me, for here by the commaundemente of kynge

3 C was away 10 C be taken 14-15 C And yf hit hadde ben that
 20 C one of sir 21 C* court that sir segwarides was 22 C to the poynte
 26-7 C And thenne was he soone armed and on horsbak 31 W Marke that
 was C forth & ever it laye in his power ii knyghtes

Marke I was sente to fecche two knyghtes of kynge Arthurs courte, and the tone bete me and wounded me and sette nought be my message.'

'Fayre cosyn,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'ryde on your way,
5 and yr I may mete them hit may happyn I shall revenge you/

So sir Andret rode into Cornwayle and sir Trystrames rode aftir the two knyghtes, whyche that one hyght sir Sagramoure le Desyrous and that othir hyght sir Dodynas le Savyayge.

162^V(I6)IO So within a whyle sir Trystrames saw hem byfore hym, two lykly knyghtys.

'Sir,' seyde Governayle unto his maystir, 'I wolde counceyle you nat to have ado with hem, for they be two proved knyghtes of Arthures courte.'

15 'As for that,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'have ye no doute but I woll have ado with them bothe to encrece my worshyp, for hit is many day sytthen I dud any armys.'

'Do as ye lyste,' seyde Governayle.

And therewythall anone sir Trystrames asked them from
a© whens they come and whothir they wolde, and what they dud in those marchis. So sir Sagramoure loked uppon sir Trystrames and had scorne of his wordys, and seyde to hym agayne,

'Sir, be ye a knyght of Cornwayle ?'

25 'Whereby askyste thou ?' seyde sir Trystrames.

'For hit is seldom seyne,' seyde sir Sagramoure, 'that ye Cornysse knyghtes bene valyaunte men in armys, for within thes two owres there mette with us one of your Cornysse knyghtes, and grete wordys he spake, and anone with lytyll
30 myght he was leyde to the erthe. And as I trow,' seyde sir Sagramoure, 'that ye wolde have the same hansell.'

'Fayre lordys,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'hit may so happe that I may bettir wythstonde you than he ded, and whether ye woll or nylle, I woll have ado with you, because he was my
35 cosyn that ye bete. And therefore here do your beste! And wete you well: but yf ye quyte you the bettir here uppon this grounde, one knyght of Cornwayle shall beate you bothe.'

7 C the whiche one i» C sir I 16 bothe *not in C* 17 C* *ony dedes of*
armes 22-4 C & asked hym ageyne Fair knyghte be ye 27 C of armes
31 Sagramoieyeshalhaue 31 Chandselthathehadde 33 you *not in C*

Whan sir Dodynas le Savyaige herde hym sey so he gate
a speare in hys honde and seyde, 'Sir knyght, kepe thyselffP
And than they departed and com togydirs as hit had bene
thundir. And sir Dodynas spere braste in sundir, but sir
Trystrames smote hym with a more myght, that he smote 5
hym clene over the horse croupyr, and nyghe he had brokyn
his necke.

Whan sir Sagramoure saw hys felow have suche a falle he
. mervayled what knyght he was, but so he dressed his speare 163^r
with all his myght, and sir Trystrames ayenste hym, and so xo
they cam togydir as thundir. And there sir Trystrames
smote sir Sagramour a stronge buffete, that he bare hys
horse and hym to the erthe, and in the fallynge he brake his
thyghe.

So whan this was done sir Trystrames asked them, 15

'Fayre knyghtes, wyll ye ony more? Be there ony bygger
knyghtys in the courte of kynge Arthur? Hit is to you
shame to sey us knyghtes of Cornwayle dishonour, for hit
may happyn a Cornysh knyght may macche you.*

'This is trouthe,' seyde sir Sagramoure, 'that have we well 20
proved. But I requyre you,' seyde sir Sagramour, 'telle us
your name, be your feyth and trouthe that ye owghe to the
hyghe Order of Knyghthode.'

'Ye charge me with a grete thyng,' seyde sir Trystrames,
'and sytthyn ye lyst to wete, ye shall know and undirstonde 25
that my name ys sir Trystrames de Lyones, kynge Melyodas
son, and newew unto kynge Marke.'

Than were they two knyghtes fayne that they had mette
with sir Trystrames, and so they prayde hym to abyde in
their felyshyp. 3°

'Nay,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'for I muste have ado wyth
one or your felawys. His name is sir Bleoberys de Ganys.'

'God spede you well,' seyde sir Sagramoure and sir
Dodynas.

So sir Trystrames departed and rode onwarde on his way. 3 s
And than was he ware before hym in a valay where rode
sir Bleoberys wyth sir Segwarydes lady that rode behynde
his squyre uppon a palfrey.

* kepe»e*i«Ct 6 C«oupe 9 Che myght be 16 C no bygger
18 Csayofvs 22 Cyour ryght name by the feythe

(I 7) Than sir Trystrames rode more than a pace untill that he had overtake hym. Than spake sir Trystrames:

'Abyde', he seyde, 'knyght of Arthures courte! Brynge agayne that lady or delyver hir to met'

5 'I woll do neyther nother,' seyde sir Bleoberys, 'for I drede no Cornysse knyght so sore that me lyst to delyver her.'

'Why,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'may nat a Cornysse knyght do as well as another knyght? Yes, this same day
163^v two knyghtes of youre courte wythin this three myle mette.

10 with me, and or ever we departed they founde a Cornysse knyght good inowe for them both.'

'What were their namys ?' seyde sir Bleobrys.

'Sir, they tolde me that one hyght sir Sagramoure le Desyrous and that other hyght sir Dodynas le Saveayge.'

15 'A,' seyde sir Bleoberys, 'have ye mette with them? So God me helpe, they were two good knyghtes and men of grete worshyp, and yf ye have betyn them bothe ye muste nedis be a good knyght. Yf hit be so ye have beatyn them bothe, yet shall ye nat feare me, but ye shall beate me or ever
20 ye have this lady.'

'Than defende you!' seyde sir Trystrames.

So they departed and com togydir lyke thundir, and eyther bare other downe, horse and man, to the erthe. Than they avoyded their horsys and lashed togydys egerly with
25 swerdys and myghtyly, now here now there, trasyng and traversynge on the ryght honde and on the lyffte honde more than two owres. And somtyme they rowyssed togydir with suche a myght that they lay bothe grovelynge on the erthe. Than sir Bleoberys de Ganys sterte abacke and seyde
3° thus:

'Now, jantyll knyght, a whyle holde your hondes and let us speke togydys.'

'Sey on what ye woll,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'and I woll answeere you and I can.*

35 'Sir,' seyde Bleoberys, 'I wolde wete of whens ye were and of whom ye be com and what is your name.'

'So God me helpe,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'I feare nat to

5 nother *not in C* 8 Yes *not in C* 12-13 *C* said Bleoberis they told me
said syr Trystram that one of them 23 Chors and alle 25 here now there *not*
in Cf 28-9 *C* on the ground 33 on *not in C* 34 and I cannot in *C*

telle you my name. Wete you well, I am kynge Melyodas son, and my mother is kynge Markys sistir, and my name is sir Trystrames de Lyones, and kynge Marke ys myne uncle.'

Truly,' seyde sir Bleoberys, 'I am ryght glad of you, for ye ar he that slewe [Marhalte] the knyght honde for honde in the ilonde for the trwayge of Cornwayle. Also ye overcom sir Palomydes, the good knyght, at the turnemente in Ire-Jonde where he bete sir Gawayne and his nine felowys.'

'So God me helpe,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'wete you well 10 164^r I am the same knyght. Now I have tolde you my name, telle me yours.'

'With good wyll. [Wete ye well] that my name is sir Bleoberys de Ganys, and my brother hyght sir Blamoure de Ganys that is callyd a good knyght, and we be sistyrs 15 chyl dyrn unto my lorde sir Launcelot de Lake that we calle one of the beste knyghtes of the worlde.'

'That is trouthe,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'sir Launcelot ys called pereles of curtesy and of knyghthode, and for his sake,' seyde sir Trystramys, 'I wyll nat with my good wyll aofeyght no more with you, for the grete love I have to sir Launcelot.'

'In good feyth,' seyde sir Bleoberys, 'as for me, I wold be loth to fyght with you, but sytthen ye folow me here to have thys lady I shall proffir you kyndenes and curtesy ryght *\$ here uppon this grounde. Thys lady shall be sette betwyxte us bothe, and who that she wold go unto of you and me, lette hym have hir in pees.'

'I wold well,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'for as I deme she wold leve you and com to me.' 30

'Ye shall preve anone,' seyde sir Bleoberys.

So whan she was sette betwyxte them she seyde thes (18) wordys unto sir Trystrames:

'Wete thou well, sir Trystrames de Lyones, that but late thou was the man in the worlde that I moste loved and 35 trusted, and I wente ye had loved me agayne above all ladyes. But whan thou sawyste this knyghte lede me away

6 C* slewe marhaus the knyght 8-9 Cf turnement in an Hand 9 C where yef bete (see note) 22 C Launcelot du Lake 25 C kyndenys curtesy and gentilnes 27 C to whome that she wille go lete 31 C preue hit anone

thou madist no chere to rescow me, but suffirdyst my lorde sir Segwarydes to ryde after me. But untyll that tyme I wente ye had loved me. And therefore now I forsake the and never to love the more.'

5 And therewithall she wente unto sir Bleoberys. Whan sir Trystrames saw her do so he was wondirly wroth with that lady and ashamed to come to the courte. But sir Bleoberys seyde unto sir Trystrames,

* Ye ar in the blame, for I hyre by this ladyes wordis that she
io trusted you abovyn all erthely knyghtes, and, as she seyth,
ye have dysseyved hir. Therefore wete you well, there may
164^T no man holde that woll away, and rathir than ye sholde
hertely be displeased with me, I wolde ye had her, and she
wolde abyde with you.'

15 'Nay,' seyde the lady, 'so Jesu me helpe, I woll never go
wyth hym, f[or] he that I loved and wente that he had loved
me forsoke me at my nede. And therefore, sir Trystrames,'
she seyde, 'ryde as thou com, for though thou haddyste
overcom this knyght as thou were lykly, with the never
20 wolde I have gone. And I shall pray thys knyght so fayre of
his knyghthode that or evir he passe thys contrey that he woll
lede me to the abbey there my lorde sir Segwarydes lyggys.'

'So God me helpe,' seyde sir Bleoberys, 'I latte you wete
this, good knyght sir Trystrames: because kynge Marke
25 gaff me the choyse of a gyffte in this courte, and so this
lady lyked me beste—natwythstondynge she is wedded and
hath a lorde—and I have also fulfilled my queste, she shall
be sente unto hir husbande agayne, and in especiall moste
for your sake, sir Trystrames. And she wolde go with you,
30 I wolde ye had her.'

'I thanke you,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'but for her sake
I shall beware what maner of lady I shall love or truste. For
had her lorde sir Segwarydes bene away from the courte, I
sholde have bene the fyrste that sholde a folowed you. But
35 syth ye have refused me, as I am a trew knyght, I shall know
hir passyngly well that I shall love other truste.'

3-4 C I wille leue the and neuer loue 7-10 C courte sir Tristram said sir
Bleoberys ye ar in the defaute for I here by these ladyes wordes she before this
day trusted 15 Cso god me help 16-17 Cf I loued most I wende he
had loued me And therfore 24 W that this (*not in C*) 27 CI haue fulfilled
31 C but for her loue 35-6 C her knowe (*see note*)

And so they toke their leve and departed, and so sir Trystrames rode unto Tyntagyll, and sir Bleoberys rode unto the abbey where sir Segwarydes lay sore wounded, and there he delyverde his lady and departed as a noble knyght.

So whan sir Segwarydes saw his lady he was gretly comforted; and than she tolde hym that sir Trystrames had done grete batayle with sir Bleoberys and caused hym to bryng her agayne. So that wordis pleased sir Segwarydes gretly, that sir Trystrames wolde do so muche; and so that lady tolde all 165* the batayle unto kynge Marke betwexte sir Trystramys and 10 sir Bleoberys.

So whan this was done kynge Marke caste all the wayes (19) that he myght to dystroy sir Trystrames, and than imaged in hymself to sende sir Trystramys into Irelande for La Beale Isode. For sir Trystrames had so preyed her for hir 15 beaute and goodnesse that kynge Marke seyde he wolde wedde hir; whereuppon he prayde sir Trystramys to take his way into Irelande for hym on message. And all this was done to the entente to sle sir Trystramys. Natwithstondynge he wolde nat refuse the messayge for no daunger nother 20 perell that myght falle, for the pleasure of his uncle. So to go he made hym redy in the moste goodlyest wyse that myght be devysed, for he toke with hym the moste goodlyeste knyghtes that he myght fynde in the courte, and they were arayed aftir the gyse that was used that tyme in the moste 25 goodlyeste maner.

So sir Trystrames departed and toke the see with all his felyshyp. And anone, as he was in the see, a tempeste toke them and drove them into the coste of Ingelonde. And there they aryved faste by Camelot, and full fayne they were 30 to take the londe. And whan they were loded sir Trystrames sette up his pavylyon uppon the londe of Camelot, and there he lete hange his shyld uppon the pavylyon.

And that same day cam two knyghtes of kynge Arthures: that one was sir Ector de Marys, and that other was sir 35

1 C leue one fro thother and 8 C segwarydes ryght wel that 12-13 Cf
cast alweyes in his hert how he myght F (MS. B.N.fr. 103 f. 49* col. 2) en
nullemaniere 15-16 Cher beaute and her goodnes 17-18 W to take thisf
way C to take his* wey 25-6 C was thenne vsed in the goodlyest maner
28 C the brode see 28-9 C toke hym and his felauship and drofe them bak in to
35 that other was not in Cf

Morganoure. And thes two touched the shyld and bade hym com oute of the pavylyon for to juste and he wolde.

'Anone ye shall be answeyrd,' seyde sir Trystramys, 'and ye woll tary a lytyll whyle.'

5 So he made hym redy, and fyrste he smote downe sir Ector and than sir Morganoure, all with one speare, and sore brused them. And whan they lay uppon the erthe they
165^v asked sir Trystramys what he was and of what contrey he was knyght.

