

PR 5558

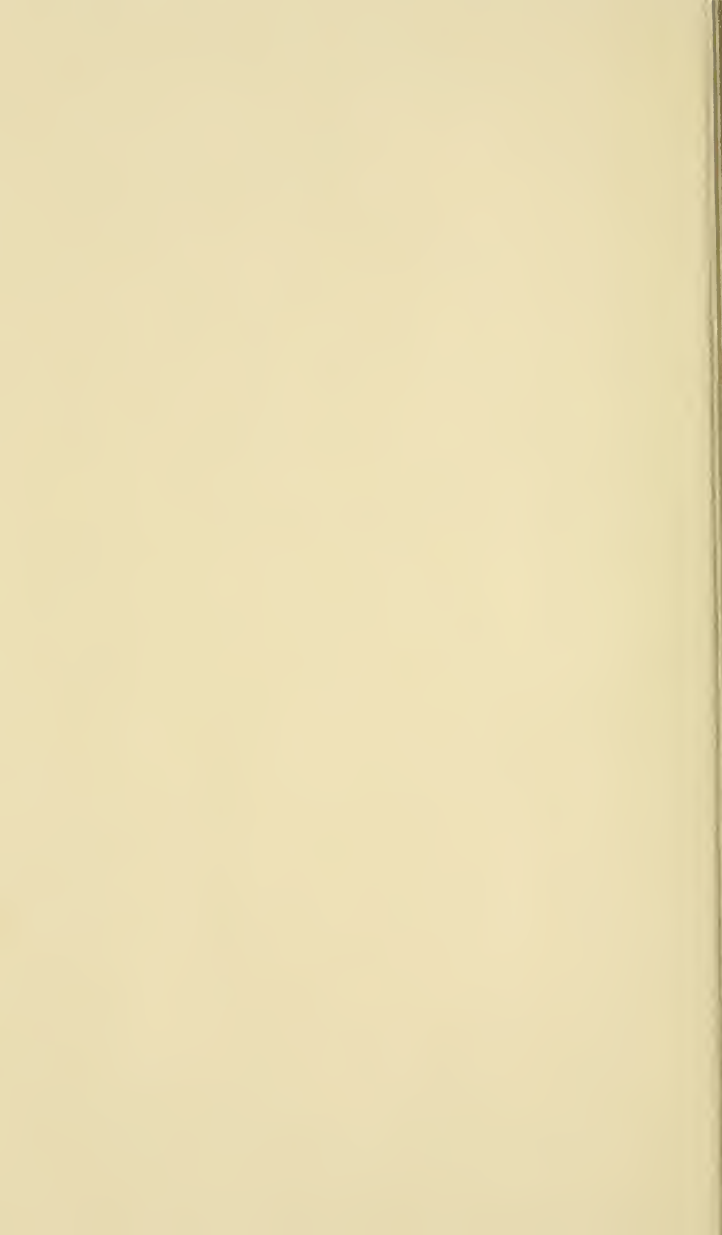
.A3 B2

1918









F283
165



J. H. P. H. H. H.

Tennyson, Alfred Tennyson

The Riverside Literature Series

SELECTED
IDYLLS OF THE KING

THE COMING OF ARTHUR
GARETH AND LYNETTE
LANCELOT AND ELAINE
THE PASSING OF ARTHUR

EDITED, WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

FRANKLIN T. BAKER, A.M.

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH IN TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY



BOSTON NEW YORK CHICAGO
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
THE LIFE OF TENNYSON	1
THE ARTHURIAN LEGENDS	7
THE IDYLLS OF THE KING	10
A BIBLIOGRAPHY	20
IDYLLS OF THE KING	21
DEDICATION	21
THE COMING OF ARTHUR	23
GARETH AND LYNETTE	40
LANCELOT AND ELAINE	87
THE PASSING OF ARTHUR	132
TO THE QUEEN	148
NOTES	150
QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR STUDY	167
EARLIER ARTHURIAN POEMS BY TENNYSON	
SIR GALAHAD	177
SIR LAUNCELOT AND QUEEN GUINEVERE	178
THE LADY OF SHALOTT	179

ILLUSTRATIONS

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON	<i>Frontispiece</i> ✓
<i>Portrait from a Photograph</i>	
SHIELD AND SWORD	39 ✓
<i>12th century</i>	
KING ARTHUR	132 ✓
<i>After the statue in bronze by Peter Vischer</i>	
KING ARTHUR'S ROUND TABLE	147 ✓
<i>After a work of art in Winchester Castle, 1235-1425</i>	

INTRODUCTION

THE LIFE OF TENNYSON

WE usually like to know something of the lives of great men. Just as we like to see the men whose ability and industry have made them famous, so we like to know something of their history: their childhood, their interests, their personal appearance and qualities, and how they reached their goal. Even when the great man is only a writer, and has lived a life without exciting adventures, it is interesting to learn what he was like and how he impressed those among whom he lived. So it has become a custom in reading great books to read also the lives of their authors.

Alfred Tennyson was one of the men who helped to make the nineteenth century the wonderful century it was — wonderful in science, statesmanship, and literature. By a curious coincidence he was born in the same year, 1809, as were Poe the poet, Darwin the scientist, and Gladstone and Lincoln the statesmen. He was one of the twelve children of the Reverend Dr. George Tennyson, vicar of the church at Somersby, Lincolnshire, near the eastern coast of England.

The Tennysons were a remarkable family. The father was a scholarly man of great physical and mental vigor. The mother was clear-sighted, tender, and just. The children were alert and imaginative. In their early childhood several of them, especially Alfred, his two brothers Charles and Frederick, and two of the sisters, found pleasure not only in the customary pastimes of young people, but also in making

verses and stories for the entertainment of the rest of the family. Later, when Alfred began to be famous, an older writer, Leigh Hunt, hearing that three or four others of the Tennyson family could write good verses, said: "Here is a nest of nightingales for you!"

Tennyson, like most men of genius, was a precocious child. He began to make verses when he was five or six years old; before he was fourteen, he had written many things in verse, among them an epic of six thousand lines. Some fragments of these childish writings that have been preserved show that he had even then both imagination and a feeling for the music of verse. He read much and eagerly, both in poetry and prose. By the time he was fourteen he was familiar with a good deal of English poetry. Byron, then at the height of his fame, especially appealed to him. In 1827 he and his brother Charles published a small volume called *Poems by Two Brothers*. Though it contained no great poetry, the verses gave promise of the fine work that came later. It is pleasant to know that the two young authors were still real boys; for they at once spent a part of the money they got for the volume in a holiday trip to the seashore.

The region in which these children were brought up was "a land of quiet villages, large fields, gray hillsides, and noble tall-towered churches"; a land of rich and quiet beauty, as are so many of the English landscapes. Here the young poet grew into that love of nature and that sensitiveness to beauty of which his poetry is so full.

His early education was obtained first at a school in Louth — a school of the vigorous type that has been described so often in English fiction. But in a short

while he was withdrawn and taught at home. Under his father's scholarly guidance, he read in preparation for the university his Greek, Latin, and mathematics.

In 1828 Tennyson entered Trinity College at the University of Cambridge. Although a great reader then, as he was all his life, and a good student in the classics, the only honors he won were for the prize poem *Timbuctoo*, still included among his works. But the life at the University meant much more in his development than mere knowledge of books. He was one of a circle of young men who called themselves "The Apostles," and who eagerly studied and discussed many important matters of religion, art, literature, politics, and science. Their views were advanced, as befitted young men of high ideals and ability. Many of this group later rose to eminence in the great activities of England in the first half of the century.

We have some interesting accounts of how Tennyson appeared to others at this time and later — "like a poet," it was often said, but not pale and feeble. He was tall, broad-shouldered, powerful. His features were clear cut and strong, his hair dark and wavy. Later, when his fame brought him and Thomas Carlyle together, Carlyle wrote of him: "A fine, large-featured, dim-eyed, bronze-coloured, shaggy-headed man is Alfred; dusty, smoky, free and easy; . . . a most restful, brotherly, solid-hearted man." And again: "One of the finest looking men in the world. A great shock of rough, dusky, dark hair; bright, laughing hazel eyes; massive, aquiline face, most massive yet most delicate; of sallow brown complexion, almost Indian looking; clothes cynically loose, free and easy, smokes infinite tobacco. His voice is musical, metallic, fit for loud laughter and piercing wail,

and all that may lie between ; speech and speculation free and plenteous ; I do not meet in these late decades such company over a pipe ! We shall see what he will grow to." When we remember that Carlyle liked a manly man, and that he knew one when he saw him, we are set to wondering how some people— especially boys — ever get the notion that a poet cannot be manly, or that poetry is not made for manly readers. Both Gladstone and Lincoln, the great statesmen who were of Tennyson's own age, were lovers of poetry ; so were the great scientists Huxley and Tyndall, the former being among Tennyson's intimate friends.

Tennyson's first volume of verse, after his juvenile work mentioned above, was *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical*, issued in 1830. In 1832 appeared another volume, entitled simply *Poems*. In 1842 appeared his *English Idylls*. Now between these last two volumes there is a considerable interval, not only in time but in character. The poems of the first two volumes were light, graceful, musical, but with only here and there an expression of serious thought or deep purpose. They were pretty, but without weight. In the 1842 volume, however, it was at once apparent that here was a poet who could not only see beauty, but think and feel more deeply than other men — a man who was cast in a larger mould. This growth in Tennyson is accounted for in two ways. First, he had developed his powers by study and thought, as he had changed from a boy of twenty-three to a man of thirty-three. Second he had had an experience that had set him to thinking more deeply upon the great problems of life. This was the death in 1833 of his dearest friend, Arthur Hallam ; the friend to whose memory was written the great poem *In Memoriam*. So general and so cordial

was the reception given to the volume of 1842 that Tennyson's fame as a poet could now be considered established. From this time on to the end of his long life, he published new volumes of poetry at short intervals.

After leaving the university, Tennyson continued to study and write, setting himself, as Milton had done, seriously to the task of improving his knowledge and his powers. The ten years between 1832 and 1842 were a period of solitude and work. The death of Arthur Hallam had deeply saddened him. The death of his father about the same time not only brought sorrow to the family but lessened their income and made necessary their removal from their old home, the vicarage at Somersby. Yet so well spent were these years of sorrow and narrowed income that the poems he published in 1842 put Tennyson at once in the rank of England's great poets.

From this time on, both his name and his prosperity grew. In 1845 he was given by the Government a pension of two hundred pounds a year. He published in 1847 a long poem, *The Princess*, dealing in a half-serious, half-humorous way with the question of the education of women and their place in the world; and in 1850, *In Memoriam*, one of his greatest and most famous poems.

His eminence being now secure, and his revenue from the sale of his poetry sufficient, he married Emily Sellwood, to whom he had formerly been engaged. Shortly after his marriage he was made poet-laureate, succeeding in this honor a poet of no less distinction than the great Wordsworth, who had recently died. In 1853 he bought a house at Farringford on the Isle of Wight. Here he spent in study and retirement the

most of the remaining forty years of his life. In 1868 he built himself a fine summer house at Aldworth, Surrey. But it is the Isle of Wight that we think of as the home of Tennyson.

The publication of *Maud* in 1855 and of *The Idylls of the King* (containing Enid, Vivien, Elaine, and Guinevere) in 1859 still further increased the poet's fame. Ten thousand copies of the *Idylls* were sold in the first six weeks. And though he published a number of poems in the succeeding thirty years, among them poems of such wide popularity as *Enoch Arden*, nothing could make his name better known. He was, by 1860, already regarded as England's foremost living poet.

Many honors came to him in the latter half of his life. Oxford University gave him an honorary degree. The University of Glasgow offered him the position of lord rector. In 1873 he declined a baronetcy; but when, in 1884, he was offered a peerage, he accepted it, as he said, for the sake of his elder son Hallam. Among his friends he numbered such men as Gladstone, Browning, Carlyle, Ruskin, Thackeray, Fitzgerald, and Huxley. To the end of his life he retained his faculties in full vigor. He died in October, 1892.

Like most great men Tennyson had many interests. All his life he was a reader, a student, and an observer; he knew not only literature, but history, politics, and science. He was in touch with all the important things that the men of his day were thinking and doing. He loved nature for its beauties, and he studied it as science. He traveled frequently, both in the British Islands and on the Continent, finding wild scenery such as that of the Pyrenees Mountains especially to his taste.

He was, for all his vigor, a shy and sensitive man, not seeking notoriety, shrinking under hostile criticism, quick to feel the rights or the sufferings of others. An essentially earnest man, he has filled his poetry with the more serious thoughts of his age. Religious faith, and its power to make men better; scientific doubt, and its power to free men from superstition; knowledge, and its power to make men strong and free; greed, and its tendency to make men base, cruel, and corrupt; ideals, and their power to lift men to higher planes of feeling and conduct; the eternal conflict of right and wrong; death and the future life; true patriotism, and its power to lift the country above cowardice and greed; the beauty of charity, of love, of the domestic affections; — these are the threads that run through all the beautifully wrought and fanciful fabric of his poetry. And so we find him both in his life and in his work, high-minded, thoughtful, and a lover of the beautiful.

THE ARTHURIAN LEGENDS

The Arthurian legends, the stories of King Arthur and his knights of the Round Table, have had a long and varied history. They were not made by any one man, or at any one place, or at any one time. They began somewhere back in the dim past, perhaps about the seventh century, as tales about a Celtic King Arthur, who had led the Britons in their battles against the heathen hordes of Saxon invaders, and, as the historian Nennius writing two centuries later tells us, "defeated them in twelve great battles." Whether Arthur was real, or the battles twelve, or anything certain, we shall never know; but scholars are now inclined to

Origin and development of the Arthurian myths

believe that there was a real King Arthur, a leader of power enough to have his name taken up and passed on in popular tradition, — not through written records, but by word of mouth.

The stories passed from land to land and from century to century through a stretch of eight hundred years. When the Normans came over and conquered England in the eleventh century, they found them there as a survival of Celtic traditions about the heroic past of the Celts. The stories then passed over into France, and took the flavor of French chivalry with its ideals of bravery, courtesy, and love. Then, as they spread in France and Germany and England, they absorbed the myths and legends of Christianity, the customs and ideals of new centuries, and other stories that were at first not even known to the original makers of the legends about Arthur. Such additions were, for example, the story of Lancelot, the story of Tristan and Isolde, and the legend of the Holy Grail.

Finally, these composite stories were gathered and arranged into some sort of unity by Sir Thomas Malory, and printed by Thomas Caxton, the first English printer. A part of Caxton's introduction shows how he regarded it: —

“ And I, according to my copy, have down set it in print, to the intent that noble men may see and learn the noble acts of chivalry, the gentle and virtuous deeds that some knights used in those days, by which they came to honor, and how they that were vicious were punished, and oft put to shame and rebuke. . . . For herein may be seen noble chivalry, courtesy, humanity, friendliness, hardiness, love, friendship, cowardice, murder,

Malory's
Morte
d'Arthur

hate, virtue, and sin. Do after the good, and leave the evil, and it shall bring you unto good fame and renown. And, for to pass the time, this book shall be pleasant to read in, but for to give faith and belief that all is true that is contained herein, ye be at your own liberty.”

So seemed these stories to a wise man of the fifteenth century; and so they seemed to Tennyson, when he drew upon them for *The Idylls of the King*.

An outline of the history and development of these legends is given as follows in Andrew Lang's *Tennyson*:¹ —

A sketch of the evolution of the Arthurian legends might run thus:—

Sixth to eighth century, growth of myth about an Arthur, real, or supposed to be real.

Tenth century, the Duchies of Normandy and Brittany are in close relations; by the eleventh century Normans know Celtic Arthurian stories.

After 1066, Normans in contact with the Celtic peoples of this island are in touch with the Arthur tales.

1130–1145, works on Arthurian matter by Geoffrey of Monmouth.

1155, Wace's French translation of Geoffrey.

1150–1182, Chrétien de Troyes writes poems on Arthurian topics.

French prose romances on Arthur, from, say, 1180 to 1250. Those romances reach Wales, and modify, in translations, the original Welsh legends, or, in part, supplant them.

Amplifications and recastings are numerous. In 1485 Caxton publishes Malory's selections from French and English sources, the whole being Tennyson's main source, *Le Morte d'Arthur*.

¹ *Alfred Tennyson*, by Andrew Lang. Dodd, Mead and Company, 1901.

THE IDYLLS OF THE KING

Tennyson regarded the Arthur stories as the "most wonderful poetic material in the world." Nor was he the first English poet to feel their fascination. For a hundred years or more after Malory published his *Morte d'Arthur*, the book was popular, and the stories were often referred to in other literature. Spenser introduced them into *The Faerie Queene*, and both Milton and Dryden thought of making them the subject of an epic. Scott revived them in the nineteenth century, by introducing Arthur and Merlin into his poem, *The Bridal of Triermain*. Tennyson's interest in the stories dates from his boyhood. "The vision of Arthur as I have drawn him," he said, "had come upon me when, little more than a boy, I first lighted upon Malory." And the theme continued to interest him throughout his long life. In the 1832 volume, in *The Lady of Shalott*, he introduces the story of Elaine and her love for Lancelot. In the 1842 volume, *English Idylls*, there were three poems on Arthurian themes: the *Morte d'Arthur*, *Sir Galahad*, and *Sir Lancelot and Queen Guinevere*. And in the introduction to *Morte d'Arthur*, called *The Epic*, he speaks of the poem as the last of twelve books of an epic, which indeed it later came to be. It is clear, then, that Tennyson had in 1842 already come to think of the Arthurian stories as the material for an epic.

The *Idylls* were not produced as one great poem, but as a number of short poems, grouped around a central figure and a common topic, written at different times, and finally unified into one poem. Just what this means must be made a little clearer. All

Tennyson's
interest in
the stories

the *Idylls* draw their materials from the legends about Arthur and his knights of the Round Table; each of them gives some part of the story of how Arthur founded his kingdom, how evil came into the court, how it spread, and how it finally resulted in the disruption of that "goodly fellowship," the defeat of Arthur's high purposes, and the overthrow of his kingdom. The *Idylls*, as finally arranged to develop this story, are as follows:—

The Coming of Arthur (1869)	Lancelot and Elaine (1859)
Gareth and Lynette (1872)	The Holy Grail (1869)
The Marriage of Geraint (1859)	Pelleas and Ettarre (1869)
Geraint and Enid (1859)	The Last Tournament (1872)
Balin and Balan (1885)	Guinevere (1859)
Merlin and Vivien (1859)	The Passing of Arthur (1842, 1869)

A glance at the dates of the publication of these poems makes clear the point of Professor Van Dyke's comment that Tennyson "began with the end, continued with the beginning, and ended with the middle of the story."

What purpose, if any, had Tennyson beyond retelling these beautiful and romantic stories? From their first appearance they provoked this question, a question which has ever since called forth various answers. The poet has himself spoken on the subject in no uncertain terms.

They have taken my hobby and ridden it too hard and have explained some things too allegorically, although there is an allegorical, or perhaps rather a parabolic drift in the poem. . . .

Of course Camelot, for instance, a city of shadowy palaces, is everywhere symbolic of the gradual growth of human beliefs and institutions and of the spiritual develop-

Subject of
the Idylls

Tennyson's
purpose in
the Idylls

ment of man. Yet there is no single fact or incident in the *Idylls*, however seemingly mystical, which cannot be explained as without any mystery or allegory whatever.

Once, when asked whether those were right who interpreted the three Queens who accompanied Arthur on his last voyage as Faith, Hope, and Charity, he answered : —

They are right, and they are not right. They mean that, and they do not. They are three of the noblest of women. They are also those three Graces, but they are much more. I hate to be tied down to say, “ *This means that,*” because the thought within the image is much more than any one interpretation.

In the same vein, Tennyson makes Percivale say, at the end of his long story in *The Holy Grail* :—

So spake the King ; I know not all he meant.

So Merlin, when questioned about the mystery of Arthur’s origin, replies “ in riddling triplets of old time ” : —

And truth is this to me, and that to thee ;
And truth or clothed or naked let it be.

When Gareth comes to Camelot (in *Gareth and Lynette*), Merlin tells him, the city

is enchanted, son,
For there is nothing in it as it seems,
Saving the King ; tho’ some there be that hold
The King a shadow, and the city real.

And yet, though he “ hated to be tied down ” to too minute an explanation, Tennyson has put the epic unity and the general meaning of the *Idylls* into explicit, though general, terms, in the *Dedication to the Queen* at the end of the poem :—

Accept this old imperfect tale,
 New-old, and shadowing Sense at war with Soul,
 Rather than that gray king, whose name, a ghost,
 Streams like a cloud, man-shaped, from mountain peak,
 And cleaves to cairn and cromlech still: or him
 Of Geoffrey's book, or him of Malleor's.

Here is the key to the meaning of the whole poem — "Sense at war with Soul": the conflict between the lower and the higher, between evil and good. Here is the "parabolic significance" — the resemblance of the poem to a para-
 ble; it illustrates in story form what goes on forever in the world at large and in the life of every one, the conflict between good and evil.

The key to
 the whole
 poem.

Arthur and his knights of the Round Table are seeking to establish a kingdom in which peace, safety, morality, and religion shall overcome disorder, cruelty, injustice, and all forms of wickedness. In the first two Idylls the good prevails. In the next two, the story of Geraint and Enid, evil has crept into the Court in the guilty love of Guinevere and Lancelot, and the rumor of this threatens the happiness of Geraint and Enid; but in the end the good again prevails. In the next, *Balin and Balan*, we have the first tragic outcome of the sin at the Court: the rumor of it leads the two brothers to fight and kill each other. In *Merlin and Vivien*, the spirit of the Court has become poisoned by evil; and from this time on the high purposes of Arthur are frustrated more and more by the spread of evil among those who should support him. In *Lancelot and Elaine* it is Lancelot's guilty love that keeps him from the pure love of Elaine, and causes the tragedy of her death. In *The Holy Grail* there is a sort of interlude in the moral

dissolution of the Court. The knights go on a sacred quest; but they neglect their higher duties, their loyalty to the great work of the King, and all but two or three of them, failing to see the Grail because they are not pure in heart, have, as Arthur says, "followed wandering fires." In *Guinevere*, the next to the last, the guilt of Lancelot and the Queen is made clear even to the unsuspecting King, the Queen flees to a convent, and Lancelot and the disloyal knights array themselves in civil war against the King. In *The Passing of Arthur* we have the end of the cycle, the complete overthrow of Arthur's reign of peace and goodness.

Is the ending hopeless? Not quite. Arthur may come again, and reëstablish his power. Even though he may not come, there are to be other ways, other systems, to accomplish good and defeat evil.

The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.

This is a recurrent idea in Tennyson's work. In *In Memoriam* he wrote, —

Our little systems have their day,
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but broken parts of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.

So much for the general meaning of *The Idylls*. There are other ideas included in them. In *Gareth and Lynette* there is a clear allegory, interpreted by the poet as "the war of time against the soul of man," and reflecting the general teaching of the whole series. The characters represent types: "Lancelot, the noblest brother and the truest man," with the good unconquered in him even by his

Other
meanings

sin; "Tristram the bold and careless hunter, Galahad the pure, unearthly knight, Bors the blunt and honest, Bedivere the warm-hearted." Arthur is a type of perfection, and perhaps for that reason rather cold and unreal.

In *Gareth and Lynette* we have the ideals of King Arthur's court at their point of highest influence. Evil and violence still exist in the land, but the Knights of the Round Table are overcoming them in combat and by their own high standards of conduct. The conflict between "Sense and Soul," that is, between the lower and the higher things, is in part a conflict of ideals: between Gareth and his mother; between Gareth and Lynette, who judges him by externals, but is in the end constrained to recognize true knighthood apart from rank; within Gareth himself, who cheerfully accepts social humiliation for the opportunity to achieve higher things. In every aspect of this story the good triumphs; it is a victory of Soul over Sense.

In *Lancelot and Elaine* the evil at the Court is growing. The Queen's guilty love has an indirect influence for harm to others. It causes the death of Elaine, and leaves in us a foreboding of further evil and sorrow. This Idyll is less allegorical than *Gareth and Lynette*. In spite of its extreme romanticism, it is a story of human beings, rather than a parable for the illustration of some general truth. In the progress of the struggle of Sense and Soul it stands as a sort of crisis or turning-point, with the evil in the ascendancy.

A manuscript note by the poet runs: —

The coming of Arthur is on the night of the New Year; when he is wedded "the world is white with May"; on a summer night the vision of the Holy Grail appears; and

the Last Tournament is in the "yellowing Autumn-tide." Guinevere flees thro' the mists of autumn, and Arthur's death takes place at midnight in midwinter.

Can the reader do better than accept Tennyson's own meaning and purpose in *The Idylls*? To find in them nothing more than a series of beautiful pictures in romantic colors is something, but it is not enough; to twist them into minute and definite allegorical meanings is too much. They were written to charm us by their beauty, by their appeal to our imaginations; and, in addition, to inculcate certain high ideals of life.

The term "Idylls" was deliberately chosen by Tennyson to designate the nature of the poem: not an **The name** epic in the ordinary sense of a long, detailed "Idylls" and sustained story, but a succession of shorter stories, idylls (from the Greek *eidyllion*, meaning a little picture), united by a common thread of theme and purpose into a unified whole.

The diction is appropriate to the theme. It is dignified, formal, archaic. Rare words are used sometimes **Diction** to designate unfamiliar things, sometimes to impart the flavor of antiquity that belongs to these old stories. Many figurative expressions are used. A random glance over the pages shows many such: A doubt that ever smouldered; like a painted battle the war stood; a voice as of the waters; Rome, slow-fading mistress of the world; heapt in mounds and ridges all the sea drove like a cataract; his own thought drove him like a goad; brightening the skirts of a long cloud; a cry that shivered to the tingling stars; so the whole round earth is every way bound by gold chains about the feet of God. In such figurative passages, and in brilliant, highly colored pictures

the pages of Tennyson abound. In a very real sense he is one of the most "picturesque" of our poets.

The verse is, except in the lyrics now and then introduced, pentameter blank verse. This means unrhymed verse, with five beats or accents to a line. Thus: —

The verse-
forms

So all day long the noise of battle rolled
Among the mountains by the winter sea.

So saying, from the ruined shrine he stept,
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He stepping down
By zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

But good verse is not to be read with the beats or accents evenly strong. In the first line above, "So all day long," etc., the stresses are nearly equal. In the next line they are by no means so: the word *by* has almost no stress. So in the first line of the next passage, *from* is not stressed; in the second line, *in* is not; and in the last line, *on* is but faintly accented and *of* not at all. Now note what is gained by these variations. Each of these unstressed or faintly stressed syllables either follows or precedes a foot (of two syllables) in which the stress is very strong. Sometimes the stress may be equally distributed on the two syllables of a foot, as in the sixth, the seventh, and the last line above. We may even have the order reversed, for the sake of variety, and have the stress fall

on the first syllable of the foot, making a *trochee* instead of an *iambus*, thus: —

Wearing the white flower of a blameless life.

If we indicate the faint or absent accent by a single mark, and the strong accent by a double mark, these variations are more clearly seen.

Among the mountains by the winter sea.

And in the moon athwart the place of tombs.

Came on the shining levels of the lake.

Torn as a sail that leaves the rope is torn.

These changes in stress give a pleasing variety to the verse: they break up the monotony of sound; so that the rhythm is very different from the mechanical effect of a Mother Goose rhyme: —

Hickory, dickory, dock,

The mouse ran up the clock,

The clock struck one,

The mouse ran down,

Hickory, dickory, dock.

But there is another advantage in this variation of stress. The accent is taken off the unimportant words, and falls, therefore, the more heavily on the important words. Thus they are made to stand out, not only by their meaning, but by their sound. Test any passage in these poems, and you will find this to be true.

What should a high school student make of these poems? He need hardly expect to see in them as yet all that Tennyson meant, or all that trained minds of older people see. If he derives pleasure from the use of his imagination and of his thinking powers, and if he is willing to

On the
reading of
Tennyson

take the pains to read carefully and thoughtfully, he may fairly expect to find in reading them an ample reward in pleasure of a high order. If he is unwilling to use his mind, he cannot expect to get much pleasure out of his reading, either in this book or in most others that belong to what is called good literature. The great poets and prose writers have not written for the sluggish reader ; they have preferred to address a more deserving audience. Are they not justified ?

Tennyson is a poet for the young as well as for the old. He has given deep pleasure to thousands of boys and girls in their "teens." The way to acquire such pleasure in poetry is to read poetry ; the way to increase it is to read more poetry. It would be well for readers of this volume to extend their knowledge of the *Idylls* by reading also, *Geraint and Enid*, *The Holy Grail*, and *Guinevere*. These are not hard reading, and they are full of beautiful passages. A list of the other good things in Tennyson would be too long to give. But here is a partial list, chosen for beauty and simplicity : —

Mariana	The Eagle
The Lady of Shalott	Break, break, break
The Miller's Daughter	The Charge of the Light
Lady Clara Vere de Vere	Brigade
The Lotos Eaters	Enoch Arden
Choric Song	The Revenge
Dora	The Defence of Lucknow
The Talking Oak	The Northern Farmer
Ulysses	The Spinster's Sweet-Arts
The Day Dream	Owd Rōa
Sir Galahad	Merlin and the Gleam
Lady Clare	Crossing the Bar

A BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE ARTHURIAN LEGENDS

- Elsdale, Henry. *Studies in the Idylls*.
Lang, Andrew. *Tennyson*.
Lawrence, W. W. *Medieval Stories*.
Littledale, Harold. *Studies in the Idylls*.
Maccallum, M. W. *Tennyson's Idylls*.
Rhys, John. *Studies in the Arthurian Legend*.

LIFE OF TENNYSON

- Cary, E. L. *Tennyson, His Homes, etc.*
Hinchman and Gummere. *Lives of Great Writers*.
Lang, Andrew. *Tennyson*.
Lyall, Herbert. *Tennyson*.
Stephen, Leslie. *Studies of a Biographer*, vol. II.
Tennyson, Hallam. *Memoirs of Tennyson*.
Walters, J. C. *In Tennyson Land*.
Waugh, Arthur. *Alfred, Lord Tennyson*.
World's Best Literature. Article on Tennyson,
vol. XXIV.

CRITICISM OF TENNYSON

- Brooke, Stopford A. *Tennyson, His Art, etc.*
Chesterton, G. K. *Varied Types*.
Dowden, Edward. *Studies in Literature*.
Gates, W. E. *Studies and Appreciations*.
Harrison, Frederic. *Tennyson and Other Literary
Estimates*.
Hutton, R. H. *Essays, Literary*.
James, Henry. *Views and Reviews*.
Noel, Roden. *Essays on Poetry and Poets*.
Paul, Herbert. *Men and Letters*.
Saintsbury, G. E. *Corrected Impressions*.
Van Dyke, Henry. *The Poetry of Tennyson*.

