

# Forgotten Books

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The Society intends to complete, as soon as its funds will allow, the Reprints of its out-of-print Texts of the year 1886, and also of nos. 20 and 26. Dr. Otto Glauning has undertaken *Seinte Marherete*; and Dr. Furnivall has *Hali Meidenhad* in type. As the cost of these Reprints, if they were not needed, would have been devoted to fresh Texts, the Reprints will be sent to all Members in lieu of such Texts. Though called 'Reprints,' these books are new editions, generally with valuable additions, a fact not noticed by a few careless receivers of them, who have complained that they already had the volumes. As the Society's copies of the *Facsimile of the Epinal MS.* issued as an Extra Volume in 1883 are exhausted, Mr. J. H. Hessels, M.A., of St. John's Coll., Cambridge, has kindly undertaken an edition of the MS. for the Society. This will be substituted for the Facsimile as an 1883 book, and will be also issued to all the present Members.

**Feb. 1905.** The Original-Series Texts for 1904 were 1. No. 124, *Twenty-six Political* (t. Hen. V) and other Poems from the Digby MS. 102, &c., edited by Dr. J. Kail; 2. No. 125, Part I of the *Medieval Records of a London City Church* (St. Mary-at-Hill), A.D. 1420-1559, copied and edited by Mr. Henry Littlehales from the Church Records in the Guildhall, the cost of the setting and corrections of the text being generously borne by its Editor. This book has shown the income and outlay of the church; the drink provided for its Palm-Sunday players, its officers' excursions into Kent and Essex, its dealing with the Plague, the disposal of its goods at the Reformation, &c., &c., and has helpt our members to realize the church-life of its time. The third Text was Part I of *An Alphabet of Tales*, a very interesting collection of stories for Sermons, &c., englisht in the Northern Dialect, about 1440, from the Latin *Alphabetum Narrationum*, and edited by Mrs. M. M. Banks from the unique MS. in the King's Library in the British Museum.

The Original-Series Texts for 1905 will be, 1. No. 127, Part II of the *Alphabet of Tales*, edited by Mrs. M. M. Banks; 2. No. 128, Part II of the *Medieval Records of a London City Church*, edited by Mr. Henry Littlehales, who will pay for its setting, as he did for that of Part I as well as its 5 Facsimiles; 3. No. 129, Part I of the englishting, ab. 1450 A.D., of the Deeds in the *Registers of Godstow Priory and Osney Abbey*, edited from the unique MSS. by the Rev. Andrew Clark, LL.D. These deeds throw much light on the early social state of England. Among the Texts for 1906 and 1907 will be Part III of the *Alphabet of Tales*, edited by Mrs. M. M. Banks, and Part I of the *Coventry Leet Book*, copied and edited for the Society by Miss M. Dormer Harris—helpt by a contribution from the Common Council of the City,—and will be publisht by the Society as its contribution to our knowledge of the provincial city life of the 15th century. Future Texts will be Part III of Robert of Brunne's *Handlyng Synne*, edited by Dr. Furnivall, with a Glossary of Wm. of Wadington's French words in his *Manuel des Pechez*, and comments on them, by Prof. Dickson-Brown; Part II of the *Exeter Book*—Anglo-Saxon Poems from the unique MS. in Exeter Cathedral—re-edited by Israel Gollancz, M.A.; Part II of Prof. Dr. Holthausen's *Vices and Virtues*; Part II of *Jacob's Well*, edited by Dr. Brandeis; the Alliterative *Siege of Jerusalem*, edited by the late Prof. Dr. E. Kölbing and Prof. Dr. Kaluza; an Introduction and Glossary to the *Minor Poems of the Vernon MS.* by H. Hartley, M.A.; Alain Chartier's *Quadrilogue*, edited from the unique MS. Univ. Coll. Oxford MS. No. 85, by Mr. J. W. H. Atkins of Owen's College; a Northern Verse *Chronicle of England to 1327 A.D.*, in 42,000 lines, about 1420 A.D., edited by M. L. Perrin, B.A.; Prof. Bruce's Introduction to *The English Conquest of Ireland*, Part II; and Dr. Furnivall's edition of the *Lichfield Gilds*, which is all printed, and waits only for the Introduction, that Prof. E. C. K. Gonner has kindly undertaken to write for the book. Canon Wordsworth of Marlborough has given the Society a copy of the Leofric Canonical Rule, Latin and Anglo-Saxon, Parker MS. 191, C. C. C. Cambridge, and Prof. Napier will edit it, with a fragment of the englisht Capitula of Bp. Theodulf: it is now at press.

The Extra-Series Texts for 1904 were 1. the *Macro Plays of Mankind, Wisdom*, and the *Castle of Perseverance*, edited from Mr. Gurney's MS. by Dr. Furnivall and A. W. Pollard, M.A.; 2. Lydgate's *DeGuilleville's Pilgrimage of the Life of Man*, Part III, edited by Miss Katharine Locock; and Dr. E. A. Kock's edition of Lovelich's *Merlin* from the unique MS. in Corpus Christi Coll., Cambridge, Part I. Those for 1906 and 1907 will be chosen from Lovelich's *History of the Holy Grail*, Part IV, edited by Dr. Furnivall, for which Miss Dorothy Kempe has written a capital summary of the rise and development of the Legend of the Graal; *Myrc's Festial*, re-edited from the MSS. by Dr. Erbe; *The Owl and Nightingale*, two parallel Texts, edited by Mr. G. F. H. Sykes; Dr. M. Konrath's re-edition of *William of Shoreham's Poems*, Part II; Prof. Erdmann's re-edition of Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes* (issued also by the Chaucer Society); Miss Rickert's re-edition of the Romance of *Emare*; Prof. I. Gollancz's re-edition of two Alliterative Poems, *Winner and Waster*, &c., ab. 1360, lately issued for the Roxburghe Club; Dr. Norman Moore's re-edition of *The Book of the Foundation of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London*, from the unique MS. ab. 1425, which gives an account of the Founder, Rahere, and the miraculous cures wrought at the Hospital; *The Craft of Nombrynge*, with other of the earliest englisht Treatises on Arithmetic, edited by R. Steele, B.A.; and Miss Warren's two-text edition of *The Dance of*

Dr. Brie of Berlin has undertaken to edit the prose *Brut* or *Chronicle of Britain* attributed to Sir John Mandeville, and printed by Caxton. He has already examined more than 100 English MSS. and several French ones, to get the best text, and find out its source.

These Extra-Series Texts ought to be completed by their Editors: the Second Part of the prose Romance of *Melusine*—Introduction, with ten facsimiles of the best woodblocks of the old foreign black-letter editions, Glossary, &c., by A. K. Donald, B.A. (now in India); and a new edition of the famous Early-English Dictionary (English and Latin), *Promptorium Parvulorum*, from the Winchester MS., ab. 1440 A.D.: in this, the Editor, the Rev. A. I. Mayhew, M.A., will follow and print his MS. not only in its arrangement of nouns first, and verbs second, under every letter of the Alphabet, but also in its giving of the flexions of the words. The Society's edition will thus be the first modern one that really represents its original, a point on which Mr. Mayhew's insistence will meet with the sympathy of all our Members.