10 'Fayre lordis,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'wete you well that I am of Cornwayle.'

'AlasP seyde sir Ector, 'now am I ashamed that ever ony Cornysse knyght sholde overcom me!' And than for dispyte sir Ector put of his armoure fro hym and wente on
is foot and wolde nat ryde.

(20) Than hit befelle that sir Bleoberys and sir Blamour de Ganys that were brethyrn, they had assomned kyng Angwysse of Irelande for to com to kyng Arthurs courte uppon payne of forfeiture of kyng Arthurs good grace; and
20 yf the kyng of Irelande come nat into that day assygned and sette, the kyng sholde lose his londys.

So by kyng Arthure hit was happened that day that nother he neythir sir Launcelot myght nat be there where the jugemente sholde be yevyn, for kyng Arthure was with sir
25 Launcelot at Joyous Garde. And so kyng Arthure assygned kyng Carados and the kyng of Scottis to be there that day as juges.

So whan thes kynges were at Camelot kyng Angwysse of Irelande was com to know hys accusers. Than was sir
30 Blamour de Ganys there that appeled the kyng of Irelande of treson, that he had slayne a cosyn of thers in his courte in Irelande by treson. Than the kyng was sore abaysshed of his accusacion for why he was at the sommons of kyng Arthure, and or that he com at Camelot he wyste nat where-
35 fore he was sente fore.

So whan the kyng herde hym sey his wyll he undirstood

2 C wold lust
doun sir

3 Anone *not in C*
20 C in at the

assigned kyng Arthur neither

Arthur 25 C the castel ioyous

6 C Ector de marys and after he smote
22-3 C So by hit happened that at the day

23-4 C there for to gyue the Iugement for kyng

35 C sente after 36 C herd sir Blamor saye

well there was none other remedy but to answeere hym knyghtly. For the custom was suche tho dayes that and ony man were appealed of ony treson othir of murthure he sholde fyght body for body, other ellys to fynde another knyght for hym. And alle maner of murders in tho dayes were called 5 treson.

So whan kyng Angwysshe undirstood his accusyng he 166^r was passynge hevy, for he knew sir Blamoure de Ganys that he was a noble knyght, and of noble kynghes comyn. So the kyng of Irelande was but symply purveyede of his answeere. 10 Therefore the juges gaff hym respyte by the thirde day to gyff his answeere. So the kyng departed unto his lodgyng.

The meanewhyle there com a lady by sir Trystrames pavylyon makynge grete dole.

'What aylyth you,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'that ye make 15 suche dole?'

'A, fayre knyght!' seyde the lady, 'I am shamed onles that som good knyght helpe me, for a grete lady of worshyp sent by me a fayre chylde and a ryche unto sir Launcelot, and hereby there mette with me a knyght and threw me 20 downe of my palfrey and toke away the chylde frome me.'

'Well, my lady,' seyde sir Trystramys, 'and for my lorde sir Launcelotes sake I shall gete you that chylde agayne, othir he shall beate me.'

And so sir Trystramys toke his horse and asked the lady 25 whyche way the knyght yoode. Anone she tolde hym, and he rode aftir. So within a whyle he overtoke that knyght and bade hym turne and brynge agayne the chylde.

Anone the knyght turned his horse and made hym redy (21) to fyght, and than sir Trystramys smote hym with a swerde 30 such a buffet that he tumbled to the erthe, and than he yelded hym unto sir Trystramys.

'Than com thy way,' seyde syr Trystrames, 'and brynge the chylde to the lady agayne!'

So he toke his horse weykety and rode wyth sir Trystrames, 35 and so by the way he asked his name.

10 but *not in C* 13 *Wh* mean whyle *P* meane whyle 19 *C* launcelot du lake
 21 *Wh* palfray *P* palfroy 23-4 *C* ageyne or els I shalle be beten for hit 26 *C*
 knyght rode And thenne she 2 7 *C* after hym 2 7-8 *C* and thenne syr Tristram
 badde 28 *Wh* hym come *P* hym tome *C* gyue ageyne 29 *Wh* Capitu-
 lum xxi *P* Capitulum xxii 29 *C* he made 36 *C* waye syr Trystram asked

'Sir,' he seyde, 'my name is Breunys Sanze Pyte^V
So whan he had delyverde that chylde to the lady [he
seyde],

'Sir, as in this the chylde is well remedyed.'

5 Than sir Trystramys lete hym go agayne, that sore
repentyd hym aftir, for he was a grete foo unto many good
knyghtes of kyng Arthures courte.

Than whan sir Trystrames was in his pavylyon Governayle
his man com and tolde hym how that kyng Angwyshe of
to Irelande was com thydir, and he was in grete dystresse; and
there he tolde hym how he was somned and appeled of
murthur.

'So God me helpe/ seyde sir Trystrames, 'this is the beste
tydynges that ever com to me this seven yere, for now shall
15 the kyng of Irelande have nede of my helpe. For I dere say
there is no knyght in this contrey that is nat in Arthures
courte that dare do batayle wyth sir Blamoure de Ganys.
And for to wyne the love of the kyng of Irelande I woll
take the batayle uppon me. And therefore, Governayle,
40 bere me this worde, I charge the, to the kyng.'

Than Governayle wente unto kyng Angwyshe of Ire-
lande and salewed hym full fayre. So the kyng welcommed
hym and asked what he wolde.

'Sir,' he seyde, 'here is a knyght nerehonde that desyryth
25 to speke wyth you, for he bade me sey that he wolde do you
servyse/

'What knyght is he ?' seyde the kyng.

'Sir, hit [is] sir Trystrames de Lyones, that for the good
grace ye shewed hym in your londys he woll rewarde [you]
30 in thys contreys.'

'Com on, fellow,' seyde the kyng, 'with me anone, and
brynge me unto sir Trystramys.'

So the kyng toke a lytyll hackeney and but fewe felyshyp
with hym tyll that he cam unto sir Trystramys pavylyon.
15 And whan sir Trystrames saw the kyng he ran unto hym

1 C Thenne he said P Breunis saunoe pyte Wh Breunis saunte pyte F
(MS. B.N. fr. 103 f. S3^V col. x)i Breulz sans Pitie* 2-3 C* lady he said
6 Wh reyentyd 10 C was putte in 11 C there gouemaile told sir Trystram
how kyng anguysshe was 20 Cf brynge me I charge the to the kyng 22 Wh
sal wed 23 C asked hym what 28 C syr he said hit is P du lyonas
Wh du fyonas 32 C shewe me unto

and wolde have holdyn his styrope, but the kynge lepe
frome his horse lyghtly, and eythir halsedothir in armys.

'My gracious lorde,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'graunte mercy
of your grete goodnesse that ye shewed me in your marchys
and landys! And at that tyme I promysed you to do you 5 *67*
servyse and ever hit lay in my power.*

'A, jantyll knyght,' seyde the kynge unto sir Trystrames,
'now have I grete nede of you, never had I so grete nede of no
.knyghtys helpe.'

'How so, my good lorde?' seyde sir Trystramys. 10

'I shall tyll you,* seyde the kynge.

'I am assumned and appeled fro my contrey for the deth
of a knyght that was kynne unto the good knyght sir
Launcelot, wherefore sir Blamour de Ganys, sir Bleoberys his
brother, hath appeled me to fyght wyth hym other for to 15
fynde a knyght in my stede. And well I wote,' seyde the kynge,
'thes that ar comyn of kynge Banys bloode, as sir Launcelot
and thes othir, ar passynge good harde knyghtes and harde
men for to wyne in batayle as ony that I know now lyvyng.*

'Sir,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'for the good lordeshyp ye *°
shewed unto me in Irelande and for my lady youre doughtirs
sake, La Beale Isode, I woll take the batayle for you
uppon this conducion, that ye shall graunte me two thynges:
one is that ye shall swere unto me that ye ar in the ryght and
that ye were never consentynge to the knyghtis deth. Sir,' 25
than seyde sir Trystramys, 'whan I have done this batayle,
yf God gyff me grace to spede, that ye shall gyff me a rewarde
what thyng resonable that I woll aske you.'

'So God me helpe,' seyde the kynge, 'ye shall have what-
somever ye woll.' 30

'Ye sey well,' seyde sir Trystramys, 'now make your (22)
answere that your champyon is redy, for I shall dye in your
quarell rathir than to be recreaunte.'

'I have no doute of you/ seyde the kynge, 'that and ye
sholde have ado with sir Launcelot de Lake.* 35

3 Cgramercy 5-6 Cdoomy seruyse 12 Cassomoned 14-15 °Ganys
and sir Bleoberys his brother C* sir Blamor de ganys broder to sir Bleoberys
F (MS. B.N. fr. 103 f. Si^o col. 2) 1 Tun d'eux qui avoit nom Blanor et estoit frere
Blioberis 23-4 C thynges that one 24 and not in C 27 C grace that
I spede 28 C of you 30-1 C ye will aske It is wel 33 Wh racreaunt
P recreaunt 34-p. 408,1 C lake syr said sir Tristram as for sire Launcelot he

'God me spedeP seyde sir Blamour.

And therewith he toke his horse at the one ende of the lystes, and sir Trystramys at the othir ende of the lystes, and so they feautred their sperys and com togedyrs as hit had be thundir, and there sir Trystrames thorow grete myght 5 smote doune sir Blamour and his horse to the erthe.

Than anone sir Blamour avoyded his horse and pulled oute his swerde and toke his shyld before hym and bade sir Trystrames alyght, 'for thoughe my horse hath fayled, I truste to God the erthe woll nat fayle me!' 10

And than sir Trystrames alyght and dressed hym unto batayle, and there they laysshed togedir strongely, rasyng, foynyng and daysshynge many sad strokes, that the kynges and knyghtes had grete wondir that they myght stonde, for they evir fought lyke woode men. There was never seyne of *s two knyghtes that fought more ferselyer, for sir Blamour was so hasty he wolde have no reste, that all men wondirde that they had brethe to stonde on their feete, that all the place was bloode* that they fought in. And at the laste sir Trystramys smote sir Blamour suche a buffette uppon the helme *o that he there synked doune uppon his syde, and sir Trystramys stood styll and behylde hym.

So whan sir Blamour myght speke he seyde thus: (23)

'Sir Trystrames de Lyones, I requyre the, as thou art a noble knyght and the beste knyght that ever I founde, 25 that thou wolt sle me oute, for I wolde nat lyve to be made lorde of all the erthe; for I had lever dye here with worshyp than lyve here with shame. And nedis, sir Trystrames, thou muste sle me, other ellys thou shalt never wynne the fylde, 168* for I woll never sey the lothe worde. And therefore, yf 30 [thou] dare sle me, sle me, I requyre the'

Whan sir Trystrames herde hym sey so knyghtly, in his herte he wyste nat what to do with hym. Remembryng hym of bothe partyes, of what bloode he was commyn of, and for sir Launcelottis sake, he wolde be loth to sle hym; and in 35 the other party, in no wyse he myght nat chose but to make hym sey the lothe worde, othir ellys to sle hym.

12-13 ^c strongly as racyng and tracyng foynyng
sene fyghte more fyersly than they dyd
not in C 27 CI haue 27, 28 here not in C 15-16 C neuer knyghtes
21 C there felle donne 22 styll
33 Che remembryng

Than sir Trystrames sterte abacke and wente to the kynges that were juges, and there he kneled downe tofore them and besought them of their worshyppis, and for kynge Arthurs love and for sir Launcellottis sake, that they wolde s take this mater in their hondis.

Tor, my fayre lordys,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'hit were shame and pyte* that this noble knyght that yondir lyeth sholde be slayne, for ye hyre well, shamed woll he nat be. And I pray to God that he never be slayne nother shamed io for me. And as for the kynge whom I fyght fore, I shall requyre hym, as I am hys trew champyon and trew knyght in this fylde, that he woll have mercy uppon this knyght.'

'So God me helpe,' seyde kyng Angwyshe, 'I woll for your sake, sir Trystrames, be ruled as ye woll have me, and 15 I woll hartely pray the kynges that be here juges to take hit in there hondys.'

Than the kynges that were juges called sir Bleoberys to them and asked his advyce.

'My lordys,' seyde sir Bleoberys, 'thoughe my brother be 20 beatyn and have the worse thorow myght of armys in his body, [I dare sey, though sir Trystrames hath beatyn his body], he hath nat beatyn his harte, and thanke God he is nat shamed this day; and rathir than he be shamed I requyre you,' seyde sir Bleoberys, 'lat sir Trystrames sle hym oute.'

zs 'Hit shall nat be!' seyde the kynges, 'for his parte his adversary, both the kynge and the champyon, have pyte* on sir Blamoure his knyghthode.'

'My lordys,' seyde sir Bleoberys, 'I woll ryght as ye woll.' 169* Than the kynges called the kynge of Irelande and founde 30 hym goodly and trefable, and than by all their advyces sir Trystrames and sir Bleoberys toke up sir Blamoure, and the two bretherne were made accorded wyth kynge Angwyshe and kyssed togydir and made frendys for ever.

And than sir Blamoure and sir Trystrames kyssed togedirs, 35 and there they made their othis that they wolde never none

14-15 C* haue me For I knowe you for my true knyghte And therefore I wyllle hertely 20-1 W have the worse in his body thorow myght of armys he hath nat beatyn his harte C hath the wers thorou myghte of armes I dare saye though syre Trystram hath beten his body he hath not beten his herte and I thanke {see note} 25-6 C his parte aduersary 26-27 C pyte of syre Blamors knyghthode 28 C ryght wel as 33 togydir not in C

of them two brethirne fyght wyth sir Trystrames, and sir Trystramys made them the same othe. And for that jantyll batayle all the bloode of sir Launcelott loved sir Trystrames for ever.

Than kynge Angwyshe and sir Trystrames toke their 5 leve, and so he sayled into Irelande wyth grete nobles and joy. So whan they were in Irelande the kynge lete make hit knowyn thorowoute all the londe how and in what maner sir Trystrames had done for hym. Than the quene and all that there were made the moste of hym that they myght. But the 10 joy that La Beale Isode made of sir Trystrames there myght no tunge telle, for of all men erthely she loved hym moste.