IDYLLS OF THE KING

IN TWELVE BOOKS

Flos Regum Arthurus. — JOSEPH OF EXETER.

DEDICATION

THESE to His Memory — since he held them dear,
Perchance as finding there unconsciously
Some image of himself — I dedicate,
I dedicate, I consecrate with tears —
These Idylls.

And indeed He seems to me 5
Scarce other than my king's ideal knight,
“ Who revered his conscience as his king ;
Whose glory was, redressing human wrong ;
Who spake no slander, no, nor listen'd to it ;
Who loved one only and who clave to her — ” 10
Her — over all whose realms to their last isle,
Commingled with the gloom of imminent war,
The shadow of His loss drew like eclipse,
Darkening the world. We have lost him : he is gone :
We know him now : all narrow jealousies 15
Are silent ; and we see him as he moved,
How modest, kindly, all-accomplish'd, wise,
With what sublime repression of himself,
And in what limits, and how tenderly ;
Not swaying to this faction or to that ; 20
Not making his high place the lawless perch
Of wing'd ambitions, nor a vantage-ground

For pleasure ; but thro' all this tract of years
 Wearing the white flower of a blameless life,
 Before a thousand peering littlenesses, 25
 In that fierce light which beats upon a throne,
 And blackens every blot : for where is he,
 Who dares foreshadow for an only son
 A lovelier life, a more unstain'd than his ?
 Or how should England dreaming of *his* sons 30
 Hope more for these than some inheritance
 Of such a life, a heart, a mind as thine,
 Thou noble Father of her Kings to be,
 Laborious for her people and her poor —
 Voice in the rich dawn of an ampler day — 35
 Far-sighted summoner of War and Waste
 To fruitful strifes and rivalries of peace —
 Sweet nature gilded by the gracious gleam
 Of letters, dear to Science, dear to Art,
 Dear to thy land and ours, a Prince indeed, 40
 Beyond all titles, and a household name,
 Hereafter, thro' all times, Albert the Good.

Break not, O woman's-heart, but still endure ;
 Break not, for thou art Royal, but endure,
 Remembering all the beauty of that star 45
 Which shone so close beside Thee that ye made
 One light together, but has past and leaves
 The Crown a lonely splendor.

May all love,
 His love, unseen but felt, o'ershadow Thee,
 The love of all Thy sons encompass Thee, 50
 The love of all Thy daughters cherish Thee,
 The love of all Thy people comfort Thee,
 Till God's love set Thee at his side again !

THE COMING OF ARTHUR

LEODOGRAN, the King of Cameliard,
Had one fair daughter, and none other child ;
And she was fairest of all flesh on earth,
Guinevere, and in her his one delight.

For many a petty king ere Arthur came 5
Ruled in this isle, and ever waging war
Each upon other, wasted all the land ;
And still from time to time the heathen host
Swarm'd overseas, and harried what was left.
And so there grew great tracts of wilderness, 10
Wherein the beast was ever more and more,
But man was less and less, till Arthur came.
For first Aurelius lived and fought and died,
And after him King Uther fought and died,
But either fail'd to make the kingdom one. 15
And after these King Arthur for a space,
And thro' the puissance of his Table Round,
Drew all their petty pryncedoms under him,
Their king and head, and made a realm, and reign'd.

And thus the land of Cameliard was waste, 20
Thick with wet woods, and many a beast therein,
And none or few to scare or chase the beast ;
So that wild dog, and wolf and boar and bear
Came night and day, and rooted in the fields,
And wallow'd in the gardens of the King. 25
And ever and anon the wolf would steal
The children and devour, but now and then,
Her own brood lost or dead, lent her first teat

To human sucklings ; and the children, housed
 In her foul den, there at their meat would growl, 30
 And mock their foster-mother on four feet,
 Till, straighten'd, they grew up to wolf-like men,
 Worse than the wolves. And King Leodogran
 Groan'd for the Roman legions here again,
 And Cæsar's eagle : then his brother king, 35
 Urien, assail'd him : last a heathen horde,
 Reddening the sun with smoke and earth with blood,
 And on the spike that split the mother's heart
 Spitting the child, brake on him, till, amazed,
 He knew not whither he should turn for aid. 40

But — for he heard of Arthur newly crown'd,
 Tho' not without an uproar made by those
 Who cried, " He is not Uther's son " — the King
 Sent to him, saying, " Arise, and help us thou !
 For here between the man and beast we die." 45

And Arthur yet had done no deed of arms,
 But heard the call, and came : and Guinevere
 Stood by the castle walls to watch him pass ;
 But since he neither wore on helm or shield
 The golden symbol of his kinglihood, 50
 But rode a simple knight among his knights,
 And many of these in richer arms than he,
 She saw him not, or mark'd not, if she saw,
 One among many, tho' his face was bare.
 But Arthur, looking downward as he past, 55
 Felt the light of her eyes into his life
 Smite on the sudden, yet rode on, and pitch'd
 His tents beside the forest. Then he drave
 The heathen ; after, slew the beast, and fell'd
 The forest, letting in the sun, and made 60

Broad pathways for the hunter and the knight
And so return'd.

For while he linger'd there,
A doubt that ever smoulder'd in the hearts
Of those great Lords and Barons of his realm
Flash'd forth and into war: for most of these, 45
Colleagu'ing with a score of petty kings,
Made head against him, crying, "Who is he
That he should rule us? who hath proven him
King Uther's son? for lo! we look at him,
And find nor face nor bearing, limbs nor voice, 71
Are like to those of Uther whom we knew.
This is the son of Gorlois, not the King;
This is the son of Anton, not the King."

And Arthur, passing thence to battle, felt
Travail, and throes and agonies of the life, 75
Desiring to be join'd with Guinevere;
And thinking as he rode, "Her father said
That there between the man and beast they die.
Shall I not lift her from this land of beasts
Up to my throne, and side by side with me? 80
What happiness to reign a lonely king,
Vext — O ye stars that shudder over me,
O earth that soundest hollow under me,
Vext with waste dreams? for saving I be join'd
To her that is the fairest under heaven, 85
I seem as nothing in the mighty world,
And cannot will my will, nor work my work
Wholly, nor make myself in mine own realm
Victor and lord. But were I join'd with her,
Then might we live together as one life, 90
And reigning with one will in everything

Have power on this dark land to lighten it,
And power on this dead world to make it live.”

Thereafter — as he speaks who tells the tale —
When Arthur reach'd a field-of-battle bright 95
With pitch'd pavilions of his foe, the world
Was all so clear about him, that he saw
The smallest rock far on the faintest hill,
And even in high day the morning star.
So when the King had set his banner broad, 100
At once from either side, with trumpet-blast,
And shouts, and clarions shrilling unto blood,
The long-lanced battle let their horses run.
And now the Barons and the kings prevail'd,
And now the King, as here and there that war 105
Went swaying; but the Powers who walk the world
Made lightnings and great thunders over him,
And dazed all eyes, till Arthur by main might,
And mightier of his hands with every blow,
And leading all his knighthood threw the kings 110
Carádos, Urien, Cradlemon of Wales,
Claudius, and Clariance of Northumberland,
The King Brandagoras of Latangor,
With Anguisant of Erin, Morganore,
And Lot of Orkney. Then, before a voice 115
As dreadful as the shout of one who sees
To one who sins, and deems himself alone
And all the world asleep, they swerved and brake
Flying, and Arthur call'd to stay the brands
That hack'd among the flyers, “Ho! they yield!” 120
So like a painted battle the war stood
Silenced, the living quiet as the dead,
And in the heart of Arthur joy was lord.
He laugh'd upon his warrior whom he loved

And honor'd most. "Thou dost not doubt me King, 125
 So well thine arm hath wrought for me to-day."
 "Sir and my liege," he cried, "the fire of God
 Descends upon thee in the battle-field:
 I know thee for my King!" Whereat the two,
 For each had warded either in the fight, 130
 Sware on the field of death a deathless love.
 And Arthur said, "Man's word is God in man:
 Let chance what will, I trust thee to the death."

Then quickly from the foughten field he sent
 Ulfus, and Brastias, and Bedivere, 135
 His new-made knights, to King Leodogran,
 Saying, "If I in aught have served thee well,
 Give me thy daughter Guinevere to wife."

Whom when he heard, Leodogran in heart
 Debating — "How should I that am a king, 140
 However much he help me at my need,
 Give my one daughter saving to a king,
 And a king's son?" — lifted his voice, and call'd
 A hoary man, his chamberlain, to whom
 He trusted all things, and of him required 145
 His counsel: "Knowest thou aught of Arthur's
 birth?"

Then spake the hoary chamberlain and said,
 "Sir King, there be but two old men that know:
 And each is twice as old as I; and one
 Is Merlin, the wise man that ever served 150
 King Uther thro' his magic art; and one
 Is Merlin's master (so they call him) Bleys,
 Who taught him magic; but the scholar ran
 Before the master, and so far, that Bleys

Laid magic by, and sat him down, and wrote 155
 All things and whatsoever Merlin did
 In one great annal-book, where after-years
 Will learn the secret of our Arthur's birth."

To whom the King Leodogran replied,
 "O friend, had I been holpen half as well 160
 By this King Arthur as by thee to-day,
 Then beast and man had had their share of me:
 But summon here before us yet once more
 Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere."

Then, when they came before him, the King said, 165
 "I have seen the cuckoo chased by lesser fowl,
 And reason in the chase: but wherefore now
 Do these your lords stir up the heat of war,
 Some calling Arthur born of Gorlois,
 Others of Anton? Tell me, ye yourselves, 170
 Hold ye this Arthur for King Uther's son?"

And Ulfius and Brastias answer'd, "Ay."
 Then Bedivere, the first of all his knights
 Knighted by Arthur at his crowning, spake —
 For bold in heart and act and word was he, 175
 Whenever slander breathed against the King —

"Sir, there be many rumors on this head:
 For there be those who hate him in their hearts,
 Call him baseborn, and since his ways are sweet,
 And theirs are bestial, hold him less than man: 180
 And there be those who deem him more than man,
 And dream he dropt from heaven: but my belief
 In all this matter — so ye care to learn —
 Sir, for ye know that in King Uther's time

The prince and warrior Gorlois, he that held 185
 Tintagil castle by the Cornish sea,
 Was wedded with a winsome wife, Ygerne :
 And daughters had she borne him, — one whereof,
 Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney, Bellicent,
 Hath ever like a loyal sister cleaved 190
 To Arthur, — but a son she had not borne.
 And Uther cast upon her eyes of love :
 But she, a stainless wife to Gorlois,
 So loathed the bright dishonor of his love,
 That Gorlois and King Uther went to war : 195
 And overthrown was Gorlois and slain.
 Then Uther in his wrath and heat besieged
 Ygerne within Tintagil, where her men,
 Seeing the mighty swarm about their walls,
 Left her and fled, and Uther enter'd in, 200
 And there was none to call to but himself.
 So, compass'd by the power of the King,
 Enforced she was to wed him in her tears,
 And with a shameful swiftness : afterward,
 Not many moons, King Uther died himself, 205
 Moaning and wailing for an heir to rule
 After him, lest the realm should go to wrack.
 And that same night, the night of the new year,
 By reason of the bitterness and grief
 That vext his mother, all before his time 210
 Was Arthur born, and all as soon as born
 Deliver'd at a secret postern-gate
 To Merlin, to be holden far apart
 Until his hour should come ; because the lords
 Of that fierce day were as the lords of this, 215
 Wild beasts, and surely would have torn the child
 Piecemeal among them, had they known ; for each
 But sought to rule for his own self and hand,

And many hated Uther for the sake
 Of Gorlois. Wherefore Merlin took the child, 220
 And gave him to Sir Anton, an old knight
 An ancient friend of Uther; and his wife
 Nursed the young prince, and rear'd him with her own;
 And no man knew. And ever since the lords
 Have foughten like wild beasts among themselves, 225
 So that the realm has gone to wrack: but now,
 This year, when Merlin (for his hour had come)
 Brought Arthur forth, and set him in the hall,
 Proclaiming, 'Here is Uther's heir, your king,'
 A hundred voices cried, 'Away with him! 230
 No king of ours! a son of Gorlois he,
 Or else the child of Anton, and no king,
 Or else baseborn.' Yet Merlin thro' his craft,
 And while the people clamor'd for a king,
 Had Arthur crown'd; but after, the great lords 235
 Banded, and so brake out in open war."

Then while the King debated with himself
 If Arthur were the child of shamefulness,
 Or born the son of Gorlois, after death,
 Or Uther's son, and born before his time, 240
 Or whether there were truth in anything
 Said by these three, there came to Cameliard,
 With Gawain and young Modred, her two sons,
 Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney, Bellicent;
 Whom as he could, not as he would, the King 245
 Made feast for, saying, as they sat at meat,

"A doubtful throne is ice on summer seas.
 Ye come from Arthur's court. Vietor his men
 Report him! Yea, but ye — think ye this king —
 So many those that hate him, and so strong, 250

“ And near him stood the Lady of the Lake,
 Who knows a subtler magic than his own —
 Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful.
 She gave the King his huge cross-hilted sword, 285
 Whereby to drive the heathen out: a mist
 Of incense curl'd about her, and her face
 Wellnigh was hidden in the minster gloom;
 But there was heard among the holy hymns
 A voice as of the waters, for she dwells 290
 Down in a deep; calm, whatsoever storms
 May shake the world, and when the surface rolls,
 Hath power to walk the waters like our Lord.

“ There likewise I beheld Excalibur
 Before him at his crowning borne, the sword 295
 That rose from out the bosom of the lake,
 And Arthur row'd across and took it — rich
 With jewels, elfin Urim, on the hilt,
 Bewildering heart and eye — the blade so bright
 That men are blinded by it — on one side, 300
 Graven in the oldest tongue of all this world,
 ‘ Take me, ’ but turn the blade and ye shall see,
 And written in the speech ye speak yourself,
 ‘ Cast me away ! ’ And sad was Arthur’s face
 Taking it, but old Merlin counsell’d him, 305
 ‘ Take thou and strike ! the time to cast away
 Is yet far-off. ’ So this great brand the king
 Took, and by this will beat his foemen down. ”

Thereat Leodogran rejoiced, but thought
 To sift his doubtings to the last, and ask’d, 310
 Fixing full eyes of question on her face,
 “ The swallow and the swift are near akin,
 But thou art closer to this noble prince,

Being his own dear sister” ; and she said,
 “ Daughter of Gorlois and Ygerne am I ” ; 315
 “ And therefore Arthur’s sister ? ” ask’d the King.
 She answer’d, “ These be secret things,” and sign’d
 To those two sons to pass and let them be.
 And Gawain went, and breaking into song
 Sprang out, and follow’d by his flying hair 320
 Ran like a colt, and leapt at all he saw :
 But Modred laid his ear beside the doors,
 And there half-heard ; the same that afterward
 Struck for the throne, and striking found his doom.

And then the Queen made answer, “ What know I ?
 For dark my mother was in eyes and hair, 326
 And dark in hair and eyes am I ; and dark
 Was Gorlois, yea and dark was Uther too,
 Wellnigh to blackness ; but this King is fair
 Beyond the race of Britons and of men. 330
 Moreover, always in my mind I hear
 A cry from out the dawning of my life,
 A mother weeping, and I hear her say,
 ‘ O that ye had some brother, pretty one,
 To guard thee on the rough ways of the world.’ ” 335

“ Ay,” said the King, “ and hear ye such a cry ?
 But when did Arthur chance upon thee first ? ”

“ O King ! ” she cried, “ and I will tell thee true :
 He found me first when yet a little maid :
 Beaten I had been for a little fault 340
 Whereof I was not guilty ; and out I ran
 And flung myself down on a bank of heath,
 And hated this fair world and all therein,
 And wept, and wish’d that I were dead ; and he —

I know not whether of himself he came, 345
 Or brought by Merlin, who, they say, can walk
 Unseen at pleasure — he was at my side,
 And spake sweet words, and comforted my heart,
 And dried my tears, being a child with me.
 And many a time he came, and evermore 350
 As I grew greater grew with me ; and sad
 At times he seem'd, and sad with him was I,
 Stern too at times, and then I loved him not,
 But sweet again, and then I loved him well.
 And now of late I see him less and less, 355
 But those first days had golden hours for me,
 For then I surely thought he would be king.

“ But let me tell thee now another tale :
 For Bleys, our Merlin's master, as they say,
 Died but of late, and sent his cry to me, 360
 To hear him speak before he left his life.
 Shrunk like a fairy changeling lay the mage ;
 And when I enter'd told me that himself
 And Merlin ever served about the King,
 Uther, before he died ; and on the night 365
 When Uther in Tintagil past away
 Moaning and wailing for an heir, the two
 Left the still King, and passing forth to breathe,
 Then from the castle gateway by the chasm
 Descending thro' the dismal night — a night 370
 In which the bounds of heaven and earth were lost —
 Beheld, so high upon the dreary deeps
 It seem'd in heaven, a ship, the shape thereof
 A dragon wing'd, and all from stem to stern
 Bright with a shining people on the decks, 375
 And gone as soon as seen. And then the two
 Dropt to the cove, and watch'd the great sea fall,

Wave after wave, each mightier than the last,
 Till last, a ninth one, gathering half the deep
 And full of voices, slowly rose and plunged 380
 Roaring, and all the wave was in a flame :

And down the wave and in the flame was borne
 A naked babe, and rode to Merlin's feet,
 Who stoopt and caught the babe, and cried 'The
 King!

Here is an heir for Uther!' And the fringe 385
 Of that great breaker, sweeping up the strand,
 Lash'd at the wizard as he spake the word,
 And all at once all round him rose in fire,
 So that the child and he were clothed in fire.

And presently thereafter follow'd calm, 390
 Free sky and stars : ' And this same child,' he said,
 ' Is he who reigns ; nor could I part in peace
 Till this were told.' And saying this the seer
 Went thro' the strait and dreadful pass of death,
 Not ever to be question'd any more 395

Save on the further side ; but when I met
 Merlin, and ask'd him if these things were truth —
 The shining dragon and the naked child
 Descending in the glory of the seas —
 He laugh'd as is his wont, and answer'd me 400
 In riddling triplets of old time, and said :

“ ‘ Rain, rain, and sun ! a rainbow in the sky !
 A young man will be wiser by and by ;
 An old man's wit may wander ere he die.

“ ‘ Rain, rain, and sun ! a rainbow on the lea ! 405
 And truth is this to me, and that to thee ;
 And truth or clothed or naked let it be.

“ Rain, sun, and rain! and the free blossom blows:
Sun, rain, and sun! and where is he who knows?
From the great deep to the great deep he goes.” 410

“ So Merlin riddling anger'd me; but thou
Fear not to give this King thine only child,
Guinevere: so great bards of him will sing
Hereafter; and dark sayings from of old
Ranging and ringing thro' the minds of men, 415
And echo'd by old folk beside their fires
For comfort after their wage-work is done,
Speak of the King; and Merlin in our time
Hath spoken also, not in jest, and sworn
Tho' men may wound him that he will not die, 420
But pass, again to come; and then or now
Utterly smite the heathen underfoot,
Till these and all men hail him for their king.”

She spake and King Leodogran rejoiced,
But musing “ Shall I answer yea or nay ? ” 425
Doubted, and drowsed, nodded and slept, and saw,
Dreaming, a slope of land that ever grew,
Field after field, up to a height, the peak
Haze-hidden, and thereon a phantom king,
Now looming, and now lost; and on the slope 430
The sword rose, the hind fell, the herd was driven,
Fire glimpsed: and all the land from roof and rick,
In drifts of smoke before a rolling wind,
Stream'd to the peak, and mingled with the haze
And made it thicker; while the phantom king 435
Sent out at times a voice; and here or there
Stood one who pointed toward the voice, the rest
Slew on and burnt, crying, “ No king of ours,
No son of Uther, and no king of ours ” ;

Till with a wink his dream was changed, the haze 440
 Descended, and the solid earth became
 As nothing, but the King stood out in heaven,
 Crown'd. And Leodogran awoke, and sent
 Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere
 Back to the court of Arthur answering yea. 445

Then Arthur charged his warrior whom he loved
 And honor'd most, Sir Lancelot, to ride forth
 And bring the Queen ; — and watch'd him from the
 gates:

And Lancelot past away among the flowers,
 (For then was latter April) and return'd 450
 Among the flowers, in May, with Guinevere.
 To whom arrived, by Dubric the high saint,
 Chief of the church in Britain, and before
 The stateliest of her altar-shrines, the King
 That morn was married, while in stainless white, 455
 The fair beginners of a nobler time,
 And glorying in their vows and him, his knights
 Stood round him, and rejoicing in his joy.
 Far shone the fields of May thro' open door,
 The sacred altar blossom'd white with May, 460
 The Sun of May descended on their King,
 They gazed on all earth's beauty in their Queen,
 Roll'd incense, and there past along the hymns
 A voice as of the waters, while the two
 Swore at the shrine of Christ a deathless love : 465
 And Arthur said, " Behold, thy doom is mine.
 Let chance what will, I love thee to the death !"
 To whom the Queen replied with drooping eyes,
 " King and my lord, I love thee to the death !"
 And holy Dubric spread his hands and spake, 470
 " Reign ye, and live and love, and make the world

Other, and may thy Queen be one with thee,
 And all this Order of thy Table Round
 Fulfil the boundless purpose of their King!"

So Dubric said; but when they left the shrine 475
 Great Lords from Rome before the portal stood,
 In scornful stillness gazing as they past;
 Then while they paced a city all on fire
 With sun and cloth of gold, the trumpets blew,
 And Arthur's knighthood sang before the King: — 480

"Blow trumpet, for the world is white with May;
 Blow trumpet, the long night hath roll'd away!
 Blow thro' the living world — 'Let the King reign.'

"Shall Rome or Heathen rule in Arthur's realm?
 Flash brand and lance, fall battleaxe upon helm, 485
 Fall battleaxe, and flash brand! Let the King reign.

"Strike for the King and live! his knights have heard
 That God hath told the King a secret word.
 Fall battleaxe, and flash brand! Let the King reign.

"Blow trumpet! he will lift us from the dust. 490
 Blow trumpet! live the strength and die the lust!
 Clang battleaxe, and clash brand! Let the King reign.

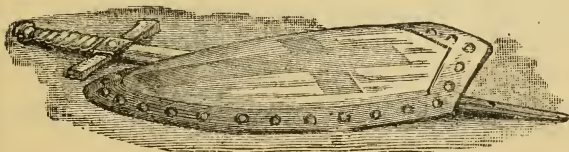
"Strike for the King and die! and if thou diest,
 The King is King, and ever wills the highest.
 Clang battleaxe, and clash brand! Let the King reign.

"Blow, for our Sun is mighty in his May! 496
 Blow, for our Sun is mightier day by day!
 Clang battleaxe, and clash brand! Let the King reign.

“The King will follow Christ, and we the King
In whom high God hath breathed a secret thing. 500
Fall battleaxe, and flash brand! Let the King reign.”

So sang the knighthood, moving to their hall.
There at the banquet those great Lords from Rome,
The slow-fading mistress of the world,
Strode in, and claim'd their tribute as of yore. 505
But Arthur spake, “Behold, for these have sworn
To wage my wars, and worship me their King;
The old order changeth, yielding place to new;
And we that fight for our fair father Christ,
Seeing that ye be grown too weak and old 510
To drive the heathen from your Roman wall,
No tribute will we pay”: so those great lords
Drew back in wrath, and Arthur strove with Rome.

And Arthur and his knighthood for a space
Were all one will, and thro' that strength the King 515
Drew in the petty pryncedoms under him,
Fought, and in twelve great battles overcame
The heathen hordes, and made a realm and reign'd.



GARETH AND LYNETTE

THE last tall son of Lot and Bellicent,
And tallest, Gareth, in a showerful spring
Stared at the spate. A slender-shafted pine
Lost footing, fell, and so was whirl'd away.
“How he went down,” said Gareth, “as a false knight 5
Or evil king before my lance, if lance
Were mine to use — O senseless cataract,
Bearing all down in thy precipitancy —
And yet thou art but swollen with cold snows
And mine is living blood: thou dost His will, 10
The Maker's, and not knowest, and I that know,
Have strength and wit, in my good mother's hall
Linger with vacillating obedience,
Prison'd, and kept and coax'd and whistled to —
Since the good mother holds me still a child! 15
Good mother is bad mother unto me!
A worse were better; yet no worse would I.
Heaven yield her for it, but in me put force
To weary her ears with one continuous prayer,
Until she let me fly discaged to sweep 20
In ever-highering eagle-circles up
To the great Sun of Glory, and thence swoop
Down upon all things base, and dash them dead,
A knight of Arthur, working out his will,
To cleanse the world. Why, Gawain, when he came 25
With Modred hither in the summer-time,
Ask'd me to tilt with him, the proven knight.
Modred for want of worthier was the judge.
Then I so shook him in the saddle, he said,
'Thou hast half prevail'd against me,' said so — he — 30

Tho' Modred biting his thin lips was mute,
For he is alway sullen: what care I?"

And Gareth went, and hovering round her chair
Ask'd, "Mother, tho' ye count me still the child,
Sweet mother do ye love the child?" She laugh'd, 35
"Thou art but a wild-goose to question it."
"Then, mother, an ye love the child," he said,
"Being a goose, and rather tame than wild,
Hear the child's story." "Yea, my well-beloved,
An't were but of the goose and golden eggs." 40

And Gareth answer'd her with kindling eyes:
"Nay, nay, good mother, but this egg of mine
Was finer gold than any goose can lay;
For this an eagle, a royal eagle, laid
Almost beyond eye-reach, on such a palm 45
As glitters gilded in thy Book of Hours.
And there was ever haunting round the palm
A lusty youth, but poor, who often saw
The splendor sparkling from aloft, and thought,
'An I could climb and lay my hand upon it, 50
Then were I wealthier than a leash of kings.'
But ever when he reach'd a hand to climb,
One that had loved him from his childhood caught
And stay'd him, 'Climb not lest thou break thy neck,
I charge thee by my love,' and so the boy, 55
Sweet mother, neither clomb nor brake his neck,
But brake his very heart in pining for it,
And past away."

To whom the mother said,
"True love, sweet son, had risk'd himself and climb'd,
And handed down the golden treasure to him." 60

And Gareth answer'd her with kindling eyes:
 "Gold? said I gold? — ay then, why he, or she,
 Or whosoe'er it was, or half the world
 Had ventured — *had* the thing I spake of been
 Mere gold — but this was all of that true steel 65
 Whereof they forged the brand Excalibur,
 And lightnings play'd about it in the storm,
 And all the little fowl were flurried at it,
 And there were cries and clashings in the nest,
 That sent him from his senses: let me go." 70

Then Bellicent bemoan'd herself and said,
 "Hast thou no pity upon my loneliness?
 Lo, where thy father Lot beside the hearth
 Lies like a log, and all but smoulder'd out!
 For ever since when traitor to the King 75
 He fought against him in the barons' war,
 And Arthur gave him back his territory,
 His age hath slowly droopt, and now lies there
 A yet-warm corpse, and yet unburiable,
 No more; nor sees, nor hears, nor speaks, nor knows, 80
 And both thy brethren are in Arthur's hall,
 Albeit neither loved with that full love
 I feel for thee, nor worthy such a love.
 Stay therefore thou; red berries charm the bird,
 And thee, mine innocent, the jousts, the wars, 85
 Who never knewest finger-ache, nor pang
 Of wrench'd or broken limb — an often chance
 In those brain-stunning shoeks, and tourney-falls,
 Frights to my heart; but stay: follow the deer
 By these tall firs and our fast-falling burns; 90
 So make thy manhood mightier day by day;
 Sweet is the chase: and I will seek thee out
 Some comfortable bride and fair, to grace

Thy climbing life, and cherish my prone year,
 Till falling into Lot's forgetfulness 95
 I know not thee, myself, nor anything.
 Stay, my best son! ye are yet more boy than man."

Then Gareth: "An ye hold me yet for child,
 Hear yet once more the story of the child.
 For, mother, there was once a king, like ours. 100
 The prince his heir, when tall and marriageable,
 Ask'd for a bride; and thereupon the king
 Set two before him. One was fair, strong, arm'd —
 But to be won by force — and many men
 Desired her; one, good lack, no man desired. 105
 And these were the conditions of the king:
 That save he won the first by force, he needs
 Must wed that other, whom no man desired,
 A red-faced bride who knew herself so vile
 That evermore she long'd to hide herself, 110
 Nor fronted man or woman, eye to eye —
 Yea — some she cleaved to, but they died of her.
 And one — they call'd her Fame; and one — O
 mother,
 How can ye keep me tether'd to you? — Shame.
 Man am I grown, a man's work must I do. 115
 Follow the deer? follow the Christ, the King,
 Live pure, speak true, right wrong, follow the King —
 Else, wherefore born?"

To whom the mother said:

"Sweet son, for there be many who deem him not,
 Or will not deem him, wholly proven King — 120
 Albeit in mine own heart I knew him King
 When I was frequent with him in my youth,
 And heard him kingly speak, and doubted him

No more than he, himself ; but felt him mine,
 Of closest kin to me : yet — wilt thou leave 125
 Thine easeful bidding here, and risk thine all,
 Life, limbs, for one that is not proven King ?
 Stay, till the cloud that settles round his birth
 Hath lifted but a little. Stay, sweet son."

And Gareth answer'd quickly : " Not an hour, 130
 So that ye yield me — I will walk thro' fire,
 Mother, to gain it — your full leave to go.
 Not proven, who swept the dust of ruin'd Rome
 From off the threshold of the realm, and crush'd
 The idolaters, and made the people free ? 135
 Who should be king save him who makes us free ? "

So when the Queen, who long had sought in vain
 To break him from the intent to which he grew,
 Found her son's will unwaveringly one,
 She answer'd craftily : " Will ye walk thro' fire ? 140
 Who walks thro' fire will hardly heed the smoke.
 Ay, go then, an ye must : only one proof,
 Before thou ask the King to make thee knight,
 Of thine obedience and thy love to me,
 Thy mother, — I demand."

And Gareth cried : 145
 " A hard one, or a hundred, so I go.
 Nay — quick ! the proof to prove me to the quick ! "

But slowly spake the mother looking at him :
 " Prince, thou shalt go disguised to Arthur's hall,
 And hire thyself to serve for meats and drinks 150
 Among the scullions and the kitchen-knaves,
 And those that hand the dish across the bar.

Nor shalt thou tell thy name to any one.
And thou shalt serve a twelvemonth and a day.”