The Texts for the Extra Series in 1906 and 1907 will be chosen from *The Three Kings' Sons*, Part II, the Introduction &c. by Prof. Dr. Leon Kellner; Part II of *The Chester Plays*, re-edited from the MSS., with a full collation of the formerly missing Devonshire MS., by Mr. G. England and Dr. Matthews; the Parallel-Text of the only two MSS. of the *Owl and Nightingale*, edited by Mr. G. F. H. Sykes (at press); Prof. Jespersen's editions of John Hart's *Orthographie* (MS. 1551 A.D.; blackletter 1569), and *Method to teach Reading*, 1570; Deguilleville's *Pilgrimage of the Soule*, in English prose, edited by Prof. Dr. L. Kellner. (For the three prose versions of *The Pilgrimage of the Life of Man*—two English, one French—an Editor is wanted.) Members are asked to realise the fact that the Society has now 50 years' work on its Lists,—at its present rate of production,—and that there is from 100 to 200 more years' work to come after that. The year 2000 will not see finished all the Texts that the Society ought to print. The need of more Members and money is pressing. Offers of help from willing Editors have continually to be declined because the Society has no funds to print their Texts.

An urgent appeal is hereby made to Members to increase the list of Subscribers to the E. E. Text Society. It is nothing less than a scandal that the Hellenic Society should have nearly 1000 members, while the Early English Text Society has not 300!

Before his death in 1895, Mr. G. N. Currie was preparing an edition of the 15th and 16th century Prose Versions of Guillaume de Deguilleville's *Pilgrimage of the Life of Man*, with the French prose version by Jean Gallopes, from Lord Aldenham's MS., he having generously promised to pay the extra cost of printing the French text, and engraving one or two of the illuminations in his MS. But Mr. Currie, when on his deathbed, charged a friend to burn all his MSS. which lay in a corner of his room, and unluckily all the E. E. T. S.'s copies of the Deguilleville prose versions were with them, and were burnt with them, so that the Society will be put to the cost of fresh copies, Mr. Currie having died in debt.

Guillaume de Deguilleville, monk of the Cistercian abbey of Chaalis, in the diocese of Senlis, wrote his first verse *Pèlerinaige de l'Homme* in 1330-1 when he was 36.<sup>1</sup> Twenty-five (or six) years after, in 1355, he revised his poem, and issued a second version of it,<sup>2</sup> a revision of which was printed ab. 1500. Of the prose representative of the first version, 1330-1, a prose Englishing, about 1430 A.D., was edited by Mr. Aldis Wright for the Roxburghe Club in 1869, from MS. Ff. 5. 30 in the Cambridge University Library. Other copies of this prose English are in the Hunterian Museum, Glasgow, Q. 2. 25; Sion College, London; and the Laud Collection in the Bodleian, no. 740.<sup>3</sup> A copy in the Northern dialect is MS. G. 21, in St. John's Coll., Cambridge, and this is the MS. which will be edited for the E. E. Text Society. The Laud MS. 740 was somewhat condensed and modernised, in the 17th century, into MS. Ff. 6. 30, in the Cambridge University Library:<sup>4</sup> "The Pilgrime or the Pilgrimage of Man in this World," copied by Will. Baspoole, whose copy "was verbatim written by Walter Parker, 1645, and from thence transcribed by G. G. 1649; and from thence by W. A. 1655." This last copy may have been read by, or its story reported to, Bunyan, and may have been the groundwork of his *Pilgrim's Progress*. It will be edited for the E. E. T. Soc., its text running under the earlier English, as in Mr. Herrtage's edition of the *Gesta Romanorum* for the Society. In February 1464,<sup>5</sup> Jean Gallopes—a clerk of Angers, afterwards chaplain to John, Duke of Bedford, Regent of France—turned Deguilleville's first verse *Pèlerinaige* into a prose *Pèlerinage de la vie humaine*.<sup>6</sup> By the kindness of Lord Aldenham, as above mentioned, Gallopes's French text will be printed opposite the early prose northern Englishing in the Society's edition.

The Second Version of Deguilleville's *Pèlerinaige de l'Homme*, A.D. 1355 or -6, was Englished in verse by Lydgate in 1426. Of Lydgate's poem, the larger part is in the Cotton MS. Vitellius C. xiii (leaves 2-308). This MS. leaves out Chaucer's Englishing of Deguilleville's

<sup>1</sup> He was born about 1295. See Abbé Goujet's *Bibliothèque française*, Vol. IX, p. 73-4.—P. M. The Roxburghe Club printed the 1st version in 1893.

<sup>2</sup> The Roxburghe Club's copy of this 2nd version was lent to Mr. Currie, and unluckily burnt too with

*A B C* or *Prayer to the Virgin*, of which the successive stanzas start with A, B, C, and run all thro' the alphabet; and it has 2 main gaps, besides many small ones from the tops of leaves being burnt in the Cotton fire. All these gaps (save the A B C) have been filled up from the Stowe MS. 952 (which old John Stowe completed) and from the end of the other imperfect MS. Cotton, Tiberius A vii. Thanks to the diligence of the old Elizabethan tailor and manuscript-lover, a complete text of Lydgate's poem has been given. The British Museum French MSS. (Harleian 4899<sup>1</sup>, and Additional 22,937<sup>2</sup> and 25,594<sup>3</sup>) are all of the First Version. Besides his first *Pèlerinage de l'homme* in its two versions, Deguilleville wrote a second, "de l'ame separee du corps," and a third, "de nostre seigneur Iesus." Of the second, a prose Englishing of 1418, *The Pilgrimage of the Soule* (with poems by Hoccleve, already printed for the Society with that author's *Regement of Princes*), exists in the Egerton MS. 615,<sup>4</sup> at Hatfield, Cambridge (Univ. Kk. 1. 7, and Caius), Oxford (Univ. Coll. and Corpus), and in Caxton's edition of 1483. This version has 'somewhat of addicions' as Caxton says, and some shortenings too, as the maker of both, the first translator, tells us in the MSS. Caxton leaves out the earlier englisher's interesting Epilog in the Egerton MS. This prose englishing of the *Soule* will be edited for the Society by Prof. Dr. Leon Kellner after that of the *Man* is finished, and will have Gallopes's French opposite it, from Lord Aldenham's MS., as his gift to the Society. Of the *Pilgrimage of Jesus*, no englishing is known.

As to the MS. Anglo-Saxon Psalters, Dr. Hy. Sweet has edited the oldest MS., the *Vespasian*, in his *Oldest English Texts* for the Society, and Mr. Harsley has edited the latest, c. 1150, *Kadwine's Canterbury Psalter*. The other MSS., except the Paris one, being interlinear versions,—some of the Roman-Latin redaction, and some of the Gallican,—Prof. Logeman has prepared for press, a Parallel-Text edition of the first twelve Psalms, to start the complete work. He will do his best to get the Paris Psalter—tho' it is not an interlinear one—into this collective edition; but the additional matter, especially in the Verse-Psalms, is very difficult to manage. If the Paris text cannot be parallelised, it will form a separate volume. The Early English Psalters are all independent versions, and will follow separately in due course.

Through the good offices of the Examiners, some of the books for the Early-English Examinations of the University of London will be chosen from the Society's publications, the Committee having undertaken to supply such books to students at a large reduction in price. The net profits from these sales will be applied to the Society's Reprints.

Members are reminded that *fresh Subscribers are always wanted*, and that the Committee can at any time, on short notice, send to press an additional Thousand Pounds' worth of work.