Than uppon a day kynge Angwyshe asked sir Trystrames (24) why he asked nat his bone. Than seyde sir Trystrames,

'Now hit is tyme. Sir, this is all that I woll desyre, that 1s ye woll gyff La Beale Isode, youre doughter, nat for myself, but for myne uncle, kyng Marke, [that] shall have her to wyff, for so have I promysed hym.*

'Alas!' seyde the kynge, 'I had lever than all the londe that I have that ye wolde have wedded hir yourself.' 20

'Sir, and I dud so, I were shamed for ever in this worlde and false to my promyse. Therefore,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'I requyre you, holde your promyse that ye promysed me, for this is my desyre: that ye woll gyff me La Beale Isode to go with me into Cornwayle for to be wedded unto kynge *5 Marke, myne uncle.'

'As for that,' kynge Angwyshe seyde, 'ye shall have her with you to do with hir what hit please you, that is for to sey, if that ye lyst to wedde hir yourselff, that is me leveste; 169* and yf ye woll gyff hir unto kyng Marke your uncle, that is 30 in your choyse.'

So, to make shorte conclusyon, La Beale Isode was made redy to go with sir Trystrames. And dame Brangwayne wente with hir for hir chyffjantyllwoman with many other: th[e] quene, Isodes modir, gaff dame Brangwayne unto hir 35 to be hir jantyllwoman.

6 so he *not in C* 14 C* bone For what somever he had promysed hym he shold have hit withoute fayle Syre said sire Trystram 16 C gyue me zo C wold wedde 23 C I praye you hold 35 W than quene C thenne the quene 35-p. 412, 2 Cf gaf to her and dame Bragwayne her doughters gentilwoman and vnto Gouvernaik a drynke and charged them that what day kynge (*see note*)

And also she and Governayle had a drynke of the quene, and she charged them that where kynge Marke sholde wedde, that same day they sholde gyff them that drynke that kynge Marke sholde drynke to La Beale Isode. 'And than,' s seyde the quene, 'ayther shall love other dayes of their lyff.'

So this drynke was gyvyn unto dame Brangwayne and unto Governayle. So sir Trystrames toke the see, and La Beale Isode. [And whan they] were in their caban, hit happed so they were thyrsty. And than they saw a lytyll io flakette of golde stonde by them, and hit semed by the coloure and the taste that hit was noble wyne. So sir Trystrames toke the flaket in his honde and seyde,

'Madame Isode, here is a draught of good wyne that dame Brangwayne, your maydyn, and Governayle, my servaunte, *5 hath kepte for hemselfrV

Than they lowghe and made good chere and eyther dranke to other frely, ana they thought never drynke that ever they dranke so swete nother so good to them. But by that drynke was in their bodyes they loved aythir other so' well that 20 never hir love departed, for well nother for woo. And thus hit happed fyrst, the love betwyxte sir Trystrames and La Beale Isode, the whyche love never departed dayes of their lyff.

So than they sayled tyll that by fortune they com nye a 25 castell that hyght Plewre, and there they aryved for to repose them, wenyng to them to have had good herborow.

But anone as sir Trystrames was within the castell they were takyn presoners, for the custom of that castell was suche that who that rode by that castell and brought ony lady wyth 30 hym he muste nedys fyght with the lorde that hyght Brewnour. And yf hit so were that Brewnour wan the fylde, than sholde the knyght straunger and his lady be put to deth, what that ever they were. And yf hit were so that the straunge knyght wan the fylde of sir Brewnour, than sholde 35 he dye and hys lady bothe. So this custom was used many

5 C said the Quene I vndertake eyther shall loue other the dayes
 aile And thenneanone syre 10 C flacked 12 C flacket 13-14 Chere
 is the beste drynke that euer ye drank that dame Bragwayne 15 C haue
 18-19 C dranke to other was soo swete nor soo good But by that theyr drynke
 22 C the dayes 24 that *not in C* 25 C Pluere 28-9 C suche who
 29-30 wyth hym *not in C* 31 C Breunor

wyntyrs, wherefore hit was called the Castell Plewre, that is to sey 'the wepynge castell\

Thus as sir Trystrames and La Beale Isode were in preson, (25) hit happynd a knyghte [and] a lady com unto them where they were to chere them. Than seyde sir Trystrames unto 5 the knyght and to the lady,

'What is the cause the lorde of this castell holdyth us in preson ? For hit [was] never the custom of placis of worshyp that ever I cam in, whan a knyght and a lady asked herborow, and they to receyve them, and aftir to dystres them that be »o his gestys.'

'Sir,' seyde the knyght, 'this is the olde custom of this castell, that whan a knyght commyth here he muste nedis fvght with oure lorde, and he that is the wayker muste lose hishede. And whan that is done, if his lady that he bryngyth 15 be fowler than is oure lordys wyff, she muste lose hir hede. And yf she be fayrer preved than is oure lady, than shall the lady of this castell lose her hede/

'So God me helpe', seyde sir Trystrames, 'this is a foule custom and a shamfull custom. But one avauntage have I,' 20 seyde sir Trystrames, 'I have a lady is fayre ynowe, and I doute nat for lacke of beaute* she shall nat lose her hede. And rathir than I shall lose myne hede I woll fyght for hit on a fayre fylde. Sir knyght and your fayre lady, I pray you, tell your lorde that I woll be redy as to-morne, wyth my 25 lady and myselff, to do batayle if hit be so I may have my 170* horse and myne armoure.'

'Sir,' seyde the knyght, 'I undirtake for youre desyre shall be spedde, and therefore take your reste and loke that ye be up betymes, and make you redy and your lady, for ye shall 30 wante nothyng that you behovyth.'

And therewith he departed, and so on the morne betymys that same knyght com to sir Trystramys and fecched hym oute and his lady, and brought hym horse and armoure that was his owne, and bade hym make hym redy to the fylde, 35

1 C wynters for hit 3-4 W were in preson hit happynd a knyghte were in
preson a lady com C* were in pryson hit happed a knyght and a lady came
8 C* pryson hit was neuer 10 C to destroye them 20 C shameful But
zi-2 C* ynou3 fayrer sawe I neuer in alle my lyfe dayes And 24 C Wherefore
Syre knyght I pray 28 C said that knyght 28-9 C that your desyre
shalle be spedde ryght wel And thenne he sayd take

for all the astatys and comyns of that lordshyp were there redy to beholde that batayle and jugement.

Than cam sir Brewnor, the lorde of the castell, with his lady in his honde muffed, and asked sir Trystrames where
 5 was his lady, 'for and thy lady be feyrer than myne, with thy swerde smyte of my ladyes hede, and yf my lady be fayrer than thyne, with my swerde I muste stryke or hir hede. And if I may wynne the, yette shall thy lady be myne, and thou shalt lese thy hede.'

io 'Sir,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'this is a foule custom and an horryble, and rather than my lady sholde lose hir hede yett had I lever lose myne hede.'

'Nay, nay!' seyde sir Brewnor, 'the ladyes shall be fyrste shewed togydir, and that one shall have hir jugement.'

15 'Nay, I wyll nat so,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'for here is none that woll gyff ryghtuous jugement. But I doute nat,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'my lady is fayrer than youres, and that woll I make good with my hondys, and who that woll sey the contrary, I woll preve hit on his hede!'

20 And therewyth sir Trystrames shewed forth La Beale Isode and turned hir thryse aboute with his naked swerde in his honde. And so duo. sir Brewnor the same wyse to his
 171* lady. But whan sir Brewnor behelde La Beale Isode hym thought he saw never a fayrer lady, and than he drad his
 25 ladyes hede sholde off. And so all the people that were there presente gaffjugement that La Beale Isode was the fayrer lady and the better made.

'How now?' seyde syr Trystrames. 'Mesemyth hit were pyte* that my lady sholde lose hir hede, but bycause thou
 30 and she of longe tyme have used this wycked custom and by you bothehath many good knyghtes and fayre ladyes bene destroyed, for that cause hit were no losse to destroy you bothe.'

'So God me helpe,' seyde sir Brewnor, 'for to sey the sothe, thy lady is fayrer than myne, and that me sore repentys,
 35 and so I hyre the people pryvyly sey, for of all women I sawe never none so fayre. And therefore, and thou wolt sle my lady, I doute nat I shall sle the and have thy lady.'

6-7 Cf fayrer than myn 14 Cthe one 18 Cwho someuer he be that wille
 2 2-3 C* And whanne syre Breunor sawe that he dyd the same wyse tome his lady But
 25 Csholdbeof 31 Cand ladyes 34 R so he thy 37 C not but Ishal

'Well, thou shalt wyn her,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'as dere as ever knyght wanne lady. And bycause of thyne owne jugemente thou woldist have done to my lady if that she had bene fowler, and bycause of the evyll custom, gyff me thy lady,' seyde syr Trystrames. 5

And therewithal! sir Trystrames strode unto hym and toke his lady frome hym, and with an awke stroke he smote of hir hede clene.

'Well, knyght,' seyde sir Brewnor, 'now haste thou done me a grete dispyte. Now take thyne horse, and sytthen that 10 (2 I am ladyles, I woll wyne thy lady and I may.'

Than they toke their horsis and cam togydir as hit had bene thundir, and sir Trystrames smote sir Brewnor clene frome his horse. And lyghtly he rose up, and as sir Trystrames com agayne by hym he threste his horse thorowoute 15 bothe shuldyrs, that his horse hurled here and there and felle dede to the grounde. And ever sir Brewnor ran aftir to have slayne sir Trystrames, but he was lyght and nymell and 171* voyded his horse. Yett, or ever sir Trystrames myght dresse his shyld and his swerde, he gaff hym three or four strokys. 20

Than they russhed togydys lyke two borys, trasynge and traversynge myghtyly and wysely as two noble knyghtes, for this sir Brewnor was a proved knyght and had bene or than the deth of many good knyghtes. Soo thus they fought hurlyng here and there nyghe two owres, and aythir were 25 wounded sore. Than at the Taste sir Brewnor russhed uppon sir Trystrames and toke hym in his armys, for he trusted muche to his strengthe. (Than was sir Trystrames called the strengyst knyght of the worlde, for he was called bygger than sir Launcelotte, but sir Launcelot was bettir brethid). 30 So anone sir Trystrames threste sir Brewnor downe grovelyng, and than he unlaced his helme and strake of his hede.

And than all they [that] longed to the castell com to hym and dud hym homage and feaute*, prayng hym that he wolde abyde styll there a lytyll whyle to fordo that foule custom. 35 So this sir Trystrames graunted thereto.

1 well not in C 3 C as thou 10 C a despyte 19 C how lightly
And or 20 C the other gaf C sadde strokes 24 C* knyghtes that it
was pyte that he had so long endured Thus they fought 29 C* the strengest and
the hyst knyght 31-4 W (sidenote)... Sir Trystra... slew sir... unor and ...
vyff of... el Pleu... {margin torn} 35 W customys 36 So this not in C

So the meanewhyle one of the knyghtes rode unto sir Galahalte the Haute Prynce whyche was sir Brewnors son, a noble knyght, and tolde hym what mysadventure his fadir had and his modir.

(27) s Than cam sir Galahalt and the Kynge with the Hondred Knyghtes with hym, and this sir Galahalte profyrde to fyght wyth sir Trystrames hande for hande. And so they made hem redy to go unto batayle on horsebacke wyth grete corrayge.

10 So anone they mette togydyrs so hard that aythir bare othir adowne, horse and man, to the erthe. And whan they avoyded their horsis, as noble knyghtes they dressed their
172^r shyldis and drewe their swerdys wyth yre and rahcoure, and they laysshed togydyr many sad strokys. And one whyle
15 strykyng and another whyle foynynge, tracynge and travyng as noble knyghtes.

Thus they fought longe, nerehonde halff a day, and aythir were sore wounded. So at the laste sir Trystrames waxed lyght and bygge, and doubled his strokys and drove sir
20 Galahalt abacke on the tone sy[d]e and on the tothir, that he was nye myscheved, lyke to be slayne.

So wyth that cam the Kynge wyth the Hondred Knyghtes, and all that felyshyp wente freyshly uppon sir Trystrames. But whan sir Trystramys saw them comynge uppon hym,
*5 than he wyste well he myght nat endure, so as a wyse knyght of warre he seyde unto sir Galahalt the Haute Prynce,

'Syr, ye shew to me no kyndenesse for to suffir all your men to have ado wyth me, and ye seme a noble knyght of your hondys. Hit is grete shame to you!'

30 'So God me helpe,' seyde sir Galahalt, 'there is none other way but thou muste yelde the to me other ellys to dye, sir Trystrames/

'Sir, as for that, I woll rather yelde me to you than dye, for hit is more for the myght of thy men than of thyne handys.'

35 And therewithall sir Trystrames toke his swerde by the

1 C knyghtes of the castel 2 Cf Galahad F Galehout (<var. Galehout) C the whiche 2-3 C sone whiche was a to C Thenne sir Galahad and sir Trystram mette 11 C hors and alle lyCnerehalt 20 W the tone syne C on the one syde* 23 Cfyersly vpon 28 C with meal at ones And as me semeth ye be a noble 31-2 C to dye said sir Galahad to sir Trystram 33 Sir, as for that to?/« C 34 C your... your 35 Chisowne

poynte and put the pomell in his honde, and therewithall com the Kynge with the Hondred Knyghtes and harde began to assayle sir Trystrames.

'Lat be,' seyde sir Galahalt, 'that ye be nat so hardy to towche hym, for I have gyffyn this knyght his lyff.' 5

'That ys your shame,' seyde the kynge, 'for he hath slayne youre fadir and your modir.'

'As for that,' seyde sir Galahalte, 'I may nat wyght hym gretly, for my fadir had hym in [preson] and inforsed hym to do batayle with hym. And my fadir hadde suche a custom, «o 172^T that was a shamefull custom, that what knyght and lady com thydir to aske herberow, his lady [must] nedis dye but yf she were fayrer than my modir; and if my fadir overcom that knyght he muste nedis dye. For sothe, this was a shamefull custom and usage, a knyght, for his herborow askynge, to *\$ have suche herborage. And for this custom I wolde never draw aboute hym,'

'So God me helpe,' seyde the kynge, 'this was a shamefull custom.'