For so the Queen believed that when her son 155
Beheld his only way to glory lead
Low down thro' villain kitchen-vassalage,
Her own true Gareth was too princely-proud
To pass thereby ; so should he rest with her,
Closed in her castle from the sound of arms. 160

Silent awhile was Gareth, then replied :
“The thrall in person may be free in soul,
And I shall see the jousts. Thy son am I,
And, since thou art my mother, must obey.
I therefore yield me freely to thy will ; 165
For hence will I, disguised, and hire myself
To serve with scullions and with kitchen-knaves ;
Nor tell my name to any — no, not the King.”

Gareth awhile linger'd. The mother's eye
Full of the wistful fear that he would go, 170
And turning toward him wheresoe'er he turn'd,
Perplext his outward purpose, till an hour
When, waken'd by the wind which with full voice
Swept bellowing thro' the darkness on to dawn,
He rose, and out of slumber calling two 175
That still had tended on him from his birth,
Before the wakeful mother heard him, went.

The three were clad like tillers of the soil.
Southward they set their faces. The birds made
Melody on branch and melody in mid air. 180
The damp hill-slopes were quicken'd into green,
And the live green had kindled into flowers,
For it was past the time of Easter-day.

So, when their feet were planted on the plain
 That broaden'd toward the base of Camelot, 185
 Far off they saw the silver-misty morn
 Rolling her smoke about the royal mount,
 That rose between the forest and the field.
 At times the summit of the high city flash'd ;
 At times the spires and turrets half-way down 190
 Priek'd thro' the mist ; at times the great gate shone
 Only, that open'd on the field below :
 Anon, the whole fair city had disappear'd.

Then those who went with Gareth were amazed,
 One crying, " Let us go no further, lord : 195
 Here is a city of enchanters, built
 By fairy kings." The second echo'd him,
 " Lord, we have heard from our wise man at home
 To northward, that this king is not the King,
 But only changeling out of Fairyland, 200
 Who drave the heathen hence by sorcery
 And Merlin's glamour." Then the first again,
 " Lord, there is no such city anywhere,
 But all a vision."

Gareth answer'd them

With laughter, swearing he had glamour enow 205
 In his own blood, his pryncedom, youth, and hopes,
 To plunge old Merlin in the Arabian sea ;
 So push'd them all unwilling toward the gate.
 And there was no gate like it under heaven.
 For barefoot on the keystone, which was lined 210
 And rippled like an ever-fleeting wave,
 The Lady of the Lake stood : all her dress
 Wept from her sides as water flowing away ;
 But like the cross her great and goodly arms

Stretch'd under all the cornice and upheld : 215
 And drops of water fell from either hand ;
 And down from one a sword was hung, from one
 A censer, either worn with wind and storm ;
 And o'er her breast floated the sacred fish ;
 And in the space to left of her, and right, 220
 Were Arthur's wars in weird devices done,
 New things and old co-twisted, as if Time
 Were nothing, so inveterately that men
 Were giddy gazing there ; and over all
 High on the top were those three queens, the friends 225
 Of Arthur, who should help him at his need.

Then those with Gareth for so long a space
 Stared at the figures that at last it seem'd
 The dragon-boughts and elvish emblemings
 Began to move, seethe, twine, and curl : they call'd 230
 To Gareth, " Lord, the gateway is alive."

And Gareth likewise on them fixt his eyes
 So long that even to him they seem'd to move.
 Out of the city a blast of music peal'd.
 Back from the gate started the three, to whom 235
 From out thereunder came an ancient man,
 Long-bearded, saying, " Who be'ye, my sons?"

Then Gareth : " We be tillers of the soil,
 Who leaving share in furrow come to see
 The glories of our King : but these, my men, — 240
 Your city moved so weirdly in the mist —
 Doubt if the King be king at all, or come
 From Fairyland ; and whether this be built
 By magic, and by fairy kings and queens ;
 Or whether there be any city at all, 245

Or all a vision : and this music now
Hath scared them both, but tell thou these the truth.”

Then that old Seer made answer, playing on him
And saying: “ Son, I have seen the good ship sail
Keel upward, and mast downward, in the heavens. 250
And solid turrets topsy-turvy in the air :
And here is truth ; but an it please thee not,
Take thou the truth as thou hast told it me.
For truly, as thou sayest, a fairy king
And fairy queens have built the city, son ; 255
They came from out a sacred mountain cleft
Toward the sunrise, each with harp in hand,
And built it to the music of their harps.
And, as thou sayest, it is enchanted, son,
For there is nothing in it as it seems 260
Saving the King ; tho’ some there be that hold
The King a shadow, and the city real :
Yet take thou heed of him, for, so thou pass
Beneath this archway, then wilt thou become
A thrall to his enchantments, for the King 265
Will bind thee by such vows as is a shame
A man should not be bound by, yet the which
No man can keep ; but, so thou dread to swear
Pass not beneath this gateway, but abide
Without, among the cattle of the field. 270
For an ye heard a music, like enow
They are building still, seeing the city is built
To music, therefore never built at all,
And therefore built for ever.”

Gareth spake

Anger’d : “ Old master, reverence thine own beard 275
That looks as white as utter truth, and seems

Wellnigh as long as thou art statured tall!
 Why mockest thou the stranger that hath been
 To thee fair-spoken?"

But the Seer replied:

"Know ye not then the Riddling of the Bards: 280
 'Confusion, and illusion, and relation,
 Elusion, and occasion, and evasion?'
 I mock thee not but as thou mockest me,
 And all that see thee, for thou art not who
 Thou seemest, but I know thee who thou art. 285
 And now thou goest up to mock the King,
 Who cannot brook the shadow of any lie."

Unmockingly the mocker ending here
 Turn'd to the right, and past along the plain;
 Whom Gareth looking after said; "My men, 290
 Our one white lie sits like a little ghost
 Here on the threshold of our enterprise.
 Let love be blamed for it, not she, nor I:
 Well, we will make amends."

With all good cheer

He spake and laugh'd, then enter'd with his twain 295
 Camelot, a city of shadowy palaces
 And stately, rich in emblem and the work
 Of ancient kings who did their days in stone;
 Which Merlin's hand, the Mage at Arthur's court,
 Knowing all arts, had touch'd, and everywhere, 300
 At Arthur's ordinance, tipt with lessening peak
 And pinnacle, and had made it spire to heaven.
 And ever and anon a knight would pass
 Outward, or inward to the hall: his arms
 Clash'd; and the sound was good to Gareth's ear. 305

And out of bower and casement shyly glanced
 Eyes of pure women, wholesome stars of love;
 And all about a healthful people stept
 As in the presence of a gracious king.

Then into hall Gareth ascending heard 310
 A voice, the voice of Arthur, and beheld
 Far over heads in that long-vaulted hall
 The splendor of the presence of the King
 Throned, and delivering doom — and looked no
 more —

But felt his young heart hammering in his ears 315
 And thought, “For this half shadow of a lie
 The truthful King will doom me when I speak.”
 Yet pressing on, tho’ all in fear to find
 Sir Gawain or Sir Modred, saw nor one
 Nor other, but in all the listening eyes 320
 Of those tall knights that ranged about the throne
 Clear honor shining like the dewy star
 Of dawn, and faith in their great King, with pure
 Affection, and the light of victory,
 And glory gain’d, and evermore to gain. 325

Then came a widow crying to the King:
 “A boon, Sir King? Thy father, Uther, reft
 From my dead lord a field with violence;
 For howsoe’er at first he proffer’d gold,
 Yet, for the field was pleasant in our eyes, 330
 We yielded not, and then he reft us of it
 Perforce and left us neither gold nor field.”

Said Arthur, “Whether would ye? gold or field?”
 To whom the woman weeping, “Nay, my lord,
 The field was pleasant in my husband’s eye.” 335

And Arthur: "Have thy pleasant field again,
And thrice the gold for Uther's use thereof,
According to the years. No boon is here,
But justice, so thy say be proven true.
Accursed, who from the wrongs his father did 340
Would shape himself a right!"

And while she past,
Came yet another widow crying to him:
"A boon, Sir King! Thine enemy, King, am I.
With thine own hand thou slewest my dear lord,
A knight of Uther in the barons' war, 345
When Lot and many another rose and fought
Against thee, saying thou wert basely born.
I held with these, and loathe to ask thee aught.
Yet lo! my husband's brother had my son
Thrall'd in his castle, and hath starved him dead, 350
And standeth seized of that inheritance
Which thou that slewest the sire hast left the son.
So, tho' I scarce can ask it thee for hate,
Grant me some knight to do the battle for me,
Kill the foul thief, and wreak me for my son." 355

Then strode a good knight forward, crying to him,
"A boon, Sir King! I am her kinsman, I.
Give me to right her wrong, and slay the man."

Then came Sir Kay; the seneschal, and cried,
"A boon, Sir King! even that thou grant her none, 360
This railer, that hath mock'd thee in full hall—
None; or the wholesome boon of gyve and gag."

But Arthur: "We sit King, to help the wrong'd
Thro' all our realm. The woman loves her lord.

Peace to thee, woman, with thy loves and hates! 365
 The kings of old had doom'd thee to the flames;
 Aurelius Emrys would have scourged thee dead,
 And Uther slit thy tongue: but get thee hence —
 Lest that rough humor of the kings of old
 Return upon me! Thou that art her kin, 370
 Go likewise; lay him low and slay him not,
 But bring him here, that I may judge the right,
 According to the justice of the King:
 Then, be he guilty, by that deathless King
 Who lived and died for men, the man shall die." 375

Then came in hall the messenger of Mark,
 A name of evil savor in the land,
 The Cornish king. In either hand he bore
 What dazzled all, and shone far-off as shines
 A field of charlock in the sudden sun 380
 Between two showers, a cloth of palest gold,
 Which down he laid before the throne, and knelt,
 Delivering that his lord, the vassal king,
 Was ev'n upon his way to Camelot;
 For having heard that Arthur of his grace 385
 Had made his goodly cousin Tristram knight,
 And, for himself was of the greater state,
 Being a king, he trusted his liege-lord
 Would yield him this large honor all the more;
 So pray'd him well to accept this cloth of gold, 390
 In token of true heart and fealty.

Then Arthur cried to rend the cloth, to rend
 In pieces, and so cast it on the hearth.
 An oak-tree smoulder'd there. "The goodly knight!
 What! shall the shield of Mark stand among
 these?" 395

For, midway down the side of that long hall,
 A stately pile, — whereof along the front,
 Some blazon'd, some but carven, and some blank,
 There ran a treble range of stony shields, —
 Rose, and high-arching over-brow'd the hearth. 400
 And under every shield a knight was named.
 For this was Arthur's custom in his hall :
 When some good knight had done one noble deed,
 His arms were carven only ; but if twain,
 His arms were blazon'd also ; but if none, 405
 The shield was blank and bare, without a sign
 Saving the name beneath : and Gareth saw
 The shield of Gawain blazon'd rich and bright,
 And Modred's blank as death ; and Arthur cried
 To rend the cloth and cast it on the hearth. 410

“ More like are we to reave him of his crown
 Than make him knight because men call him king.
 The kings we found, ye know we stay'd their
 hands

From war among themselves, but left them kings ;
 Of whom were any bounteous, merciful, 415
 Truth-speaking, brave, good livers, them we enroll'd
 Among us, and they sit within our hall.
 But Mark hath tarnish'd the great name of king,
 As Mark would sully the low state of churl ;
 And, seeing he hath sent us cloth of gold, 420
 Return, and meet, and hold him from our eyes,
 Lest we should lap him up in cloth of lead,
 Silenced for ever — craven — a man of plots,
 Craft, poisonous counsels, wayside ambushings —
 No fault of thine : let Kay the seneschal 425
 Look to thy wants, and send thee satisfied —
 Accursed, who strikes nor lets the hand be seen ! ”

And many another suppliant crying came
 With noise of ravage wrought by beast and man,
 And evermore a knight would ride away. 430

Last, Gareth leaning both hands heavily
 Down on the shoulders of the twain, his men,
 Approach'd between them toward the King, and ask'd,
 "A boon, Sir King," — his voice was all ashamed, —
 "For see ye not how weak and hunger-worn 435
 I seem — leaning on these? grant me to serve
 For meat and drink among thy kitchen-knaves
 A twelvemonth and a day, nor seek my name.
 Hereafter I will fight."

To him the King :

"A goodly youth and worth a goodlier boon ! 440
 But so thou wilt no goodlier, then must Kay,
 The master of the meats and drinks, be thine."

He rose and past ; then Kay, a man of mien
 Wan-sallow as the plant that feels itself
 Root-bitten by white lichen :

"Lo ye now ! 445

This fellow hath broken from some abbey, where,
 God wot, he had not beef and brewis enow,
 However that might chance ! but an he work,
 Like any pigeon will I cram his crop,
 And sleeker shall he shine than any hog." 450

Then Lancelot standing near : "Sir Seneschal,
 Sleuth-hound thou knowest, and gray, and all the
 hounds ;
 A horse thou knowest, a man thou dost not know :

Broad brows and fair, a fluent hair and fine,
 High nose, a nostril large and fine, and hands 455
 Large, fair, and fine! — Some young lad's mystery —
 But, or from sheepcot or king's hall, the boy
 Is noble-natured. Treat him with all grace,
 Lest he should come to shame thy judging of him."

Then Kay: "What murmurest thou of mystery? 460
 Think ye this fellow will poison the King's dish?
 Nay, for he spake too fool-like: mystery!
 Tut, an the lad were noble, he had ask'd
 For horse and armor: fair and fine, forsooth!
 Sir Fine-face, Sir Fair-hands? but see thou to it 465
 That thine own fineness, Lancelot, some fine day
 Undo thee not — and leave my man to me."

So Gareth all for glory underwent
 The sooty yoke of kitchen-vassalage,
 Ate with young lads his portion by the door, 470
 And couch'd at night with grimy kitchen-knaves.
 And Lancelot ever spake him pleasantly,
 But Kay the seneschal, who loved him not,
 Would hustle and harry him, and labor him
 Beyond his comrade of the hearth, and set 475
 To turn the broach, draw water, or hew wood,
 Or grosser tasks; and Gareth bow'd himself
 With all obedience to the King, and wrought
 All kind of service with a noble ease
 That graced the lowliest act in doing it. 480
 And when the thralls had talk among themselves,
 And one would praise the love that linkt the King
 And Lancelot — how the King had saved his life
 In battle twice, and Lancelot once the King's —
 For Lancelot was first in the tournament, 485

But Arthur mightiest on the battlefield —
 Gareth was glad. Or if some other told
 How once the wandering forester at dawn,
 Far over the blue tarns and hazy seas,
 On Caer-Eryri's highest found the King, 490
 A naked babe, of whom the Prophet spake,
 "He passes to the Isle Avilion,
 He passes and is heal'd and cannot die" —
 Gareth was glad. But if their talk were foul,
 Then would he whistle rapid as any lark, 495
 Or carol some old roundelay, and so loud
 That first they mock'd but, after, revered him.
 Or Gareth, telling some prodigious tale
 Of knights who sliced a red life-bubbling way
 Thro' twenty folds of twisted dragon, held 500
 All in a gap-mouth'd circle his good mates
 Lying or sitting round him, idle hands,
 Charm'd; till Sir Kay, the seneschal, would come
 Blustering upon them, like a sudden wind
 Among dead leaves, and drive them all apart. 505
 Or when the thralls had sport among themselves,
 So there were any trial of mastery,
 He, by two yards in casting bar or stone,
 Was counted best; and if there chanced a joust,
 So that Sir Kay nodded him leave to go, 510
 Would hurry thither, and when he saw the knights
 Clash like the coming and retiring wave,
 And the spear spring, and good horse reel, the boy
 Was half beyond himself for ecstasy.

So for a month he wrought among the thralls; 515
 But in the weeks that follow'd, the good Queen,
 Repentant of the word she made him swear,
 And saddening in her childless castle, sent,

Between the in-crescent and de-crescent moon,
Arms for her son, and loosed him from his vow. 520

This, Gareth hearing from a squire of Lot
With whom he used to play at tourney once,
When both were children, and in lonely haunts
Would scratch a ragged oval on the sand,
And each at either dash from either end — 525
Shame never made girl redder than Gareth joy.
He laugh'd ; he sprang. " Out of the smoke, at once
I leap from Satan's foot to Peter's knee —
These news be mine, none other's — nay, the King's —
Descend into the city : " whereon he sought 530
The King alone, and found, and told him all.

" I have stagger'd thy strong Gawain in a tilt
For pastime ; yea, he said it : joust can I.
Make me thy knight — in secret ! let my name
Be hidd'n, and give me the first quest, I spring 535
Like flame from ashes."

Here the King's calm eye
Fell on, and check'd, and made him flush, and bow
Lowly, to kiss his hand, who answer'd him :
" Son, the good mother let me know thee here,
And sent her wish that I would yield thee thine. 540
Make thee my knight ? my knights are sworn to
vows

Of utter hardihood, utter gentleness,
And, loving, utter faithfulness in love,
And uttermost obedience to the King."

Then Gareth, lightly springing from his knees : 545
" My King, for hardihood I can promise thee.

For uttermost obedience make demand
 Of whom ye gave me to, the Seneschal,
 No mellow master of the meats and drinks!
 And as for love, God wot, I love not yet, 550
 But love I shall, God willing."

And the King:

"Make thee my knight in secret? yea, but he,
 Our noblest brother, and our truest man,
 And one with me in all, he needs must know."

"Let Lancelot know, my King, let Lancelot
 know. 555

Thy noblest and thy truest!"

And the King:

"But wherefore would ye men should wonder at you?
 Nay, rather for the sake of me, their King,
 And the deed's sake my knighthood do the deed,
 Than to be noised of."

Merrily Gareth ask'd: 560

"Have I not earn'd my cake in baking of it?
 Let be my name until I make my name!
 My deeds will speak: it is but for a day."
 So with a kindly hand on Gareth's arm
 Smiled the great King, and half-unwillingly 565
 Loving his lusty youthhood yielded to him.
 Then, after summoning Lancelot privily:
 "I have given him the first quest: he is not proven.
 Look therefore, when he calls for this in hall,
 Thou get to horse and follow him far away. 570
 Cover the lions on thy shield, and see,
 Far as thou mayest, he be nor ta'en nor slain."

Then that same day there past into the hall
 A damsel of high lineage, and a brow
 May-blossom, and a cheek of apple-blossom, 575
 Hawk-eyes; and lightly was her slender nose
 Tip-tilted like the petal of a flower:
 She into hall past with her page and cried:

“O King, for thou hast driven the foe without,
 See to the foe within! bridge, ford, beset 580
 By bandits, every one that owns a tower
 The lord for half a league. Why sit ye there?
 Rest would I not, Sir King, an I were king,
 Till even the lonest hold were all as free
 From cursed bloodshed as thine altar-cloth 585
 From that best blood it is a sin to spill.”

“Comfort thyself,” said Arthur, “I nor mine
 Rest: so my knighthood keep the vows they swore,
 The wastest moorland of our realm shall be
 Safe, damsel, as the centre of this hall. 590
 What is thy name? thy need?”

“My name?” she said —
 “Lynette, my name; noble; my need, a knight
 To combat for my sister, Lyonors,
 A lady of high lineage, of great lands,
 And comely, yea, and comelier than myself. 595
 She lives in Castle Perilous: a river
 Runs in three loops about her living-place;
 And o'er it are three passings, and three knights
 Defend the passings, brethren, and a fourth,
 And of that four the mightiest, holds her stay'd 600
 In her own castle, and so besieges her
 To break her will, and make her wed with him;

And but delays his purport till thou send
 To do the battle with him thy chief man
 Sir Lancelot, whom he trusts to overthrow; 605
 Then wed, with glory: but she will not wed
 Save whom she loveth, or a holy life.
 Now therefore have I come for Lancelot."

Then Arthur mindful of Sir Gareth ask'd:
 "Damsel, ye know this Order lives to crush 610
 All wrongers of the realm. But say, these four,
 Who be they? What the fashion of the men?"

"They be of foolish fashion, O Sir King,
 The fashion of that old knight-errantry
 Who ride abroad, and do but what they will; 615
 Courteous or bestial from the moment, such
 As have nor law nor king; and three of these
 Proud in their fantasy call themselves the Day,
 Morning-Star, and Noon-Sun, and Evening-Star,
 Being strong fools; and never a whit more wise 620
 The fourth, who alway rideth arm'd in black,
 A huge man-beast of boundless savagery.
 He names himself the Night and oftener Death,
 And wears a helmet mounted with a skull,
 And bears a skeleton figured on his arms, 625
 To show that who may slay or scape the three,
 Slain by himself, shall enter endless night.
 And all these four be fools, but mighty men,
 And therefore am I come for Lancelot."

Hereat Sir Gareth call'd from where he rose, 630
 A head with kindling eyes above the throng,
 "A boon, Sir King — this quest!" then — for he
 mark'd

Kay near him groaning like a wounded bull —
 “Yea, King, thou knowest thy kitchen-knave am I,
 And mighty thro’ thy meats and drinks am I, 635
 And I can topple over a hundred such.
 Thy promise, King,” and Arthur glancing at him,
 Brought down a momentary brow. “Rough, sudden,
 And pardonable, worthy to be knight —
 Go therefore,” and all hearers were amazed. 640

But on the damsel’s forehead shame, pride, wrath
 Slew the may-white: she lifted either arm,
 “Fie on thee, King! I ask’d for thy chief knight,
 And thou hast given me but a kitchen-knave.”
 Then ere a man in hall could stay her, turn’d, 645
 Fled down the lane of access to the King,
 Took horse, descended the slope street, and past
 The weird white gate, and paused without, beside
 The field of tourney, murmuring “kitchen-knave!”

Now two great entries open’d from the hall, 650
 At one end that gave upon a range
 Of level pavement where the King would pace
 At sunrise, gazing over plain and wood;
 And down from this a lordly stairway sloped
 Till lost in blowing trees and tops of towers; 655
 And out by this main doorway past the King.
 But one was counter to the hearth, and rose
 High that the highest-crested helm could ride
 Therethro’ nor graze; and by this entry fled
 The damsel in her wrath, and on to this 660
 Sir Gareth strode, and saw without the door
 King Arthur’s gift, the worth of half a town,
 A war-horse of the best, and near it stood
 The two that out of north had follow’d him.

This bare a maiden shield, a casque; that held 665
 The horse, the spear; whereat Sir Gareth loosed
 A cloak that dropt from collar-bone to heel,
 A cloth of roughest web, and cast it down,
 And from it, like a fuel-smother'd fire
 That lookt half-dead, brake bright, and flash'd as
 those 670

Dull-coated things, that making slide apart
 Their dusk wing-cases, all beneath there burns
 A jewell'd harness, ere they pass and fly.
 So Gareth ere he parted flash'd in arms.
 Then as he donn'd the helm, and took the shield 675
 And mounted horse and graspt a spear, of grain
 Storm-strengthen'd on a windy site, and tipt
 With trenchant steel, around him slowly prest
 The people, while from out of kitchen came
 Thé thralls in throng, and seeing who had work'd 680
 Lustier than any, and whom they could but love,
 Mounted in arms, threw up their caps and cried,
 "God bless the King, and all his fellowship!"
 And on thro' lanes of shouting Gareth rode
 Down the slope street, and past without the gate. 685

So Gareth past with joy; but as the cur
 Pluckt from the cur he fights with, ere his cause
 Be cool'd by fighting, follows, being named,
 His owner, but remembers all, and growls
 Remembering, so Sir Kay beside the door 690
 Mutter'd in scorn of Gareth whom he used
 To harry and hustle.

"Bound upon a quest
 With horse and arms — the King hath past his time —
 My scullion knave! Thralls, to your work again,

For an your fire be low ye kindle mine ! 695
 Will there be dawn in West and eve in East?
 Begone! — my knave! — belike and like enow
 Some old head-blow not heeded in his youth
 So shook his wits they wander in his prime —
 Crazed! How the villain lifted up his voice, 700
 Nor shamed to bawl himself a kitchen-knave!
 Tut, he was tame and meek enow with me,
 Till peacock'd up with Lancelot's noticing.
 Well — I will after my loud knave, and learn
 Whether he know me for his master yet. 705
 Out of the smoke he came, and so my lance
 Hold, by God's grace, he shall into the mire —
 Thence, if the King awaken from his craze,
 Into the smoke again."

But Lancelot said:

"Kay, wherefore wilt thou go against the King, 710
 For that did never he whereon ye rail,
 But ever meekly served the King in thee?
 Abide: take counsel; for this lad is great
 And lusty, and knowing both of lance and sword."
 "Tut, tell not me," said Kay, "ye are overfine 715
 To mar stout knaves with foolish courtesies":
 Then mounted, on thro' silent faces rode
 Down the slope city, and out beyond the gate.

But by the field of tourney lingering yet
 Mutter'd the damsel: "Wherefore did the King 720
 Scorn me? for, were Sir Lancelot lackt, at least
 He might have yielded to me one of those
 Who tilt for lady's love and glory here,
 Rather than — O sweet heaven! O fie upon him! —
 His kitchen-knave."

To whom Sir Gareth drew — 72i

And there were none but few goodlier than he —
 Shining in arms, “Damsel, the quest is mine.
 Lead, and I follow.” She thereat, as one
 That smells a foul-flesh’d agaric in the holt,
 And deems it carrion of some woodland thing, 730
 Or shrew, or weasel, nipt her slender nose
 With petulant thumb and finger, shrilling, “Hence!
 Avoid, thou smellest all of kitchen-grease.
 And look who comes behind”; for there was Kay.
 “Knowest thou not me? thy master? I am Kay. 73b
 We lack thee by the hearth.”

And Gareth to him,

“Master no more! too well I know thee, ay —
 The most ungentle knight in Arthur’s hall.”
 “Have at thee then,” said Kay: they shock’d, and
 Kay
 Fell shoulder-slipt, and Gareth cried again, 740
 “Lead, and I follow,” and fast away she fled.

But after sod and shingle ceased to fly
 Behind her, and the heart of her good horse
 Was nigh to burst with violence of the beat,
 Perforce she stay’d, and overtaken spoke: 745

“What doest thou, scullion, in my fellowship?
 Deem’st thou that I accept thee aught the more
 Or love thee better, that by some device
 Full cowardly, or by mere unhappiness,
 Thou hast overthrown and slain thy master —
 thou! — 750

Dish-washer and broach-turner, loon! — to me
 Thou smellest all of kitchen as before.”

“Damsel,” Sir Gareth answer’d gently, “say
 Whate’er ye will, but whatso’er ye say,
 I leave not till I finish this fair quest, 755
 Or die therefore.”

“Ay, wilt thou finish it?
 Sweet lord, how like a noble knight he talks!
 The listening rogue hath caught the manner of it.
 But, knave, anon thou shalt be met with, knave,
 And then by such a one that thou for all 760
 The kitchen brewis that was ever supt
 Shalt not once dare to look him in the face.”

“I shall assay,” said Gareth with a smile
 That madden’d her, and away she flashed again
 Down the long avenues of a boundless wood, 765
 And Gareth following was again beknaved:

“Sir Kitchen-knave, I have miss’d the only way
 Where Arthur’s men are set along the wood;
 The wood is nigh as full of thieves as leaves:
 If both be slain, I am rid of thee; but yet, 770
 Sir Scullion, canst thou use that spit of thine?
 Fight, an thou canst: I have miss’d the only way.”

So till the dusk that follow’d evensong
 Rode on the two, reviler and reviled;
 Then after one long slope was mounted, saw, 775
 Bowl-shaped, thro’ tops of many thousand pines
 A gloomy-gladed hollow slowly sink
 To westward — in the deeps whereof a mere,
 Round as the red eye of an eagle-owl,
 Under the half-dead sunset glared; and shouts 780
 Ascended, and there brake a servingman

Flying from out of the black wood, and crying,
 "They have bound my lord to cast him in the
 mere."

Then Gareth, "Bound am I to right the wrong'd,
 But straitlier bound am I to bide with thee." 785

And when the damsel spake contemptuously,
 "Lead, and I follow," Gareth cried again,
 "Follow, I lead!" so down among the pines
 He plunged; and there, black-shadow'd nigh the mere,
 And mid-thigh-deep in bulrushes and reed, 790

Saw six tall men haling a seventh along,
 A stone about his neck to drown him in it.
 Three with good blows he quieted, but three
 Fled thro' the pines; and Gareth loosed the stone
 From off his neck, then in the mere beside 795
 Tumbled it; oilily bubbled up the mere.

Last, Gareth loosed his bonds and on free feet
 Set him, a stalwart baron, Arthur's friend.

"Well that ye came, or else these caitiff rogues
 Had wreak'd themselves on me; good cause is theirs 800
 To hate me, for my wont hath ever been
 To catch my thief, and then like vermin here
 Drown him, and with a stone about his neck;
 And under this wan water many of them
 Lie rotting, but at night let go the stone, 805
 And rise, and flickering in a grimly light
 Dance on the mere. Good now, ye have saved a life
 Worth somewhat as the cleanser of this wood.
 And fain would I reward thee worshipfully.
 What guerdon will ye?"

Gareth sharply spake: 810
 "None! for the deed's sake have I done the deed,

In uttermost obedience to the King.
But wilt thou yield this damsel harborage?"

Whereat the baron saying, "I well believe
You be of Arthur's Table," a light laugh 815
Broke from Lynette: "Ay, truly of a truth,
And in a sort, being Arthur's kitchen-knave! —
But deem not I accept thee aught the more,
Scullion, for running sharply with thy spit
Down on a rout of craven foresters. 820
A thresher with his flail had scatter'd them.
Nay — for thou smellest of the kitchen still.
But an this lord will yield us harborage,
Well."

So she spake. A league beyond the wood
All in a full-fair manor and a rich, 825
His towers, where that day a feast had been
Held in high hall, and many a viand left,
And many a costly cate, received the three.
And there they placed a peacock in his pride
Before the damsel, and the baron set 830
Gareth beside her, but at once she rose.

"Meseems, that here is much discourtesy,
Setting this knave, Lord Baron, at my side.
Hear me — this morn I stood in Arthur's hall,
And pray'd the King would grant me Lancelot 835
To fight the brotherhood of Day and Night —
The last a monster unsubduable
Of any save of him for whom I call'd —
Suddenly bawls this frontless kitchen-knave,
The quest is mine; thy kitchen-knave am I, 840
And mighty thro' thy meats and drinks am I.'

Then Arthur all at once gone mad replies,
 ‘Go therefore,’ and so gives the quest to him —
 Him — here — a villain fitter to stick swine
 Than ride abroad redressing women’s wrong, 845
 Or sit beside a noble gentlewoman.”