The Subscribers to the Original Series must be prepared for the issue of the whole of the *Early English Lives of Saints*, sooner or later. The Society cannot leave out any of them, even though some are dull. The Sinners would doubtless be much more interesting. But in many *Saints' Lives* will be found valuable incidental details of our forefathers' social state, and all are worthful for the history of our language. The *Lives* may be looked on as the religious romances or story-books of their period.

The Standard Collection of *Saints' Lives* in the Corpus and Ashmole MSS., the Harleian MS. 2277, &c. will repeat the Laud set, our No. 87, with additions, and in right order. (The foundation MS. (Laud 108) had to be printed first, to prevent quite unwieldy collations.) The Supplementary *Lives* from the Vernon and other MSS. will form one or two separate volumes.

Besides the *Saints' Lives*, Trevisa's englishing of *Bartholomæus de Proprietatibus Rerum*, the mediæval Cyclopædia of Science, &c., will be the Society's next big undertaking. Dr. R. von Fleischhacker will edit it. Prof. Napier of Oxford, wishing to have the whole of our MS. Anglo-Saxon in type, and accessible to students, will edit for the Society all the unprinted and other Anglo-Saxon Homilies which are not included in Thorpe's edition of *Ælfric's prose*,<sup>5</sup> Dr. Morris's of the Blickling Homilies, and Prof. Skeat's of *Ælfric's Metrical Homilies*. The late Prof. Kölbing left complete his text, for the Society, of the *Ancren Riwle*, from the best MS., with collations of the other four, and this will be edited for the Society by Dr. Thümmler. Mr. Harvey means to prepare an edition of the three MSS. of the *Earliest English Metrical Psalter*, one of which was edited by the late Mr. Stevenson for the Surtees Society.

Members of the Society will learn with pleasure that its example has been followed, not only by the Old French Text Society which has done such admirable work under its founders Profs. Paul Meyer and Gaston Paris, but also by the Early Russian Text Society, which was set on foot in 1877, and has since issued many excellent editions of old MS. Chronicles, &c.

Members will also note with pleasure the annexation of large tracts of our Early English territory by the important German contingent, the late Professors Zupitza and Kölbing, the

<sup>1</sup> 15th cent., containing only the *Vie humaine*.

<sup>2</sup> 15th cent., containing all the 3 Pilgrimages, the 3rd being Jesus Christ's.

living Hausknecht, Einkenel, Haenisch, Kaluza, Hupe, Adam, Holthausen, Schick, Herzfeld, Brandeis, Sieper, Konrath, Wülfig, &c. Scandinavia has also sent us Prof. Erdmann and Dr. E. A. Kock; Holland, Prof. H. Logeman, who is now working in Belgium; France, Prof. Paul Meyer—with Gaston Paris as adviser (alas, now dead);—Italy, Prof. Lattanzi; Austria, Dr. von Fleischhacker; while America is represented by the late Prof. Child, by Dr. Mary Noyes Colvin, Miss Rickert, Profs. Mead, McKnight, Triggs, Perrin, Craig, &c. The sympathy, the ready help, which the Society's work has cald forth from the Continent and the United States, have been among the pleasantest experiences of the Society's life, a real aid and cheer amid all troubles and discouragements. All our Members are grateful for it, and recognise that the bond their work has woven between them and the lovers of language and antiquity across the seas is one of the most welcome results of the Society's efforts.

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# Merlin.

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# Merlin,

*A MIDDLE-ENGLISH METRICAL VERSION*

*OF A FRENCH ROMANCE,*

BY

HERRY LOVELICH,

SKINNER AND CITIZEN OF LONDON (AB. 1450 A.D.),

EDITED

FROM THE UNIQUE MS. 80 IN CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE,

CAMBRIDGE,

WITH AN INTRODUCTION, NOTES, AND GLOSSARIES,

BY

DR. ERNST A. KOCK.

PART I.

LONDON :

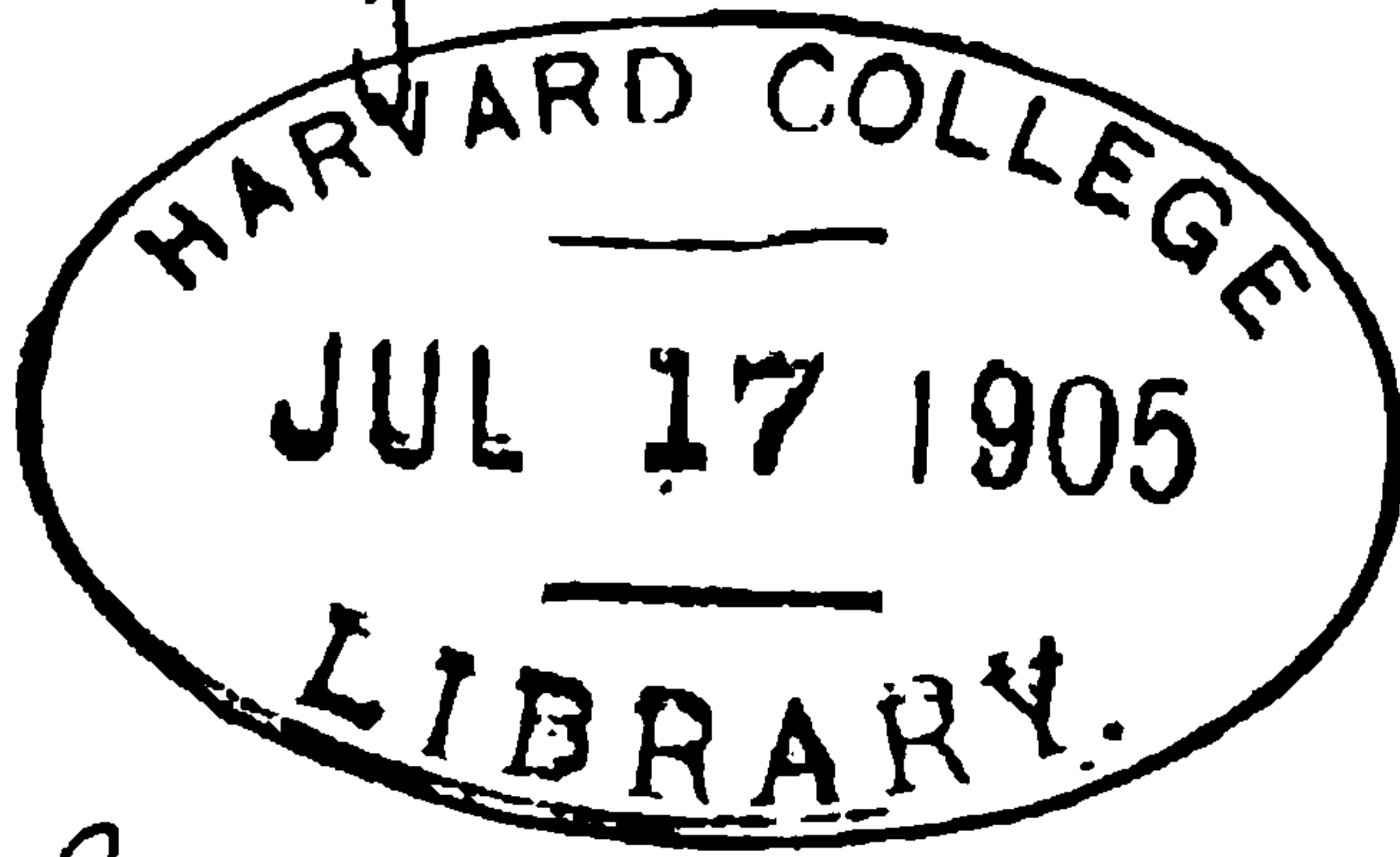
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(I)

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RICHARD CLAY & SONS, LIMITED, LONDON AND BUNGAY.