'Truly,' seyde sir Galahalt, 'so semyth me. And me- 20 semyth hit had bene grete pyte* that this knyght sholde have bene slayne, for I dare sey he is one of the noblyst knyghtes that beryth lyff but yf hit be sir Launcelot du Lake.'

'Now, fayre knyght,' seyde sir Galahalte, 'I requyre you, telle me youre name and of whens ye ar and whethir thou 25 wolte.'

'Sir,' he seyde, 'my name is sir Trystrames de Lyones, and frome kynge Marke of Cornwayle I was sente on messayge unto kyng Angwyshe of Irelande for to fecche his doughtyr to be his wyff, and here she is redy to go wyth me 30 into Cornwayle, and her name is La Beale Isode.'

Than seyde sir Galahalte unto sir Trystramys,

'Well be ye founde in this marchis! And so ye woll promyse me to go unto sir Launcelot and accompany wyth hym, ye shall go where ye woll and youre fayre lady wyth 35 you. And I shall promyse you never in all my dayes shall

1 C in the hand of sir Galahad 6 C the kynge with the C knyghtes hath he not
14 For sothe *not in C* 20, 21 Csemed 22 C is the noblest man 24-5 C
requyre the... thy name ... thou aft 31-3 Cf Isoud and sir Trystram said sir
Galahad the haut prynce wel be ye

none suche custom be used in this castell as hath bene used heretofore.'

'Sir/ seyde sir Trystrames, 'now I late you wete, so God me helpe, I wente ye had bene sir Launcelot du Lake whan
 173* 5 I sawe you fyrste, and therefore I dred you the more. And, sir, I promyse you/ seyde sir Trystrames, 'as sone as I may I woll se sir Launcelot and infelyshyp me with hym, for of all the knyghtes in the worlde I moste desyre his felyshyp.'
 (28) And than sir Trystramys toke his leve whan he sawe his 10 tyme, and toke the see.

And meanewhyle worde com to sir Launcelot and to sir Trystramys that kynge Carados, the myghty kynge that was made lyke a gyaunte why(ght), fought wyth sir Gawayne and gaff hym suche strokys that he sowned in his sadyll. And
 15 after that he toke hym by the coler and pulled hym oute of his sadyll and bounde hym faste to the sadyll-bowghe, and so rode his way with hym towarde his castell. And as he rode, sir Launcelot by fortune mette with kynge Carados, and anone he knew sir Gawayne that lay bounde before hym.

20 'A !' seyde syr Launcelot unto sir Gawayne, 'how stondyth hit wyth you ?'

'Never so harde,' seyde sir Gawayne, 'onles that ye helpe me. For, so God me helpe, withoute ye rescow me I know no knyght that may but you other sir Trystrames,' wherefor
 25 sir Launcelot was hevy at sir Gawaynes wordys.

And than sir Launcelot bade sir Carados, 'Ley downe that knyght and fyght with me!'

'Thow arte but a foole,' seyde sir Carados, 'for I woll serve the in the same wyse.'

30 'As for that,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'spare me nat, for I warne the, I woll nat spare the.'

And than he bounde hym hand and foote and so threw hym to the grounde, and than he gate his speare in his honde of his squyre and departed frome sir Launcelot to fecche his
 35 course. And so ayther mette with other and brake their speares to their hondys. And than they pulled oute their

1 none not in C 2 heretofore not in C 12 C sire Carados 13 W gyaunte whyche fought Cgyaunt that fought {see note} 16 Cfast bounde hym 18 C by fortune sir Launcelot sir Carados 24 Coutheryouor 25 Cheuyof 32 C* bond sir Gawayne 33 in his honde not in C

swerdys and hurled togydyrs on horsebacke more than an owre. And at the laste sir Launcelot smote sir Carados suche a buffet on the helme that hit perysshed his brayne-panne.

So than syr Launcelot toke sir Carados by the coler and pulled hym undir his horse fete, and than he alyght and pulled 5 173* of his helme and strake offe his hede. Than sir Launcelot unbownde sir Gawayne.

So this same tale was tolde to sir Galahalte and to syr Trystrames, and sayde, 'Now may ye hyre the nobles that folowyth sir Launcelot.' 10

'Alas!' seyde sir 3Trystrames, 'and I had nat this messayge in hande with this fayre lady, truly I wolde never stynte or I had founde sir Launcelot.'

Than syr Trystrames and La Beale Isode yeode to the see and cam into Cornwayle, and anone all the barownes ^ls mette with hym.

And anone they were rychely wedded wyth grete nobley. (29) But evir, as the Frenshe booke seyth, sir Trystrames and La Beale Isode loved ever togedyrs.

Than was there grete joustys and grete turnayynge, and *o many lordys and ladyes were at that feyste, and sir Trystrames was moste praysed of all other. So thus dured the feste longe.

And aftir that feste was done, within a lytyll whyle aftir, by the assente of two ladyes that were with the quene they *5 ordayned for hate and envye for to distroy dame Brangwayne that was mayden and lady unto La Beale Isode. And she was sente into the foreste for to fecche herbys, and there was she [mette] and bounde honnde and foote to a tre, and so she was bounden three dayes. And by fortune sir 30 Palomydes founde dame Brangwayne, and there he delvverde hir from the deth and brought hir to a nunry there besyde for to be recoverde.

Whan Isode the quene myssed hir mayden, wete vou well she was ryght hevy as evir any quene myght be, for of all 35 erthely women she loved hir beste and moste, cause why she

3 Cit perched 6-9 W (sidenote): How sir Launcelot slew kyng Carados of the dolerous towre 9-10 C Trystram here maye ye here the noblenes 14 C Isoud wente 17 Cf Capitulum XIX 29 W she was and C feete and hand 35 C euer was only quene for 3^p- 4²⁰> 1 C be^{8t tne} cause was for she came

cam with her oute of her contrey. And so uppon a day quene
 Isode walked into the foreste and put away hir thoughtes,
 and there she wente hirselff unto a welle and made grete
 moone. And suddey[n]ly there cam sir Palomydes unto her,
 5 and herde all hir complaynte and seyde,

174^r * Madame Isode, and ye wolde graunte me my boone I
 shall brynge agayne to you dame Brangwayne sauff and
 sounde.'

Than the quene was so glad of his profyr that suddaynly.
 10 unavysed she graunte all his askynge.

'Well, madame,' seyde sir Palomydes, 'I truste to youre
 promyse, and yf ye woll abyde halff an owre here I shall
 brynge hir to you.'

'Sir, I shall abyde you,' seyde the quene.

15 Than sir Palomydes rode forth his way to that nunry,
 and lyghtly he cam agayne with dame Brangwayne; but by
 hir good wylle she wolde nat have comyn to the quene, for
 cause she stoode in adventure of hir lyff. Natwythstondynge,
 halff agayne hir wyll, she cam wyth sir Palomydes unto the
 20 quene, and whan the quene sawe her she was passyng glad.

'Now, madame,' seyde sir Palomydes, 'remembir uppon
 your promyse, for I have fulfilled my promyse.'

'Sir Palomydes,' seyde the quene, 'I wote nat what is your
 desyre, but I woll that ye wete, howbehit that I profyrde
 25 you largely, I thought none evyll, nother, I warne you, none
 evyll woll I do.'

'Madame,' seyde sir Palomydes, 'as at this tyme ye shall
 nat know my desyre.'

'But byfore my lorde, myne husbände, there shall ye
 30 know that ye shall have your desyre that I promysed you.'

And than the quene rode home unto the kynge, and sir
 Palomydes rode with hir, and whan sir Palomydes com be-
 fore the kynge he seyde,

'Sir kynge, I requyre the, as thou arte ryghtuous kynge,
 35 that ye woll juge me the ryght.'

2 Ctoputte 5 C* had herd 6 Cyewille 7 agayne *not in C* 12 C
 abyde here half an houre 14 Csaïd la beale Isoud 17-18 Ccomen ageyne by
 cause for loue of the quene she stood 24 CI promysed 29-31 C*butbifore
 my lord your husband there shalle ye knowe that I wil haue my desyre that ye haue
 promysed me And therwith the quene departed and rode home 32 Crode after
 her 34 Casye be a

'Telle me your cause,' seyde the kynge, 'and ye shall have ryght.'

'Sir,' seyde sir Palomydes, 'I promysed youre quene, my (30) lady dame Isode, to brynge agayne dame Brangwayne that she had loste, uppon this covaunte, that she sholde graunte 5 me a boone that I wolde aske, and withoute grucchyng othir advysemente she graunted me.'

'What sey ye, my lady?*' seyde the kynge. 174*

'Hit is as he seyth, so God me helpe! To sey the soth,' seyde the quene, 'I promysed hym his askyng for love and 10 joy I had to se her.'

'Welle, madame,' seyde the kynge, 'and yf [ye] were hasty to graunte what boone he wolde aske, I wolde well that [ye] perfourmed [your] promyse.'

Than seyde sir Palomydes, 'I woll that ye wete that I woll 15 have youre quene to lede hir and to governe her whereas me lyst.'

Therewyth the kynge stode styll and unbethought hym of sir Trystrames and demed that he wolde rescowe her. And than hastely the kynge answered and seyde, 20

'Take hir to the and the adventures withall that woll falle of hit, for, as I suppose, thou wolt nat enjoy her no whyle.'

'As for that,' seyde sir Palomydes, 'I dare ryght well abyde the adventure.'

And so, to make shorte tale, sir Palomydes toke hir by the 25 honde and seyde,

'Madame, grucche nat to go with me, for I desyre nothyng but youre owne promyse.'

'As for that,' seyde the quene, 'wete thou well, I feare nat gretely to go with the, howbehit thou haste me at avauntage 30 uppon my promyse. For I doute nat I shall be worshypfully rescowed fro the.'

'As for that,' seyde sir Palomydes, 'be as hit be may.'

So quene Isode was sette behynde sir Palomydes and rode his way. And anone the kynge sente unto sir Trystrames, 35 but in no wyse he wolde nat be founde, for he was in the

3-4 my lady dame *not in C* 9-10 *C* help said the quene to saye the sothe I promysed 12 *W* if I 14 *W* she perfourmed her 18 *C* bethought hym 20, 26 and seyde *not in C* %xC her with the aduetures that shal falle 29 wete thou well *not in C* 32 *C* fro *S* from 33 *C* be it as 35 *C* sente after syr 36 *C* he coude be foOde

foreste an-huntynge; for that was allwayes hys custom, but yf he used armes, to chace and to hunte in the forestes.

'Alas!' seyde the kynge, 'now am I shamed forever, that be myne owne assente my lady and my quene shall be
5 devoured.'

Than cam there forth a knyght that hyght Lambegus, and he was a knyght of sir Trystrames.

175^r 'My lorde,' seyde the knyght, 'syth that ye have suche
io truste in my lorde sir Trystrames, wete yow well for his sake
I woll ryde aftir your quene and rescow her, other ellys shall
I be beatyn.'

'Grauntermercy!' seyde the kynge. 'And I lyve, sir Lambegus, I shall deserve hit.'

And than sir Lambegus armed hym and rode aftir them
15 as faste as he myght, and than wythin a whyle he overtoke hem. And than sir Palomydes lefte the quene and seyde,

'What arte thou?' seyde sir Palomydes, 'arte thou sir Trystrames?'

'Nay,' he seyde, 'I am his servaunte, and my name is sir
*o Lambegus.'

'That me repentys,' seyde sir Palomydes, 'I had lever thou had bene sir Trystrames.'

'I leve you well,' seyde sir Lambegus, 'but whan thou metyste with sir Trystrames thou shalt have bothe thy
25 hondys full!'

And than they hurteled togydyrs and all to-braste their sperys, and than they pulled pute their swerdys and hewed on there helmys and hawbirkes. At the laste sir Palomydes gaff sir Lambegus suche a wounde that he felle doune lyke
30 a dede man to the erthe. Than he loked aftir La Beale Isode, and than she was gone he woste nat where. Wete you well that sir Palomydes was never so hevy!

So the quene ran into the foreste, and there she founde a welle and therein she had thought to have drowned herselff.
35 And as good fortune wolde, there cam a knyght to her that had a castell there besyde, and his name was sir Adtherpe.

3 Clam 6 C knyght his name was lambegus 8suche«o//«C 10-n C
orelslshalbe 12 C Gramercy 14 them not in C 15 JFasshe 15-16 C
ouertoke sir Palamydes And 16 and seyde not in C 19 sir not in S 21 sir
not in C 23 CI bileue you sir not in C 24 bothe not in C 28 there not in C
29 Cwonnd(£ wound) 31 Che nyst where 36 Ctherby his name . CAdtherp

And whan he founde the quene in that myscheffhe rescowed her and brought hir to his castell. And whan he wyste what [s]he was he armed hym and toke his horse, and seyde he wolde be avenged uppon sir Palomydes.

And so he rode unto the tyme he mette with hym, and 5 there sir Palomydes wounded hym sore. And by force he made hym to telle the cause why he dud batayle wyth hym, and he tolde hym how he ladde the quene La Beale Isode into hys owne castel.

'Now brynge me there,' seyde sir Palamydes, 'or thou 10 shalt of myne handis die!'

'Sir,' seyde sir Adtherpe, 'I am so sore wounded I may nat folow, but ryde you this way and hit shall bryng you to my castell, and therein is the quene.'

Sir Palomydes rode tyll that he cam to the castell. And 15 at a wyndow La Beale Isode saw sir Palomydes, than she made the yatys to be shutte strongely. And whan he sawe he myght nat entir into the castell he put of his horse brydyll and his sadyll, and so put his horse to pasture and sette hymselff downe at the gate, lyke a man that was oute of his 20 wytt that recked nat of hymselff.