Then half-ashamed and part-amazed, the lord
 Now look’d at one and now at other, left
 The damsel by the peacock in his pride,
 And, seating Gareth at another board, 850
 Sat down beside him, ate and then began :

“ Friend, whether thou be kitchen-knave, or not,
 Or whether it be the maiden’s fantasy,
 And whether she be mad, or else the King,
 Or both or neither, or thyself be mad, 855
 I ask not : but thou strikest a strong stroke,
 For strong thou art and goodly therewithal,
 And saver of my life ; and therefore now,
 For here be mighty men to joust with, weigh
 Whether thou wilt not with thy damsel back 860
 To crave again Sir Lancelot of the King.
 Thy pardon ; I but speak for thine avail,
 The saver of my life.”

And Gareth said,
 “ Full pardon, but I follow up the quest,
 Despite of Day and Night and Death and Hell.” 865

So when, next morn, the lord whose life he saved
 Had, some brief space, convey’d them on their way
 And left them with God-speed, Sir Gareth spake,
 “ Lead, and I follow.” Haughtily she replied :

"I fly no more: I allow thee for an hour. 870
 Lion and stoat have isled together, knave,
 In time of flood. Nay, furthermore, methinks
 Some ruth is mine for thee. Back wilt thou, fool?
 For hard by here is one will overthrow
 And slay thee; then will I to court again, 875
 And shame the King for only yielding me
 My champion from the ashes of his hearth."

To whom Sir Gareth answer'd courteously:
 'Say thou thy say, and I will do my deed.
 Allow me for mine hour, and thou wilt find 880
 My fortunes all as fair as hers who lay
 Among the ashes and wedded the King's son."

Then to the shore of one of those long loops
 Wherethro' the serpent river coil'd, they came.
 Rough-thicketed were the banks and steep; the stream
 Full, narrow; this a bridge of single arc 886
 Took at a leap; and on the further side
 Arose a silk pavilion, gay with gold
 In streaks and rays, and all Lent-lily in hue,
 Save that the dome was purple, and above, 890
 Crimson, a slender banneret fluttering.
 And therefore the lawless warrior paced
 Unarm'd, and calling, "Damsel, is this he,
 The champion thou hast brought from Arthur's hall?
 For whom we let thee pass." "Nay, nay," she said, 895
 'Sir Morning-Star. The King in utter scorn
 Of thee and thy much folly hath sent thee here
 His kitchen-knave: and look thou to thyself:
 See that he fall not on thee suddenly,
 And slay thee unarm'd; he is not knight but
 knave." 900

Then at his call, "O daughters of the Dawn,
 And servants of the Morning-Star, approach,
 Arm me," from out the silken curtain-folds
 Bare-footed and bare-headed three fair girls
 In gilt and rosy raiment came: their feet 905
 In dewy grasses glisten'd; and the hair
 All over glanced with dewdrop or with gem
 Like sparkles in the stone Avanturine.
 These arm'd him in blue arms, and gave a shield
 Blue also, and thereon the morning star. 910
 And Gareth silent gazed upon the knight,
 Who stood a moment, ere his horse was brought,
 Glorifying; and in the stream beneath him shone,
 Immingled with heaven's azure waveringly,
 The gay pavilion and the naked feet, 915
 His arms, the rosy raiment, and the star.

Then she that watched him: "Wherefore stare ye so?
 Thou shakest in thy fear: there yet is time:
 Flee down the valley before he get to horse.
 Who will cry shame? Thou art not knight but knave."

Said Gareth: "Damsel, whether knave or knight, 921
 Far liefer had I fight a score of times
 Than hear thee so missay me and revile.
 Fair words were best for him who fights for thee;
 But truly foul are better, for they send 925
 That strength of anger thro' mine arms, I know
 That I shall overthrow him."

And he that bore
 The star, when mounted, cried from o'er the bridge:
 "A kitchen-knave, and sent in scorn of me!
 Such fight not I, but answer scorn with scorn. 930

For this were shame to do him further wrong.
 Than set him on his feet, and take his horse
 And arms, and so return him to the King.
 Come, therefore, leave thy lady lightly, knave.
 Avoid: for it beseemeth not a knave 935
 To ride with such a lady."

"Dog, thou liest!

I spring from loftier lineage than thine own."
 He spake; and all at fiery speed the two
 Shock'd on the central bridge, and either spear
 Bent but not brake, and either knight at once, 940
 Hurl'd as a stone from out of a catapult
 Beyond his horse's crupper and the bridge,
 Fell, as if dead; but quickly rose and drew,
 And Gareth lash'd so fiercely with his brand
 He drave his enemy backward down the bridge, 945
 The damsel crying, "Well-stricken, kitchen-knave!"
 Till Gareth's shield was cloven; but one stroke
 Laid him that clove it grovelling on the ground.

Then cried the fallen, "Take not my life: I yield."
 And Gareth, "So this damsel ask it of me, 950
 Good — I accord it easily as a grace."
 She reddening, "Insolent scullion! I of thee?
 I bound to thee for any favor ask'd!"
 "Then shall he die." And Gareth there unlaced
 His helmet as to slay him, but she shriek'd, 955
 "Be not so hardy, scullion, as to slay
 One nobler than thyself." "Damsel, thy charge
 Is an abounding pleasure to me. Knight,
 Thy life is thine at her command. Arise
 And quickly pass to Arthur's hall, and say 960
 His kitchen-knave hath sent thee. See thou crave

His pardon for thy breaking of his laws.
 Myself when I return will plead for thee.
 Thy shield is mine — farewell ; and, damsel, thou,
 Lead, and I follow.”

And fast away she fled ; 965
 Then when he came upon her, spake : “ Methought,
 Knave, when I watch'd thee striking on the bridge,
 The savor of thy kitchen came upon me
 A little faintlier : but the wind hath changed ;
 I scent it twenty-fold.” And then she sang, 970

“ ‘ O morning star ’ — not that tall felon there
 Whom thou, by sorcery or unhappiness
 Or some device, hast foully overthrown, —
 ‘ O morning star that smilest in the blue,
 O star, my morning dream hath proven true, 975
 Smile sweetly, thou ! my love hath smiled on me.’

“ But thou begone, take counsel, and away,
 For hard by here is one that guards a ford —
 The second brother in their fool's parable —
 Will pay thee all thy wages, and to boot. 980
 Care not for shame : thou art not knight but knave.”

To whom Sir Gareth answer'd, laughingly :
 “ Parables ? Hear a parable of the knave.
 When I was kitchen-knave among the rest,
 Fierce was the hearth, and one of my co-mates 985
 Own'd a rough dog, to whom he cast his coat,
 ‘ Guard it,’ and there was none to meddle with it.
 And such a coat art thou, and thee the King
 Gave me to guard, and such a dog am I,
 To worry, and not to flee — and — knight or knave — 990

The knave that doth thee service as full knight
Is all as good, meseems, as any knight
Toward thy sister's freeing."

"Ay, Sir Knave!

Ay, knave, because thou strikest as a knight,
Being but knave, I hate thee all the more." 995

"Fair damsel, you should worship me the more,
That, being but knave, I throw thine enemies."

"Ay, ay," she said "but thou shalt meet thy match."

So when they touch'd the second river-loop,
Huge on a huge red horse, and all in mail 1000
Burnish'd to blinding, shone the Noonday Sun
Beyond a raging shallow. As if the flower
That blows a globe of after arrowlets
Ten-thousand-fold had grown, flash'd the fierce shield,
All sun; and Gareth's eyes had flying blots 1005
Before them when he turn'd from watching him.
He from beyond the roaring shallow roar'd,
"What doest thou, brother, in my marches here?"
And she athwart the shallow shrill'd again,
"Here is a kitchen-knave from Arthur's hall 1010
Hath overthrown thy brother, and hath his arms."
"Ugh!" cried the Sun, and, vizoring up a red
And cipher face of rounded foolishness,
Push'd horse across the foamings of the ford,
Whom Gareth met mid-stream: no room was there 1015
For lance or tourney-skill: four strokes they struck
With sword, and these were mighty; the new knight
Had fear he might be shamed; but as the Sun
Heaved up a ponderous arm to strike the fifth,

The hoof of his horse slipt in the stream, the stream 1020
 Descended, and the Sun was wash'd away.

Then Gareth laid his lance athwart the ford ;
 So drew him home ; but he that fought no more,
 As being all bone-batter'd on the rock,
 Yielded ; and Gareth sent him to the King. 1025
 "Myself when I return will plead for thee.
 Lead, and I follow." Quietly she led.
 "Hath not the good wind, damsel, changed again?"
 "Nay, not a point ; nor art thou victor here.
 There lies a ridge of slate across the ford ; 1030
 His horse thereon stumbled — ay, for I saw it.

"O sun' — not this strong fool whom thou, Sir
 Knave,
 Hast overthrown thro' mere unhappiness —
 'O sun, that wakenest all to bliss or pain,
 O moon, that layest all to sleep again, 1035
 Shine sweetly: twice my love hath smiled on me.'

"What knowest thou of love-song or of love?
 Nay, nay, God wot, so thou wert nobly born,
 Thou hast a pleasant presence. Yea, perchance, —

"O dewy flowers that open to the sun, 1040
 O dewy flowers that close when day is done,
 Blow sweetly: twice my love hath smiled on me.'

"What knowest thou of flowers, except, belike,
 To garnish meats with? hath not our good King,
 Who lent me thee, the flower of kitchendom, 1045
 A foolish love for flowers? what stick ye round

The pasty? wherewithal deck the boar's head?
Flowers? nay, the boar hath rosemaries and bay.

“O birds that warble to the morning sky,
O birds that warble as the day goes by, 1050
Sing sweetly: twice my love hath smiled on me.’

“What knowest thou of birds, lark, mavis, merle,
Linnet? what dream ye when they utter forth
May-music growing with the growing light,
Their sweet sun-worship? these be for the snare — 1055
So runs thy fancy — these be for the spit,
Larding and basting. See thou have not now
Larded thy last, except thou turn and fly.
There stands the third fool of their allegory.”

For there beyond a bridge of treble bow, 1060
All in a rose-red from the west, and all
Naked it seem'd, and glowing in the broad
Deep-dimpled current underneath, the knight
That named himself the Star of Evening stood.

And Gareth, “Wherefore waits the madman
there 1065
Naked in open dayshine?” “Nay,” she cried,
“Not naked, only wrapt in harden'd skins
That fit him like his own; and so ye cleave
His armor off him, these will turn the blade.”

Then the third brother shouted o'er the bridge, 1070
“O brother-star, why shine ye here so low?
Thy ward is higher up: but have ye slain
The damsel's champion?” and the damsel cried:

“No star of thine, but shot from Arthur’s heaven
 With all disaster unto thine and thee! 1075
 For both thy younger brethren have gone down
 Before this youth; and so wilt thou, Sir Star;
 Art thou not old?”

“Old, damsel, old and hard,
 Old, with the might and breath of twenty boys.”
 Said Gareth, “Old, and over-bold in brag! 1080
 But that same strength which threw the Morning Star
 Can throw the Evening.”

Then that other blew
 A hard and deadly note upon the horn.
 “Approach and arm me!” With slow steps from out
 An old storm-beaten, russet, many-stain’d 1085
 Pavilion, forth a grizzled damsel came,
 And arm’d him in old arms, and brought a helm
 With but a drying evergreen for crest,
 And gave a shield whereon the star of even
 Half-tarnish’d and half-bright, his emblem, shone. 1090
 But when it glitter’d o’er the saddle-bow,
 They madly hurl’d together on the bridge;
 And Gareth overthrew him, lighted, drew,
 There met him drawn, and overthrew him again,
 But up like fire he started: and as oft 1095
 As Gareth brought him grovelling on his knees,
 So many a time he vaulted up again;
 Till Gareth panted hard, and his great heart,
 Foredooming all his trouble was in vain,
 Labor’d within him, for he seem’d as one 1100
 That all in later, sadder age begins
 To war against ill uses of a life,
 But these from all his life arise, and cry,

“Thou hast made us lords, and canst not put us
down!”

He half despairs; so Gareth seem'd to strike 1105

Vainly, the damsel clamoring all the while,

“Well done, knave-knight, well stricken, O good
knight-knave —

O knave, as noble as any of all the knights —

Shame me not, shame me not. I have prophesied —

Strike, thou art worthy of the Table Round — 1110

His arms are old, he trusts the harden'd skin —

Strike — strike — the wind will never change again.”

And Gareth hearing ever stronger smote,

And hew'd great pieces of his armor off him,

But lash'd in vain against the harden'd skin, 1115

And could not wholly bring him under, more

Than loud Southwesterns, rolling ridge on ridge,

The buoy that rides at sea, and dips and springs

For ever; till at length Sir Gareth's brand

Clash'd his, and brake it utterly to the hilt. 1120

“I have thee now”; but forth that other sprang,

And, all unknightlike, writhed his wiry arms

Around him, till he felt, despite his mail,

Strangled, but straining even his uttermost

Cast, and so hurl'd him headlong o'er the bridge 1125

Down to the river, sink or swim, and cried,

“Lead, and I follow.”

But the damsel said:

“I lead no longer; ride thou at my side;

Thou art the kingliest of all kitchen-knaves.

“O trefoil, sparkling on the rainy plain, 1130

O rainbow with three colors after rain,

Shine sweetly: thrice my love hath smiled on me.’

“ Sir, — and good faith, I fain had added — Knight,
 But that I heard thee call thyself a knave, —
 Shamed am I that I so rebuked, reviled, 1135
 Missaid thee; noble I am; and thought the King
 Scorn'd me and mine; and now thy pardon, friend,
 For thou hast ever answer'd courteously,
 And wholly bold thou art, and meek withal
 As any of Arthur's best, but, being knave, 1140
 Hast mazed my wit: I marvel what thou art.”

“ Damsel,” he said, “ you be not all to blame,
 Saving that you mistrusted our good King
 Would handle scorn, or yield you, asking, one
 Not fit to cope your quest. You said your say; 1145
 Mine answer was my deed. Good sooth! I hold
 He scarce is knight, yea but half-man, nor meet
 To fight for gentle damsel, he, who lets
 His heart be stirr'd with any foolish heat
 At any gentle damsel's waywardness. 1150
 Shamed? care not! thy foul sayings fought for
 me:

And seeing now thy words are fair, methinks
 There rides no knight, not Lancelot, his great self,
 Hath force to quell me.”

· Nigh upon that hour
 When the lone hern forgets his melancholy, 1155
 Lets down his other leg, and stretching dreams
 Of goodly supper in the distant pool,
 Then turn'd the noble damsel smiling at him,
 And told him of a cavern hard at hand,
 Where bread and baken meats and good red wine 1160
 Of Southland, which the Lady Lyonors
 Had sent her coming champion, waited him.

Anon they past a narrow comb wherein
 Were slabs of rock with figures, knights on horse
 Sculptured, and deckt in slowly-waning hues. 1165
 "Sir Knave, my knight, a hermit, once was here,
 Whose holy hand hath fashion'd on the rock
 The war of Time against the soul of man.
 And yon four fools have suck'd their allegory
 From these damp walls, and taken but the form. 1170
 Know ye not these?" and Gareth lookt and read —
 In letters like to those the vexillary
 Hath left crag-carven o'er the streaming Gelt —
 "PHOSPHORUS," then "MERIDIES," — "HESPERUS" —
 "NOX" — "MORS," beneath five figures, armed men,
 Slab after slab, their faces forward all, 1176
 And running down the Soul, a shape that fled
 With broken wings, torn raiment, and loose hair,
 For help and shelter to the hermit's cave.
 "Follow the faces, and we find it. Look, 1180
 Who comes behind?"

For one — delay'd at first

Thro' helping back the dislocated Kay
 To Camelot, then by what thereafter chanced,
 The damsel's headlong error thro' the wood —
 Sir Lancelot, having swum the river-loops — 1185
 His blue shield-lions cover'd — softly drew
 Behind the twain, and when he saw the star
 Gleam, on Sir Gareth's turning to him, cried,
 "Stay, felon knight, I avenge me for my friend."
 And Gareth crying prick'd against the cry; 1190
 But when they closed — in a moment — at one touch
 Of that skill'd spear, the wonder of the world —
 Went sliding down so easily, and fell,
 That when he found the grass within his hands

He laugh'd; the laughter jarr'd upon Lynette: 1195
 Harshly she ask'd him, "Shamed and overthrown,
 And tumbled back into the kitchen-knave,
 Why laugh ye? that ye blew your boast in vain?"

"Nay, noble damsel, but that I, the son
 Of old King Lot and good Queen Bellicent, 1200
 And victor of the bridges and the ford,
 And knight of Arthur, here lie thrown by whom
 I know not, all thro' mere unhappiness —
 Device and sorcery and unhappiness —
 Out, sword; we are thrown!" And Lancelot
 answer'd: "Prince, 1205

O Gareth — thro' the mere unhappiness
 Of one who came to help thee, not to harm,
 Lancelot, and all as glad to find thee whole
 As on the day when Arthur knighted him." 1209

Then Gareth: "Thou — Lancelot! — thine the hand
 That threw me? An some chance to mar the boast
 Thy brethren of thee make — which could not chance —
 Had sent thee down before a lesser spear,
 Shamed had I been, and sad — O Lancelot — thou!"

Whereat the maiden, petulant: "Lancelot, 1215
 Why came ye not when call'd? and wherefore now
 Come ye, not call'd? I gloried in my knave,
 Who being still rebuked would answer still
 Courteous as any knight — but now, if knight,
 The marvel dies, and leaves me fool'd and trick'd, 1220
 And only wondering wherefore play'd upon;
 And doubtful whether I and mine be scorn'd.
 Where should be truth if not in Arthur's Hall,
 In Arthur's presence? Knight, knave, prince and fool,
 I hate thee and forever."

And Lancelot said : 1225

“Blessed be thou, Sir Gareth! knight art thou
 To the King’s best wish. O damsel, be you wise,
 To call him shamed who is but overthrown?
 Thrown have I been, nor once, but many a time.
 Victor from vanquish’d issues at the last, 1230
 And overthrower from being overthrown.
 With sword we have not striven; and thy good horse
 And thou art weary; yet not less I felt
 Thy manhood thro’ that wearied lance of thine.
 Well hast thou done; for all the stream is freed, 1235
 And thou hast wreak’d his justice on his foes,
 And when reviled hast answer’d graciously,
 And makest merry when overthrown. Prince, knight,
 Hail, knight and prince, and of our Table Round!”

And then when turning to Lynette he told 1240
 The tale of Gareth, petulantly she said:
 “Ay, well — ay, well — for worse than being fool’d
 Of others, is to fool one’s self. A cave,
 Sir Lancelot, is hard by, with meats and drinks
 And forage for the horse, and flint for fire, 1245
 But all about it flies a honeysuckle.
 Seek, till we find.” And when they sought and found,
 Sir Gareth drank and ate, and all his life
 Past into sleep: on whom the maiden gazed:
 “Sound sleep be thine! sound cause to sleep hast thou.
 Wake lusty! Seem I not as tender to him 1251
 As any mother? Ay, but such a one
 As all day long hath rated at her child,
 And vext his day, but blesses him asleep —
 Good lord, how sweetly smells the honeysuckle 1255
 In the hush’d night, as if the world were one
 Of utter peace, and love, and gentleness!

O Lancelot. Lancelot,"—and she clapt her hands —
 " Full merry am I to find my goodly knave
 Is knight and noble. See now, sworn have I, 1260
 Else you black felon had not let me pass,
 To bring thee back to do the battle with him.
 Thus an thou goest, he will fight thee first;
 Who doubts thee victor? so will my knight-knave
 Miss the full flower of this accomplishment." 1265

Said Lancelot: "Peradventure he you name
 May know my shield. Let Gareth, an he will,
 Change his for mine and take my charger, fresh,
 Not to be spurr'd, loving the battle as well
 As he that rides him." "Lancelot-like," she said, 1270
 "Courteous in this, Lord Lancelot, as in all."

And Gareth, wakening, fiercely clutch'd the shield:
 "Ramp, ye lance-splintering lions, on whom all spears
 Are rotten sticks! ye seem agape to roar!
 Yea, ramp and roar at leaving of your lord! — 1275
 Care not, good beasts, so well I care for you.
 O noble Lancelot, from my hold on these
 Streams virtue — fire — thro' one that will not shame
 Even the shadow of Lancelot under shield.
 Hence: let us go."

Silent the silent field 1280

They traversed. Arthur's Harp tho' summer-wan,
 In counter motion to the clouds, allured
 The glance of Gareth dreaming on his liege.
 A star shot; "Lo," said Gareth, "the foe falls!"
 An owl whoopt: "Hark the victor pealing there!" 1285
 Suddenly she that rode upon his left
 Clung to the shield that Lancelot lent him, crying:

“Yield, yield him this again: ’t is he must fight:
 I curse the tongue that all thro’ yesterday
 Reviled thee, and hath wrought on Lancelot now 1290
 To lend thee horse and shield: wonders ye have done;
 Miracles ye cannot: here is glory enow
 In having flung the three: I see thee maim’d,
 Mangled; I swear thou canst not fling the fourth.”

“And wherefore, damsel? tell me all ye know. 1295
 You cannot scare me; nor rough face, or voice,
 Brute bulk of limb, or boundless savagery
 Appal me from the quest.”

“Nay, prince,” she cried,
 “God wot, I never look’d upon the face,
 Seeing he never rides abroad by day; 1300
 But watch’d him have I like a phantom pass
 Chilling the night: nor have I heard the voice.
 Always he made his mouthpiece of a page
 Who came and went, and still reported him
 As closing in himself the strength of ten, 1305
 And when his anger tare him, massacring
 Man, woman, lad, and girl — yea, the soft babe!
 Some hold that he hath swallow’d infant flesh,
 Monster! O prince, I went for Lancelot first,
 The quest is Lancelot’s: give him back the shield.” 1310

Said Gareth laughing, “An he fight for this,
 Belike he wins it as the better man:
 Thus — and not else!”

But Lancelot on him urged
 All the devisings of their chivalry
 When one might meet a mightier than himself; 1315

How best to manage horse, lance, sword, and shield,
 And so fill up the gap where force might fail
 With skill and fineness. Instant were his words.

Then Gareth: "Here be rules. I know but one —
 To dash against mine enemy and to win. 1320
 Yet have I watch'd thee victor in the joust,
 And seen thy way." "Heaven help thee!" sigh'd
 Lynette.

Then for a space, and under cloud that grew
 To thunder-gloom palling all stars, they rode
 In converse till she made her palfrey halt, 1325
 Lifted an arm, and softly whisper'd, "There."
 And all the three were silent seeing, pitch'd
 Beside the Castle Perilous on flat field,
 A huge pavilion like a mountain peak
 Sunder the glooming crimson on the marge, 1330
 Black, with black banner, and a long black horn
 Beside it hanging; which Sir Gareth graspt,
 And so, before the two could hinder him,
 Sent all his heart and breath thro' all the horn.
 Echo'd the walls; a light twinkled; anon 1335
 Came lights and lights, and once again he blew;
 Whereon were hollow tramlings up and down
 And muffled voices heard, and shadows past;
 Till high above him, circled with her maids,
 The Lady Lyonors at a window stood, 1340
 Beautiful among lights, and waving to him
 White hands and courtesy; but when the prince
 Three times had blown — after long hush — at last —
 The huge pavilion slowly yielded up,
 Thro' those black foldings, that which housed therein.
 High on a night-black horse, in night-black arms, 1346

With white breast-bone, and barren ribs of Death,
 And crown'd with fleshless laughter -- some ten
 steps --

In the half-light -- thro' the dim dawn -- advanced
 The monster, and then paused, and spake no word. 1350

But Gareth spake and all indignantly:

“Fool, for thou hast, men say, the strength of ten,
 Canst thou not trust the limbs thy God hath given,
 But must, to make the terror of thee more,
 Trick thyself out in ghastly imageries 1355
 Of that which Life hath done with, and the clod,
 Less dull than thou, will hide with mantling flowers
 As if for pity?” But he spake no word;
 Which set the horror higher: a maiden swoon'd;
 The Lady Lyonors wrung her hands and wept, 1360
 As doom'd to be the bride of Night and Death;
 Sir Gareth's head prickled beneath his helm;
 And even Sir Lancelot thro' his warm blood felt
 Ice strike, and all that mark'd him were aghast.

At once Sir Lancelot's charger fiercely neigh'd, 1365
 And Death's dark war-horse bounded forward with
 him.

Then those that did not blink the terror saw
 That Death was cast to ground, and slowly rose.
 But with one stroke Sir Gareth split the skull.
 Half fell to right and half to left and lay. 1370
 Then with a stronger buffet he clove the helm
 As throughly as the skull; and out from this
 Issued the bright face of a blooming boy
 Fresh as a flower new-born, and crying, “Knight,
 Slay me not: my three brethren bade me do it, 1375
 To make a horror all about the house,

And stay the world from Lady Lyonors;
 They never dream'd the passes would be past."
 Answer'd Sir Gareth graciously to one
 Not many a moon his younger, "My fair child, 1380
 What madness made thee challenge the chief knight
 Of Arthur's hall?" "Fair Sir, they bade me do it.
 They hate the King and Lancelot, the King's friend;
 They hoped to slay him somewhere on the stream,
 They never dream'd the passes could be past." 1385

Then sprang the happier day from underground;
 And Lady Lyonors and her house, with dance
 And revel and song, made merry over Death,
 As being after all their foolish fears
 And horrors only proven a blooming boy. 1390
 So large mirth lived, and Gareth won the quest.

And he that told the tale in older times
 Says that Sir Gareth wedded Lyonors,
 But he that told it later says Lynette.

LANCELOT AND ELAINE

ELAINE the fair, Elaine the lovable,
Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat,
High in her chamber up a tower to the east
Guarded the sacred shield of Lancelot;
Which first she placed where morning's earliest ray 5
Might strike it, and awake her with the gleam;
Then fearing rust or soilure fashion'd for it
A case of silk, and braided thereupon
All the devices blazon'd on the shield
In their own tinct, and added, of her wit, 10
A border fantasy of branch and flower,
And yellow-throated nestling in the nest.
Nor rested thus content, but day by day,
Leaving her household and good father, climb'd
That eastern tower, and entering barr'd her door, 15
Stript off the case, and read the naked shield,
Now guess'd a hidden meaning in his arms,
Now made a pretty history to herself
Of every dint a sword had beaten in it,
And every scratch a lance had made upon it, 20
Conjecturing when and where: this cut is fresh;
That ten years back; this dealt him at Caerlyle;
That at Caerleon; this at Camelot:
And ah God's mercy, what a stroke was there!
And here a thrust that might have kill'd, but God 25
Broke the strong lance, and roll'd his enemy down,
And saved him: so she lived in fantasy.

How came the lily maid by that good shield
Of Lancelot, she that knew not ev'n his name?

He left it with her, when he rode to tilt 30
 For the great diamond in the diamond jousts,
 Which Arthur had ordain'd, and by that name
 Had named them, since a diamond was the prize.

For Arthur, long before they crown'd him King,
 Roving the trackless realms of Lyonesse, 35
 Had found a glen, gray boulder and black tarn.
 A horror lived about the tarn, and clave
 Like its own mists to all the mountain side.
 For here two brothers, one a king, had met,
 And fought together; but their names were lost; 40
 And each had slain his brother at a blow;
 And down they fell and made the glen abhorr'd:
 And there they lay till all their bones were bleach'd,
 And lichen'd into color with the crags:
 And he, that once was king, had on a crown 45
 Of diamonds, one in front and four aside.
 And Arthur came, and laboring up the pass,
 All in a misty moonshine, unawares
 Had trodden that crown'd skeleton, and the skull
 Brake from the nape, and from the skull the crown 50
 Roll'd into light, and turning on its rims
 Fled like a glittering rivulet to the tarn:
 And down the shingly scaur he plunged, and caught,
 And set it on his head, and in his heart
 Heard murmurs, "Lo, thou likewise shalt be King." 55

Thereafter, when a King, he had the gems
 Pluck'd from the crown, and show'd them to his knights,
 Saying, "These jewels, whereupon I chanced
 Divinely, are the kingdom's, not the King's —
 For public use: henceforward let there be, 60
 Once every year, a joust for one of these:

For so by nine years' proof we needs must learn
 Which is our mightiest, and ourselves shall grow
 In use of arms and manhood, till we drive
 The heathen, who, some say, shall rule the land 65
 Hereafter, which God hinder." Thus he spoke:
 And eight years past, eight jousts had been, and
 still

Had Lancelot won the diamond of the year,
 With purpose to present them to the Queen,
 When all were won; but meaning all at once 70
 To snare her royal fancy with a boon
 Worth half her realm, had never spoken word.

Now for the central diamond and the last
 And largest, Arthur, holding then his court
 Hard on the river nigh the place which now 75
 Is this world's hugest, let proclaim a joust
 At Camelot, and when the time drew nigh
 Spake (for she had been sick) to Guinevere,
 "Are you so sick, my Queen, you cannot move
 To these fair jousts?" "Yea, lord," she said, "ye
 know it." 80

"Then will ye miss," he answer'd, "the great deeds
 Of Lancelot, and his prowess in the lists,
 A sight ye love to look on." And the Queen
 Lifted her eyes, and they dwelt languidly
 On Lancelot, where he stood beside the King. 85
 He thinking that he read her meaning there,
 "Stay with me, I am sick; my love is more
 Than many diamonds," yielded; and a heart
 Love-loyal to the least wish of the Queen
 (However much he yearn'd to make complete 90
 The tale of diamonds for his destined boon)
 Urged him to speak against the truth, and say,

“ Sir King, mine ancient wound is hardly whole,
 And lets me from the saddle ;” and the King
 Glanced first at him, then her, and went his way. 95
 No sooner gone than suddenly she began :

“ To blame, my lord Sir Lancelot, much to blame!
 Why go ye not to these fair jousts? the knights
 Are half of them our enemies, and the crowd
 Will murmur, ‘ Lo, the shameless ones, who take 100
 Their pastime now the trustful King is gone!’ ”
 Then Lancelot vext at having lied in vain :
 “ Are ye so wise? ye were not once so wise,
 My Queen, that summer, when ye loved me first.
 Then of the crowd ye took no more account 105
 Than of the myriad cricket of the mead,
 When its own voice clings to each blade of grass,
 And every voice is nothing. As to knights,
 Them surely I can silence with all ease.
 But now my loyal worship is allow’d 110
 Of all men : many a bard, without offence,
 Has link’d our names together in his lay,
 Lancelot, the flower of bravery, Guinevere,
 The pearl of beauty : and our knights at feast
 Have pledged us in this union, while the King 115
 Would listen smiling. How then? is there more?
 Has Arthur spoken aught? or would yourself,
 Now weary of my service and devoir,
 Henceforth be truer to your faultless lord? ”

She broke into a little scornful laugh: 120
 “ Arthur, my lord, Arthur, the faultless King,
 That passionate perfection, my good lord —
 But who can gaze upon the Sun in heaven?
 He never spake a word of reproach to me,

He never had a glimpse of mine untruth, 125
 He cares not for me : only here to-day
 There gleam'd a vague suspicion in his eyes :
 Some meddling rogue has tamper'd with him — else
 Rapt in this fancy of his Table Round,
 And swearing men to vows impossible, 130
 To make them like himself : but, friend, to me
 He is all fault who has no fault at all :
 For who loves me must have a touch of earth ;
 The low sun makes the color : I am yours,
 Not Arthur's, as ye know, save by the bond. 135
 And therefore hear my words : go to the jousts :
 The tiny-trumpeting gnat can break our dream.
 When sweetest ; and the vermin voices here
 May buzz so loud — we scorn them, but they sting."