1510

# Merlin,

BY LOUELICH THE SKINNER.

(MS. 80 in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.)

Now gyneth the devel to wraththen him sore (as aftir scholen 3e herkene & here wel more), whanne that oure lord to helle wente, and took owt Adam with good entente, and also Eve, and ek othere mo, þat with him he likede forto han tho. and whanne þe develis behelden this, moche drede and merueille they hadden, j-wis. So, as Aftyward longe be-Felle, to-gederis they conseilled, the develis, ful snelle, and token hem to-gederis Jn parlement, the maister-develis, be on assent, and seiden : " what mester man Js he, this, that doth vs here al this distres ? we mown not azens him maken defens, whanne he is owht Jn owre presens, and bynemeth vs that we scholde haue, and for hym non thing mowen we kepen save. For we supposede, ful verrayly, that non man scholde be born of wommans body, that alle owre they weren be Ryht, but he hem benemeth vs be his myht. Sey, how was this 3oman bore, be whom owre Ryht js thus forlore ? "	<p>[leaf 88 c] <i>Chap. I.</i></p> <hr/> <p>The devils, angry on account of Christ rescu- ing Adam and his race from Hell</p> <p>4</p> <p>8</p> <p>[leaf 88 d]</p> <p>hold a council.</p> <p>12</p> <p>They wonder who he is,</p> <p>16</p> <p>that thus deprives them of their supposed right.</p> <p>20</p> <p>24</p> <p>One of the devils says that the same is the Son of God, who died to save sinners,</p> <p>28</p>
--	--

30. *and Eve* added above the line.

MERLIN.

B

and who, in  
all trials and  
tribulations,

Anon wenten we thanne hem to prove,  
and evere weren they stedfast jn goddis love, 32  
and the more turment we diden hem do,  
Evere the ferthre they weren vs fro,

So that Evere jn here moste peyne  
To hem aperede he, jn certeygne, 36

comforts and  
helps His  
faithful ones.

and hem comforted so wondirly wel,  
that owre tormentes greved hem neuere a del,  
and euere jn here moste distresse  
he hem deliuerede to Sikirnesse." 40

The devils  
agree that,

Thus talkydden they þere al jn fere  
of thinges that befallen were—

“That thus from vs hath he taken away  
thinges that we not kepen ne may. 44

through  
baptism

wel knowen 3e alle here wel Everychon  
that jn water he doth hem waschen anon,  
jn þe Name of the Fadir and sone & holi gost,  
whiche that ben of myhtes most, 48

and anoint-  
ment,

and also hem anoynteth with oynement,  
where-thorwh owre powere js al j-schent,  
So that oure part of hem, Jt is don,  
Tyl that owre Servauntes they becom. 52

He and His  
ministers

and thus owre power he doth away,  
and so don his mynestres Everyday,  
that jn Erthe he hath left here ;  
they don vs ful often wel mochel dere. 56

annihilate  
their power  
over man-  
kind.

For they, oure Servantes the[y] ben be Ryht,  
3it ouer hem han they so gret myht,  
that, and they welen oure Servise forsake  
and onliche to Jesu thanne hem take, 60

Born of a  
woman,

alle oure powere, than Js it j-don,  
and thus we lesen hem Everychon.  
Moche goodnesse schewed he for man-kynde,  
that jn this world he wold hym bynde 64  
of a wommans body to ben j-bore,  
to Saven mankynde, that was forlore.

32. *they*, *e* corrected from *y*.

47. MS. *þ*; similarly l. 97 and often; sometimes also *þ*<sup>*dir*</sup>,  
*sop*, and the like.

57. MS. *the ben*.

62. MS. *Evoy chon* with the (*e*)*r*-mark twice over *cy*.

and whanne that he j-boren was, we hym assaieden jn Every plas, as moche as was jn owre powere, and neuere gilty ne fownden we hym jn non manere, jn hym of oure werkes neuere Ryht nowht, For al that evere we to hym wrowht, But that he wolde deyen to saven man, For jn him hadde we non powere than. Ful mochel cherte hadde he to man, that so mochel peyne suffrede for him than, and hym forto wynnen ageyn, and from vs hem be-reven, jn certeyn. Ful mochel sorwe to vs he wrowhte thorwgh mankynde, that he bowhte."	68	and tempted by the devils,  He remained without sin,
	72	and died for the love of man.
		[leaf 89 a]
	76	
thane anon Spoken they Jn fere of Swiche thinges as greved hem there, of hem that proclaimed the tydyng Ferst jn the erthe of his comeng : "and whanne we ony tormentes scholde hem do, anon he delyverede hem vs Fro. Therefore wolden we weten ful fayn The beste to done, Jn certayn, how that jn the erthe a child to have that the peple wolde after crave. For he scholde hauen alle connenge of thyng þat is past and that is comenge, and encense the peple to oure lore, as he dyde that was þere be-fore, To tellen hem of thinges þat hadde be and befalle scholden, ful Sikerle. So scholde he þe peple to vs drawe, For of hym they wolden ben Ryht fawe." thane seiden they amonges hem Everichon that swich a child, and they hadden on, wel mochel he scholde hem profyte and torne the peple to here delyte, For fulwel beleved scholde he be For his prophecyes, ful Sikerle.	80	The devils further speak of the pro- phets, who were likewise sustained by Christ.
	84	
	88	Now the devils would like to have, on earth, a child with the same mental powers,
	92	
	96	to draw the people to them.
	100	
	104	

94. *fore*, *f* corrected from *b*.95. MS. *þ* *scholde be*.



One devil  
declares he  
can make  
women  
conceive,

thane stirte there forth a schrewe anon,  
and seide amonges hem everichon :  
“ J haue power Seed forto Sowe  
jn the erthe on wommen bothe hye & lowe, 108  
and j haue on Redy at myn assent,  
that wil Fulfillen myn talent.”

and they  
form a plan  
accordingly,

So concentyd they that this ilke schrewe  
jnto erthe scholde gon anon that threwe 112  
Forto Fulfillen that jlke dede,  
of wheche alle the schrewes token here Rede.

in foolish  
ignorance of  
God's wise  
intentions.

Now, grete Foles weren they everychon,  
that amonges hem cowde not knowen on 116  
how that god knew wel alle thyng,  
bothe gynneng, midwardis, and endyng !  
thus departyd they from here conseylle  
this werk to be-gynne, with-owten faille. 120

The devil  
repairs

thane he that seide that he hadde powere  
on women jn erthe to engendren there,  
he taryed there non lengere thanne,  
but cam jnto erthe to this wommanne 124  
whiche womman that dyde hym Servise.

to a woman,

with hire he anon mette jn prevy gyse,  
and anon he tempted hire so,  
that anon sche concentyd hym to, 128

who promises  
to help him.

and graunted hym, al that sche cowde oper myhte,  
To don him Servyse bothe day & Nyhta.

This woman  
has a rich  
husband ;

and hire lord was a worthy man,  
& moche more good hadde thanne J telle kan. 132

This Riche man hadde moche of worldly good,  
more thanne ony man tho vndirstood,  
of Bestes and of other Richesse,  
of kamailles, of jewelis, & of oper worthynesse. 136

they have  
three  
[leaf 89 b]  
daughters  
and one  
son.