Now turne we unto sir Trystrames, that whan he was com (3 home and wyste that La Beale Isode was gone with sir Palomydes, wete you well he was wrothe oute of mesure. 'Alas!' seyde sir Trystrames, 'I am this day shamed 1' Than 25 he called Gavernayle, his man, and seyde,

'Haste the that I were armed and on horsebacke, for well I wote sir Lambegus hath no myght nor strength to wyth- stonde sir Palomydes. Alas I had nat bene in his stedel'

So anone he was armed and horsed and rode aftir into the 30 foreyste, and within a whyle he founde his knyght sir Lambegus allmoste to deth wounded. And sir Trystrames bare hym to a foster and charged hym to kepe hym welle.

And than he rode forth and founde sir Adtherpe sore wounded; and he tolde all, and how the quene had drowned 35

7 C telle hym the cause
handes 12 sore not in C
not come within the castel
Alias that I haue not
and Gouvernaile rode
inC

8 he tolde hym not in Cf

13-14 Cinto my 14 C and there within i%
21 Cretchyd 26 and seyde not in C 29 C
30 C as he was armed and horsed sir Tristram
32 C wooded to the dethe

n C dye of my
C
C
C
35 all and not

herselff 'had nat I bene, and how for her sake I toke uppon me to do batayle, with sir Palomydes.'

'Where is my lady?' seyde sir Trystrames.

'Sir,' seyde the knyght, 'she is sure inowe wythin my s castell, and she can holde her within hit.'

'Graunte mercy,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'of thy grete goodnesse.'

176* And so he rode tyll that he cam nyghe his castell. And than sir Palomydes sate at the gate and sawe where sir 10 Trystrames cam, and he sate as he had slepe, and his horse pastured afore hym.

'Now go thou, Governayle,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'and bydde hym awake and make hym redy.'

So Governayle rode unto hym and seyde,

i\$ 'Sir Palomydes! aryse and take to thyne harneys!'

But he was in suche a study he herde nat what he seyde. So Governayle com agayne to sir Trystrames and tolde hym he slepe ellys he was madde.

'Go thou agayne/ seyde sir Trystrames, 'and bydde hym *o aryse, and telle hym I am here, his mortal foo.'

So Governayle rode agayne, and putte uppon hym with the but of his spere and seyde,

'Sir Palomydes, make the redy, for wete thou welle sir Trystrames hovyth yondir and sendyth the worde he is thy *5 mortall foo.'

And therewithall sir Palomydes arose styllly withoute ony wordys, and gate hys horse anone and sadyllled hym and brydyllled hym; and lyghtly he lepe uppon hym and gate his spere in his honde. And aythir feautred their spearys and 30 hurled faste togedyrs, and anone sir Trystrames smote downe sir Palomydes over his horse tayle. Than lyghtly sir Palomydes put his shyld before hym and drew his swerde.

And there began stronge batayle on bothe partyes, for bothe they fought for the love of on[e] lady. And ever she 35 lay on the wallys and behylde them how they fought oute of

1 C not he ben 1-2 C her sake & loue he had taken vpon hym to doo 6 C Gramercy 8 that *not in C* 8-11 C nyghe to that Castel and thenne syr Tristram saw where syr Palamydes sat at the gate slepyng and his hors pastured fast afore hym 16-18 C what Gouernayle said So Gouemaile came ageyne and told syre Tristram he slepte or els 26 ony *not in C* 27 anone *not in C* 30 C hurtled and there Tristram 34 S for thr

measure. And aythir were wounded passynge sore, but sir Palomydes was muche sorer wounded; for they fought thus trasynge and traversynge more than two owres, that well nyghe for doole and sorow La Beale Isode sowned, and seyde,

'Alas! that one I loved and yet do, and the other I love 176^T
nat, that they sholde fyght! And yett hit were grete pyte*
that I sholde se sir Palomydes slayne, for well I know by
that the ende be done sir Palomydes is but a dede man,
bycause that he is nat crystened, and I wolde be loth that he xo
sholde dye a Sarezen.' And therewithall she cam downe and
besought hem for her love to fyght no more.

'A, madame' seyde sir Trystrames, 'what meane you?***
Woll ye have me shamed ? For well ye know that I woll be
ruled by you.' 15

'A, myne awne lorde,' seyde La Beale Isode, 'full well ye
wote I wolde nat your dyshonour, but I wolde that ye wolae
for my sake spare this unhappy Sarezen, sir Palomydes.'

'Madame,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'I woll leve for youre
sake.' ao

Than seyde she to sir Palomydes, 'This shall be thy
charge: thou shalt go oute of this contrey whyle I am
'therinV

'Madame, I woll obey your commaundemente,' seyde sir
Palomydes, 'whyche is sore ayenste my wylle.' *5

'Than take thy way,' seyde La Beale Isode, 'unto the
courte of kynge Arthure, and there recommaunde me unto
quene Gwenyvere and tell her that I sende her worde that
there be within this londe but four lovers, and that is sir
Launcelot and dame Gwenyver, and sir Trystrames and 30
quene Isode.'

And so sir Palomydes departed with grete hevynesse, and (3²)

4-6 C swowned Alias she said 7 that they sholde fyght *not in* Cf 9 C by
that tyme the 9-10 C dede kny3t by cause he is not crystened I wold be
12 C bisought sire Tristram to fyghte no more (for her love *not in* C) 13 C
saide he 14 For *not in* C 16 A myne awne lorde *not in* C 16-17 C I
wylle not your dishonour saide la beale Isoud but 19 Cleue fyghtynge at this
tyme for 21 C she said 21-2 C your charge 22-3 WI am quene thereof?
C*therin F (MS. B.N.fr. 103 f. 6? ^{coL J}) : Et si VOUS command que vous jamais
neven&enlieuoujesoye 24 Madame *not in* C 25 C thewhiche 29-31 C
louera that is sire Launcelot du lake and Quene Gueneuer and sire Trystram de
lyonas and quene Isoud

sir Trystrames toke the quene and brought her agayne unto kyng Marke. And than was there made grete joy of hir home-commynge. Than who was cheryshed but sir Trystrames I

5 Than sir Trystrames latte fecche home sir Lambegus, his knyght, frome the forsters house; and hit was longe or he was hole, but so at the laste he recovered.

And thus they lyved with joy and play a longe whyle. But ever sir Andret, that was nye cosyn unto sir Trystrams, lay
177^r io in a wayte betwyxte sir Trystrames and La Beale Isode for to take hym and devoure hym.

So uppon a day sir Trystrames talked with La Beale Isode in a wyndowe, and that aspyed sir Andred and tolde the kyng. Than kyng Marke toke a swerde in his honde and
15 cam to sir Trystrames and called hym 'false traytowre', and wolde have stryken hym, but sir Trystrames was nyghe hym and ran undir his swerde and toke hit oute of his honde. And than the kyng cryed:

'Where ar my knyghtes and my men ? I charge you, sle
20 this traytowre!'

But at that tyme there was nat one that wolde meve for his wordys.

Whan sir Trystrames sawe there was none that wolde be ayenste hym he shoke hys swerde to the kyng and made
*s countenaunce as he wolde have strykyn hym. And than kyng Marke fledde, and sir Trystrames folowed hym and smote hym fyve or six strokys flatlynge in the necke, that he made hym falle on the nose.

And than sir Trystrames yode his way and armed hym
30 and toke his horse and his men, and so he rode into the foreste. And there uppon a day sir Trystrames mette with two bretherne that were wyth kyng Marke knyghtes, and there he strake of the hede of the tone brother and wounded that other to the deth, and he made hym to bere the hede in
35 his helme. And thirty mo he there wounded. And whan

3 Than *not in C* 7-8 *W recovered thus* And thus *C* he was wel recouered thus they 10 *C in a watche to wayte* 11 *C take hem and sklanndre hem*
13 *C told it to the* 23 *C sawe that there was not one wold* 25 *Cas though*
he 27 *C smote vpon hym* *C on the neck* 28 *C hym to falle vpon the*
nose 32 *C were knyghtes with kyng Marke* 33-4 *C the one & wounded the*
other 34-5 *C* bere his broders hede in his helme vnto the kyng and*

that knyght com before the kyng to say hys message he dyed there before the kyng and the quene.

Than kyng Marke called his counceyle unto hym and asked avyce of his barownes, what were beste to do with sir Trystrames. 5

'Sir,' seyde the barowns, and in especiall sir Dynas the Senesciall, 'we woll gyff you counceyle for to sende for sir Trystrames, for we woll that ye wete many men woll holde with sir Trystrames and he were harde bestadde. And, sir,' seyde sir Dynas the Senesciall, 'ye shall undirstonde that sir 10 Trystrames ys called peereless and makeles of ony Crystyn 177^v knyght, and of his myght and hardynes we know none so good a knyght but yf hit be sir Launcelot du Lake. And yf he departe frome your courte and go to kyng Arthurs courte, wete you well he woll so frende hym there that he woll nat 15 sette by your malyce. And therefore, sir, I counceyle you to take hym to your grace.'

'I woll well,' seyde the kyng, 'that he be sent fore, that we may be frendys.'

Than the barounes sente for sir Trystrames undir theire 20 conduyte, and so whan sir Trystrames com to the kyng he was wellcom, and no rehersall was made, and than there was game and play.

And than the kyng and the quene wente an-huntyng, and sir Trystrames. So the kyng and the quene made their 25 (33) pavylons and their tentes in the foreste besyde a ryver, and there was dayly justyng and huntyng, for there was ever redy thirty knyghtes to juste unto all that cam at that tyme.

And there by fortune com sir Lamerak de Galis and sir Dryaunte. And sir Dryaunte justed well, but at the laste he 30 had a falle. Than sir Lamerak profyrde, and whan he began he fared so wyth the thirty knyghtes that there was nat one off them but he gaff a falle, and som of them were sore hurte.

'I mervayle,' seyde kyng Marke, 'what knyght he is that doth 35 suche dedis of armys.'

2 C dyed afore the 6 and not in C 7 C syr we 10 the Senesciall not
in C 10 Cvnderstaude (S vnderstande) 12 C we knewe none 14 S ye
departe 15 C he wille gete hym suche frendes there 20-1 Cvnderasau
conduyte 27-8 C euer xxx knyghtes redy 28 Calle them that 29 C
Lamerak de galys 30 C Dryaunt and there syre Dryaunte lusted ryght wel
31 C profered to iuste 33 C gaf hym a falle

'Sir,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'I know hym well for a noble knyght as fewe now be lyvyng, and his name is sir Lamerake de Galys.'

'Hit were shame,' seyde the kynge, 'that he sholde go s thus away onles that he were manne-handled.'

178^r io 'Sir,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'mesemyth hit were no worship for a nobleman to have ado with hym, and for this cause: for at this tyme he hath done overmuch for any meane knyght lyvyng. And as me semyth,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'hit were shame to tempte hym any more, for his horse is wery and hymself both [for the dedes of armes he hath] done this day. Welle considered, hit were inow for sir Launcelot du Lake.'

15 'As for that,' seyde kynge Marke, 'I requyre you, as ye love me and my lady the quene La Beale Isode, take youre armys and juste with sir Lamerake de Galis.'

'Sir,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'ye bydde me do a thyng that is ayenste knyghthode. And well I can thynke that I shall gyff hym a falle, for hit is no maystry: for my horse and y 20 be freysshe, and so is nat his horse and he. And wete you well that he woll take hit for grete unkyndenes, for ever one good knyght is loth to take anothir at avauntage. But bycause 1 woll nat displace, as ye requyre me so muste I do and obey youre commaundemente.'

25 And so sir Trystrames armed hym and toke his horse and putte hym forth, and there sir Lamerake mette hym myghtyly. And what with the myght of his owne spere and of syr Trystrames spere sir Lamerake his horse felle to the erthe, and he syttyng in the sadyll.

30 So as sone as he myght he avoyded the sadyll and his horse, and put his shyld afore hym, and drewe his swerde. And than he bade sir Trystrames, 'alyght, thou knyght, and thou darstel*

2 C ben lyuyng 4 C grete shame 5 C that somme of you mette with
hym better 7-8 C for by cause at 9-12 C* knyghte (S knyght) lyuyng
therfore as me semeth hit were grete shame and vylony to tempte hym any more at
this tyme in soo moche as he and his horse are wery bothe For the dedes of armes
that he hath done this daye and they be wel W bothe 18 Cknyghthode
S knyghthode C I candeme 20 C ben fresshe bothe and 22 Catdis-
aavauntageBnt (SBut) 23 Csoo wille I do (Sdoo) 28 CLamorakshors
30 C Thenne anone as lyghtly as he myghte

'Nay, sir!' seyde sir Trystrames, 'I woll no more have ado wyth you, for I have done the overmuch unto my dyshonoure and to thy worschyppe.'

'As for that,' seyde sir Lamerok, 'I can the no thanke; syn thou haste forjusted me on horsebacke I requyre the ana I 5 beseche the, and thou be sir Trystrames de Lyones, feyght with me on foote.'

'I woll nat,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'and wete you well my name is sir Trystrames de Lyones, and well I know that ye 178^v be sir Lameroke de Galis. And this have I done to you xo ayenst my wyll, but I was requyred thereto. But to sey that I woll do at your requeste as at this tyme, I woll nat have no more ado with you at this tyme, for me shamyth of that I have done.'

'As for the shame/ seyde sir Lamerake, 'on thy party or »5 on myne, beare thou hit and thou wyll: for thoughe a marys sonne hath fayled me now, yette a quenys sonne shall nat fayle the! And therefore, and thou be suche a knyght as men calle the, I requyre the alyght and fyght with mel'

'Sir Lameroke,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'I undirstonde your *0 harte is grete, and cause why ye have to sey the soth, for hit wolde greve me and ony good knyght sholde kepe hym freysssh and than to stryke downe a wery knyght; for that knyght nother horse was never fourmed that allway may endure. And therefore,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'I woll nat *5 have ado with you, for me forthynkes of that I have done.'

'As for that,' seyde sir Lameroke, 'I shall quyte you and ever I se my tyme.'