Then answer'd Lancelot, the chief of knights : 140
 " And with what face, after my pretext made,
 Shall I appear, O Queen, at Camelot, I
 Before a King who honors his own word,
 As if it were his God's ? "

" Yea," said the Queen,
 " A moral child without the craft to rule, 145
 Else had he not lost me : but listen to me,
 If I must find you wit : we hear it said
 That men go down before your spear at a touch,
 But knowing you are Lancelot ; your great name,
 This conquers : hide it therefore ; go unknown : 150
 Win ! by this kiss you will : and our true King
 Will then allow your pretext, O my knight,
 As all for glory ; for to speak him true,
 Ye know right well, how meek soe'er he seem,
 No keener hunter after glory breathes. 155

He loves it in his knights more than himself:
They prove to him his work: win and return."

Then got Sir Lancelot suddenly to horse,
Wroth at himself. Not willing to be known,
He left the barren-beaten thoroughfare, 160
Chose the green path that show'd the rarer foot,
And there among the solitary downs,
Full often lost in fancy, lost his way;
Till as he traced a faintly-shadow'd track,
That all in loops and links among the dales 165
Ran to the Castle of Astolat, he saw
Fired from the west, far on a hill, the towers.
Thither he made, and blew the gateway horn.
Then came an old, dumb, myriad-wrinkled man
Who let him into lodging and disarm'd. 170
And Lancelot marvell'd at the wordless man;
And issuing found the Lord of Astolat
With two strong sons, Sir Torre and Sir Lavaine,
Moving to meet him in the castle court;
And close behind them stept the lily maid 175
Elaine, his daughter: mother of the house
There was not: some light jest among them rose
With laughter dying down as the great knight
Approach'd them: then the Lord of Astolat:
"Whence comest thou, my guest, and by what name 180
Livest between the lips? for by thy state
And presence I might guess the chief of those,
After the King, who eat in Arthur's halls.
Him have I seen: the rest, his Table Round,
Known as they are, to me they are unknown." 185

Then answer'd Lancelot, the chief of knights:
"Known am I, and of Arthur's hall, and known,

What I by mere mischance have brought, my shield,
 But since I go to joust as one unknown
 At Camelot for the diamond, ask me not, 190
 Hereafter ye shall know me — and the shield —
 I pray you lend me one, if such you have,
 Blank, or at least with some device not mine.”

Then said the Lord of Astolat, “Here is Torre’s:
 Hurt in his first tilt was my son, Sir Torre; 195
 And so, God wot, his shield is blank enough.
 His ye can have.” Then added plain Sir Torre,
 “Yea, since I cannot use it, ye may have it.”
 Here laughed the father saying, “Fie, Sir Churl,
 Is that an answer for a noble knight? 200
 Allow him! but Lavaine, my younger here,
 He is so full of lustlihood, he will ride,
 Joust for it, and win, and bring it in an hour,
 And set it in this damsel’s golden hair,
 To make her thrice as wilful as before.” 205

“Nay, father, nay, good father, shame me not
 Before this noble knight,” said young Lavaine,
 “For nothing. Surely I but play’d on Torre:
 He seem’d so sullen, vext he could not go:
 A jest, no more! for, knight, the maiden dreamt 210
 That some one put this diamond in her hand,
 And that it was too slippery to be held,
 And slipt and fell into some pool or stream,
 The castle-well, belike; and then I said
 That *if* I went and *if* I fought and won it 215
 (But all was jest and joke among ourselves)
 Then must she keep it safelier. All was jest.
 But, father, give me leave, an if he will,
 To ride to Camelot with this noble knight:

Win shall I not, but do my best to win : 220
 Young as I am, yet would I do my best."

"So ye will grace me," answer'd Lancelot,
 Smiling a moment, "with your fellowship
 O'er these waste downs whereon I lost myself,
 Then were I glad of you as guide and friend: 225
 And you shall win this diamond — as I hear,
 It is a fair large diamond, — if ye may,
 And yield it to this maiden, if ye will."

"A fair large diamond," added plain Sir Torre,
 "Such be for queens, and not for simple maids." 230
 Then she who held her eyes upon the ground,
 Elaine, and heard her name so tost about,
 Flush'd slightly at the slight disparagement
 Before the stranger knight, who, looking at her,
 Full courtly, yet not falsely, thus return'd : 235
 "If what is fair be but for what is fair,
 And only queens are to be counted so,
 Rash were my judgment then, who deem this maid
 Might wear as fair a jewel as is on earth,
 Not violating the bond of like to like." 240

He spoke and ceased : the lily maid Elaine,
 Won by the mellow voice before she look'd,
 Lifted her eyes, and read his lineaments.
 The great and guilty love he bare the Queen,
 In battle with the love he bare his lord, 245
 Had marr'd his face, and mark'd it ere his time.
 Another sinning on such heights with one,
 The flower of all the west and all the world,
 Had been the sleeker for it; but in him
 His mood was often like a fiend, and rose 250
 And drove him into wastes and solitudes

For agony, who was yet a living soul.
 Marr'd as he was, he seem'd the goodliest man
 That ever among ladies ate in hall,
 And noblest, when she lifted up her eyes. 255
 However marr'd, of more than twice her years,
 Seam'd with an ancient swordcut on the cheek,
 And bruised and bronzed, she lifted up her eyes
 And loved him, with that love which was her doom.

Then the great knight, the darling of the court, 260
 Loved of the loveliest, into that rude hall
 Stept with all grace, and not with half disdain
 Hid under grace, as in a smaller time,
 But kindly man moving among his kind :
 Whom they with meats and vintage of their best, 265
 And talk and minstrel melody entertain'd.
 And much they ask'd of court and Table Round,
 And ever well and readily answer'd he :
 But Lancelot, when they glanced at Guinevere,
 Suddenly speaking of the wordless man, 270
 Heard from the Baron that, ten years before,
 The heathen caught and reft him of his tongue.
 "He learnt and warn'd me of their fierce design
 Against my house, and him they caught and maim'd ;
 But I, my sons, and little daughter fled 275
 From bonds or death, and dwelt among the woods
 By the great river in a boatman's hut.
 Dull days were those, till our good Arthur broke
 The Pagan yet once more on Badon hill."

"O there, great lord, doubtless," Lavaine said,
 rapt 280

By all the sweet and sudden passion of youth
 Toward greatness in its elder, "you have fought.

O tell us — for we live apart — you know
 Of Arthur's glorious wars." And Lancelot spoke
 And answer'd him at full, as having been 285
 With Arthur in the fight which all day long
 Rang by the white mouth of the violent Glem;
 And in the four loud battles by the shore
 Of Duglas; that on Bassa; then the war
 That thunder'd in and out the gloomy skirts 290
 Of Celidon the forest: and again
 By castle Gurnion, where the glorious King
 Had on his cuirass worn our Lady's Head,
 Carved of one emerald center'd in a sun
 Of silver rays, that lighten'd as he breathed; 295
 And at Caerleon had he help'd his lord,
 When the strong neighings of the wild White Horse
 Set every gilded parapet shuddering;
 And up in Agned-Cathregonion too,
 And down the waste sand-shores of Trath Treroit, 300
 Where many a heathen fell; "and on the mount
 Of Badon I myself beheld the King
 Charge at the head of all his Table Round,
 And all his legions crying Christ and him,
 And break them; and I saw him, after, stand 305
 High on a heap of slain, from spur to plume
 Red as the rising sun with heathen blood,
 And seeing me, with a great voice he cried,
 'They are broken, they are broken!' for the King
 However mild he seems at home, nor cares 310
 For triumph in our mimic wars, the jousts —
 For if his own knight cast him down, he laughs,
 Saying, his knights are better men than he —
 Yet in this heathen war the fire of God
 Fills him: I never saw his like: there lives 315
 No greater leader."

While he uttered this

Low to her own heart said the lily maid,
 "Save your great self, fair lord": and when he fell
 From talk of war to traits of pleasantry —
 Being mirthful he, but in a stately kind — 329
 She still took note that when the living smile
 Died from his lips, across him came a cloud
 Of melancholy severe, from which again,
 Whenever in her hovering to and fro
 The lily maid had striven to make him cheer, 325
 There brake a sudden-beaming tenderness
 Of manners and of nature: and she thought
 That all was nature, all, perchance, for her.
 And all night long his face before her lived,
 As when a painter, poring on a face, 330
 Divinely thro' all hindrance finds the man
 Behind it and so paints him that his face,
 The shape and color of a mind and life,
 Lives for his children, ever at its best
 And fullest; so the face before her lived, 335
 Dark-splendid, speaking in the silence, full
 Of noble things, and held her from her sleep.
 Till rathe she rose, half-cheated in the thought
 She needs must bid farewell to sweet Lavaine.
 First as in fear, step after step, she stole 340
 Down the long tower-stairs, hesitating:
 Anon, she heard Sir Lancelot cry in the court,
 "This shield, my friend, where is it?" and Lavaine
 Past inward, as she came from out the tower.
 There to his proud horse Lancelot turn'd, and smooth'd
 The glossy shoulder, humming to himself. 346
 Half-jealous of the flattering hand, she drew
 Nearer and stood. He look'd, and more amazed
 Than if seven men had set upon him, saw

The maiden standing in the dewy light. 350
 He had not dream'd she was so beautiful.
 Then came on him a sort of sacred fear,
 For silent, tho' he greeted her, she stood
 Rapt on his face as if it were a god's.
 Suddenly flash'd on her a wild desire, 355
 That he should wear her favor at the tilt.
 She braved a riotous heart in asking for it.

“Fair lord, whose name I know not — noble it is,
 I well believe, the noblest — will you wear
 My favor at this tourney?” “Nay,” said he, 360
 “Fair lady, since I never yet have worn
 Favor of any lady in the lists.
 Such is my wont, as those who know me know.”
 “Yea, so,” she answer'd; “then in wearing mine
 Needs must be lesser likelihood, noble lord, 365
 That those who know should know you.” And he turn'd
 Her counsel up and down within his mind,
 And found it true, and answer'd: “True, my child.
 Well, I will wear it: fetch it out to me:
 What is it?” and she told him “A red sleeve 370
 Broider'd with pearls,” and brought it: then he bound
 Her token on his helmet, with a smile,
 Saying, “I never yet have done so much
 For any maiden living,” and the blood
 Sprang to her face and fill'd her with delight; 375
 But left her all the paler, when Lavaine
 Returning brought the yet-unblazon'd shield,
 His brother's; which he gave to Lancelot,
 Who parted with his own to fair Elaine:
 “Do me this grace, my child, to have my shield 380
 In keeping till I come.” “A grace to me,”
 She answer'd, “twice to-day. I am your squire!”

Whereat Lavaine said, laughing, "Lily maid,
 For fear our people call you lily maid
 In earnest, let me bring your color back; 385
 Once, twice, and thrice: now get you hence to bed."
 So kiss'd her, and Sir Lancelot his own hand,
 And thus they moved away: she stay'd a minute,
 Then made a sudden step to the gate, and there —
 Her bright hair blown about the serious face 390
 Yet rosy-kindled with her brother's kiss —
 Paused by the gateway, standing near the shield
 In silence, while she watch'd their arms far-off
 Sparkle, until they dipt below the downs.
 Then to her tower she climb'd, and took the shield, 395
 There kept it, and so lived in fantasy.

Meanwhile the new companions past away
 Far o'er the long backs of the bushless downs,
 To where Sir Lancelot knew there lived a knight
 Not far from Camelot, now for forty years 400
 A hermit, who had pray'd, labor'd and pray'd,
 And ever laboring had scoop'd himself
 In the white rock a chapel and a hall
 On massive columns, like a shorecliff cave,
 And cells and chambers: all were fair and dry; 405
 The green light from the meadows underneath
 Struck up and lived along the milky roofs;
 And in the meadows tremulous aspen-trees
 And poplars made a noise of falling showers.
 And thither wending there that night they bode. 410

But when the next day broke from underground,
 And shot red fire and shadows thro' the cave,
 They rose, heard mass, broke fast, and rode away:
 Then Lancelot saying, "Hear, but hold my name

Hidden, you ride with Lancelot of the Lake," 415
 Abash'd Lavaine, whose instant reverence,
 Dearer to true young hearts than their own praise,
 But left him leave to stammer, "Is it indeed?"
 And after muttering "The great Lancelot,"
 At last he got his breath and answer'd, "One, 420
 One have I seen — that other, our liege lord,
 The dread Pendragon, Britain's King of kings,
 Of whom the people talk mysteriously,
 He will be there — then were I stricken blind
 That minute, I might say that I had seen." 425

So spake Lavaine, and when they reach'd the lists
 By Camelot in the meadow, let his eyes
 Run thro' the peopled gallery which half round
 Lay like a rainbow fall'n upon the grass,
 Until they found the clear-faced King, who sat 430
 Robed in red samite, easily to be known,
 Since to his crown the golden dragon clung,
 And down his robe the dragon writhed in gold,
 And from the carven-work behind him crept
 Two dragons gilded, sloping down to make 435
 Arms for his chair, while all the rest of them
 Thro' knots and loops and folds innumerable
 Fled ever thro' the woodwork, till they found
 The new design wherein they lost themselves,
 Yet with all ease, so tender was the work: 440
 And, in the costly canopy o'er him set,
 Blazed the last diamond of the nameless king.

Then Lancelot answer'd young Lavaine and said,
 "Me you call great: mine is the firmer seat,
 The truer lance: but there is many a youth 445
 Now crescent, who will come to all I am

And overcome it; and in me there dwells
 No greatness, save it be some far-off touch
 Of greatness to know well I am not great:
 There is the man." And Lavaine gaped upon him 450
 As on a thing miraculous, and anon
 The trumpets blew; and then did either side,
 They that assail'd, and they that held the lists,
 Set lance in rest, strike spur, suddenly move,
 Meet in the midst, and there so furiously 455
 Shock, that a man far-off might well perceive,
 If any man that day were left afield,
 The hard earth shake, and a low thunder of arms.
 And Lancelot bode a little, till he saw
 Which were the weaker; then he hurl'd into it 460
 Against the stronger: little need to speak
 Of Lancelot in his glory! King, duke, earl,
 Count, baron — whom he smote, he overthrew.

But in the field were Lancelot's kith and kin,
 Ranged with the Table Round that held the lists, 465
 Strong men, and wrathful that a stranger knight
 Should do and almost overdo the deeds
 Of Lancelot; and one said to the other, "Lo!
 What is he? I do not mean the force alone —
 The grace and versatility of the man! 470
 Is it not Lancelot?" "When has Lancelot worn
 Favor of any lady in the lists?
 Not such his wont, as we that know him know."
 "How then? who then?" a fury seized them all,
 A fiery family passion for the name 475
 Of Lancelot, and a glory one with theirs.
 They couch'd their spears and prick'd their steeds,
 and thus
 Their plumes driv'n backward by the wind they made

In moving, all together down upon him
 Bare, as a wild wave in the wide North-sea, 480
 Green-glimmering toward the summit, bears, with all
 Its stormy crests that smoke against the skies,
 Down on a bark, and overbears the bark,
 And him that helms it, so they overbore
 Sir Lancelot and his charger, and a spear 485
 Down-glancing lamed the charger, and a spear
 Prick'd sharply his own cuirass, and the head
 Pierced thro' his side, and there snapt, and remain'd.

Then Sir Lavaine did well and worshipfully ;
 He bore a knight of old repute to the earth, 490
 And brought his horse to Lancelot where he lay.
 He up the side, sweating with agony, got,
 But thought to do while he might yet endure,
 And being lustily holpen by the rest,
 His party, — tho' it seem'd half-miracle 495
 To those he fought with, — drave his kith and kin,
 And all the Table Round that held the lists,
 Back to the barrier ; then the trumpets blew
 Proclaiming his the prize, who wore the sleeve
 Of scarlet, and the pearls ; and all the knights, 500
 His party, cried “ Advance and take thy prize
 The diamond ;” but he answer'd, “ Diamond me
 No diamonds ! for God's love, a little air !
 Prize me no prizes, for my prize is death !
 Hence will I, and I charge you follow me not.” 505

He spoke, and vanish'd suddenly from the field
 With young Lavaine into the poplar grove.
 There from his charger down he slid, and sat,
 Gasping to Sir Lavaine, “ Draw the lance-head :”
 “ Ah my sweet lord Sir Lancelot,” said Lavaine, 510

"I dread me, if I draw it, you will die."
 But he, "I die already with it: draw —
 Draw," — and Lavaine drew, and Sir Lancelot gave
 A marvellous great shriek and ghastly groan,
 And half his blood burst forth, and down he sank 515
 For the pure pain, and wholly swoon'd away.
 Then came the hermit out and bare him in,
 There stanch'd his wound; and there, in daily doubt
 Whether to live or die, for many a week
 Hid from the wide world's rumor by the grove 520
 Of poplars with their noise of falling showers,
 And ever-tremulous aspen-trees, he lay.

But on that day when Lancelot fled the lists,
 His party, knights of utmost North and West,
 Lords of waste marches, kings of desolate isles, 525
 Came round their great Pendragon, saying to him,
 "Lo, Sire, our knight, thro' whom we won the day,
 Hath gone sore wounded, and hath left his prize
 Untaken, crying that his prize is death."
 "Heaven hinder," said the King, "that such an one, 530
 So great a knight as we have seen to-day —
 He seem'd to me another Lancelot —
 Yea, twenty times I thought him Lancelot —
 He must not pass uncared for. Wherefore, rise,
 O Gawain, and ride forth and find the knight. 535
 Wounded and wearied, needs must he be near.
 I charge you that you get at once to horse.
 And, knights and kings, there breathes not one of you
 Will deem this prize of ours is rashly given:
 His prowess was too wondrous. We will do him 540
 No customary honor: since the knight
 Came not to us, of us to claim the prize,
 Ourselves will send it after. Rise and take

This diamond, and deliver it, and return,
 And bring us where he is, and how he fares, 545
 And cease not from your quest until ye find."

So saying, from the carven flower above,
 To which it made a restless heart, he took,
 And gave, the diamond; then from where he sat
 At Arthur's right, with smiling face arose, 550
 With smiling face and frowning heart, a Prince
 In the mid might and flourish of his May,
 Gawain, surnamed The Courteous, fair and strong,
 And after Lancelot, Tristram, and Geraint
 And Gareth, a good knight, but therewithal 555
 Sir Modred's brother, and the child of Lot,
 Nor often loyal to his word, and now
 Wroth that the King's command to sally forth
 In quest of whom he knew not, made him leave
 The banquet, and concourse of knights and kings. 560

So all in wrath he got to horse and went;
 While Arthur to the banquet, dark in mood,
 Past, thinking, "Is it Lancelot who hath come
 Despite the wound he spake of, all for gain
 Of glory, and hath added wound to wound, 565
 And ridd'n away to die?" So feared the King,
 And, after two days' tarriance there, return'd.
 Then when he saw the Queen, embracing ask'd,
 "Love, are you yet so sick?" "Nay, lord," she said.
 "And where is Lancelot?" Then the Queen amazed, 570
 "Was he not with you? won he not your prize?"
 "Nay, but one like him." "Why that like was he."
 And when the King demanded how she knew,
 Said, "Lord, no sooner had ye parted from us,
 Than Lancelot told me of a common talk 575

That men went down before his spear at a touch,
 But knowing he was Lancelot ; his great name
 Conquer'd ; and therefore would he hide his name
 From all men, ev'n the King, and to this end
 Had made the pretext of a hindering wound, 580
 That he might joust unknown of all, and learn
 If his old prowess were in aught decay'd ;
 And added, ' Our true Arthur, when he learns,
 Will well allow my pretext, as for gain
 Of purer glory.' "

Then replied the King : 585
 " Far lovelier in our Lancelot had it been,
 In lieu of idly dallying with the truth,
 To have trusted me as he hath trusted thee.
 Surely his King and most familiar friend
 Might well have kept his secret. True, indeed, 590
 Albeit I know my knights fantastical,
 So fine a fear in our large Lancelot
 Must needs have moved my laughter : now remains
 But little cause for laughter : his own kin —
 Ill news, my Queen, for all who love him, this ! — 595
 His kith and kin, not knowing, set upon him ;
 So that he went sore wounded from the field :
 Yet good news too : for goodly hopes are mine
 That Lancelot is no more a lonely heart.
 He wore, against his wont, upon his helm 600
 A sleeve of scarlet, broider'd with great pearls,
 Some gentle maiden's gift."

" Yea, lord," she said,
 " Thy hopes are mine," and saying that, she choked,
 And sharply turn'd about to hide her face,
 Past to her chamber, and there flung herself 605

Down on the great King's couch, and writhed upon it,
 And clench'd her fingers till they bit the palm,
 And shriek'd out "Traitor!" to the unhearing wall,
 Then flash'd into wild tears, and rose again,
 And moved about her palace, proud and pale. 610

Gawain the while thro' all the region round
 Rode with his diamond, wearied of the quest,
 Touch'd at all points, except the poplar grove,
 And came at last, tho' late, to Astolat:
 Whom glittering in enamell'd arms the maid 615
 Glanced at, and cried, "What news from Camelot, lord?
 What of the knight with the red sleeve?" "He won."
 "I knew it," she said. "But parted from the jousts
 Hurt in the side," whereat she caught her breath;
 Thro' her own side she felt the sharp lance go; 620
 Thereon she smote her hand; wellnigh she swoon'd;
 And, while he gazed wonderingly at her, came
 The Lord of Astolat out, to whom the Prince
 Reported who he was, and on what quest
 Sent, that he bore the prize and could not find 625
 The victor, but had ridd'n a random round
 To seek him, and had wearied of the search.
 To whom the Lord of Astolat, "Bide with us,
 And ride no more at random, noble Prince!
 Here was the knight, and here he left a shield; 630
 This will he send or come for: furthermore
 Our son is with him; we shall hear anon,
 Needs must we hear." To this the courteous Prince
 Accorded with his wonted courtesy,
 Courtesy with a touch of traitor in it, 635
 And stay'd; and cast his eyes on fair Elaine:
 Where could be found face daintier? then her shape,
 From forehead down to foot, perfect — again

From foot to forehead exquisitely turn'd:

“ Well — if I bide, lo! this wild flower for me! ” 640

And oft they met among the garden yews,

And there he set himself to play upon her

With sallying wit, free flashes from a height

Above her, graces of the court, and songs,

Sighs, and slow smiles, and golden eloquence 645

And amorous adulation, till the maid

Rebell'd against it, saying to him, “ Prince,

O loyal nephew of our noble King,

Why ask you not to see the shield he left,

Whence you might learn his name? Why slight

your King

650

And lose the quest he sent you on, and prove

No surer than our falcon yesterday,

Who lost the hern we slipt her at, and went

To all the winds? ” “ Nay, by mine head, ” said he,

“ I lose it, as we lose the lark in heaven, 655

O damsel, in the light of your blue eyes;

But an ye will it let me see the shield. ”

And when the shield was brought, and Gawain saw

Sir Lancelot's azure lions, crown'd with gold,

Ramp in the field, he smote his thigh, and mock'd: 660

“ Right was the King! our Lancelot! that true man! ”

“ And right was I, ” she answer'd merrily, “ I,

Who dream'd my knight the greatest knight of all. ”

“ And if *I* dream'd, ” said Gawain, “ that you love

This greatest knight, your pardon! lo, ye know it! 665

Speak therefore: shall I waste myself in vain? ”

Full simple was her answer, “ What know I?

My brethren have been all my fellowship;

And I, when often they have talk'd of love,

Wish'd it had been my mother, for they talk'd, 670

Meseem'd, of what they knew not; so myself —

I know not if I know what true love is,
 But if I know, then, if I love not him,
 I know there is none other I can love."

"Yea, by God's death," said he, "ye love him well,
 But would not, knew ye what all others know, 676
 And whom he loves." "So be it," cried Elaine,
 And lifted her fair face and moved away:
 But he pursued her, calling, "Stay a little!
 One golden minute's grace! he wore your sleeve: 680
 Would he break faith with one I may not name?
 Must our true man change like a leaf at last?
 Nay — like enow: why then, far be it from me
 To cross our mighty Lancelot in his loves!
 And, damsel, for I deem you know full well 685
 Where your great knight is hidden, let me leave
 My quest with you; the diamond also: here!
 For if you love, it will be sweet to give it;
 And if he love, it will be sweet to have it
 From your own hand; and whether he love or not, 690
 A diamond is a diamond. Fare you well
 A thousand times! — a thousand times farewell!
 Yet, if he love, and his love hold, we two
 May meet at court hereafter: there, I think,
 So ye will learn the courtesies of the court, 695
 We two shall know each other."

Then he gave,
 And slightly kiss'd the hand to which he gave,
 The diamond, and all wearied of the quest
 Leapt on his horse, and carolling as he went
 A true-love ballad, lightly rode away. 700

Thence to the court he past; there told the King
 What the King knew, "Sir Lancelot is the knight."

And added, "Sire, my liege, so much I learnt;
But fail'd to find him tho' I rode all round
The region: but I lighted on the maid 705
Whose sleeve he wore; she loves him: and to her,
Deeming our courtesy is the truest law,
I gave the diamond: she will render it;
For by mine head she knows his hiding-place."

The seldom-frowning King frown'd, and replied, 710
"Too courteous truly! ye shall go no more
On quest of mine, seeing that ye forget
Obedience is the courtesy due to kings."

He spake and parted. Wroth, but all in awe,
For twenty strokes of the blood, without a word, 715
Linger'd that other, staring after him;
Then shook his hair, strode off, and buzz'd abroad
About the maid of Astolat, and her love.
All ears were prick'd at once, all tongues were loosed:
"The maid of Astolat loves Sir Lancelot, 720
Sir Lancelot loves the maid of Astolat."
Some read the King's face, some the Queen's, and all
Had marvel what the maid might be, but most
Predoom'd her as unworthy. One old dame
Came suddenly on the Queen with the sharp news. 725
She, that had heard the noise of it before,
But sorrowing Lancelot should have stoop'd so low,
Marr'd her friend's aim with pale tranquillity.
So ran the tale like fire about the court,
Fire in dry stubble a nine-days' wonder flared: 730
Till ev'n the knights at banquet twice or thrice
Forgot to drink to Lancelot and the Queen,
And pledging Lancelot and the lily maid
Smiled at each other, while the Queen, who sat

Being our greatest : yea, and you must give it —
And sure I think this fruit is hung too high
For any mouth to gape for save a queen's — 770
Nay, I mean nothing: so then, get you gone,
Being so very wilful you must go."

Lightly, her suit allow'd, she slipt away,
And while she made her ready for her ride,
Her father's latest word humm'd in her ear, 775
"Being so very wilful you must go,"
And changed itself and echo'd in her heart,
"Being so very wilful you must die."

But she was happy enough and shook it off,
As we shake off the bee that buzzes at us ; 780
And in her heart she answer'd it and said,

"What matter, so I help him back to life?"
Then far away with good Sir Torre for guide
Rode o'er the long backs of the bushless downs
To Camelot, and before the city-gates 785

Came on her brother with a happy face
Making a roan horse caper and curvet
For pleasure all about a field of flowers:

Whom when she saw, "Lavaine," she cried, "Lavaine,
How fares my lord Sir Lancelot?" He amazed, 790

"Torre and Elaine! why here? Sir Lancelot?
How know ye my lord's name is Lancelot?"

But when the maid had told him all her tale,
Then turn'd Sir Torre, and being in his moods
Left them, and under the strange-statued gate, 795

Where Arthur's wars were render'd mystically,
Past up the still rich city to his kin,
His own far blood, which dwelt at Camelot ;
And her Lavaine across the poplar grove
Led to the caves: there first she saw the casque 800

Of Lancelot on the wall : her scarlet sleeve,
 Tho' carved and cut, and half the pearls away,
 Stream'd from it still ; and in her heart she laugh'd,
 Because he had not loosed it from his helm,
 But meant once more perchance to tourney in it. 805
 And when they gain'd the cell wherein he slept,
 His battle-writhen arms and mighty hands
 Lay naked on the wolfskin, and a dream
 Of dragging down his enemy made them move.
 Then she that saw him lying unsleek, unshorn, 810
 Gaunt as it were the skeleton of himself,
 Utter'd a little tender dolorous cry.
 The sound not wonted in a place so still
 Woke the sick knight, and while he roll'd his eyes
 Yet blank from sleep, she started to him, saying, 815
 " Your prize the diamond sent you by the King : "
 His eyes glisten'd : she fancied " Is it for me ? "
 And when the maid had told him all the tale
 Of King and Prince, the diamond sent, the quest
 Assign'd to her not worthy of it, she knelt 820
 Full lowly by the corners of his bed,
 And laid the diamond in his open hand.
 Her face was near, and as we kiss the child
 That does the task assign'd, he kiss'd her face.
 At once she slipt like water to the floor. 825
 " Alas," he said, " your ride hath wearied you.
 Rest must you have." " No rest for me," she said ;
 " Nay, for near you, fair lord, I am at rest."
 What might she mean by that ? his large black eyes,
 Yet larger thro' his leanness, dwelt upon her, 830
 Till all her heart's sad secret blazed itself
 In the heart's colors on her simple face ;
 And Lancelot look'd and was perplex't in mind,
 And being weak in body said no more ;

But did not love the color; woman's love,
Save one, he not regarded, and so turn'd
Sighing, and feign'd a sleep until he slept. 835

Then rose Elaine and glided thro' the fields,
And past beneath the weirdly-sculptured gates
Far up the dim rich city to her kin; 840
There bode the night; but woke with dawn, and
past

Down thro' the dim rich city to the fields,
Thence to the cave: so day by day she past
In either twilight ghost-like to and fro
Gliding, and every day she tended him, 845

And likewise many a night: and Lancelot
Would, tho' he call'd his wound a little hurt
Whereof he should be quickly whole, at times
Brain-feverous in his heat and agony, seem
Uncourteous, even he: but the meek maid 850

Sweetly forebore him ever, being to him
Meeker than any child to a rough nurse,
Milder than any mother to a sick child,
And never woman yet, since man's first fall,
Did kindlier unto man, but her deep love 855

Upbore her; till the hermit, skill'd in all
The simples and the science of that time,
Told him that her fine care had saved his life.