This worthy man hadde dowhtren thre,  
The Fa[y]rest Wommen that myhte be,  
and a sone, that scholde ben his Eyr,  
bothe a gentilmanly child and a fayr ; 140  
and alle he hadde be this womman,  
that þe devel so mochel part hadde of than.

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and the man  
angrily  
exclaims :

and whanne the goodman wiste of this,  
that al his good wente so amys, 180  
anon ryht angry ful sone he was  
for the tydynges jn that plas,  
and a word of anger spak he thore,  
wheche after repentyd him ful sore, 184  
and be-took the devel al the remnaunt,  
That him be-lefte, petyt & graunt.

"May the  
devil take  
the lot!"

And so the  
devil gladly  
does :

Whanne that the devel herde him so seyn,  
thanne was he bothe joyful & fayn, 188  
and thowhte to greven him moche more  
thanne that he dyde ony tyme before.

For he made the goode man thanne so wroth,  
that eche mannes compenye was hym loth. 192

thanne wiste anon the devel ful wel  
that jn him hadde he part a gret del,  
and that wel jnowgh he myhte go  
jnto what partye him lykede tho. 196

the son and  
heir

Thanne cam the devel to his sone & his Eyr,  
That was bothe so gentyl & Fayr ;

[leaf 89 c]

Vppon A nyht, As he in his bed lay,  
the devel him strangelede, the sothe to say ; 200  
and vppon the morwen hym fond ded  
his owne fadir Jn that same sted.

thanne was he Ryht a sorweful man,  
For that non Recowr ne knew he than, 204

Sethen that his faire sone he hadde lost so,  
thanne jnto desperaunce fyl he tho.  
and whanne the devel vndirstod al this,  
thanne was he joyful, with-owten mis. 208

the wife takes  
her own life  
in the loft,

anon thanne wente he to his wyf,  
that began al this wo and stryf ;  
jnto an hygh soler he dyde hire go,  
and abowtes a plawncher a Rope caste tho, 212

and Sette a thing thanne vndir hire feet,  
& þe Rope abowtes hire nekke teydde askeet ;  
thanne voided sche anon hire stondyng,  
þat so thike cursed womman þere hyre-self heng. 216  
whanne the husbonde beheld al this,

- that his wyf thus ded was, j-wys,  
and also his sone Jn Swich manere,  
thanne was he of wondyr hevy chere, 220  
that there for sorwe he deyde anon,  
and thus alle thre, thanne weren they gon.  
Lo, thus the devel doth be hem alle  
that jn his Servise ony thing don falle. 224  
thanne caste the cursede schrewe a wyle  
how þat he myhte his thre dowhtres begyle ;  
and wel he wyste, Jt myhte not be  
but thorwgh som man of his afynyte. 228  
So was there a bachelor Jn the town,  
that folwed his werkis bothe vpe and down ;  
and hym to this place he dyde propyne  
these thre faire maidenis forto Engyne ; 232  
and so ofte thedyr he gan to gon,  
that thussonne he hadde ouercomen the ton.  
and whanne be hire he hadde don folye,  
the devel anon it schewede openlye, 236  
and disclawndred it al the contre,  
the more schame to hem þat it scholde be.  
and jn thyke tyme was tho the lawe,  
that ho so dyde avowtrye, scholde be slawe 240  
and with stones j-browht to the ded,  
For that was the lawe Jn that sted ;  
and thus with Stoneng scholden they ben schent,  
but 3if sche were comwne to alle Mennes Entent. 244
- Thanne thus this womman was taken anon,  
and the man fledde and was agon ;  
and anon was browht to-forn the justice  
there forto Resceyven hire jewyse. 248  
so that of hire they hadden pyte,  
Swich maner of jewyse be hire to se,  
For that hire fadyr was so worthy a man,  
and Jn so schort tyme was mischevyd than. 252  
but Natheles nedis ded moste sche be,  
and thanne thus acordid they, Sykerle,

and the  
bereft man  
himself dies  
with grief.

Now the  
three daugh-  
ters remain.

One of them  
is seduced by  
a young man  
from the  
town,

her disgrace  
is divulged,

and according  
to the law  
she must die.

The judges,  
out of pity,  
decide to let  
the execution  
take place in  
the night.

So that for love of hire kynrede  
be Nyhtes tyme hire stone to dede. 256

A holy  
hermit, on  
hearing of all  
this, visits  
the grieving  
sisters,

thane jn that contre was there a good man,  
that of alle these merveilles herde than,  
and to the tweyne sostren gan he gon  
hem forto cownseillen with anon. 260

and inquires  
about their  
[leaf 80 d]  
disasters.

and there anon he spak hem tulle,  
and axede how this misaventure befile—  
“Of 3owre fadyr And modyr Jn Fere,  
of 3owre brothir and 3oure Soster dere?” 264

The girls say  
that God  
seems to  
hate them.

“We nete Neuere, Sire, Jn certeyn,  
but 3if that god vs hate, ful pleyn,  
and this torment Suffreth vs to haue;  
we knowen non othyr, so god vs saue!” 268

The hermit  
rebukes  
them,

thane seide this goodman to hem tho:  
“Forsothe, 3e seyn mys bothe two,  
For god hatede nevere creature,  
but Js misplesid, J 3ow enswre, 272

casts the  
blame on  
the devil,

whanne ony Synnere doth him hate  
Owthir for ony thing with him debate.  
For weteth ful wel, as j 3ow telle,  
that is the werk of the devel of helle; 276  
and that 3oure soster thus Js ded,  
Syker it is be the develys red.”

and exhorts  
them to a  
good life.

“Sire, so god now be owre helpyng,  
we knewen neuere of this thyng.” 280

“thane kepe 3e 3ow from jlle werkyng,  
and caste 3ow to plese now hevене kyng;  
for jlle werk bryngeth a man to evele ende  
and jn-to synne & synneres scheude; 284

and he that hym wol not kepen from jlle werkyng,  
to ille ende it bringeth hym at his deyeng.”  
thane thus prechid hem this good man,  
how that they scholden bope plesen an serven god than. 289

The elder  
sister likes  
his lore.

So that the eldest Soster of hem bothe  
his teching liked wel, forsothe,  
and seide that sche wolde potten al hire peyne  
hys doctryne to kepen, Jn certeyne. 292

thanne seide this goodman to hem tho :

“ ȝif that ȝe welen thus aftyr me do,  
ȝe scholen ben bothe my loves dere  
and my dowhtren jn god, bothe jn fere.

The hermit  
says he will  
be a father  
to them,

296

and ȝif ȝe hauen Nede of ony thyng  
owper of ony maner of cownseylyng,  
Swich helpe and cownseil as j kan do,  
J schal it for ȝow don Evere mo.

ever ready to  
help and  
advise.

300

and therefore abasche ȝow Ryht nowht,  
but stedfastly beleveth jn hym that ȝow bowht ;  
and that ȝe comen often-tymes to me,  
for fer from ȝow j ne schal not be.”

304

thus hem cow[n]ceillede this holy man,  
and forth his weye anon wente he than.

whanne that the devel wiste of this,  
moche sorwe he made, *with-owten* mys,  
and wiste wel þat Engyned myhten they not be  
but be som womman, ful Sykerle.