So he departed frome hym with sir Dryaunte, and by the 30 (34) way they mette with a knyght that was sente fro dame Morgan le Fay unto kynge Arthure. And this knyght had a fayre home harneyste with golde, and the home had suche a vertu that there myght no lady nothir jantyllwoman drynke of that home but yf she were trew to her husbande; and if 35 she were false she sholde spylle all the drynke, and if she

1 C Nay said % C with the C done to the 6 de Lyones *not in C*
 8 C not soo said oref Tristram 10-11 C this that I haue done to you was
 ageynst 13 at this tyme *not in C* 17 yette *not in C* 24-5(7* myght
 stade or endure 30 C Noof he Of Dryaun

were trew to her lorde she myght drynke thereof pesible\ And because of the quene Gwenyvere and in the dyspyte of sir Launcelot this home was sente unto kynge Arthure. And so by forse sir Lameroke made that knyght to telle all the
5 cause why he bare the home, and so he tolde hym all hole.

'Now shalt thou bere this home,' seyde sir Lamerok, 'to kynge Marke, othir chose to dye. For in the dyspyte of sir
179^r Trystrames thou shalt bere hit hym, that home, and sey that I sente hit hym for to assay his lady, and yf she be trew he
i° shall preve her.'

So this knyght wente his way unte kynge Marke and brought hym that ryche home, and seyde that sir Lamerok sente hit hym, and so he tolde hym the vertu of that home.

Than the kynge made his quene to drynke thereof, and an
15 hondred ladyes with her, and there were but four ladyes of all tho that dranke clene.

'Alas!' seyde kynge Marke, 'this is a grete dyspyte,' and swore a grete othe that she sholde be brente and the other ladyes also.

*° Than the barowns gadred them togedyrs and seyde playnly they wolde nat have tho ladyes brente for an home made by sorcery that cam 'frome the false sorseres and wycche moste that is now lyvyng\ For that home dud never good, but caused stryffand bate, and allway in her dayes she was an
*5 enemy to all trew lovers.

So there were many knyghtes made their avowe that and ever they mette wyth Morgan le Fay that they wolde shew her shorte curtesy. Also syr Trystrames was passyng wroth that sir Lamerok sent that home unto kynge Marke, for welle
30 he knew that hit was done in the dyspyte of hym, and therefore he thought to quyte sir Lameroke.

Than sir Trystrames used dayly and nyghtly to go to quene Isode evir whan he myght, and ever sir Andret, his

5 C that home and so he tolde hym all hole *not in Cf 7-9 C** or els chese to dye for it For I telle the playnly in despyte and reproof of sire Tristrames thou shake bere that home vnto kynge Marke his vnkel and say thou to hym that *F (MS. B.N.fr. 103/. 73' col. 1): et presenteras ce cor au roy Marc* 9 Ctrue to hym he 13 C and there to he 14 Cmaade Quene Isoud to 15 with her *not in C* 19 also *not in C* 22-3 C from as fals a sorceresse and wytche as tho was lyuyng 24 C stryf and debate C she had ben 26 that *not in C* 33 *tvixnotin C*

cosyn, wacched hym nyght by nyght for to take hym with
La Beale Isode.

And so uppon a nyght sir Andret aspyed his owre and
the tyme whan sir Trystrames went to his lady. Than sir
Andret gate unto hym twelve knyghtis, and at mydnyght he 5
sette uppon sir Trystrames secretly and suddeynly. And
there sir Trystrames was takyn nakyd a-bed with La Beale
Isode, and so was he bounde hande and foote and kepte tyll
day.

And than by the assent of kynge Marke and of sir Andret 10
and of som of the barownes sir Trystramys was lad unto a
chapell that stood uppon the see rockys, there for to take his 179^T
jugemente. And so he was lad bounden with forty knyghtes,
and whan sir Trystrames saw that there was none other
boote but nedis he muste dye, than seyde he, 15

'Fayre lordis! Remembir what I have done for the con trey
of Cornwayle, and what jouparte* I have bene in for the wele
of you all. For whan I fought ^rfor the trewage of Cornwayle¹
with sir Marhalte, the good knyght, I was promysed to be
bettir rewarded, whan ye all refused to take the batayle. 20
Therefore, as ye be good jantyll knyghtes, se me nat thus
shamfully to dye, for hit is shame to all knyghthode thus to
se me dye. For I dare sey,' seyde sir Trystrams, 'that I mette
never with no knyght but I was as good as he or better.'

'Fye uppon the!' seyde sir Andrete, 'false traytur thou 25
arte with thyne advauntage! For all thy boste thou shalt dye
this day!'

'A, Andrete, Andrete!' seyde sir Trystrames, 'thou
sholdyst be my kynnysman, and now arte to me full un-
frendely. But and there were no more but thou and I, thou 30
woldyst nat put me to deth.'

'No ?' seyde sir Andred, and therewith he drew his swerde
and wolde have slayne hym.

So whan sir Trystrames sye hym make that countenaunce
he loked uppon bothe his hondis that were faste boundyn 35
unto two knyghtes, and suddeynly he pulde them bothe unto

1 C nyght and daye 15 C nedis that he 17 C in what Ieopardy
18-19 C* fouzt for the truage of cornewaille with sir Marhaus F (MS. B.N.fr.
103/. ?\$* col. 2): rencontre le Morhoult pour la franchise de Cornouaille 19 C
for to be 25 C traitour that thou 26 Cauaucynge 28 C O Andred
29 C now thou art 34 C suche countenaunce

hym and unwrayste his hondis, and lepe unto his cosyn sir Andred, and wroth his swerde oute of his hondis. And than he smote sir Andret, that he felle downe to the erthe, and so he fought that he kylde ten knyghtys.

5 So than sir Trystrames gate the chapell and kepte hyt myghtyly. Than the crye was grete, and peple drew faste unto sir Andret, mo than an hondred. So whan sir Trystramys saw the peple draw unto hym he remembyrd he was naked, and sparde faste the chapell dore and brake the to barrys of a wyndow, and so he lepe oute and felle uppon the craggys in the see.

180* And so at that tyme sir Andret nothir none of his felowys
(35) myght nat gete hym. But whan they were departed, Governayle and sir Lambegus and sir Sentrayle de Lushon, that
15 were sir Trystrames men, sought sore aftir their maystir whan they herde he was ascaped. And so on the rokkys they founde hym, and with towels pulde hym up.

And than sir Trystrames asked where was La Beale Isode. 'Sir,* seyde Governayle, 'she is put in a lazar-cote.'

o 'AlasI seyde sir Trystrames, 'that is a full ungoodly place for suche a fayre lady, and yf I may she shall nat be longe there.'

And so he toke hys men and wente thereas was La Beale Isode, and fette her away, and brought her into a fayre
*5 foreste to a fayre maner; and so he abode there with hir. So now this good knyght bade his men departe, for at that tyme he myght nat helpe them, and so they departed all save Governayle.

And so uppon a day sir Trystrames yode into the foroste
30 for to disporte hym, and there he felle on slepe. And so happynde there cam to sir Trystrames a man that he had slayne his brothir. And so whan this man had founde hym

1 C vnwrast C and thenne he lepte 3 downe *not in C* 4 C sir
Tristram foughte tyl that 6 C the peple 11 C crackys 13 C gete to
hym at that tyme Capitulum xxxv Soo whanne 14 C Sentraile 15 sore
aftir *not in C* 16 C* escaped thenne they were passynge gladde 17 C with tuel
18-19 C* asked hem where was la beale Isoud for he wende she had ben had awaye of
Andreds peple Sir 24-5 Ca foreste 25 Cand sire Tristram there abode 26 now
not in C 26-7 C men goo from hym For at this tyme I maye not helpe you
soo 30-1 C and thenne hit happend that there he felle on slepe And there
came a man that sire Tristram afore hand had

he shotte hym thorow the sholdir^r with an arow¹, and anone sir Trystrames sterte up and kylde that man.

And in the meanetyme hit was tolde unto kynge Marke how sir Trystrames and La Beale Isode were in that same maner, and thydir he cam with many knyghtes to sle sir 5 Trystrames. And whan he cam there he founde hym gone, and anone he toke La Beale Isode home with hym and kepte her strayte, that by no meane she myght never wryght nor sende.

And whan sir Trystrames com toward the maner he founde the tracke of many horse, and loked aboute in the *^o place and knew that his lady was gone. And than sir Trystrames toke grete sorow and endured with grete sorow and payne longe tyme, for the arow that he was hurte wythall was envenomed.

So by the meane of La Beale Isode she (b)ade a lady that 15 180* was cosyn unto dame Brangwayne, and she cam unto sir Trystrames and tolde hym that he myght nat be hole by no meanys, 'for thy lady Isode may nat helpe the; therefore she byddyth you, haste you into Bretayne unto kynge Howell, and there shall ye fynde his doughter that is called Isode le 20 Blaunche Maynes, and there shall ye fynde that she shall helpe you.'

Than sir Trystrames and Governayle gate them shyping, and so sayled into Bretayne. And whan kyng Howell knew that hit was sir Trystrames he was full glad of hym. 25

'Sir,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'I am com unto this contrey to have helpe of youre doughter, ^rfor hit is tolde me that there is none other may hele me but she"¹. And so she heled hym.

There was an erle that hyght Grype, and thys erle made (36) grete warre uppon ^rthe kynge and putte hym ^rto the werse 30 and bysegged hym¹. And on a tyme sir Keyhydins that was

1-2 C* sholder with an arow and sir Tristram lepte vp F (MS. B.N. fr. 103 f. y8^r col. 1): cil le fiert d'une saiette envenimee 3 unto not inC 5 C and as soone as euer he myght thyder 6-7 C and there he 8 C neuer she myght wetef nor sende vnto Trystram nor he vnto her 9 C old manoir 10-11 Cf horses and ther by he wiste his lady was gone 12-13 C with grete payne 15 W she made C she told 19 C haste in to 20 that is called not in C 21-2 Cmaynys and she shal helpe the 26 C he said 27-8 C* For hit is tolde me that there is none other may hele me but she and soo within a whyle she heled hym F (MS. B.N. fr. 103 f. 78* col. J): si m'a on dit que vous av& une fiUe qui tost m'aroit gari s'elle vouloit 29 C Gryp 30-1 C* vpon the kynge and putte the kynge to the werse and bysegged hym F {foe. cit.) Le roy Hoel y

sonne to the kynge Howell, as he issewed oute he was sore wounded nyghe to the deth. Than Governayle wente to the kynge and seyde,

'Sir, I counceyle you to desyre my lorde sir Trystrames
5 as in your nede to helpe you.'

'I woll do by youre counceyle,' seyde the kynge. And so he yode unto sir Trystrames and prayde hym as in his warrys to helpe hym, 'for my sonne sir Keyhidyns may nat go unto the fylde'.

10 'Sir,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'I woll go to the fylde and do what I may.'

So sir Trystrames issued oute of the towne wyth suche felyshyp as he myght make, and dede suche dedys that all Bretayne spake of hym. And than at the laste by grete force
15 he slew the erle Grype his owne hondys, and mo than an hondred knyghtes he slew that day.

And than sir Trystrames was resceyved into the cyte
181^r worshipfully with procession. Than kyng Howell enbraced hym in his armys and seyde,

20 'Sir Trystrames, all my kyngedom I woll resygne to you.'

'God defendel' seyde sir Trystrames, 'for I am beholdyn thereto for your doughtyrs sake to do for you more than that.'

So by the grete meanes of the kynge and his sonne there
25 grewe grete love betwyxte Isode and sir Trystrames, for that lady was bothe goode and fayre, and a woman of noble bloode and fame. And for because that sir Trystrames had suche chere and ryches and all other plesaunce that he had allmoste forsakyn La Beale Isode.

30 And so uppon a tyme sir Trystrames aggreed to wed this Isode le Blaunche Maynes. And so at the laste they were wedded and solemply hylde their maryayge.

And so whan they were a-bed bothe, sir Trystrames remembirde hym of his olde lady, La Beale Isode, and than
35 he toke suche a thoughte suddeynly that he was all dismayed,

fu desconfit et perdi grant partie de ses gens et de ses chevaliers. . . . Et le roy fist
clorre les portes 1 W and as he C* as he 7 as not in C 8 sir not in
C 17 into the cyte" not in C 20 C to the 21-2 C beholden vnto you
for 22-3 more than that not in C 24 C of kynge Howel & kehydyns
his sone by grete prefers* there 27 that not in C 28-9 C hadde all moost
he hadde forsaken 31 C la blaunche maynys

and other chere made he none but¹ with clyppynge and kyssynge. As for [other] fleysshely lustys, sir Trystrames had never ado with hir: suche mencion makyth the Freynshe booke. Also hit makyth mencion that the lady wente there had be no plesure but kyssynge and clyppynge. 5

And in the meanetyme there was a knyght in Bretayne, his name was sir Suppynabyles, and he com over the see into Inglonde, and so he com into the courte of kynge Arthure. And there he mette with sir Launcelot du Lake and tolde hym of the maryage of sir Trystrames. Than seyde sir 10 Launcelot,

'Fye uppon hym, untrew knyght to his lady! That so noble a knyght as sir Trystrames is sholde be founde to his fyrst lady and love untrew, that is the quene of Cornwayle! But sey ye to hym thus,' seyde sir Launcelot, 'that of all 15 knyghtes in the worlde I have loved hym [moost and had moost joye of hym], and all was for his noble dedys. And 181^T lette hym wete that the love betwene hym and me is done for ever, and that I gyff hym warnyng: from this day forthe I woll be his mortal! enemy.' 20

So departed sir Suppynabyles unto Bretayne agayne, and (37) there he founde sir Trystrames and tolde hym that he had bene in kynge Arthures courte. Than sir Trystrames seyde,

'Herd ye onythyng of me?'

'So God me helpe,' seyde sir Suppynabyles, 'there I harde 25 sir Launcelot speke of you grete shame, and that ye ar a false knyght to youre lady. And he bade me to do you to wyte that he woll be youre mortal foo in every place where he may mete you.'

'That me repentyth,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'for of all 30 knyghtes I loved moste to be in his felyshyp.'