And the sick man forgot her simple blush,
Would call her friend and sister, sweet Elaine, 860

Would listen for her coming and regret
Her parting step, and held her tenderly,
And loved her with all love except the love
Of man and woman when they love their best,
Closest and sweetest, and had died the death 865

In any knightly fashion for her sake.

And peradventure had he seen her first
 She might have made this and that other world
 Another world for the sick man ; but now
 The shackles of an old love straiten'd him, 870
 His honor rooted in dishonor stood,
 And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true.

Yet the great knight in his mid-sickness made
 Full many a holy vow and pure resolve.
 These, as but born of sickness, could not live ; 875
 For when the blood ran lustier in him again,
 Full often the bright image of one face,
 Making a treacherous quiet in his heart,
 Dispersed his resolution like a cloud.
 Then if the maiden, while that ghostly grace 880
 Beam'd on his fancy, spoke, he answer'd not,
 Or short and coldly, and she knew right well
 What the rough sickness meant, but what this meant
 She knew not, and the sorrow dimm'd her sight,
 And drave her ere her time across the the fields 885
 Far into the rich city, where alone
 She murmur'd, " Vain, in vain : it cannot be.
 He will not love me : how then ? must I die ?"
 Then as a little helpless innocent bird,
 That has but one plain passage of few notes, 890
 Will sing the simple passage o'er and o'er
 For all an April morning, till the ear
 Wearies to hear it, so the simple maid
 Went half the night repeating, " Must I die ?"
 And now to right she turn'd, and now to left, 895
 And found no ease in turning or in rest ;
 And " Him or death," she mutter'd, " death or
 him,"
 Again and like a burthen, " Him or death."

But when Sir Lancelot's deadly hurt was whole,
To Astolat returning rode the three. 900
There morn by morn, arraying her sweet self
In that wherein she deem'd she look'd her best,
She came before Sir Lancelot, for she thought
"If I be loved, these are my festal robes,
If not, the victim's flowers before he fall." 905
And Lancelot ever prest upon the maid
That she should ask some goodly gift of him
For her own self or hers; "and do not shun
To speak the wish most near to your true heart;
Such service have ye done me, that I make 910
My will of yours, and Prince and Lord am I
In mine own land, and what I will I can."
Then like a ghost she lifted up her face,
But like a ghost without the power to speak.
And Lancelot saw that she withheld her wish, 915
And bode among them yet a little space
Till he should learn it; and one morn it chanced
He found her in among the garden yews,
And said, "Delay no longer, speak your wish,
Seeing I go to-day:" then out she brake: 920
"Going? and we shall never see you more.
And I must die for want of one bold word."
"Speak; that I live to hear," he said, "is yours."
Then suddenly and passionately she spoke:
"I have gone mad. I love you: let me die." 925
"Ah, sister," answer'd Lancelot, "what is this?"
And innocently extending her white arms,
"Your love," she said, "your love — to be your wife."
And Lancelot answer'd, "Had I chosen to wed,
I had been wedded earlier, sweet Elaine: 930
But now there never will be wife of mine."
"No, no," she cried, "I care not to be wife,

But to be with you still, to see your face,
 To serve you, and to follow you thro' the world."
 And Lancelot answer'd, "Nay, the world, the world,
 All ear and eye, with such a stupid heart 936
 To interpret ear and eye, and such a tongue
 To blare its own interpretation — nay,
 Full ill then should I quit your brother's love,
 And your good father's kindness." And she said, 940
 "Not to be with you, not to see your face —
 Alas for me then, my good days are done."
 "Nay, noble maid," he answer'd, "ten times nay!
 This is not love: but love's first flash in youth,
 Most common: yea, I know it of mine own self: 945
 And you yourself will smile at your own self
 Hereafter, when you yield your flower of life
 To one more fitly yours, not thrice your age:
 And then will I, for true you are and sweet,
 Beyond mine old belief in womanhood, 950
 More specially should your good knight be poor,
 Endow you with broad land and territory,
 Even the half my realm beyond the seas,
 So that would make you happy: furthermore,
 Ev'n to the death, as tho' ye were my blood, 955
 In all your quarrels, will I be your knight.
 This will I do, dear damsel, for your sake,
 And more than this I cannot."

While he spoke

She neither blush'd nor shook, but deathly-pale
 Stood grasping what was nearest, then replied: 960
 "Of all this will I nothing;" and so fell,
 And thus they bore her swooning to her tower.

Then spake, to whom thro' those black walls of yew

Their talk had pierced, her father : “ Ay, a flash,
 I fear me, that will strike my blossom dead. 965
 Too courteous are ye, fair Lord Lancelot.
 I pray you use some rough discourtesy
 To blunt or break her passion.”

Lancelot said,
 “ That were against me : what I can I will ” ;
 And there that day remain'd and toward even 970
 Sent for his shield : full meekly rose the maid,
 Stript off the case, and gave the naked shield ;
 Then, when she heard his horse upon the stones,
 Unclasping flung the casement back, and look'd
 Down on his helm, from which her sleeve had gone.
 And Lancelot knew the little clinking sound ; 976
 And she by tact of love was well aware
 That Lancelot knew that she was looking at him.
 And yet he glanced not up, nor waved his hand,
 Nor bade farewell, but sadly rode away. 980
 This was the one discourtesy that he used.

So in her tower alone the maiden sat :
 His very shield was gone ; only the case,
 Her own poor work, her empty labor, left.
 But still she heard him, still his picture form'd 985
 And grew between her and the pictured wall.
 Then came her father, saying in low tones,
 “ Have comfort,” whom she greeted quietly.
 Then came her brethren saying, “ Peace to thee,
 Sweet sister,” whom she answer'd with all calm. 990
 But when they left her to herself again,
 Death, like a friend's voice from a distant field
 Approaching thro' the darkness, call'd ; the owls
 Wailing had power upon her, and she mixt

Repeating, till the word we know so well
Becomes a wonder, and we know not why,
So dwelt the father on her face, and thought
“Is this Elaine?” till back the maiden fell,
Then gave a languid hand to each, and lay, 1025
Speaking a still good-morrow with her eyes.
At last she said, “Sweet brothers, yesternight
I seem’d a curious little maid again,
As happy as when we dwelt among the woods,
And when ye used to take me with the flood 1030
Up the great river in the boatman’s boat.
Only ye would not pass beyond the cape
That has the poplar on it: there ye fixt
Your limit, oft returning with the tide.
And yet I cried because ye would not pass 1035
Beyond it, and far up the shining flood
Until we found the palace of the King.
And yet ye would not; but this night I dream’d
That I was all alone upon the flood,
And then I said, ‘Now shall I have my will’: 1040
And there I woke, but still the wish remain’d.
So let me hence that I may pass at last
Beyond the poplar and far up the flood,
Until I find the palace of the King.
There will I enter in among them all, 1045
And no man there will dare to mock at me;
But there the fine Gawain will wonder at me,
And there the great Sir Lancelot muse at me;
Gawain, who bade a thousand farewells to me,
Lancelot, who coldly went, nor bade me one: 1050
And there the King will know me and my love,
And there the Queen herself will pity me,
And all the gentle court will welcome me,
And after my long voyage I shall rest!”

“Peace,” said her father, “O my child, ye seem 1055
 Light-headed, for what force is yours to go
 So far, being sick? and wherefore would ye look
 On this proud fellow again, who scorns us all?”

Then the rough Torre began to heave and move
 And bluster into stormy sobs and say, 1060
 “I never loved him: an I meet with him,
 I care not howsoever great he be,
 Then will I strike at him and strike him down,
 Give me good fortune, I will strike him dead,
 For this discomfort he hath done the house.” 1065

To whom the gentle sister made reply,
 “Fret not yourself, dear brother, nor be wroth,
 Seeing it is no more Sir Lancelot’s fault
 Not to love me, than it is mine to love
 Him of all men who seems to me the highest.” 1070

“‘Highest?’” the father answer’d, echoing “highest”
 (He meant to break the passion in her), “nay,
 Daughter, I know not what you call the highest;
 But this I know, for all the people know it,
 He loves the Queen, and in an open shame: 1075
 And she returns his love in open shame.
 If this be high, what is it to be low?”

Then spake the lily maid of Astolat:
 “Sweet father, all too faint and sick am I
 For anger: these are slanders: never yet 1080
 Was noble man but made ignoble talk.
 He makes no friend who never made a foe.
 But now it is my glory to have loved
 One peerless, without stain: so let me pass,

My father, howsoe'er I seem to you, 1085
 Not all unhappy, having loved God's best
 And greatest, tho' my love had no return:
 Yet, seeing you desire your child to live,
 Thanks, but you work against your own desire;
 For if I could believe the things you say, 1090
 I should but die the sooner; wherefore cease,
 Sweet father, and bid call the ghostly man
 Hither, and let me shrive me clean, and die."

So when the ghostly man had come and gone,
 She, with a face bright as for sin forgiven, 1095
 Besought Lavaine to write as she devised
 A letter, word for word; and when he ask'd,
 "Is it for Lancelot, is it for my dear lord?
 Then will I bear it gladly;" she replied,
 "For Lancelot and the Queen and all the world, 1100
 But I myself must bear it." Then he wrote
 The letter she devised; which being writ
 And folded, "O sweet father, tender and true,
 Deny me not," she said — "ye never yet
 Denied my fancies — this, however strange, 1105
 My latest: lay the letter in my hand
 A little ere I die, and close the hand
 Upon it; I shall guard it even in death.
 And when the heat is gone from out my heart,
 Then take the little bed on which I died 1110
 For Lancelot's love, and deck it like the Queen's
 For richness, and me also like the Queen
 In all I have of rich, and lay me on it.
 And let there be prepared a chariot-bier
 To take me to the river, and a barge 1115
 Be ready on the river, clothed in black.
 I go in state to court, to meet the Queen.

There surely I shall speak for mine own self,
 And none of you can speak for me so well.
 And therefore let our dumb old man alone 1120
 Go with me, he can steer and row, and he
 Will guide me to that palace, to the doors."

She ceased : her father promised ; whereupon
 She grew so cheerful that they deem'd her death
 Was rather in the fantasy than the blood. 1125
 But ten slow mornings past, and on the eleventh
 Her father laid the letter in her hand,
 And closed the hand upon it, and she died.
 So that day there was dole in Astolat.

But when the next sun brake from underground, 1130
 Then, these two brethren slowly with bent brows
 Accompanying, the sad chariot-bier
 Past like a shadow thro' the field, that shone
 Full-summer, to that stream whereon the barge,
 Pall'd all its length in blackest samite, lay. 1135
 There sat the lifelong creature of the house,
 Loyal, the dumb old servitor, on deck,
 Winking his eyes, and twisted all his face.
 So those two brethren from the chariot took
 And on the black decks laid her in her bed, 1140
 Set in her hand a lily, o'er her hung
 The silken case with braided blazonings,
 And kiss'd her quiet brows, and saying to her
 "Sister, farewell for ever," and again
 "Farewell, sweet sister," parted all in tears. 1145
 Then rose the dumb old servitor, and the dead,
 Oar'd by the dumb, went upward with the flood —
 In her right hand the lily, in her left
 The letter — all her bright hair streaming down —

And all the coverlid was cloth of gold 1150
 Drawn to her waist, and she herself in white
 All but her face, and that clear-featured face
 Was lovely, for she did not seem as dead,
 But fast asleep, and lay as tho' she smiled.

That day Sir Lancelot at the palace craved 1155
 Audience of Guinevere, to give at last
 The price of half a realm, his costly gift,
 Hard-won and hardly won with bruise and blow,
 With deaths of others, and almost his own,
 The nine-years fought-for diamonds: for he saw 1160
 One of her house, and sent him to the Queen
 Bearing his wish, whereto the Queen agreed
 With such and so unmoved a majesty
 She might have seem'd her statue, but that he,
 Low-drooping till he wellnigh kiss'd her feet 1165
 For loyal awe, saw with a sidelong eye
 The shadow of some piece of pointed lace,
 In the Queen's shadow, vibrate on the walls,
 And parted, laughing in his courtly heart.

All in an oriel on the summer side, 1170
 Vine-clad, of Arthur's palace toward the stream,
 They met, and Lancelot kneeling utter'd, "Queen,
 Lady, my liege, in whom I have my joy,
 Take, what I had not won except for you,
 These jewels, and make me happy, making them 1175
 An armlet for the roundest arm on earth,
 Or necklace for a neck to which the swan's
 Is tawnier than her cygnet's: these are words:
 Your beauty is your beauty, and I sin
 In speaking, yet O grant my worship of it 1180
 Words, as we grant grief tears. Such sin in words,

In which as Arthur's Queen I move and rule:
 So cannot speak my mind. An end to this! 1215
 A strange one! yet I take it with Amen.
 So pray you, add my diamonds to her pearls;
 Deck her with these; tell her, she shines me down:
 An armlet for an arm to which the Queen's
 Is haggard, or a necklace for a neck 1220
 O as much fairer — as a faith once fair
 Was richer than these diamonds — hers not mine —
 Nay, by the mother of our Lord himself,
 Or hers or mine, mine now to work my will —
 She shall not have them."

Saying which she seized, 1225

And thro' the casement standing wide for heat,
 Flung them, and down they flash'd, and smote the
 stream,
 Then from the smitten surface flash'd, as it were,
 Diamonds to meet them, and they past away.
 Then while Sir Lancelot leant, in half disdain 1230
 At love, life, all things, on the window ledge,
 Close underneath his eyes, and right across
 Where these had fallen, slowly past the barge
 Whereon the lily maid of Astolat
 Lay smiling, like a star in blackest night. 1235

But the wild Queen, who saw not, burst away
 To weep and wail in secret; and the barge,
 On to the palace-doorway sliding, paused.
 There two stood arm'd, and kept the door; to whom,
 All up the marble stair, tier over tier, 1240
 Were added mouths that gaped, and eyes that ask'd
 "What is it?" but that oarsman's haggard face,
 As hard and still as is the face that men

Shape to their fancy's eye from broken rocks
 On some cliff-side, appall'd them, and they said, 1245
 "He is enchanted, cannot speak — and she,
 Look how she sleeps — the Fairy Queen, so fair!
 Yea, but how pale! what are they? flesh and blood?
 Or come to take the King to Fairyland?
 For some do hold our Arthur cannot die, 1250
 But that he passes into Fairyland."

While thus they babbled of the King, the King
 Came girt with knights: then turn'd the tongueless
 man

From the half-face to the full eye, and rose
 And pointed to the damsel, and the doors. 1255
 So Arthur bade the meek Sir Percivale
 And pure Sir Galahad to uplift the maid;
 And reverently they bore her into hall.
 Then came the fine Gawain and wonder'd at her,
 And Lancelot later came and mused at her, 1260
 And last the Queen herself, and pitied her:
 But Arthur spied the letter in her hand,
 Stoop't, took, brake seal, and read it; this was all:

"Most noble lord, Sir Lancelot of the Lake,
 I, sometime call'd the maid of Astolat, 1265
 Come, for you left me taking no farewell,
 Hither, to take my last farewell of you.
 I loved you, and my love had no return,
 And therefore my true love has been my death.
 And therefore to our Lady Guinevere, 1270
 And to all other ladies, I make moan.
 Pray for my soul, and yield me burial.
 Pray for my soul thou, too, Sir Lancelot,
 As thou art a knight peerless."

Thus he read :

And ever in the reading, lords and dames 1275
 Wept, looking often from his face who read
 To hers which lay so silent, and at times,
 So touch'd were they, half-thinking that her lips,
 Who had devised the letter, moved again.

Then freely spoke Sir Lancelot to them all: 1280
 " My lord liege Arthur, and all ye that hear
 Know that for this most gentle maiden's death,
 Right heavy am I; for good she was and true,
 But loved me with a love beyond all love
 In woman, whomsoever I have known. 1285
 Yet to be loved makes not to love again;
 Not at my years, however it hold in youth.
 I swear by truth and knighthood that I gave
 No cause, not willingly, for such a love :
 To this I call my friends in testimony, 1290
 Her brethren, and her father, who himself
 Besought me to be plain and blunt, and use,
 To break her passion, some discourtesy
 Against my nature : what I could, I did.
 I left her and I bade her no farewell ; 1295
 Tho', had I dreamt the damsel would have died,
 I might have put my wits to some rough use,
 And help'd her from herself."

Then said the Queen

(Sea was her wrath, yet working after storm)
 " Ye might at least have done her so much grace, 1300
 Fair lord, as would have help'd her from her
 death."

He raised his head, their eyes met and hers fell,
 He adding :

“Queen, she would not be content
 Save that I wedded her, which could not be.
 Then might she follow me thro’ the world, she ask’d ; 1305
 It could not be. I told her that her love
 Was but the flash of youth, would darken down
 To rise hereafter in a stiller flame
 Toward one more worthy of her — then would I,
 More specially were he she wedded poor, 1310
 Estate them with large land and territory
 In mine own realm beyond the narrow seas,
 To keep them in all joyance: more than this
 I could not ; this she would not, and she died.”

He pausing, Arthur answer’d, “O my knight, 1315
 It will be to thy worship, as my knight,
 And mine, as head of all our Table Round,
 To see that she be buried worshipfully.”

So toward that shrine which then in all the realm
 Was richest, Arthur leading, slowly went 1320
 The marshall’d Order of their Table Round,
 And Lancelot sat beyond his wont, to see
 The maiden buried, not as one unknown,
 Nor meanly, but with gorgeous obsequies,
 And mass, and rolling music, like a queen. 1325
 And when the knights had laid her comely head
 Low in the dust of half-forgotten kings,
 Then Arthur spake among them, “Let her tomb
 Be costly, and her image thereupon,
 And let the shield of Lancelot at her feet 1330
 Be carven, and her lily in her hand.
 And let the story of her dolorous voyage
 For all true hearts be blazon’d on her tomb
 In letters gold and azure !” which was wrought

Thereafter; but when now the lords and dames 1335
 And people, from the high door streaming, brake
 Disorderly, as homeward each, the Queen,
 Who mark'd Sir Lancelot where he moved apart,
 Drew near, and sigh'd in passing, "Lancelot,
 Forgive me; mine was jealousy in love." 1340
 He answer'd with his eyes upon the ground,
 "That is love's curse; pass on, my Queen, forgiven."
 But Arthur, who beheld his cloudy brows,
 Approach'd him, and with full affection said,

"Lancelot, my Lancelot, thou in whom I have 1345
 Most joy and most affiance, for I know
 What thou hast been in battle by my side,
 And many a time have watch'd thee at the tilt
 Strike down the lusty and long-practised knight,
 And let the younger and unskill'd go by 1350
 To win his honor and to make his name,
 And loved thy courtesies and thee, a man
 Made to be loved; but now I would to God,
 Seeing the homeless trouble in thine eyes,
 Thou couldst have loved this maiden, shaped, it seems,
 By God for thee alone, and from her face, 1356
 If one may judge the living by the dead,
 Delicately pure and marvellously fair,
 Who might have brought thee, now a lonely man,
 Wifeless and heirless, noble issue, sons 1360
 Born to the glory of thy name and fame,
 My knight, the great Sir Lancelot of the Lake."

Then answer'd Lancelot, "Fair she was, my King,
 Pure, as you ever wish your knights to be.
 To doubt her fairness were to want an eye, 1365
 To doubt her pureness were to want a heart —

Yea, to be loved, if what is worthy love
 Could bind him, but free love will not be bound."

"Free love, so bound, were freëst," said the King.
 "Let love be free; free love is for the best: 1370
 And, after heaven, on our dull side of death,
 What should be best, if not so pure a love
 Clothed in so pure a loveliness? yet thee
 She fail'd to bind, tho' being, as I think,
 Unbound as yet, and gentle, as I know." 1375

And Lancelot answer'd nothing, but he went,
 And at the inrunning of a little brook
 Sat by the river in a cove, and watch'd
 The high reed wave, and lifted up his eyes
 And saw the barge that brought her moving down, 1380
 Far-off, a blot upon the stream, and said
 Low in himself, "Ah simple heart and sweet,
 Ye loved me, damsel, surely with a love
 Far tenderer than my Queen's. Pray for thy soul?
 Ay, that will I. Farewell too — now at last — 1385
 Farewell, fair lily. 'Jealousy in love?'
 Not rather dead love's harsh heir, jealous pride?
 Queen, if I grant the jealousy as of love,
 May not your crescent fear for name and fame,
 Speak, as it waxes, of a love that wanes? 1390
 Why did the King dwell on my name to me?
 Mine own name shames me, seeming a reproach,
 Lancelot, whom the Lady of the Lake
 Caught from his mother's arms — the wondrous one
 Who passes thro' the vision of the night — 1395
 She chanted snatches of mysterious hymns
 Heard on the winding waters, eve and morn.
 She kiss'd me saying, 'Thou art fair, my child,

As a king's son,' and often in her arms
She bare me, pacing on the dusky mere. 1400
Would she had drown'd me in it, where'er it be!
For what am I? what profits me my name
Of greatest knight? I fought for it, and have it:
Pleasure to have it, none; to lose it, pain;
Now grown a part of me: but what use in it? 1405
To make men worse by making my sin known?
Or sin seem less, the sinner seeming great?
Alas for Arthur's greatest knight, a man
Not after Arthur's heart! I needs must break
These bonds that so defame me: not without 1410
She wills it: would I, if she will'd it? nay,
Who knows? but if I would not, then may God,
I pray him, send a sudden Angel down
To seize me by the hair and bear me far,
And fling me deep in that forgotten mere, 1415
Among the tumbled fragments of the hills."

So groaned Sir Lancelot in remorseful pain,
Not knowing he should die a holy man.

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR

THAT story which the bold Sir Bedivere,
First made and latest left of all the knights,
Told, when the man was no more than a voice
In the white winter of his age, to those
With whom he dwelt, new faces, other minds. 5

For on their march to westward, Bedivere,
Who slowly paced among the slumbering host,
Heard in his tent the moanings of the King:

“I found Him in the shining of the stars,
I mark'd Him in the flowering of His fields, 10
But in His ways with men I find Him not.
I waged His wars, and now I pass and die.
O me! for why is all around us here
As if some lesser god had made the world,
But had not force to shape it as he would, 15
Till the High God behold it from beyond,
And enter it, and make it beautiful?
Or else as if the world were wholly fair,
But that these eyes of men are dense and dim,
And have not power to see it as it is: 20
Perchance, because we see not to the close; —
For I, being simple, thought to work His will,
And have but stricken with the sword in vain;
And all whereon I lean'd in wife and friend
Is traitor to my peace, and all my realm 25
Reels back into the beast, and is no more.
My God, thou hast forgotten me in my death:
Nay — God my Christ — I pass but shall not die.”



Peter Vischer

KING ARTHUR

Then, ere that last weird battle in the west,
 There came on Arthur sleeping, Gawain kill'd 30
 In Lancelot's war, the ghost of Gawain blown
 Along a wandering wind, and past his ear
 Went shrilling, "Hollow, hollow all delight!
 Hail, King! to-morrow thou shalt pass away.
 Farewell! there is an isle of rest for thee. 35
 And I am blown along a wandering wind,
 And hollow, hollow, hollow all delight."
 And fainter onward, like wild birds that change
 Their season in the night and wail their way
 From cloud to cloud, down the long wind the dream
 Shrill'd; but in going mingled with dim cries 41
 Far in the moonlit haze among the hills,
 As of some lonely city sack'd by night,
 When all is lost, and wife and child with wail
 Pass to new lords; and Arthur woke and call'd, 45
 "Who spake? A dream. O light upon the wind,
 Thine, Gawain, was the voice — are these dim cries
 Thine? or doth all that haunts the waste and wild
 Mourn, knowing it will go along with me?"

This heard the bold Sir Bedivere and spake: 50
 "O me, my King, let pass whatever will,
 Elves, and the harmless glamour of the field;
 But in their stead thy name and glory cling
 To all high places like a golden cloud
 For ever: but as yet thou shalt not pass. 55
 Light was Gawain in life, and light in death
 Is Gawain, for the ghost is as the man;
 And care not thou for dreams from him, but rise —
 I hear the steps of Modred in the west,
 And with him many of thy people, and knights 60
 Once thine, whom thou hast loved, but grosser grown

Than heathen, spitting at their vows and thee.
 Right well in heart they know thee for the King.
 Arise, go forth and conquer as of old." *7 close*

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere: 65
 "Far other is this battle in the west
 Whereto we move, than when we strove in youth,
 And brake the petty kings, and fought with Rome,
 Or thrust the heathen from the Roman wall,
 And shook him thro' the north. Ill doom is mine 70
 To war against my people and my knights.
 The king who fights his people fights himself.
 And they my knights, who loved me once, the stroke
 That strikes them dead is as my death to me.
 Yet let us hence, and find or feel a way 75
 Thro' this blind haze, which ever since I saw
 One lying in the dust at Almesbury,
 Hath folded in the passes of the world."

Then rose the King and moved his host by night,
 And ever push'd Sir Modred, league by league, 80
 Back to the sunset bound of Lyonesse —
 A land of old upheaven from the abyss
 By fire, to sink into the abyss again;
 Where fragments of forgotten peoples dwelt,
 And the long mountains ended in a coast 85
 Of ever-shifting sand, and far away
 The phantom circle of a moaning sea.
 There the pursuer could pursue no more,
 And he that fled no further fly the King;
 And there, that day when the great light of heaven 90
 Burn'd at his lowest in the rolling year,
 On the waste sand by the waste sea they closed.
 Nor ever yet had Arthur fought a fight

Like this last, dim, weird battle of the west.
 A deathwhite mist slept over sand and sea : 95
 Whereof the chill, to him who breathed it, drew
 Down with his blood, till all his heart was cold
 With formless fear ; and ev'n on Arthur fell
 Confusion, since he saw not whom he fought.
 For friend and foe were shadows in the mist, 100
 And friend slew friend not knowing whom he slew ;
 And some had visions out of golden youth,
 And some beheld the faces of old ghosts
 Look in upon the battle ; and in the mist
 Was many a noble deed, many a base, 105
 And chance and craft and strength in single fights,
 And ever and anon with host to host
 Shocks, and the splintering spear, the hard mail hewn,
 Shield-breakings, and the clash of brands, the crash
 Of battle-axes on shatter'd helms, and shrieks 110,
 After the Christ, of those who falling down
 Look'd up for heaven, and only saw the mist ;
 And shouts of heathen and the traitor knights,
 Oaths, insult, filth, and monstrous blasphemies,
 Sweat, writhings, anguish, laboring of the lungs 115
 In that close mist, and cryings for the light,
 Moans of the dying, and voices of the dead.

Last, as by some one deathbed after wail
 Of suffering, silence follows, or thro' death
 Or deathlike swoon, thus over all that shore, 120
 Save for some whisper of the seething seas,
 A dead hush fell ; but when the dolorous day
 Grew drearier toward twilight falling, came
 A bitter wind, clear from the North, and blew
 The mist aside, and with that wind the tide 125
 Rose, and the pale King glanced across the field

Of battle : but no man was moving there ;
 Nor any cry of Christian heard thereon,
 Nor yet of heathen ; only the wan wave
 Brake in among dead faces, to and fro 130
 Swaying the helpless hands, and up and down
 Tumbling the hollow helmets of the fallen,
 And shiver'd brands that once had fought with Rome,
 And rolling far along the gloomy shores
 The voice of days of old and days to be. 135

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere,
 And whiter than the mist that all day long
 Had held the field of battle was the King :

“Hearest thou this great voice that shakes the world,
 And wastes the narrow realm whereon we move, 140
 And beats upon the faces of the dead,
 My dead, as tho' they had not died for me? —
 O Bedivere, for on my heart hath fall'n
 Confusion, till I know not what I am,
 Nor whence I am, nor whether I be King. 145
 Behold, I seem but King among the dead.”

Then spake the bold Sir Bedivere : “ My King,
 King everywhere ! and so the dead have kings,
 There also will I worship thee as King.
 Yet still thy life is whole, and still I live 150
 Who love thee ; but who hates thee, he that brought
 The heathen back among us, yonder stands,
 Modred, unharm'd, the traitor of thine house.”

Then spake the King : “ My house hath been my
 doom.
 But call not thou this traitor of my house 155

Who hath but dwelt beneath one roof with me.
 My house are rather they who sware my vows,
 Yea, even while they brake them, own'd me King.
 And well for thee, saying in my dark hour,
 When all the purport of my throne hath fail'd, 160
 That quick or dead thou holdest me for King.
 King am I, whatsoever be their cry ;
 And one last act of kinghood shalt thou see
 Yet, ere I pass." And uttering this the King
 Made at the man : then Modred smote his liege 165
 Hard on that helm which many a heathen sword
 Had beaten thin ; while Arthur at one blow,
 Striking the last stroke with Excalibur,
 Slew him, and all but slain himself, he fell.

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd 170
 Among the mountains by the winter sea ;
 Until King Arthur's Table, man by man,
 Had fall'n in Lyonesse about their lord,
 King Arthur. Then, because his wound was deep,
 The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him, 175
 And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
 A broken chancel with a broken cross,
 That stood on a dark strait of barren land :
 On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
 Lay a great water, and the moon was full. 180

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere :
 " The sequel of to-day unsolders all
 The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
 Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
 They sleep — the men I loved. I think that we 185
 Shall never more, at any future time,
 Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,

Walking about the gardens and the halls
 Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
 I perish by this people which I made, — 190
 Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again
 To rule once more ; but, let what will be, be,
 I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
 That without help I cannot last till morn.
 Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur, 195
 Which was my pride : for thou rememberest how
 In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
 Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
 Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
 Holding the sword — and how I row'd across 200
 And took it, and have worn it, like a king ;
 And, wheresoever I am sung or told
 In aftertime, this also shall be known :
 But now delay not : take Excalibur,
 And fling him far into the middle mere : 205
 Watch what thou seëst, and lightly bring me word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere :
 "It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,
 Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm —
 A little thing may harm a wounded man ; 210
 Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
 Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word."

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he stept,
 And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
 Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men, 215
 Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
 Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down
 By zigzag paths, and juts of pointed rock,
 Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur, 220
 And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
 Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
 And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt:
 For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
 Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work 225
 Of subtlest jewelry. He gazed so long
 That both his eyes were dazzled as he stood,
 This way and that dividing the swift mind,
 In act to throw: but at the last it seem'd
 Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd 230
 There in the many-knotted waterflags,
 That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
 So strode he back slow to the wounded King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:

"Hast thou perform'd my mission which I gave? 235
 What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:

"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
 And the wild water lapping on the crag."