The devil,  
annoyed at  
this,

308

So was there on, as j vndirstonde,  
that jn his Servise hadde dwellid longe ;  
and anon it putte jn hire herte,  
that to thike maidenis ȝhe scholde gon ful smerte.

sends a bad  
woman

312

and so sche dide anon, this wikked womman,  
wente forto cownseillen *with* hem than,  
and took the ȝongest Soster on Syde,  
and anon with hire counseilled that tyde,  
hire axeng anon how ȝhe did fare,  
and what maner thing hire soster dyde thare.

to make the  
younger girl

316

“ Loueth sche not ȝow wondirly wel ? ”  
“ ȝis, and ellis were it azens Resown & Skyl ;  
but that sche is other while hevvy  
For this mysaventure, trewely,

dissatisfied  
with her  
sister

324

The wheche jn Schort tyme to vs is befalle  
of oure fadyr & modir and Frendis alle,  
So that with hire is non manere of chere,  
Nethir to me ne to non oper ellis where,  
but doth al aftyr a goodmannes techyng,

328

305. MS. *cowceillede* ; cf. the footnote to l. 853.

314. *ȝhe* corrected from *they*. 319. *ȝhe*, *h* corrected from *e*.

320. *hir*, *r* through correction ; *soster* added above the line.

That here faste be-sydes is his dwellyng,  
So that nothyng sche Wyle do,  
but 3if he only consente to." 332

"A," quod this olde Bawde tho,  
"thou knowest of mochel sorwe & wo,  
and neuere of joye schalt þou knowe, trewlye,  
as longe as thou art jn hire compenye. 336

A, my leve dowghter so dere,  
3if that thou knewe what mannes compenye were,  
thou wost neuere resten ne dwelle,  
Tyl mannes Feleschepe 3e comen vntylle. 340

For better at ese Seker ben we,  
Jn mannes compenye whanne that we be,  
althowgh we haue but on almesse of Bred,  
thanne 3e with al 3oure good jn 3oure sted. 344

Fy of joye of ony womman,  
but 3if sche haue joye oþer compenye of man!  
my Fayre dowhter, to 3ow this j seye,  
for that 3e knowen not mannes compenye. 348

and wete 3e why J thus to 3ow Seye?  
3owre Soster is Eldere than 3e, trewlye,  
and taketh this here as hire owne good,  
and the lasse setteth be 3ow, be the rood, 352

So that the joye of 3oure fayre Body  
Js ful olene j-lost, j sey 3ow trewely."  
thanne seide this damysele to hire tho:  
"how scholde j this thing thus do 356

that 3e to me speken offe pleyedly,  
whanne that my Soster was ded therby?"  
"jn the name of god," quod this Bawde thanne,  
"3owre Sostyr wrowhte as a folisch wommanne! 360

but 3if 3e wile werken aftyr me  
and to my conseille trosten, sekerle,  
3e scholde neuere comen to-fore justice,  
and 3it haue 3oure delytes Jn alle wyse." 364

"A," quod this damysele, "how scholde j do?  
that j ne myhte 3ow speken more vnto!  
For j ne dar not for my soster here

366. After *speken* another *3ow* was added above the line, but erased again.

[leaf 90 a]

and with  
their present  
mode of life.

She extols  
the indulg-  
ence of lust,

more desir-  
able than  
anything else,

and points  
out the girl's  
disadvanta-  
geous  
position, as  
a younger  
sister, with  
regard to in-  
heritance and  
matrimony.

The girl is  
interested,  
but fright-  
ened of her  
sister's fate.

The woman  
says there is  
a means of  
avoiding it.

The girl, for  
fear of her  
sister,

Nethir to 3ow Speke ne make non chere.  
 Goth 3e now hens, tyl that eftt sone  
 that we mown Speke to-gederys alone!"

368 bids the  
 woman to  
 leave for the  
 time.

whanne that the devel herde hire so seyn,  
 Thanne was the schrewe jn joye, ful pleyn,  
 and wiste wel be hire answeryng  
 that sche scholde hoppen vppon hys Rynge. ✓

372 The devil,  
 however, is  
 now sure of  
 success.

whanne this womman from thens was past,  
 this damysele bethowghte hire atte last  
 often-tymes of hire wordis, pleyn,  
 that prevyly betwenes hem gonne they seyn.  
 and whanne the devel vndirstod openly  
 that to-gyderis scholden they speken prevyly,  
 thanne sette he this maydenis herte on fyre  
 aftyr this womman more to desire ;

376 The girl  
 muses on the  
 woman's  
 words,

that so ferforth, as j 3ow seye,  
 atte laste sche beheld hire fayre Bodye,  
 and to hire-Self thus gan sche talke,  
 alone as sche jn hire chambre gan walke :  
 "Ful trewly me this good womman tolde  
 that this Faire Body lost ben Scholde!"

380

384 and finishes  
 by thinking  
 that she is  
 right.

Thanne aftyr hire sche sente vppon a day,  
 and thus to hire anon gan sche say :

She then  
 sends for the  
 woman,

" Certes, ful trowe now j it fynde,  
 that my soster to me Js vnkynde."

392 who renews  
 her provok-  
 ing

" that knew j, damysele, tho ful wel,  
 lyk as j 3ow tolde Everydel,  
 and lasse be 3ow wile sche sette,  
 For sche fareth Every Day bette and bette.

396 [leaf 90 b]

for sche lyveth as sche liketh Best,  
 whiche is to 3ow nethir ese ne Rest,  
 and 3e ben ordeygned for Mannes kende,  
 and therto ben 3e bothe good and hende."

400 and tempting  
 speeches.

thanne seide this damysele anon agayn :

" that joye wolde j hauen fulfayn ;  
 3if that j wiste not To ben ded,  
 J scholde concenten to 3oure red."

404 The girl asks  
 again



“J sey 3ow, damysele, with-owten dwere,  
and 3e don as dyde 3oure soster dere,  
ded moste 3e thanne Nedlynges be,  
but and 3e welen werken aftyr me.” 408

for that  
means of safe  
indulgence  
of lust.

“leve dame, thanne how Scholde J do  
my lust to haue, and they not me Slo?”  
thanne this Bawde answerid hire agayn :

At length she  
is told :

“J schal 3ow tellen, Jn certayn : 412

3e scholen 3ow maken as 3e weren wroth,  
and that 3owre sostres compenye is 3ow loth,  
and perfore graunteth to alle men buxom to be  
and to leden 3oure lyf jn lechere ; 416

“Be a  
prostitute!”

thanne hath there powere non justyse  
3ow forto putten to non jewyse,  
and thus al 3oure lust scholen 3e haue  
and from alle peryles to ben Save. 420

3it thanne myhte there comen som good man,  
that for 3oure erytage wolde wedden [3ow] than.”

She follows  
the advice,  
stealing  
away from  
home.

Thanne thus behyhte 3e hire forto don,  
and from hire Soster sche stal anon, 424  
and bond hire a comown womman to be,  
be cownseil of that womman, Sikerle.

Ful mochel joye made the devel thanne,  
whanne he hadde thus geten this wommanne. 428

The elder  
sister then  
goes to  
the hermit,

and whanne the eldest Sostyr knew of this,  
that thus hire Soster hadde don amys,  
anon wente sche to this good man tho,  
that to-fore tymes here creauce tawhte hem so, 432

sorrowing  
and weeping,

with sory herte and weping chere.  
Anon this goodman axede what hire were,  
and of hire hadde ful gret pyte,  
& to hire thanne anon Seyde he : 436

“blesse the jn the Name of the Trenite,  
and telle me now what Eyllerth the.”

and tells of  
her fresh  
misery.