Than sir Trystrames was ashamed and madegrete mone that ever any knyghtes sholde defame hym for the sake of his lady.

1 C* none but with W\ none nother with 2-3 C* other flesshly lustes sire Trystram neuer thoughte nor hadde adoo F (MS. B.N.fr. 103/. 80^T col. 1): L'autre Yseult ly deffend qu'il ne gise a sa femme charnellement. Mais Tacoler ne le baiser ne lui deffend elle mie Et Tristan la baise et Tacole 7 sir not in C 9 there not in S 14 C lady fals la beale Isoud quene 15 to not in C 15 C hym this 16-17 C* loued hym moost and had moost ioye of hym and alle (komoeoteleuton in W) 19-20 C forth as his mortal 27 C medoo 28 C mortal enemy 32-3 G made grete mone and was ashamed that noble knyghtes

And so in this meanewhyle La Beale Isode made a lettir
unto quene Gwentyvere complaynyng her of the untrouthe of
sir Trystrames, how he had wedded the kynges doughter of
Bretayne. So quene Gwentyver sente her another letter and
5 bade her be of goode comforte, for she sholde have joy aftir
sorrow: for sir Trystrames was so noble a knyght called that
by craftes of sorsery ladyes wolde make suche noble [men]
to wedde them. 'But the ende', quene Gwentyver seyde,
'shulde be thus, that he shall hate her and love you bettir than
10 ever he dud.'

5 C good chere

8-9 C but in the ende Quene Gueneuer said hit shal be

9-10 C better than euer he dyd to fore

II

LAMEROK DE GALYS

*[Winchester MS., ff. 181^v - i 87^r;
Caxton, Book Fill, chs. 37-41]*

CAXTON'S RUBRICS

37. Of syr Lamerok.
38. How syr Trystram and his wyf arrayved in Wales, and how he mette there wyth syr Lamerok.
39. How syr Trystram faught wyth syr Nabon and overcame hym, and made syr Lamerok lord of the yle.
40. How syr Lamerok departed fro syr Trystram, and how he mette wyth syr Frolle, and after wyth syr Launcelot.
41. How syr Lamerok slewe syr Frolle, and of the curtoyse fyghtyng wyth syr Belleaunce, hys brother.

SO leve we sir Trystrames in Bretayne, and speke we of
 sir Lameroke de Galys, that as he sayled his shyppe felle
 on a rocke and disperysshed all save sir Lameroke and his
 squyer; for he swamme so myghtyly that fysshers of the He
 of Servayge toke hym up, and his squyer was drowned. And 5
 the shypmen had grete labour to save sir Lameroke his lyff 182*
 for all the comforte that they coude do.

And the lorde of that ile hyght sir Nabon le Noyre, a grete
 myghty gyaunte, and thys sir Nabon hated all the knyghtes
 of kynge Arthures, and in no wyse he wolde do hem no 10
 favoure. And thes fysshers tolde sir Lameroke all the gyse
 of syr Nabon, how there com never knyght of kyng Arthurs
 but he distroyed hym. And the laste batayle that ever he
 ded was wyth sir Nanowne le Petyte, and whan he had
 wonne hym he put hym to a shamefull deth in the despyte of 15
 kynge Arthure: he was drawyn lym-meale.

'That forthynkes me,' seyde sir Lamerok, 'for that
 knyghtes deth, for he was my cosyn, and yf I were at myne
 ease as well as ever I was, I wolde revenge his deth.'

'Paase,' seyde the fysshers, 'and make here no wordys! 20
 For or ever ye departe frome hens sir Nabon muste know
 that ye have bene here, othir ellis we shall dye for your sake.'

'So that I be hole,' seyde sir Lameroke, 'of my mysse-ease
 that I have takyn in the see, I woll that ye telle hym that I am
 a knyght of kyng Arthures, for I was never ferde to renayne 25
 my lorde.*

Now turne we unto sir Trystrams, that uppon a day he (38)
 toke a lytyll barget and hys wyff Isode le Blaunche Maynys
 wyth syr Keyhydins, her brother, to sporte hem on the costis.
 And whan they where frome the londe there was a wynde that 30
 drove hem into the coste of Walys uppon this Ile or Servage
 whereas was sir Lameroke.

And there the barget all to-rove, and there dame Isode

3 C and perysshed 4 C squyer and there he swam myghtely and fysshers
 7 they omitted'in S 10-n Chemfauoure 13 CAnd attef last 13 ever
 not in C 14-15 C petyte the which he put to 15 C in despyte 16 C
 Arthur for he was drawen lymme meale 22 C we shold 23 C disease
 25 C to reneye 28 W and and C la blaQche 29 C to playe hem in the
 costes 30-1 C wynde drofe 33 Crofe S f rose

was hurte, and as well as they myght they gate into the forest. And there by a welle he sye sir Segwarydes, and a
182^v damesell with hym, and than aythir salewed other.

'Sir,' seyde sir Segwarydes, 'I know you well for sir
5 Trystrames de Lyones, the man in the worlde that I have
moste cause to hate, bycause ye departed the love betwene me
and my wyff. But as for that,' seyde sir Segwarydes, 'I woll
never hate a noble knyght for a lyght lady, and therefore I
pray you to be my frende, and I woll be yourys unto my •
10 power. For wete you well ye ar harde bestadde in this
valey, and we shall have inowe ado ayther to succoure
other.'

And so sir Segwarydes brought sir Trystrames to a lady
thereby that was borne in Cornwayle, and she told hym
15 all the pereles of that valay, how there cam never knyght
there but he were takyn presonere or slayne.

'Wete you well, fayre lady,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'that
I slew sir Marhalte and delyverde Cornwayle frome the
trewage of Irelande. And I am he that delyverde the kynge
20 of Irelande frome sir Blamoure de Ganys, and I am he that
bete sir Palomydes, and wete you welle that I am sir Trys-
trames de Lyones that by the grace of God shall delyver this
wofull He of Servage.'

So sir Trystrames was well eased that nyght. Than one
25 tolde hym there was a knyght of kynge Arthurs that wracked
on the rockes.

'What is his name?' seyde sir Trystrames.

'We wote nat,' seyde the fysshers, 'but he kepyth hit no
counsel that he is a knyght of kynge Arthurs, and by the
30 myghty lorde he settyth nought.'

'I pray you,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'and ye may, brynge
hym hydir that I may se hym. And if he be ony of the noble
knyghtes I know hym.'

183^r Than the good lady prayde the fysshers to brynge hym
35 to hir place. So on the morne they brought hym thydir in a
fysshers garmente, and as sone as sir Trystrames sy hym he

3 with hym *not in C* 4 well *not in C* 9 to *not in C* 11 *C* eyther of vs to
15 *c* and how 24 that nyght *not in C-f* 30 *C* lord of this yle* he setteth
nought by 31 *C* Tdestramf 32-3 *C* of the Knyghtes of Arthurs I
shalle*knowe 34 good *not in C* 35 *C* morowe 36 *C* fysshers rayment
And

smyled uppon hym and knew hym well. But he knew **nat** sir Trystrams.

'Fayre sir,' seyde sir Trystrams, 'mesemyth be youre chere that ye have bene desesed but late, and also methynkyth I sholde know ye heretoforne.' 5

'I woll well,' seyde sir Lamerok, 'that ye have seyne me, for the nobelyst knyghtes of the Table Rownde have seyne me and mette with me.'

'Fayre sir,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'telle me youre name.'

'Sir, uppon a covenante I woll tell you, so that ye telle me 10 whether that ye be lorde of thys ilonde or no, that is callyd sir Nabon le Noyre.*

'I am nat, nother I holde nat of hym, but I am his foo as well as ye be, and so shall I be founde or I departe of this ile.'

'Well,' seyde sir Lamerok, 'syn ye have seyde so largely 15 unto me, my name is syr Lamerok de Galys, son unto kynge Pellynore.'

'Forsothe, I trow well,' seyde syr Trystrams, 'for and ye seyde other I know the contrary.'

'What are ye,' seyde sir Lamerok, 'that knowith so me?' 20

'Forsothe, sir, I am sir Trystrames de Lyones.'

'A, sir, remembir ye nat of the fall ye dud gyff me onys, and aftir that ye refused to fyght on foote with me?'

'Sir, that was nat for no feare that [I had] of you, but me shamed at that tyme to have more ado with you, for as me 25 semed ye had inowe ado. But, sir, wete you well, for my kyndenesse ye put many ladyes to a repreffwhan ye sent the home from Morgan le Fay unto kynge Marke. And hit sholde have gone to kynge Arthurr, whereas ye dud that in 183*
dispyte of me.' 30

'Well,' seyde he, 'and hit were to do agayne, so wolde I do, for I had lever stryff and debate felle in kyng Markys courte rether than in kynge Arthurs courte, for the honour of bothe courtes be nat lyke.'

7-8 for the nobelyst knyghtes of the Table Rownde have seyne me *not in Cf* (Aom-
oeoteleuton) 10 Sir *not in C* C you said sir Lamorak that is that ye wil
telle 13 C For sothe said sir tristram I am not he nor I hold not of hym I am
his 14 C out of 21 Forsothe *not in C* 23 C after ye refused me
23 with me *not in C* 24 Sir *not in C* W feare that of you C* fere
I had of you said sire Tristram but 26 ado *not in C* C sire Lamorack
wete you wel *not in C* 27 C many ladyes ye putte to a repreff 28-9 And
hit sholde have gone to kynge Arthure *not in Cf* (see note) 34 Cy lyke

'As to that,' seyde sir Trystrams, 'I know well; but that, that was done for dyspyte of me. But all youre malyce, I thanke God, hurte nat gretly. Therefore,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'ye shall leve all youre malyce and so woll I, and lette
5 us assay how we may wyne worshyp betwene you and me uppon this gyaunte sir Nabon le Noyre, that is lorde of this ilonde, to destroy hym.'

'Sir,' seyde sir Lameroke, 'now I understonde youre knyghthode. Hit may nat be false that all men sey, for of
10 youre bounty, nobles, and worshyp of all knyghtes ye are periles. And for your curtesy and jantylnes I shewed you unkyndnesse, and that now me repentyth.'

(39) So in the meanetyme cam worde that sir Nabon had made a cry that all people sholde be at his castell the fifth day aftir,
15 and the same day the sonne of Nabon sholde be made knyght, and all the knyghtes of that valey and thereabout sholde be there to juste, and all tho of the realme of Logrys sholde be there to juste wyth them of Northe Walys.

And thydir cam fyve hondred knyghtes. And so they of
20 the contrey brought thydir sir Lamerok and sir Trystrames and sir Keyhydins and sir Segwarydes, for they durste none otherwyse do. And than Nabon lente sir Lamerok horse and armour at his owne desyre. And so sir Lamerok justed and dud suche dedis of armys that sir Nabon and all the
25 people seyde there was never knyght that ever they sie that dud such dedis of armys. For, as the booke seyth, he forjusted all that were there for the moste party of fyve hondred knyghtes, that none abode hym in his sadyll.

184* Than sir Nabon profirde sir Lamerok to play his play
30 with hym, 'for I saw never one knyght do so muche uppon one day.'

'I woll well,' seyde sir Lameroke, 'play as I may, but I am wery and sore brused.'

And there aythir gate a speare, but this sir Nabone wolde
35 nat encountir with sir Lameroke, but smote his horse in the forehede and so slew hym. And than sir Lameroke yode on

2 TV was done was done Cdone it was for 11-12 C you vngentilnesse
14 C alle the peple of that yle* shold 22 C sir Nabon 23 C* at sire
Lamoraks desyre 25-6 C they sawe do suche 26 C the Frensshe book
29-30 Cprofered to playe with hym his playe for 30 C neuer no knyghte
34 this sir not in C

foote, and turned his shyld and drew his swerde, and there began stronge batayle on foote. But sir Lameroke was so sore brused and shorte brethid that he traced and traversed somewhat abacke.

'Fayre felow,' seyde sir Nabone, 'holde thy honde, and I shall shewe the more curtesy than ever I shewyd knyght, because I have sene this day thy noble knyghthode. And therefore stonde thou by, and I woll wete whethir ony of thy felowys woll have ado with me.'

Whan sir Trystrames harde that he seyde, 10

'Sir Nabone, lende me horse and sure armoure, and I woll have ado with you.'

'Well, felow,' seyde sir Nabone, 'go thou to yondir pavylyon and arme the of the beste thou fyndyst there, and I shall play sone a mervayles pley wyth the.' 15

Than seyde sir Trystrames,

'Loke ye play well, other ellys peraventure I shall lerne you a new play.*

'That is well seyde,' seyde sir Nabone.

So whan sir Trystrames was armed as hym lyked beste 20 and well shylded and swerded, he dressed to hym on foote, 'for well I know that sir Nabone wolde nat abyde a stroke with a speare, and therefore he woll sle all knyghtes horse.*

'Now, fayre felow,' seyde sir Nabone, 'latte us play!' 25

And so they fought longe on foote, trasyng and traver-syng, smytyng and foynyng longe withoute ony reste. So at the laste sir Nabone prayde hym to tell hym his name.

'Sir,' seyde he, 'my name ys sir Trystrames de Lyones, a knyght of Cornwayle, whyche am undir kynge Marke.' 30

'A, thou arte wellcom!* seyde sir Nabone, 'for of all knyghtes I have moste desyred to fyght wyth [the] othir 184* ellys wyth sir Launcelot.'

And so they wente than egerly togydir, that at the laste

10-11 C Theune (S Thenne) whan sir Tristram herd that he stepte forth and and said Nabon 12 C the 15 sone not in C 19 C said felawe said n C wel he knewe syr 23 and not in C 27-8 Crest Atte last 27-31 W (side-note) : How sir Nabone and his son were slayne by the hondis of sir Trystramys in the lie of Servage 29 C Syre Nabon I telle the my name is 30 whyche am not in Cf 31 A not in C 32-3 W wyth all othir ellys wyth C with the or with 34-p. 446, 1 C Soo thenne they went (S wente) egerly to gyders and sire tristram

sir Trystrames slew sir Nabone. And so forthwithall he lepe to his sonne and strake of his hede.