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale: 240

"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,
 Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd
 Thy fēalty, nor like a noble knight:
 For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,
 Or voice, or else a motion of the mere. 245
 This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
 Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again,
 As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing
 I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me word."

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time 250
 Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
 Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in thought ;
 But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
 How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
 His palms together, and he cried aloud : 255

“ And if indeed I cast the brand away,
 Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
 Should thus be lost for ever from the earth,
 Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.
 What good should follow this, if this were done? 260
 What harm, undone? Deep harm to disobey,
 Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
 Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
 An act unprofitable, against himself?
 The King is sick, and knows not what he does. 265
 What record, or what relic of my lord
 Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
 And rumors of a doubt? But were this kept,
 Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
 Some one might show it at a joust of arms, 270
 Saying, ‘ King Arthur’s sword, Excalibur,
 Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.
 Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps
 Upon the hidden bases of the hills.’
 So might some old man speak in the aftertime 275
 To all the people, winning reverence.
 But now much honor and much fame were lost.”

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,
 And hid Excalibur the second time,
 And so strode back slow to the wounded King. 280

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily :

“ What is it thou hast seen ? or what hast heard ? ”

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :

“ I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds.” 285

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath :

“ Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted ! Woe is me !
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye 290
That bowed the will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt ;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl 295
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence :
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands.” 300

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
Among the bulrush beds, and clutch'd the sword,
And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendor of the moon, 305
And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock
By night, with noises of the Northern Sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur : 310
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
 And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
 Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
 And lightly went the other to the King. 315

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath :
 " Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
 Speak out : what is it thou hast heard, or seen ? "

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
 " Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems 320
 Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
 Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
 Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
 So great a miracle as yonder hilt.
 Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him ; 325
 But when I look'd again, behold an arm,
 Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
 That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
 Three times, and drew him under in the mere. "

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard :
 " My end draws nigh ; 't is time that I were gone, 331
 Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
 And bear me to the margin ; yet I fear
 My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die. "

So saying, from the pavement he half rose, 335
 Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
 And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
 As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
 Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
 And would have spoken, but he found not words ; 340
 Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,

O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed 345
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear, "Quick, quick!
I fear it is too late, and I shall die."

But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd,
Larger than human on the frozen hills. 351

He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him like a goad.
Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right 355
The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he
based

His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels —
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon. 360

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms,
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream — by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold: and from them
rose 366

A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes, 370
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, "Place me in the barge."
 So to the barge they came. There those three Queens
 Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
 But she, that rose the tallest of them all 375

And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
 And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,
 And call'd him by his name, complaining loud,
 And dropping bitter tears against a brow
 Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white
 And colorless, and like the wither'd moon 381

Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;
 And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops
 Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls —
 That made his forehead like a rising sun 385

High from the daïs-throne — were parch'd with dust,
 Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
 Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his
 lips.

So like a shatter'd column lay the King;
 Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest, 390
 From spur to plume a star of tournament,
 Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged
 Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere:
 "Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go? 395
 Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?
 For now I see the true old times are dead,
 When every morning brought a noble chance,
 And every chance brought out a noble knight.
 Such times have been not since the light that led 400
 The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
 But now the whole Round Table is dissolved
 Which was an image of the mighty world,

And I, the last, go forth companionless,
 And the days darken round me, and the years, 405
 Among new men, strange faces, other minds."

And slowly answer'd Arthur from the barge:
 "The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
 And God fulfils himself in many ways,
 Lest one good custom should corrupt the world. 410
 Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?
 I have lived my life, and that which I have done
 May He within himself make pure! but thou,
 If thou shouldst never see my face again, 414
 Pray for my soul. (More things are wrought by prayer
 Than this world dreams of.) Wherefore, let thy voice
 Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
 For what are men better than sheep or goats
 That nourish a blind life within the brain,
 If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer 420
 Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
 For so the whole round earth is every way
 Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
 But now farewell. I am going a long way
 With these thou seest — if indeed I go 425
 (For all my mind is clouded with a doubt) —
 To the island-valley of Avilion; *W.C.*
 Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
 Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
 Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard lawns 430
 And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
 Where I will heal me of my grievous wound." *W.C.*

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
 Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
 That, fluting a wild carol ere her death, 435

Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
 With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
 Revolving many memories, till the hull
 Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
 And on the mere the wailing died away. 440

But when that moan had past for evermore,
 The stillness of the dead world's winter dawn
 Amazed him, and he groan'd, "The King is gone."
 And therewithal came on him the weird rhyme,
 "From the great deep to the great deep he goes." 445

Whereas he slowly turn'd and slowly clomb
 The last hard footstep of that iron crag;
 Thence mark'd the black hull moving yet, and cried,
 "He passes to be King among the dead,
 And after healing of his grievous wound 450
 He comes again; but — if he come no more —
 O me, be yon dark Queens in yon black boat,
 Who shriek'd and wail'd, the three whereat we gazed
 On that high day, when, clothed with living light,
 They stood before his throne in silence, friends 455
 Of Arthur, who should help him at his need?"

Then from the dawn it seem'd there came, but faint
 As from beyond the limit of the world,
 Like the last echo born of a great cry,
 Sounds, as if some fair city were one voice 460
 Around a king returning from his wars.

Thereat once more he moved about, and clomb
 Ev'n to the highest he could climb, and saw,
 Straining his eyes beneath an arch of hand,
 Or thought he saw, the speck that bare the King, 465

Down that long water opening on the deep
 Somewhere far off, pass on and on, and go
 From less to less and vanish into light.
 And the new sun rose bringing the new year.



KING ARTHUR'S ROUND TABLE

Now in Winchester Castle. A work of art of doubtful date, 1235-1425.

TO THE QUEEN

O LOYAL to the royal in thyself,
And loyal to thy land, as this to thee —
Bear witness, that rememberable day,
When, pale as yet, and fever-worn, the Prince
Who scarce had pluck'd his flickering life again 5
From halfway down the shadow of the grave,
Past with thee thro' thy people and their love,
And London roll'd one tide of joy thro' all
Her trebled millions, and loud leagues of man
And welcome! witness, too, the silent cry, 10
The prayer of many a race and creed, and clime —
Thunderless lightnings striking under sea
From sunset and sunrise of all thy realm,
And that true North, whereof we lately heard
A strain to shame us “keep you to yourselves; 15
So loyal is too costly! friends — your love
Is but a burthen: loose the bond, and go.”
Is this the tone of empire? here the faith
That made us rulers? this, indeed, her voice
And meaning, whom the roar of Hougoumont 20
Left mightiest of all peoples under heaven?
What shock has fool'd her since, that she should speak
So feebly? wealthier — wealthier — hour by hour!
The voice of Britain, or a sinking land,
Some third-rate isle half-lost among her seas? 25
There rang her voice, when the full city peal'd
Thee and thy Prince! The loyal to their crown
Are loyal to their own far sons, who love
Our ocean-empire with her boundless homes
For ever-broadening England, and her throne 30

In our vast Orient, and one isle, one isle,
 That knows not her own greatness: if she knows
 And dreads it we are fall'n. — But thou, my Queen,
 Not for itself, but thro' thy living love
 For one to whom I made it o'er his grave 35
 Sacred, accept this old imperfect tale,
 New-old, and shadowing Sense at war with Soul
 Rather than that gray king, whose name, a ghost,
 Streams like a cloud, man-shaped, from mountain peak,
 And cleaves to cairn and cromlech still; or him 40
 Of Geoffrey's book, or him of Malleor's, one
 Touch'd by the adulterous finger of a time
 That hover'd between war and wantonness,
 And crownings and dethronements: take withal
 Thy poet's blessing, and his trust that Heaven 45
 Will blow the tempest in the distance back
 From thine and ours: for some are scared, who mark,
 Or wisely or unwisely, signs of storm,
 Waverings of every vane with every wind,
 And wordy trucklings to the transient hour, 50
 And fierce or careless looseners of the faith,
 And Softness breeding scorn of simple life,
 Or Cowardice, the child of lust for gold,
 Or Labor, with a groan and not a voice,
 Or Art with poisonous honey stol'n from France, 55
 And that which knows, but careful for itself,
 And that which knows not, ruling that which knows
 To its own harm: the goal of this great world
 Lies beyond sight: yet — if our slowly-grown
 And crown'd Republic's crowning common-sense, 60
 That saved her many times, not fail — their fears
 Are morning shadows huger than the shapes
 That cast them, not those gloomier which forego
 The darkness of that battle in the West,
 Where all of high and holy dies away. 65

NOTES

In Twelve Books. Twelve books is the number in the two great epics best known to modern readers: Virgil's *Æneid* and Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Twelve was also the number of books planned by Spenser for his *Faerie Queene*, though he completed only six of them, and a little of the seventh.

Flos Regum Arthurus. Arthur, the flower of kings.

DEDICATION

LINE

- 1 **His Memory.** To the memory of Prince Albert, the husband of Queen Victoria. He died in December, 1861. The volume of the Idylls containing *The Coming of Arthur*, *The Holy Grail*, *Pelleas and Ettare*, and *The Passing of Arthur* was published in 1869.
- 12 **Imminent war.** An allusion, probably, to the danger of war, late in 1861, between England and the United States, caused by "the Trent affair." See any history of the United States; for example, Fiske's.
- 35 **The rich dawn of an ampler day.** In reference to the many new discoveries in science, and new ideas of the nineteenth century. Compare *Locksley Hall*.
- 36-7 **Summoner of War and Waste, etc.** Prince Albert had arranged the great International Exposition at London in 1851, and was at work on the second, that of 1862, at the time of his death.
- 47 **Has past.** The subject of this verb is "that star," in line 45.

THE COMING OF ARTHUR

- 1 **Cameliard**, an unidentified region, seemingly in south-east England.
- 5 **Petty king.** Britain was divided into many tribes or

LINE

clans, the "king" of each being no more than a sort of chief.

- 8 **Heathen host.** The Angles and the Saxons, who made invasions and settlements in Britain in the fifth and sixth centuries.
- 13 **Aurelius,** "a descendant of the last Roman general who claimed the purple as an emperor of Britain." — Green, *The Making of England*.
- 32 **Wolf-like men.** Stories of children nourished by wolves, and growing up into "wolf-like men" were common and widespread. Compare the story of Romulus and Remus. See an unabridged dictionary for the term *were-wolves*.
- 34 **Roman legions.** The part of Britain that is now England had been invaded and conquered by Cæsar in the first century, B.C. The Romans maintained their power there, and exacted tribute of the Britons for four or five centuries.
- 36 **Urien,** according to Malory, was a king of North Wales "who made great war upon Leodogrance, king of Cameliard."
- 43 **Uther's son.** According to Malory, Uther Pendragon, a king in southern Britain, fell in love with Igraine, or Ygerne, wife of Gorlois, Duke of Tintagil in Cornwall; made war upon Gorlois, slew him, and married Igraine in the castle of Tintagil, where she had taken refuge. Of this union Arthur was born. In accordance with the old Celtic custom of fosterage, and to save the child's life, he was given over to Merlin immediately after his birth, and given by Merlin to the wife of Sir Ector to be reared. See Tennyson's version of the story in lines 184-236.
- 50 **Kinglihood,** kingship.
- 73 **Anton,** in one of the old stories (not Malory's) is the knight in whose family Arthur is brought up.

LINE

- 96 Pavilions. Tents. To "pitch" a tent is to set it up.
- 102 Shrilling unto blood. Stirring the blood.
- 103 The long-lanced battle, . . . run. That is, the lines of battle rode against each other.
- 105 The King. King Arthur.
- 106 The Powers. The supernatural powers.
- 111-5 This list of kings is borrowed from Malory, I, 10.
- 116-8 One who sees, etc. That is, one who has his sin discovered and proclaimed.
- 119 To stay the brands, etc. To stop fighting.
- 124-5 Warrior whom he loved and honored most. Sir Launcelot. See lines 446-7.
- 127 Liege is an old word, common in poetry, meaning one to whom are due service and allegiance, or faithful loyalty.
- 132 Man's word is God in man. That is, man's word, or promise, is a sacred thing.
- 134 Foughten. This old form of the participle still survives in the word *boughten*, especially in New England.
- 141 Holp, an old form of the verb, like *tell, told; sell, sold*.
- 150 Merlin, the wise man, the magician, appears many times in the Idylls and in the various versions of the Arthurian legends. He had not only great knowledge, but the gifts of prophecy and magic.
- 160 Holpen. See notes on lines 134 and 141.
- 160-2 Note the king's way of telling the old man his knowledge is useless.
- 167 And reason in the chase. The cuckoo lays its eggs in the nests of other birds, to be hatched, after throwing out the eggs of the owners of the nest.
- 177 Be. This is an old use of the verb, still found in many parts of England and New England.
- 183 So. An old use of the word, equivalent to *if*.
- 187 Note the alliteration in this line.
- 191-2 The pronouns refer to Ygerne, not to Bellicent.

LINE

- 194 **Bright dishonor.** A distinction, yet dishonorable.
- 203-4 This is one of the many instances in which Tennyson assigns the taste and morals of his own century to the period of King Arthur. In Malory the knights and ladies are much less sensitive to such improprieties.
- 214-20 Tennyson here supplies a reason for the secret bringing up of Arthur. See note on line 43. See also the story of Arthur's birth in Tennyson's *Guinevere*, lines 282-93.
- 227 **His hour.** Whose hour? Merlin's, or Arthur's?
- 230-3 According to Malory, the true king was to be he who could draw a certain sword from a stone in which it was deeply thrust. All the kings and nobles tried, but only Arthur could withdraw it. The people clamored for him to be their king, and he was crowned by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Compare the story of Siegfried and the sword.
- 252 **Body enow.** Weight enough, power enough.
- 256 **Uther's peerage.** The knights and kings under Uther.
- 257 **Dais.** A low platform on which the king's chair stood.
- 261 **Strait.** Narrow, strict.
- 262 **Knighthed from kneeling.** In the old ceremony the candidate for knighthood knelt before the king, who struck him gently on the shoulder with the flat side of the sword and said, "Arise, Sir John," or whatever name the knight bore. This stroke of the sword admitting to knighthood, was called an *acolade*.
- 266 **Table Round.** The "round table," from which the order of King Arthur and his knights was named, was a custom of the early Britons or Celts. The place nearest the salt was the place of favor, or of honor. If the guests sat at equal distance from the salt, at the center, there could be no quarrels on this point.
- 271-4 "**The cross,**" etc. . . . This passage seems to describe pictures and Christian symbols in stained

LINE

glass. But stained glass was first made long after the date ascribed to King Arthur. Tennyson cares more for beauty of picture than for historical accuracy.

275 **Three fair queens.** Perhaps the same three queens who appear at Arthur's death, and bear him in the barge across the lake. See *The Passing of Arthur*, lines 361, and following. Do they symbolize anything? Perhaps the Christian virtues, Faith, Hope, and Charity. See Tennyson's own comment in the *Introduction*, page 12.

282 **The Lady of the Lake.** Commonly understood to symbolize the Church, as Tennyson uses her. In the original story (see Malory, I, xxii) she is a mystical lady who gives Arthur the magic sword, Excalibur.

288 **Minster.** A cathedral which had its origin in a monastery, of which word *minster* is a corruption.

293 **To walk the waters like our Lord.** So Malory describes her: "They saw a damsel going upon the lake." The comparison is to the miracle told in Matt. xiv, and Mark vi.

298 **Urim.** Flames or lights. (A Hebrew plural, indicated by the termination *im*. Compare the words *seraphim* and *cherubim*.) The *Urim* were worn in the breastplate of the high priest of the Jews. They are thought to have been small figures or jewels, of some mystic or sacred significance. But what they were is not certainly known. At any rate, they fit in well enough with the rest of the mystery of this poem. The word occurs in Ex. xxviii, Lev. viii, and Num. xxvii.

301 **The oldest tongue of all this world.** What this is no one knows. But note the effect of mystery and wonder which the line suggests. Tennyson, of course, means that the words were in Hebrew.

310 **To sift his doubtings.** How would this be expressed in everyday English?

LINE

- 318 **To pass.** To withdraw.
- 322 **Modred's stealthy and treacherous nature** appears elsewhere in the *Idylls: Guinevere*, 10-110; *The Passing of Arthur*, 10-50, 150-70.
- 332 **The dawning of my life.** My infancy.
- 342 **Heath.** The heath or heather is a small, shrubby plant growing in great abundance on the moors and other waste land of Great Britain. It has a small bell-shaped flower, commonly purple, but sometimes pink or white.
- 362 **Shrunk like a fairy changeling.** There was an old belief that fairies sometimes carried off infants and left little elves in their stead. These were called *changelings* and were sometimes known by their old and shriveled appearance.
- 371 **What kind of night does this mean?**
- 372-93 **This story of the coming of the babe Arthur** is an excellent example of the wild yet childlike imagination of the people of the Middle Ages.
- 380 **Full of voices.** There is a likeness between the sound of waves and the murmur of many voices.
- 402-10 **What is the general meaning of Merlin's "riddling triplets"?**
- 407 **Truth or clothed or naked.** Truth told in parables or by symbols or embellished; — truth told barely or simply.
- 410 **From the great deep to the great deep.** From the unknown past into eternity.
- 421 **Again to come.** In Malory, *xxi*, 7, it is said that many thought that Arthur was not dead, and that he would come again.
- 426-43 **Read the king's dream carefully.** What does it mean? What other significant dreams have you read in old stories?
- 431 **The hind fell, the herd was driven:** The peasants were killed, and their cattle driven away as plunder.

LINE

- 450 This, the first of the *Idylls*, and *Gareth and Lynette*, the second in the series, are laid in the spring of the year. The last two, *Guinevere* and *The Passing of Arthur* are in the winter, the end of the year. See *Introduction*, p. 15.
- 452 To whom arrived. To whom, when she arrived, the king was married by Dubric, etc.
- 460 White with May. A kind of hawthorn, with a profuse white bloom, called the may.
- 476 Great lords from Rome, come to demand their annual tribute of the Britons. See the answer that they get from Arthur, lines 506-13.
- 481-501 In this lyric notice how often Tennyson has used repetition with slight variations. Note also the martial clang and ring that the song has; the harsh and rugged music of it.
- 504 Rome, the slow-fading mistress of the world. By the sixth or seventh century Rome, weakened by the invasions of the barbarians from the North, was rapidly losing her great power.
- 508 The old order changeth, etc. This line occurs again near the end of *The Passing of Arthur*, line 408. It is an idea that Tennyson has expressed in many places.
- 513 Strove with Rome. Was at enmity, but not at war, with Rome.
- 514-5 For a space, etc. This is a forecast of the trouble and disunion that later interfere with Arthur's work, and finally destroy both Round Table and kingdom.
- 516-8 Arthur's achievement was to unify the land into one kingdom by making the petty kings his vassals; to drive back the heathen (the Teutonic invaders); to purge the land of robbers and wild beasts; and to uphold order, law, and religion.

GARETH AND LYNETTE

Gareth and Lynette, though it follows *The Coming of Arthur* in the series of the Idylls, was not written until the end, in 1872.

LINE

- 18 **Heaven yield her. Heaven reward her.**
- 46 **Book of Hours.** A book of devotions, with prayers for the hours of the day.
- 66 **Excalibur.** Arthur's sword. The swords of heroes were often given individual names.
- 89 **Frights.** Explain the construction here.
- 94 **Prone year.** Declining life.
- 105 **Good lack.** Alas.
- 115-118 Commit to memory these well-known lines.
- 128 Recall the doubts concerning Arthur's birth as told in *The Coming of Arthur*.
- 133-4 Where is this described?
- 147 Point out the play on words here.
- 174 Note the imaginative quality in this line.
- 184-93 The city is made to seem mysterious here and later.
- 202 **Glamour.** Enchantment. Look up the origin of this word in the dictionary.
- 212 **The Lady of the Lake.** A mythical personage, a guardian to Arthur.
- 219 **The sacred fish.** An emblem of the Church, said to be derived from the accidental fact that the initials of the Greek words for Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior, happened to form the Greek word meaning fish. Ask your teacher to write out the Greek for you.
- 229 **Dragon-boughts.** A bought is a loop or curve.
- 254-74 Study this passage carefully. The city "built to music" is an old Greek idea. Troy was fabled to have taken form under Apollo's music, and the wall around Thebes rose to Amphion's lyre.

LINE

For the idea in the last lines, remember that Camelot was a city of ideals, that ideals are never perfectly realized, that they are ever growing, and that they endure forever.

- 298 **Did their days in stone.** Had the record of their deeds carved in stone.
- 355 **Wreak.** Avenge.
- 366 **Had doom'd.** Subjunctive form; compare the verb in the next line.
- 380 **Charlock.** Wild mustard. What color is it?
- 405 **Blazon'd.** Drawn in colors.
- 422 **In cloth of lead.** Lead was used for coffins.
- 465 **Sir Fair-hands.** In Malory, Kay gives Gareth the nickname of Beau-Mains.
- 476 **Broach.** A spit, a sharp iron rod on which the meat was held while roasting.
- 529 **News.** Note the old plural form. Compare the French word for news, *nouvelles*.
- 607 **A holy life.** The life of a nun or monk.
- 657 **Counter to.** Opposite.
- 665 **A maiden shield.** A shield undecorated with exploits.
- 693 **Hath past his time.** Is falling into dotage.
- 729 **Agaric.** Mushroom. **Holt.** Grove or orchard.
- 784-5 Note the antithetic use of words here and in 787-8.
- 873 **Ruth.** Pity. From what verb is the noun derived?
- 881-2 To what is the allusion?
- 972 **Unhappiness.** Mishap, accident.
- 1002-3 What flower is meant?
- 1012 **Vizoring up.** Putting up the vizor of his helmet.
- 1023-5 Note the peculiar involved construction here, equivalent to, He fought no more and yielded.
- 1101-4 Here we have a hint of the allegory further described in lines 1167-79.
- 1130 Look back over the lyrics that Lynette has sung, and see how they indicate her change of view toward Gareth.

LINE

1281 **Arthur's Harp.** In *The Last Tournament* there is a passage, "the star we call the harp of Arthur up in Heaven."

1318 **Instant.** Urgent, impressive.

1373 Going back to the allegory in 1167-79, what do you make of Tennyson's meaning here? If a man has won the battles for good in the morning, the noon, and the evening of his life, what will death be to him? A thing to be feared, or the entrance to a new and beautiful life? Compare lines 1388-90.

1392-4 Which ending would have pleased you best?

As for the place of this Idyll in the series, note the conflict between the better and the worse ideals, first between Gareth and his mother, then between Gareth and Lynette. Which prevails? What evidences are there at the Court that the good influences are in control?

What passages of striking beauty can you find? Do you think of Lynette as a medieval or a modern girl? Does Gareth seem near or remote?

LANCELOT AND ELAINE

This Idyll shows openly the growing evil in the Court of Arthur. The indirect cause of Elaine's death is Lancelot's guilty love of Guinevere. It is not allegorical, like *Gareth and Lynette*; but a romantic story of a passion which, though pure and innocent, transcends ordinary bounds. It is therefore not to be read for an ethical lesson, but for its beauty and its pathos.

Read first *The Lady of Shalott*, Tennyson's early version of the story, wherein he pictures the heroine as a type of the artistic imagination weaving into the web the figures of the world as she sees them in the mirror (her imagination).

LINE

- 2 Astolat. Used in Malory. Compare Shalott.
- 44 Lichen'd. Covered with dry moss.
- 53 Shingly scaur. Rock covered with gravel (or shingle).
- 59 Divinely. By divine direction. Providentially.
- 76 This world's hugest. London.
- 91 The tale. The number.
- 94 Lets. Hinders, keeps.
- 118 Devoir. Duty; a French word.
- 162 Downs. Rolling hills of thin soil and sparse vegetation.
- 218 An if. *An* alone is also used for *if*.
- 272 Reft. Deprived.
- 293 Our Lady's Head. An image of the Virgin Mary.
- 297 The White Horse was a symbol of the Saxons. On a hillside in Berkshire there may still be seen the image of a huge white horse made by uncovering the chalky rock of the hill. It is said to have been made by King Alfred in memory of a victory over the Danes.
- 301 Heathen. The Saxons and Danes became Christians later than the British.
- 325 To make him cheer. To show him kindness.
- 331-4 Explain these lines.
- 338 Rathe. Early. *Rather* is the comparative degree.
- 431 Samite. A kind of heavy silk.
- 446 Crescent. Growing, increasing in power.
- 453 Held the lists. Awaited the attack. The *lists* was the enclosure within which the combat was fought.
- 502 Diamond me, etc. Note here and in line 505 the noun as verb. What do these lines mean?
- 545 Bring us, etc. Bring us news of where he is.
- 652-3 To "slip" the falcon was to release it from the holding-strings, that it might bring down the game in its flight.
- 713 A famous line, often quoted.
- 728 Marr'd her friend's aim, etc. Did not betray her emotion, as her friend had expected.

LINE

- 766 Wit ye well. Know you well.
- 870-2 Another well-known passage. Explain it.
- 905 The victim's flowers. An animal sacrificed at the altar was thus bedecked.
- 923 Is yours. Is your doing, is due to your kindness.
- 939 Quit. Requite, repay.
- 999 Make. Compose poetry. Our word *poet* is from a Greek word meaning *maker*.
- 1000-11 Note the rhyme arrangement.
- 1015-6. A common belief. In Ireland such a spirit is called a Banshee.
- 1092 The ghostly man. The priest.
- 1233-1410 Compare with this account the brief and simple ending of *The Lady of Shalott*.
- 1418 Die a holy man. The end of Lancelot's life was spent in prayer and penance in a monastery.

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR

The *Passing of Arthur* was first published, in its present form, in the volume with *The Coming of Arthur*, in 1869. It is an enlargement, with some changes, of the *Morte d'Arthur*, published in 1842 in the volume *English Idylls*. The main part of the story of this Idyll is taken from Malory, XXI, v. This last division of Malory's account is called *La Morte d'Arthur*, or *The Death of Arthur*.

- 1-5 That story: meaning, This is that story, etc.
- 3 The man was no more than a voice. Meaning?
- 6 On their march, etc. This Idyll opens at a time when the Round Table is dissolved, and war has broken out. A part of the knights are still faithful to the king, and the rest, led by Modred and Lancelot, are at war with King Arthur.
- 22 Simple. Trustful, believing.

LINE

- 26 Reels back into the beast. Becomes fierce and degraded again. Why *reels*?
- 33 Shrilling. Tennyson seems to like the weird effect of this word. See how many times you find it, either as verb or adjective, in this poem. Hollow all delight! All joy is empty and fleeting.
- 38-40 Wild birds that change their season, etc. Some of the migratory birds that go north in spring and south in autumn fly high, and travel day and night. Read Bryant's poem, *To a Waterfowl*.
- 42 Moonlit haze among the hills. Do you get the picture?
- 44-5 Wife and Child, etc. In olden times the women and children of the conquered were often carried off into slavery by the victors.
- 52 Harmless glamour of the field. The imaginary beings in nature.
- 68-70 These are the events told of in *The Coming of Arthur*.
- 77 In reference to Queen Guinevere, who had taken refuge in the convent at Almesbury, and to whom Arthur had there said good-bye. See the Idyll, *Guinevere*, lines 410 ff.
- 78 Folded in the passes of the world. Closed the way as by a mist or darkness.
- 81 Lyonesse. A district supposed to lie between Cornwall and the Scilly Islands, and now submerged.
- 82-7 A land made by volcanic action. Note the boldness of imagination in this picture.
- 87 The phantom circle. The dim line of the horizon, between sea and sky.
- 90-1 The shortest day of the year. As the events of the early days of Arthur's reign have spring as their setting, so his death has the end of the year and a winter landscape for its appropriate background.

LINE

- 94 **Dim, weird battle.** What things in this whole paragraph, lines 79-118, make the scene *dim* and *weird*?
- 108-10 Read these lines aloud, and note how they suggest the shock and crash of fighting.
- 113-7 Does Tennyson here make war seem glorious? Or is it made to seem bestial?
- 119 **Or thro' death, or, etc.** Either through death or, etc.
- 121 **Seething.** Surging and chafing, as if boiling.
- 127 **No man was moving there.** Is this forceful? Why?
- 129 *ff.* Remember that Arthur's army had overtaken the enemy on the coast, and fought them there; and then "with the wind the tide rose," and so flowed in among the dead.
- 133 **Once had fought with Rome.** A reminder of the days in which they fought together against a foreign enemy.
- 134-5 What do these lines suggest? The ceaseless movement and roar of the sea?
- 139 **This great voice, etc.** The roaring waves that beat upon the land and wear it down.
- 151-2 **But (he) who hates thee, and who
Brought the heathen back among us.**
Made allies of the heathen (the Saxons) in his war against Arthur.
- 154 **My house hath been my doom.** Modred was Arthur's half-brother. He and Queen Guinevere were the two that had most injured the king.
- 169 These first lines, (1-169), were added in 1869 to the first version of the Idyll, the *Morte d'Arthur* of 1842. It is not quite clear how the single combat, just told of, comes in. Is it in a pause in the battle? But all was quiet; see lines 127-31.
- 170 In the *Introduction* to this poem, in the 1842 version, the poem is supposed to be read aloud by the poet to a group of friends. Notice how often, as in 171-2, the lines have a deep, sonorous quality.

- 172 The name "*King Arthur's Table*," or "seat," has been applied to a hill near Tintagil, in Cornwall.
- 177 Chancel. The inclosed part of the church in which the altar stands. Notice the beautiful and romantic scene in lines 177-80.
- 198-9 Where have you read these lines before?
- 205 The middle mere. The middle of the lake.
- 206 Lightly. Quickly.
- 211 Hest. Behest, command.
- 213-9 Note the weird beauty of this picture, and how, in the last two lines, we get a feeling of the change in both sound and scene.
- 220-30. Note the richness and beauty of these lines.
- 228 This way and that dividing the swift mind. Students who know Latin may find that this line is a translation of *Æneid*, iv, 285, which Virgil had borrowed from Homer's *Iliad*, i, 188-9. Tennyson greatly admired Virgil, and wrote a beautiful-poem *To Virgil* in praise of him.
- 238-9. Test the sound of these lines. Does it suggest the things described?
- 252 The dewy pebbles. The gems in the hilt.
- 254 Chased. Wrought, ornamented.
- 256 *ff.* Why does Sir Bedivere argue these points with himself?
- 276 Winning reverence by the wonder and interest of the tale he told.
- 278 Clouded with his own conceit. Blinded by the idea that had come to him.
- 289 Authority forgets a dying king. What does this fine line mean? Explain the rest of the sentence.
- 293 Offices. Services, duties.
- 304-15 Another of those rich and brilliant passages. The northern moon. *Aurora borealis* or "northern lights."
- 350-1 Get the picture in these lines clearly.
- 354-60 Read these lines aloud, clearly and vigorously.