“ha, Sire,” sche Seide, “J am ful wo !  
my soster from me js now a-go, 440

422. MS. *wedde than*; cf. l. 522.

436. *Thanne*, T through correction.

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keep herself  
free from  
all guilt;

and loke that cowpable nevere thou be  
azens thy god Jn non manere degre, 480

but that thou plese hym vtterly  
and alle the seintes of hevne generally,  
That loven god and his Servise ;  
loke thow hem love jn alle wyse. 484

she must  
blesse herself  
in rising and  
before going  
to bed,

and loke, Eche tyme that thou dost ryse,  
that thou þe blesse be ony wyse,  
and also that thow blesse the Every nyht,  
Er that thou jn thy Bed lye down ryht, 488  
jn the name of the Fadyr and sone and þe holygost,  
which that is on god and of myhtes most.

making the  
sign of the  
crosse,

and with that loke thou make a cros on the,  
Jn memorye that he deyde vppon the tre 492  
vs for to beyen from the peynes of helle.  
loke thou do thus as j the telle !

and of that Enemy haue thow neuere non drede,  
where euere thow be Jn ony stede ; 496

and have a  
light burning  
in the night.

and where so Evere thow lye on nyht,  
Loke be ony weyes that thou have lyht,  
For there as lyht is, he ne wyl not be,  
For lyht hateth he most, ful Sekerle !” 500

Thus this holy man tawhte this mayde,  
that gret drede hadde, as j have 3ow sayde,  
lest that the devel hire Scholde be-gyle.  
thus wente sche hom with-jnne a while 504

The girl goes  
home, and  
follows the  
hermit's in-  
structions.

Jn ful beleve ful stedfastly  
and to hire Neyghbours ful nek and lowly ;  
also Evere hire god hadde sche jn Mynde,  
that so to god and to þe peple was sche good & kende.  
the goode men and the goode Wyves of that contre 509

She is re-  
minded, by  
her neigh-  
bours, of her  
family  
troubles,

often to that mayden comen, ful Sekerle,  
and thus to hire thanne goznen they saye :  
“Jt Nis non wondyr thowgh 3e han Fraye 512  
of the torment that is 3ow befalle  
of 3oure Fadyr & modyr and frendis alle,  
whiche that 3owre brothir and Sostren were.

486. þe squeezed in afterwards.

495. of added above the line.

488. E through correction.

505. MS. *fulbeleve*.

- here misaventure, it is to 3ow gret dere, 516 and of her  
 but that 3e take now som good cownsaille ; own position  
 For ful riche 3e ben and of ful gret availle,  
 and worthy 3e ben of erytage,  
 that Som man that is of hygh parage, 520  
 that fulfayn he wolde be  
 3ow wedden to wyve, ful Sykerle."  
 thanne seide this maiden to hem anon Ryht :  
 " Me governe and kepē god, þat is most of myht, 524 In prayers  
 and jn his Servise me governe & kepe to God,  
 at alle tymes, whethir j wake oþer slepe !"  
 and thus tweyne 3er lyvede sche fully, she keeps off  
 That of hire power neuere hadde the fals enemy, 528 the devil for  
 Ne he myhte nevere Jn non Degre two years.  
 hire Fynden Jn non adversite. [leaf 90 d]
- And whanne he Sawhe that he ne myhte  
 that mayden engynen be day ne nyhte, 532 But then the  
 Nether maken hire to forȝeten jn non degre devil, thus  
 that the goodman tawht hire, ful Sykerle balked,  
 (For wroth wolde sche ben jn non manere  
 Ne lyhtles, where so that evere sche were), 536  
 thanne to hire Soster he wente anon,  
 and to this goode mayden dyde hire to gon  
 vppon a satirday, whanne it was Eve  
 (tyl sche was forthe, he Nolde not leve), 540 contrives to  
 hire Soster Jn anger Forto brynge, send her  
 þat he on hire myhte werken his engynenge. fallen sister  
 So that hire Soster thider went to her, of a  
 & with hire many knaves, verament. 544 Saturday  
 thanne seide this maiden jn this manere : night,  
 " A, leeve Soster, what do 3e here, with a lot  
 3e forto comen jn Swich degre, of rowdy  
 and with 3ow to bryngen swich compeyne ? 548 followers.  
 Jt schal me maken blame to have,  
 and þat Nedeth me not, so god me saue !"

517. *counsaille*, a corrected from *e* ; cf. the footnotes to ll. 2051, 3531, 5707, 5855, etc.

522–524. *wedden*, *seide*, *govern* partly blotted.

528. *neuere* added above the line.

530. *adversite*, *d* corrected from *v*. 547. *3e* on erasure.

548. *3ow* added above the line.

She is ac-  
cused, by  
her, of for-  
bidden inter-  
course with  
the hermit,

thane spak this cursed damysele ageyn :  
“ thow lyvest moche wers than j, jn certeyn ! ” 552

and bar hire good soster on hande vppon  
that jn folye sche lovede that holy man.  
“ and 3if that the peple it wiste, Sekerlye,  
anon wolden they the distroye ! ” 556

flies into a  
rage,  
has a tussle  
with the  
disturbers,

and whanne this maide herde hire so seyn,  
be bothe scholdres sche took hire, ful pleyn,  
and wolde han put hire owt at the 3ate,  
but that hire knaues wolde hire not late, 560

rushes into  
her chamber,  
locks her  
door,

but setten hand on this good maiden anon,  
and hire to-beten bothe bak an bon,  
Tyl atte laste sche brak hem fro,

& jnto hire chambre sche gan to go, 564  
and schitte the dore faste hire vppon,  
and so there-jnne dwelde al alon.

& non more peple with hire gan dwelle  
but a man and a maide, as j 3ow telle, 568  
and for hem nolden they not Spare,

but diden this goode womman moche care.  
this maiden alone jn hire chambre was,  
and ful mochel mone made jn that plas, 572

flings herself  
on the bed,

and wept and sorwede mochel of the nyht,  
so that jn hire clothes sche leide hire down ryht.  
Anon as this enemy this gan aspye,  
that sche was so angry vttirlye, 576

thanno made he bothe joye and game,  
whiche torned this maiden to mochel blame.  
Thanne of gret deol this maide hire thowhte,

So that of hire-self but litel sche rowhte. 580  
sche hire remembrid of Fadyr and modyr bothe,  
and of hire brother and Sostren, forsothe,

and of that grete aventure,  
So was sche Sorweful, J 3ow ensure. 584

and thus jn morneng and wrathe sche fyl jn slepe,  
and al the goodmannes lore sche forzete :  
bothe of hire blessing and ek of lyht  
sche clene forzat that jlke nyht. 588

all about  
blessing and  
light.