Than all the contrey seyde they wolde holde of sir Trystrames all the whole valay of Servage.

5 'Nay,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'I woll nat so, for here is a worshypfull knyght, sir Lameroke de Galys, that for me he shall be lorde or this ile: for he hath done here grete dedis of armys.'

'Nay,' seyde sir Lameroke, 'I woll nat be lorde of this
10 countrey, for I have nat deserved hit as well as ye. Therefore gyff ye hit where ye woll, for I woll [none] have.'

'Well,' seyde sir Trystrames, 'syn ye nother I woll have hit, lett us gyff hit unto hym that hath nat so well deserved hit.'

15 'Sir, do as ye lyste, for the gyffte is owres, for I woll none and I had deserved hit.'

And so by assente hit was yevyn unto sir Segwarydes. And he thanked them, and so was he lorde, and worshypfully he dud governe hem. And than sir Segwarydes delyvirde
20 all the presoners and sette good governaunce in that valey.

And so he turned into Cornwayle and tolde kyng Marke and La Beale Isode how sir Trystrames had avaunced hym in the Ile of Servayge. And there he proclaymed in all Cornwayle of all the adventures of thes two knyghtes, and so was
25 hit opynly knowyn. But full wo was La Beale Isode whan she herde telle that sir Trystrames had with hym Isode le Blaunche Maynys.

(40) So turne we unto sir Lamerok that rode towarde kyng Arthures courte.

30 (And so sir Trystramys wyff and sir Keyhydyns toke a vessel and sayled into Bretayne unto kyng Howell where they were wellcom. And whan they herde of thes adventures they mervayled of his noble dedis).

185^r Now turne we unto sir Lameroke that whan he was

1-2 C forth with he lepte 4 all the whole valay of Servage *not in Cf F*
(MS. B.N.fr. 103/. go^r col. 2): 'Sire, client tous, vous l'av^zs conquise, droit est que
vous l'ayes.' 5 for *not in C* 7 C of this countrey 12 C ye nor I
wille not haue 15-16 C Doo as ye lyst said Segwarydes for the yefte is yoursf
for I wil none haue 17 by assente *not in C* 17-18 C segwarydes wherof he
19 C gouerne hit 26 C herd S herde C* Tristram was wedded to Isoud
30 C Kehydyus 32 C whan hef herd

departed frome sir Trystrames he rode oute of the foreste
tyll he cam to an ermytage. And whan the ermyte sawe hym
he asked frome whens he com.

'Sir, I am com frome this valey.'

'That mervayle we off, for this twenty wyntir,' seyde the 5
ermyte, 'I saw never knyght passe this contrey but he was
other slayne other vylansely wounded or passe as a poore
presonere.'

'Sir, tho evyll customys are fordone,' seyde sir Lameroke,
'for sir Trystrames hath slayne youre lorde sir Nabone and 10
his sonne.'

Than was the ermyte glade and all his brethirne, for he
seyde there was never suche a tirraunte amonge Crystyn
men. 'And therefore,' seyde the ermyte, 'this valey of
fraunchyse shall ever holde of sir Trystrames.' 15

So on the morne sir Lameroke departed, and as he rode he
sawe four knyghtes fyght ayenste one, and that one knyght
defended hym well, but at the laste the four knyghtes had
hym downe. And than sir Lameroke wente betwexte them
and asked them why they wolde sle that one knyght, and 20
seyde hit was shame, four ayenste one.

'Thow shalt well wete,' seyde the four knyghtes, 'that he
is false.'

'So that is your tale,' seyde sir Lameroke, 'and whan I.
here hym speke I woll sey as ye sey. Sir,' seyde sir Lameroke, 25
'how sey you ? Can ye nat excuse you none otherwyse but
that ye ar a false knyght ?'

'Sir, yett can I excuse me bothe with my worde and with
my hondys, and that woll I make good uppon one of the
beste of them, my body to his body.' 30

Than spake they all at onys: 'We woll nat jouparte' oure
bodies, but wete thou welle,' they seyde, 'and kynge Arthure
were here hymselff, hit sholde nat lye in his power to save his
lyff.'

'That is seyde to largely,' seyde sir Lamerok, 'but many 35
spekyth behynde a man more than he woll seye to his face. 185^T

4 C sir said sir Lamorak 5-6 C sir said the hermyte therof I merueille For this
xx wynter I sawe 9 Sir *not in C* 14-15 C valey and frauceis we wille holde
16 C morowe i8(7attelast 24 So *not in C* 25 C also* speke 25-6 C
saye Thenne said Lamorak a knyght can ye not excuse you but 28 C Syr said he
32 C bodies as for the But 35 C is to moche said said sir 36 C they wylle

And for because of youre wordis ye shall undirstonde that I am one of the symplyst of kynge Arthures courte, and in the worship of my lorde now do your beste, and in the dyspyte of you I shall rescow hym!*

5 And than they layshed all at onys to syr Lameroke, but at two strokis he had slayne two of them. Than the other two fled. So than sir Lamerok turned agayne unto that knyght and horsed hym and asked hym his name.

'Sir, my name is sir Froll of the Oute Ilys.'

10 And so he rode with sir Lameroke and bare hym company. And as they rode by the way they sawe a semely knyght rydyng and commynge ayenst them, and all in whyght.

'A,' seyde sir Froll, 'yondir knyght justed but late wyth
15 me and smote me downe, therefore I woll juste with hym.*

'Ye shall nat do so,* seyde sir Lamerok, 'be my counceyle. And ye woll tell me your quarrell, where ye justed at his requeste other he at youre.'

'Nay,' seyde sir Froll, 'I justed with hym at my requeste.'

20 'Sir, than woll I counceyle you, deale no more with hym, for, lyke his countenaunce, he sholde be a noble knyght and no japer: for methynkys he sholde be of the Rounde Table.'

'As for that, I woll nat spare,' seyde sir Froll.

Than he cryed and seyde,

25 'Sir knyght, make the redy to juste!'

'That nedyth nat,' seyde the whyghte knyght, 'for I have no luste to jape nother juste.'

So they feautred their sperys, and the whyght knyght overthrewe sir Froll and than he rode his way a soffte pace.

30 Than sir Lameroke rode aftir hym and prayde hym to telle his name, 'for mesemyth ye sholde be of the felyshyp of the Rounde Table.'

186^r *Sir, uppon a covaunte, that ye woll nat telle my name, and also that ye woll tell me youre.'

1 for *not in C* 3-4 *C in despyte* 5-6 *C but anone at two strokes syre*
Lamorak had 8 and horsed hym *not in Cf* *F (MS. B.N.fr. 103/. 92' col.*
x) 1 Lors va querre le cheval au chevalier tant qu'il lui ramena et cil monte 9 C
syre he sayde 12 and commynge *not in C* *to C Syr said Lamorak thine*
21 *C for me semeth by his* 23 *Ctherfor I wil* 27 *Cno luste to luste*
with the 33-4 *C* Vpon a couenaunt said he I wille telle you my name soo*
that ye wylle not discouer my 34—p. 449,1 *C yours Thenne said he my name*

'Sir, my name is sir Lamerok de Galis.'

'And my name is sir Launcelot du Lake.'

Than they putt up their swerdys and kyssed hertely
togydirs, and aythir made grete joy of other.

'Sir,' seyde sir Lameroke, 'and hit please you I woll do you 5
servyse.'

'God deffende, sir, that ony of so noble a blood as ye be
sholde do me servyse.' Than seyde sir Launcelot, 'I am in a
queste that I muste do myselff alone/

'Now God spede you!' seyde sir Lameroke. 10

And so they departed. Than sir Lamerok com to sir
Froll and horsed hym agayne.

'Sir, what knyght is that?' seyde sir Froll.

'Sir, hit is nat for you to know, nother is no poynte of
yours charge.' 15

'Ye ar the more uncurteyse,' seyde sir Froll, 'and there-
fore I woll departe felyshyp.'

'Ye may do as ye lyst, and yett be my company ye have
savid the fayryst floure of your garlonde.'

So they departed. 20

Than wythin 'two or' three dayes sir Lamerok founde a (4¹)
knyght at a welle slepyng and his lady sate with hym and
waked. Ryght so com sir Gawayne and toke the knyghtes
lady and sette hir up behynde hys squyer. So sir Lamerok
rode aftir sir Gawayne and seyde, 25

'Sir, turneayenP

Than seyde sir Gawayne,

'What woll ye do with me? I am nevew unto kynge
Arthure.'

'Sir, for that cause I woll forbear you, othir ellys that 30
lady sholde abyde with me.'

Than sir Gawayne turned hym and ran to hym that ought
the lady with his speare, but the knyght wyth pure myght
smote downe sir Gawayne and toke his lady with hym.

8 C Thenne he saide more I am 12-13 W agayne and seyde sir what knyght is
that seyde sir Froll C* ageyne what knyght is that said sir Frol 17 C departe
fro yow 18 C lyst said sir Lamorak and yet 21 C* two or thre dayes
F (MS. B.N. fr. 103 f. gy col. 2): Lamourat. .. vint la nuit en la maison d'un
chevalier qui moult bien le herberga.... A l'andemain se leva et se mist au chemin
et chevaucha tant qu'il vint a une fontaine 26 C sire Gawayne 28 C
for I am 30 Csyresaidhe 30-1 Cwil spare you els 33 W the the lady

And all this sye sir Lamerok and seyde to hymselff, 'but I revenge my felow he woll sey me dishonoure in kynge Arthurs courte.' Than sir Lamerok returned and profyrde that knyght to fyght.

186^T 5 'Sir, I am redy,' seyde he.

And there they cam togedyrs with all theire myght, and sir Lamerok smote the knyght thorow bothe sydis that he fylle to the erthe dede.

Than that lady rode to that knyghtis brothir that hyght io sir Bellyaunce le Orgulus that dwelled faste thereby and tolde hym how his brother was slayne.

'Alas!' seyde he, 'I woll be revenged/

And so he horsed hym and armed hym, and within a whyle he overtoke sir Lamerok and bade hym turne, 'and 15 leve that lady, for thou and I muste play a new play: for thow haste slayne my brother sir Froll that was a bettir knyght than ever was thou.*

'Ye may well say hit,' seyde sir Lamerok, 'but this day in the playne fylde I was founde the bettir knyght.'

20 So they rode togydyrs and unhorsed eche other, and turned their shyldis and drew their swerdys, and foughte myghtyly as noble knyghtes preved the space of two owres. So than sir Bellyaunce prayde hym to telle hym his name.

'Sir, my name is sir Lameroke de Galys.'

25 'A,' seyde sir Bellyaunce, 'thou arte the man in the worlde that I moste hate, for I slew my sunnys for thy sake where I saved thy lyff, and now thou haste slayne my brothir sir Froll. Alas, how sholde I be accorded with the ? Therefore defende the! Thou shalt dye! There is none other way nor 30 remedy.'

'Alas!' seyde sir Lameroke, 'full well me ought to know you, for ye ar the man that moste have done for me.' And therewithall sir Lamerok kneled adowne and besought hym of grace.

35 'Aryse up!' seyde sir Bellyaunce, 'othir ellys thereas thou knelyste I shall sle the!'

2 C sir Lamerok saw 2 C say of me 4 C knyght to Iuste 5 C Syr said
he 10 C Bellyaunce 11 C thenne she told 17 C were thou 18 C I t
myghte wel be said sir 19 playne not in C knyght not in C 22 C by
the space 24 C Syr said he 29 C for thou way nor not in C
33 C knelyd doune 35 up not in C

'That shall nat nede,' seyde sir Lameroke, 'for I woll **yelde** me to-you, nat for no feare of you nor of youre strength, but youre goodnesse makyth me to lothe to have ado with you. Wherefore I requyre you, for Goddis sake and for the honour of knyghthode, forgyff me all that I have offended unto you.' 5 187^r

'Alas!' seyde sir Bellyaunce, 'leve thy knelynge, other ellys I shall sle the withoute mercy.'

Than they yode agayne to batayle and aythir wounded othir, that all the grounde was bloody thereas they fought. And at the laste sir Bellyaunce withdrew hym abacke and 10 sette hym downe a lytyll uppon an hylle, for he was faynte for bledynge, that he myght nat stonde.

Than sir Lameroke threw his shylde uppon his backe and cam unto hym and asked hym what chere.

'Well,' seyde sir Bellyaunce. 15

'A, sir, yett shall I shew you favoure in youre male ease.'

'A, knyght,' seyde sir Bellyaunce unto sir Lamerok, 'thou arte a foole, for and I had the at suche avauntage as thou haste me, I sholde sle the. But thy jantylnesse is so good and so large that I muste nedys forgyff the myne evyll wyll.' 20

And than sir Lameroke kneled adowne and unlaced fyrst his umbrere and than his owne, and than aythir kyssed othir with wepynge tearys. Than sir Lamerok led sir Bellyaunce to an abbey faste by, and there sir Lamerok wolde nat departe from sir Bellyaunce tylle he was hole. And than they 25 were sworne togydys that none of hem sholde never fyght ayenste other.

So sir Lamerok departed and wente to the courte of Arthur.

HERE LEVYTH OF THE TALE OF SIR LAMEROK AND OF SYR TRYSTRAMYS, AND HERE BEGYNNYTH THE TALE OF SYR LA COTE 3^o MALE TAYLE THAT WAS A GOOD KNYGHT.

2 C not for fere of you 3 C mefulloth 5 Clhane SI haue u C
 doune softly vpon a lytil hylle 14 and cam unto hym not in Cf 17 Cf A
 knyght syr Belliaunce said syr Lamorak F (MS. B.N.fr. 103/. 95' col. 2): Et
 Belynas lui respont: 'Comment, Amourat, tu sceis que je te vueil mal de mort et tu
 me paroles de garir? Certes, se je fusse aussi au dessus de toy comme tu es de moy,
 tout le monde ne te garantiroit mie que je ne t'occeisse 25 sir not in C 25-6 C
 theyswaretogyders 28 Cofkynge Arthur 29 CHereleuweof 30-1 C
 the historye of La cote male taylor 31 that was a good knyght not in C

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