LINE

Note again the rugged harshness and energy of the passage sliding off, at the end, into the smoother beauty of the last two lines.

- 367 The tingling stars. Twinkling, trembling as though affected by the agony of the cry. The same idea is suggested in *shivered*.
- 369-71 What is the feeling inspired by these lines?
- 381 Why *withered* moon?
- 382 The springing east. The early dawn.
- 383 Greaves and cuisses. Armor for the legs: greaves below the knee, cuisses above.
- 384 Onset. Conflict.
- 398 Chance. Happening.
- 400-1 The Star of Bethlehem that guided the Wise Men of the East to where the infant Jesus lay. See Matt. II.
- 408-10 New customs, new standards and ideals, come to take the place of the old; and God works out his purposes in many ways. Even a good plan may come to be misused, and a good institution grow corrupt.
- 422-3 Explain these lines.
- 427 Avilion (or Avalon) is, in Celtic legend, and as used by Tennyson, *The Land of the Blest*, a sort of earthly paradise in the western sea, like the Greek Hesperides. Not only Arthur but other heroes, like Ogier the Dane, were said to have been carried there after death. It is often called *The Vale of Avalon*.
- 435 The belief that the swan sings a beautiful song just before death was old and widespread. Hence the phrase, "swan song," for last effort.
- 442 The dead world's winter dawn. Note how this scene fits the ending of the story of Arthur.
- 457-61 What is hinted in this passage?
- 469 Does this line give a note of hope? Compare 408-10.

DEDICATION TO THE QUEEN

LINE

This dedication to the Queen was first added in the general edition of the Poems in 1872-73.

- 3 **That memorable day.** The day of public thanksgiving, in February, 1872, for the recovery of the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) from a severe illness.
- 12 **Thunderless lightnings, etc.** Messages by cable.
- 14 **That true North, etc.** In reference to Canada, and a sentiment that was heard for a time in England that Canada should be separated from England.
- 20 **The roar of Hougoumont.** The battle of Waterloo. The château of that name was on the battlefield.
- 21 **Left mightiest, etc.** After the victory at Waterloo England was unquestionably the greatest power in the world.
- 35 **For one to whom I made it.** See the *Dedication* at the beginning of the *Idylls* in this volume.
- 37 **Shadowing Sense at war with Soul.** Picturing or reflecting the conflict between evil and good, between the lower and the higher ideals. This line is the keynote to the meaning of the *Idylls* as a whole. See *Introduction*, page 13.
- 41-2 In reference to the different qualities given to the stories in the different versions. See *Introduction*, pages 7-9.
- 55 **Poisonous honey stol'n from France.** Art and literature from France, which seemed to the poet to be unwholesome or immoral. Tennyson has more than once showed his lack of belief in things French or sympathy with them.

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR STUDY

DEDICATION TO THE IDYLLS

1. To whom is this dedication addressed? What is a dedication of a book for? Have you ever seen one before? Sometimes a very brief dedication is printed on one of the pages of a book, between the title-page and the first page of the preface.

2. Explain the meaning of lines 2 and 3.

3. Look up the rest of the quotation begun in line 7. You will find it in *Guinevere*, lines 464-480. It is a famous expression of the finest ideals of chivalry.

4. What high qualities does Tennyson ascribe to Prince Albert? Commit to memory lines 24-27. Explain the meaning of lines 27-29; of lines 30-33. See in the Notes the explanation of line 35.

5. Does this *Dedication* seem extravagant in its adulation of royalty?

THE COMING OF ARTHUR

1. Note how the story is begun. The first paragraph tells who Guinevere was. The second paragraph begins the account of the state of the country before Arthur came, and the fourth tells how Leodogran summoned Arthur to help him. The fifth paragraph tells of Arthur's love for Guinevere; the fourth and sixth tell of the doubts about Arthur's right to be king. These two themes, introduced side by side, are the main themes of this Idyll.

2. What was the state of the country before Arthur triumphed? What troubles and what enemies were there? Why were the Roman legions "groaned for"?

3. Who was King Uther, and why did it matter whether Arthur was or was not his son?

4. What is the "golden symbol" referred to in line 50?

5. Read aloud lines 94-123, to feel the vigor and spirit in this account of the battle.

6. Lines 124-133 give the vows of friendship between Arthur and Lancelot. Do you know how this friendship came later to be broken? If so, do you see the significance of introducing it here?

7. Why does Leodogran hesitate about giving his daughter to King Arthur? How does he seek to resolve his doubts? Explain lines 160-162.

8. Why the different opinions of Arthur's worth, in lines 178-182?

9. Sir Bedivere, commonly called "the bold Sir Bedivere," gives the true account of Arthur's birth. It is he who is with Arthur at his death: see *The Passing of Arthur*. See in the Notes the explanations of various things in Bedivere's story, lines 177-236.

10. Explain lines 245-6; line 247; line 252.

11. What is meant by "the savage yells of Uther's peerage," lines 255-6?

12. What evidence does Bellicent give of Arthur's moral force? See lines 259-278. Why did the knights have "a momentary likeness of the King"? What visions appeared? Read lines 279-293 aloud, the better to appreciate the rhythm of the verse.

13. What doubt still remains in Leodogran's mind? Does his doubt seem reasonable, or does Tennyson merely make him doubt further for the sake of bringing out the story of Arthur?

14. Note the traits of Bellicent's two sons: how are they shown?

15. What memory is indicated in lines 331-335?

16. Read aloud, for the rhythm and the beauty of de-

scription, Bellicent's memories of her childhood with her brother, lines 338-357.

17. How does her account of the birth of Arthur, which she received from old Bleys, the magician, differ from Bedivere's account? Which account seems the more credible? Would Leodogran have doubted a story merely because it was marvelous? Would you?

18. How had Merlin answered her questions? What do his "riddling triplets" mean?

19. Read aloud lines 411-423. Note how the verse rises in dignity as the Queen rises into prophecy of the coming fame of Arthur.

20. What finally banishes Leodogran's doubts? Is it in keeping with the time that he should think his dream significant and trustworthy? What other instances of belief in dreams can you recall? Select some of the finest lines in this dream.

21. Select the most beautiful lines in this picture of Arthur's marriage, lines 449-474. Compare with this passage Tennyson's early short poem, *Sir Lancelot and Queen Guinevere*.

22. What former passage in this Idyll do lines 463-4 recall to you?

23. Read aloud the triumphant battle-song of the knights, lines 481-501. Note the use of repetition; of harsh battle-like sounds; and the rough, staccato effects of the rhythm.

24. What is the meaning of the appearance here of the messengers from Rome and the way they are received?

25. How does the last scene in this Idyll bring our minds round to the beginning?

GARETH AND LYNETTE

1. Who was Gareth? Why did he remain at home?
2. What did he want to do? What kind of life did he wish to lead? Find passages that justify your answer.
3. Explain the parable in lines 98-114.
4. Quote lines 115-8, beginning "Man am I grown."
5. By what arguments does Gareth's mother try to dissuade him?
6. How did he win his mother's consent? What condition did she impose? Why?
7. Describe his departure, and his arrival at Camelot.
8. What were his first impressions of the city? Describe his meeting with Merlin.
9. Explain lines 254-274. Give, if you can, some parallel or instance of this truth from modern life.
10. What functions of King Arthur's Court does Gareth first see? What impressions of the King do they give you?
11. How is Gareth received by the King? Does any one suspect his disguise?
12. How is he treated by his master, Sir Kay? How by Lancelot?
13. How did he spend his time? How did he differ from his fellows?
14. What is his first quest?
15. What sort of girl does Lynette seem to be? How does she treat Gareth? Commit to memory lines 574-7.
16. What adventures does Gareth meet on the way? How does he acquit himself?
17. What allegory had been assumed in the armor of the men whom Gareth was to fight? See lines 1166 ff.
18. What is implied in the fact that the second combat is harder than the first, and the third fiercer still? See lines 1100-4.

19. What do the lyrics that Lynette sings mean? Show how they form a real part of the story.

20. What does the death's-head knight prove to be? What does this mean?

21. Where else have you read a description like that of the tournament in lines 1323-1345?

22. What does "fleshless laughter" (line 1348) mean?

23. How do you like the ending of the story?

24. What does the poem as a whole mean to you?

LANCELOT AND ELAINE

1. Note how the story opens in the middle, — *in medias res*, as it is called. Where does the author go back to the beginning?

2. What things are told about Elaine in the first paragraph?

3. Give an account of the origin of the "diamond jousts."

4. What was Lancelot's purpose in these tourneys? How did he happen to go unknown to this last one?

5. What does Guinevere say of Arthur? What impression has he made on you?

6. Who were in the household of Astolat? How do they receive Lancelot? Do they know who he is? What sort of face and manner had he?

7. Why does Lancelot wear Elaine's favor? Does any vestige of this old custom of chivalry still survive?

8. Compare the tournament here (lines 426-522) with that in *Ivanhoe*.

9. Whom does Arthur send in search of Lancelot? How does he perform his mission? How does Arthur rebuke him?

10. What indications of Guinevere's jealousy do you find?

11. What things in Elaine's life, her circumstances, and her character, seem to make her declaration of love less bold and unmaidenly than it might be in another?

12. Comment upon Lancelot's attitude towards her?

13. Why does she wish to be carried to Camelot after her death?

14. What do the people there think and say of her?

15. What things in the story put it in the land of pure romance?

16. How does this Idyll show the growing force of evil at the Court?

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR

1. The earlier form of this Idyll was published by Tenyson in 1842, under the title *Morte d'Arthur*. (See the Notes.) To this earlier version was prefixed the following Introduction:

THE EPIC

AT Francis Allen's on the Christmas-eve, —
 The game of forfeits done — the girls all kiss'd
 Beneath the sacred bush and past away —
 The parson Holmes, the poet Everard Hall,
 The host, and I sat round the wassail-bowl,
 Then half-way ebb'd: and there we held a talk,
 How all the old honor had from Christmas gone,
 Or gone, or dwindled down to some odd games
 In some odd nooks like this; till I, tired out
 With cutting eights that day upon the pond,
 Where, three times slipping from the outer edge,
 I bump'd the ice into three several stars,
 Fell in a doze; and half awake I heard
 The parson taking wide and wider sweeps,
 Now harping on the church-commissioners,
 Now hawking at Geology and schism;
 Until I woke, and found him settled down
 Upon the general decay of faith
 Right thro' the world, "at home was little left,
 And none abroad: there was no anchor, none,
 To hold by." Francis, laughing, clapt his hand
 On Everard's shoulder, with "I hold by him."
 "And I," quoth Everard, "by the wassail-bowl."
 "Why yes," I said, "we knew your gift that way
 At college; but another which you had,
 I mean of verse (for so we held it then),
 What came of that?" "You know," said Frank, "he burnt
 His epic, his King Arthur, some twelve books" —
 And then to me demanding why? "Oh, sir,
 He thought that nothing new was said, or else
 Something so said 't was nothing — that a truth
 Looks freshest in the fashion of the day:

God knows: he has a mint of reasons: ask.
 It pleased *me* well enough." "Nay, nay," said Hall,
 "Why take the style of those heroic times?
 For nature brings not back the Mastodon,
 Nor we those times; and why should any man
 Remodel models? these twelve books of mine
 Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-worth,
 Mere chaff and draff, much better burnt." "But I,"
 Said Francis, "pick'd the eleventh from this hearth
 And have it: keep a thing, its use will come.
 I hoard it as a sugar-plum for Holmes."
 He laugh'd, and I, tho' sleepy, like a horse
 That hears the corn-bin open, prick'd my ears;
 For I remember'd Everard's college fame
 When we were Freshmen: then at my request
 He brought it; and the poet little urged,
 But with some prelude of disparagement,
 Read, mouthing out his hollow oes and aes,
 Deep-chested music, and to this result.

2. Sir Bedivere, "first made and latest left of all the knights," figures in *The Coming of Arthur*. Do you remember how?

3. Is the first paragraph (lines 1-5) a sentence? Or is it more like a title, or description, of what follows?

4. Is the use of *for*, line 6, like our use of it to-day? Could it be omitted here?

5. In lines 9-28, what is it that Arthur despairs of? What hopes had he entertained that have failed him? Explain lines 9-11.

6. Is there anything in the vision of Gawain's ghost that reminds you of Gawain living?

7. Explain the comparison in lines 38-40.

8. What lines in this paragraph (lines 29-49) give the sense of mystery or terror?

9. Why does the King feel such deep dejection?

10. Study the description beginning "the sunset bound of Lyonesse." What was this country like?

11. What time of year is it? What is the season of the year at the end of *The Coming of Arthur*? What things in the scene and the season are in harmony with the King's dejection?

12. Read aloud lines 79-117. Select lines that are striking either for their rhythm or the picture they present.

Do such lines as 82, 85, 86, 92, 94, 95, move rapidly or slowly? What is the meaning of 82-3, 84, 87, 90-1? Note the striking effects in the description of the battle: the sense of confusion in the mist and darkness, the thoughts and memories that come to the fighters, the impression of crash and struggle and crude violence, the base passions and foul speech, the suffering and the grief. Taken as a whole, does this passage make war seem heroic or horrible? Read again lines 106 to 117, and notice the effect of the sound: how the passage gives the shock and crash of the fight, and the effect, at the end, of the cessation of sound and struggle.

13. In lines 120-1, note the effect of the *s* sounds: what are they intended to resemble?

14. What is the picture we get of the waves rising over the battlefield? See lines 127-135. Does this again make war seem heroic?

15. Read line 139. Note how slowly and laboringly it moves. What does this suggest to you? Compare the movement of it with that of line 141. What does line 140 mean?

16. Note in the next five lines how Arthur seems to feel the emptiness of all his work, the unreality of himself and of everything. How does Bedivere try to cheer him?

17. In what sense does the King mean, "My house hath been my doom," line 154?

18. What is Arthur's last deed before he falls?

19. With line 170 begins the first-published part of the *Idylls*. Note the sonorous, rolling quality of the opening. What is the scene pictured here? What feelings does it stir in you?

20. What things does Arthur recall of the golden days in Camelot? What story of Excalibur did you read in the first *Idyll*? What command does the King give Bedivere?

21. Read aloud lines 213-219. Which seem best to you? Which, if any, suggest the idea by their sound? This whole

passage, like lines 170-180, and many others in this Idyll, is what is called *romantic*; do you know what that means? If not, consult a dictionary, your teacher, or any other authorities you can.

22. In lines 220-233, which lines excel in giving a picture? Which in the effect of sound?

23. How does the King know that Bedivere¹ deceived him? How does he rebuke him? How does Bedivere the second time justify to himself his disobedience?

24. Note lines 273-4. Tennyson himself thought these lines were very good. Can you see why? Would you have selected them as fine poetry?

25. Explain the meaning of lines 275-277; of line 278.

26. How does Arthur's second rebuke differ from his first? Explain line 289. How does Bedivere this time make sure of obedience? What happens when he flings the sword? What lines in the description would you select as finest? Read aloud lines 301-315. What lines seem, in their movement, swift or slow, to suit the action?

27. Read aloud lines 344-360. Point out in them some of the qualities you have already had called to your attention in other lines; the romantic quality of the scene, the way the lines express the idea not only by what they say but by their sound and movement, and especially the fine transition or change in the last seven. Select the lines that you think most impressive.

28. Read aloud lines 361-371. Comment upon them as upon the preceding passage. What are some of the most suggestive words in these lines?

29. What or who do you suppose the three queens were? See the *Introduction*, page 12.

30. Lines 408-410 are among the best known in all Tennyson's poetry. What do they mean? How do they apply to Arthur's work, and to the work of other leaders that came after? Can you think of some order or system that is now changing, "yielding place to new"? Or of some

“good custom” no longer good for the world? Commit these lines to memory.

31. Commit to memory also lines 418-423. What do they mean?

32. What was Avilion? Compare it with the Islands of the Blest, or the Garden of the Hesperides, in Greek mythology.

33. Read the last two paragraphs aloud. What do the last two lines suggest? Compare lines 408-410.

34. Review in your mind the four Idylls in this volume: What were Arthur's hopes and plans in the beginning? What work did he set himself to do? What interfered with his success and finally destroyed his kingdom? Which of his friends were false, which true? Does the conflict of right and wrong, this account of “Sense at war with Soul,” as Tennyson phrased it, which runs through the whole story, end in victory for the evil, or is it implied that good will triumph in the end?

35. Or, does the chivalric and romantic part of the story interest you more than the moral of the stories? If so, what characters, what actions, what scenes can you recall? What pictures have you hung up in the gallery of your memory? Can you call before your mind, for instance, the mythical coming of Arthur on a wave of the sea and his mythical departure in the boat with the three black-robed queens? Or the picture of Gareth approaching Camelot? Or Elaine's body steered up the river into the city? Or the marriage of Arthur, with the mailed warriors around him shouting their battle-song? Or the ruined shrine, the place of tombs, the dim and misty night of midwinter when Arthur lay dying? What other pictures can you recall?

36. Or, if you take pleasure in things well said, what lines have stuck in your memory? What phrases give you pleasure by coming back to you? What things would you like to have been able to say as well?

Readers of the *Idylls* should know also these poems of Tennyson's:—

SIR GALAHAD

My good blade carves the casques
of men,

My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of
ten,

Because my heart is pure.
The shattering trumpet shrilleth
high,

The hard brands shiver on the
steel,

The splinter'd spear-shafts crack
and fly,

The horse and rider reel ;
They reel, they roll in clanging
lists,

And when the tide of combat
stands,

Perfume and flowers fall in
showers,

That lightly rain from ladies'
hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies
bend

On whom their favors fall!
For them I battle till the end,

To save from shame and thrall ;
But all my heart is drawn
above,

My knees are bow'd in crypt
and shrine ;

I never felt the kiss of love,
Nor maiden's hand in mine.

More bounteous aspects on me
beam,

Me mightier transports move
and thrill ;

So keep I fair thro' faith and
prayer

A virgin heart in work and
will.

When down the stormy crescent
goes,

A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest
glows.

I hear a noise of hymns.
Then by some secret shrine I ride ;

I hear a voice, but none are
there ;

The stalls are void, the doors are
wide,

The tapers burning fair.
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,

The silver vessels sparkle clean,
The shrill bell rings, the censer
swings,

And solemn chants resound be-
tween.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-
meres

I find a magic bark ;
I leap on board ; no helmsman
steers ;

I float till all is dark.
A gentle sound, an awful light !

Three angels bear the Holy
Grail :

With folded feet, in stoles of
white,

On sleeping wings they sail.
Ah, blessed vision ! blood of God !

My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides the glory
slides,

And star-like mingles with the
stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
Thro' dreaming towns I go,

The cock crows ere the Christmas
morn,

The streets are dumb with snow.

The tempest crackles on the
leads,

And, ringing, springs from brand
and mail;

But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
And gilds the driving hail.

I leave the plain, I climb the
height;

No branchy thicket shelter
yields;

But blessed forms in whistling
storms

Fly o'er waste fens and windy
fields.

A maiden knight — to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear;

I yearn to breathe the airs of
heaven

That often meet me here.

I muse on joy that will not cease,
Pure spaces clothed in living
beams,

Pure lilies of eternal peace,

Whose odors haunt my dreams;

And, stricken by an angel's hand,

This mortal armor that I wear,

This weight and size, this heart
and eyes,

Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest
air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
And thro' the mountain-walls

A rolling organ-harmony

Swells up, and shakes and falls.

Then move the trees, the copses
nod,

Wings flutter, voices hover
clear:

"O just and faithful knight of
God!

Ride on! the prize is near."

So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;
By bridge and ford, by park and

pale,

All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the Holy Grail.

SIR LAUNCELOT AND QUEEN GUINEVERE

A FRAGMENT

LIKE souls that balance joy and
pain,

With tears and smiles from heaven
again

The maiden Spring upon the plain
Came in a sunlit fall of rain.

In crystal vapor everywhere

Blue isles of heaven laugh'd be-
tween,

And far, in forest-deeps unseen,
The topmost elm-tree gather'd
green

From draughts of balmy air.

Sometimes the linnet piped his
song:

Sometimes the throstle whistled
strong:

Sometimes the sparrowhawk, wheel'd
along,

Hush'd all the groves from fear of
wrong:

By grassy capes with fuller
sound

In curves the yellowing river ran,
And drooping chestnut-buds be-
gan

To spread into the perfect fan,
Above the teeming ground.

Then, in the boyhood of the year,
Sir Launcelot and Queen Guine-
vere

Rode thro' the coverts of the
deer,

With blissful treble ringing clear.

She seem'd a part of joyous
Spring:

Spring:

A gown of grass-green silk she wore,
 Buckled with golden clasps before;
 A light-green tuft of plumes she bore
 Closed in a golden ring.

Now on some twisted ivy-net,
 Now by some tinkling rivulet,
 In mosses mixt with violet
 Her cream-white mule his pastern set;
 And fleetier now she skimm'd
 the plains
 Than she whose elfin prancer
 springs
 By night to eery warblings,
 When all the glimmering moor
 land rings
 With jingling bridle-reins.

As she fled fast thro' sun and shade,
 The happy winds upon her play'd,
 Blowing the ringlet from the braid.
 She look'd so lovely, as she sway'd
 The rein with dainty finger-tips,
 A man had given all other bliss,
 And all his worldly worth for this,
 To waste his whole heart in one kiss
 Upon her perfect lips.

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

PART I

ON either side the river lie
 Long fields of barley and of rye,
 That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
 And thro' the field the road runs
 by
 To many-tower'd Camelot;

And up and down the people go,
 Gazing where the lilies blow
 Round an island there below,
 The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
 Little breezes dusk and shiver
 Thro' the wave that runs forever
 By the island in the river
 Flowing down to Camelot.
 Four gray walls, and four gray
 towers,
 Overlook a space of flowers,
 And the silent isle imbowers
 The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,
 Slide the heavy barges trail'd
 By slow horses; and unhail'd
 The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd
 Skimming down to Camelot:
 But who hath seen her wave her
 hand?
 Or at the casement seen her stand?
 Or is she known in all the land,
 The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
 In among the bearded barley,
 Hear a song that echoes cheerly,
 From the river winding clearly,
 Down to tower'd Camelot;
 And by the moon the reaper
 weary,
 Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
 Listening, whispers "'Tis the fairy
 Lady of Shalott."

PART II

THERE she weaves by night and day
 A magic web with colors gay.
 She has heard a whisper say,
 A curse is on her if she stay
 To look down to Camelot.

She knows not what the curse may
 be,
 And so she weaveth steadily,
 And little other care hath she,
 The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear
 That hangs before her all the year,
 Shadows of the world appear.
 There she sees the highway near
 Winding down to Camelot;
 There the river eddy whirls,
 And there the surly village-churls,
 And the red cloaks of market girls,
 Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
 An abbot on an ambling pad,
 Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
 Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,
 Goes by to tower'd Camelot;
 And sometimes thro' the mirror
 blue
 The knights come riding two and
 two:
 She hath no loyal knight and
 true,
 The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
 To weave the mirror's magic
 sights,
 For often thro' the silent nights
 A funeral, with plumes and lights
 And music, went to Camelot;
 Or when the moon was overhead,
 Came two young lovers lately
 wed;
 "I am half sick of shadows," said
 The Lady of Shalott.

PART III

A BOW-SHOT from her bower-
 eaves,
 He rode between the barley-
 sheaves,

The sun came dazling thro' the
 leaves
 And flamed upon the brazen
 greaves
 Of bold Sir Lancelot.
 A red-cross knight forever kneel'd
 To a lady in his shield,
 That sparkled on the yellow field,
 Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
 Like to some branch of stars we see
 Hung in the golden Galaxy.
 The bridle bells rang merrily
 As he rode down to Camelot;
 And from his blazon'd baldric
 slung
 A mighty silver bugle hung,
 And as he rode his armor rung,
 Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
 Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-
 leather,
 The helmet and the helmet-feather
 Burn'd like one burning flame to-
 gether,
 As he rode down to Camelot;
 As often thro' the purple night,
 Below the starry clusters bright,
 Some bearded meteor, trailing
 light,
 Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight
 glow'd;
 On burnish'd hooves his war-
 horse trode;
 From underneath his helmet
 flow'd
 His coal-black curls as on he rode,
 As he rode down to Camelot.
 From the bank and from the river
 He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
 "Tirra lirra," by the river
 Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
 She made three paces thro' the room,
 She saw the water-lily bloom,
 She saw the helmet and the plume,
 She look'd down to Camelot.
 Out flew the web and floated wide ;
 The mirror crack'd from side to side ;
 "The curse is come upon me,"
 cried
 The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV

IN the stormy east-wind straining,
 The pale yellow woods were waning,
 The broad stream in his banks complaining,
 Heavily the low sky raining
 Over tower'd Camelot ;
 Down she came and found a boat
 Beneath a willow left afloat,
 And round about the prow she wrote
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse
 Like some bold seër in a trance,
 Seeing all his own mischance —
 With a glassy countenance
 Did she look to Camelot.
 And at the closing of the day
 She loosed the chain, and down she lay ;
 The broad stream bore her far away,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white,
 That loosely flew to left and right —

The leaves upon her falling light —
 Thro' the noises of the night
 She floated down to Camelot ;
 And as the boat-head wound along
 The willowy hills and fields among,
 They heard her singing her last song,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
 Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
 Till her blood was frozen slowly,
 And her eyes were darken'd wholly,
 Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.
 For ere she reach'd upon the tide
 The first house by the water-side,
 Singing in her song she died,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
 By garden-wall and gallery,
 A gleaming shape she floated by,
 Dead-pale between the houses high,
 Silent into Camelot.
 Out upon the wharfs they came,
 Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
 And round the prow they read her name,
The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this ? and what is here ?
 And in the lighted palace near
 Died the sound of royal cheer ;
 And they cross'd themselves for fear,
 All the knights at Camelot:
 But Lancelot mused a little space ;
 He said, "She has a lovely face ;
 God in his mercy lend her grace,
 The Lady of Shalott."

ROLFE'S STUDENTS' SERIES

BYRON, LORD

Childe Harold. No. 10. With Introduction, Notes, an Analysis of the Poem, and Illustrations. Cloth, .75.

SCOTT, SIR WALTER

The Lady of the Lake. No. 1. With an Historical Introduction, Explanatory Notes, Pronouncing Vocabulary, Map and Illustrations. Cloth, .75. Also, *Riverside Literature Series, No. 53*: Paper, .32.

The Lay of the Last Minstrel. No. 3. With Introduction, Explanatory Notes, Map, and Many Illustrations. Cloth, .75. Also *Riverside Literature Series, No. 134*: Paper, .32.

Marmion. No. 2. With Introduction, Explanatory Notes, Map, and Many Illustrations. Cloth, .75.

TENNYSON, ALFRED, LORD

Enoch Arden, and Other Poems. No. 7. With Notes and Illustrations. Cloth, .75.

The Coming of Arthur, and Other Idylls of the King. No. 8. With Notes, History of the Poems, and "Various Readings." Cloth, .75.

Lancelot and Elaine, and Other Idylls of the King. No. 9. With Notes, History of the Poems, and "Various Readings." Cloth, .75.

Idylls of the King. Nos. 8 and 9. Complete in one volume. With Notes, History of the Poems, and "Various Readings." Cloth, \$1.00.

In Memoriam. No. 6. With Notes, a Portrait, and Biographical Sketch of Arthur Henry Hallam. Cloth, .75.

The Princess. No. 4. With Introduction, Explanatory Notes, and many Illustrations. Cloth, .75. Also *Riverside Literature Series, No. 111*: Paper, .32.

Select Poems. No. 5. With Introduction and Illustrations. Cloth, .75.

COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS IN ENGLISH.

Minimum College Entrance Requirements for Study. Containing selections from Shakespeare, Milton, Burke, and Macaulay. With complete editorial equipment. *Riverside Literature Series, Extra Number K*, Library binding, 80 cents.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

BOSTON

NEW YORK

CHICAGO

ON VOCATIONAL PREPARATION

SCHOOL CREDIT FOR HOME WORK By L. R. Alderman

A successful plan for the co-operation of school and home. \$1.25. Postpaid.

THE VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE OF YOUTH

By Meyer Bloomfield

A monograph by the former Director of the Vocation Bureau of Boston. 75 cents. Postpaid.

YOUTH, SCHOOL, AND VOCATION

By Meyer Bloomfield

A first-hand presentation of the meaning and work of the vocational guidance movement \$1.35. Postpaid.

CHOOSING A VOCATION

By Frank Parsons

This book is an indispensable manual for every vocational counselor. \$1.10. Postpaid.

THE PROBLEM OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

By David Snedden

The author is the Professor of Education, Teachers College, and one of the leaders in the movement for the closer adaptation of public schools to the actual needs of youth. 40 cents. Postpaid.

PREVOCATIONAL EDUCATION

By Frank M. Leavitt and Edith Brown

The first authoritative book to tell how the public schools may prepare pupils to select wisely the work to which they are best adapted. \$1.25. Postpaid.

THE PEOPLE'S SCHOOL

By Ruth Mary Weeks

A statement regarding the vocational training movement in this country and abroad. 75 cents. Postpaid.

VOCATIONS FOR GIRLS By Mary A. Laselle and Katherine Wiley

Information as to conditions of work and the opportunities in the more common vocations open to girls with only a high-school education. \$1.00. Postpaid.

THE HOME SCHOOL

By Ada Wilson Trowbridge

An account of a unique and successful experiment in teaching practical household economics. 75 cents. Postpaid.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

By David Snedden, Ruth Mary Weeks, and Ellwood P. Cubberley

A combination of three volumes from the *Riverside Educational Monographs* treating different phases of vocational education, — theory, administration, and practice. \$1.35. Postpaid.

INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION: Its Problems, Methods, and Dangers

By Albert H. Leake

A study and criticism of the opportunities provided for the education of the industrial worker. \$1.40. Postpaid.

ESTABLISHING INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS

By Harry Bradley Smith

A practical discussion of the steps to be taken in establishing industrial schools. 75 cents. Postpaid.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

BOSTON H NEW YORK CHICAGO

1918

85, 7



Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: May 2009

Preservation Technologies
A WORLD LEADER IN COLLECTIONS PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111



**HECKMAN
BINDERY INC.**

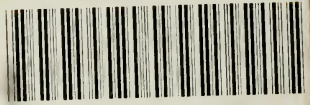


NOV 85

**N. MANCHESTER,
INDIANA 46962**



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 547 010 9