564. MS. *his* for *hir'*; cf. the footnotes to ll. 147, 320, 948, 4648.  
582, 586. *of, lore* added above the line.

thane was the devel ful of joye, and thowhte fulsone hire to anoye.		The devil,
"now," quod the devel, "tyme it is, For sche hath forzeten hire lore, j-wys, Bothe mynde of god and of Hire maister Also, therefore it is hygh tyme that j now go. Now myhten we wel don owre dever, Owre man to putten <i>with-jnnen</i> hire her."	592	seizing the opportunity,  [leaf 91 a]
Anon this devel that hadde Swich myht <i>with womme[n]</i> To compenyen bothe day & Nyht, To this goode maiden wente he anon, and Bedy hym made that dede to dou, and on hire he engendred, as j 3ow telle, a merveillous child ful schortly and snelle. Anon as that maiden conceyved was, the devel hym wente owt of that plas ; and that mayden tho awook anon, whanne that the devel hadde thus j-don. and Evne Jn hire awakyng this goodman hadde sche Jn remembryng, and took vp hire hond and gan hire to blesse, & seide : "o seinte Marye, what is thisse ? and what maner of thing Js me betyd, Sethen that j leide me vppon my bed ? me thenkyth, apeyred welsore am J, Sethen j me here leyde, ful trewly. wherfore, blessid lady, j preye to the, So that to thy sone thow preye for me, that on me he wolde haven pyte and from the fals enemy defenden me." thane, whanne sche hadde don this dede, vpe sche ros owt of that stede, and wende han fownden that Jche wyht that hire so hadde deceyved thike nyht. So that to hire chamberdore sche wente anon, and it fond fast schet & not vndon, lyk as sche hadde schet yt to-fore, and non wyht ne fond sche thore.	596	defiles her in her sleep.
	600	
	604	On awaken- ing, immedi- ately after,
	608	
	612	she discovers her disgrace,
	616	prays to the Virgin,
	620	and gets up to look for the perpe- trator.
	624	Finding the door still locked,

and the room  
empty,

thanne further to serche cam jn hire thowht,  
but al that avayllede thanne hire ryht nowht.

628

she under-  
stands that  
it must have  
been the  
devil.

thanne cam jt jn hire mynde anon  
that the enemy hire hadde ouergon.  
thanne ful mochel sorwe gan sche make,  
whanne that verrayly sche gan wake.  
sche besowhte god with humble chere  
that jn this world neuere schamed sche were.

632

At daybreak,  
when the in-  
truders have  
left,

and whanne it was the lyht of day,  
the devel hire Soster thanne ladde away,  
For sche hadde wel j-sped hire arende,  
wherfore thedyr he gan hire sende.

636

she unlocks  
her door,  
sends for  
two women,

and whanne that hire Sostir thens was gon,  
owt of hire chambre sche cam anon,  
and cleped hire Servaunt ful hastelye,  
and bad hym faste to hire hye.

640

thanne thus to hym tho gan sche telle :

“ Go jnto towne, and not ne dwelle,  
and bidde swiche two wommen to me hye,  
& that they to me comen hastelye ! ”

644

Anon as they comen bothe jn fere,  
thanne hem cowde sche maken non chere,

648

and goes with  
them to the  
hermit,

but evene with hem took the ryhte weye  
To hire confessour, alle thre, jn feye.

and whanne hire confessour hire gan beholde,

who is sur-  
prised at the  
sight of her.

Jn his herte he merveilled many folde,

652

and to that womman thanne gan he to say :

“ hyderward the aryveth som gret affray. ”

thanne seide this womman to hym aze :

“ Sire, j trowe that it may ful wel be,

656

[leaf 91 b]

For no Js be-falle A destyne

That neuere fyl to womman but to me,

and am J here comen to 3ow

Som good cownseille to taken of 3ow.

660

After re-  
minding him  
of his pro-  
mises of  
forgiveness

For toforn tymes han ze me told,

though a body Jn synne were neuer so bold,

and he be schreven, and Repente also,

643. *tho* over struck-out *thanne*.

650. *thre*, *r* corrected from *e*.

- and don the penaunce that longeth þerto,  
 his Synnes forzoven to hym scholen be ;  
 Thus tolde ʒe me, Sire, ful Sykerle.  
 Sire, J haue Synned and that ryht sore,  
 as j haue told ʒow ferst before,  
 For the enemy hath deceyved me,  
 as J schal ʒow tellen, ful seker[1]e.  
 Jt happed, my Soster cam me vnto,  
 and me wrowhte bothe care & wo,  
 and how that sche wraththed me ful jlle,  
 tyl that to my chambre j wente vntylle  
 al ful wroth and of hevy chere,  
 and faste my dore J schette there.  
 and for the grete wraththe that j am jnne,  
 me forto blessen J gan to blynne,  
 and forʒat what J scholde do,  
 which aftyr torned me to mochel wo.  
 and whanne that J of my Sleepe awook,  
 and Remembraunce to me took,  
 thanne fond J that defowlyd J was,  
 and my maydenhot aweye Jn that plas.  
 thanne serched j my chambre al abowte,  
 and non wyht ne fond, with-owten dowte,  
 ne wiste ho it hadde me do,  
 From that owr ʒit hider-to.  
 And, Sire, al thus engyned am J,  
 wherfore to God and ʒow J crye Mercy,  
 that though my body J-tormentyd be,  
 ʒit that my sowle be not lost Jn non degre.”  
 thanne herkened this good man Everydel  
 al that to hym sche seyde, ful wel,  
 but he beleved it non thyng,  
 For, Sekyr, he held it for a lesing,  
 For he ne herde nevere to-fore  
 of swich a thing speken, sethen he was bore.  
 thanne answerid hire this good man agayn :  
 “ Ful of the devel thou art, ful pleyn,  
 and the devel js fer with-Jnne the.

664 for those who  
repent and  
do penance,668 she acknow-  
ledges that  
she has  
sinned672  
by being  
angry676  
and forget-  
ful,680 which has led  
to her being  
disgraced684  
by an un-  
known  
creature.692  
The hermit,  
incredulous,

696

700 rebukes her,



and says that  
confession  
and penance  
are not for  
liars.

how scholdest thou thanne confessed be  
other ony penaunce of me take,  
whanne swiche lesinges þou dost me make ? 704

owther how scholde j zeven the ony penaunce,  
whanne j knowe wel thou makest variaunce ?  
For jn that degre was neuere womman jnto this day  
From hire hire maydenhot taken away, 708  
but 3if sche knew, Felte, other Sye,  
ho that it hadde don, Sekerlye.

and thow makest me to beleve  
Swich a thing as thow myht not preve." 712

But the girl  
protests she  
has told the  
truth.

Thanne answerid this womman ageyn  
and seide : " So god haue part on me, pleyn,  
and also kepe my body from torment,  
as trowthe j haue Seid 3ow, verament." 716

The hermit  
then

thanne answerid this good man to hire tho :  
" And it be lyk as thou seyst me vnto,  
thow schalt wel knowen, and j Jn fere,  
er that come fulliche the ende of þe 3ere. 720

lets her  
atone for her  
disobedience

But thou hast broken thin obedyence,  
and azens me don ful gret defense,  
And broken my comaundement  
that J comanded the, verament ; 724

l [leaf 91 c]

Wherfore penaunce thou schalt haue  
Jn amendement thy Sowle to Save :  
Every fryday thow most Faste  
and to the taken but on repaste. 728

by fasting,

for her  
incredible  
commerce

& Jn manere that thou luxvre hast do,  
which that myn herte Nyl not concenten therto,  
how scholde [j] þanne ony penaunce leyn on the,  
but that j knew the certeynte ? 732

(fully re-  
signed as  
she is)

For it were to lytel, al dayes of thy lyve  
3if that algates J scholde the Schryve."  
thanne seide this woman to hym ageyn :  
" what evere 3e me chargen, Jn certeyn, 736  
J schal it don with ful good wylle,  
what so evere to me 3e putten vntylle."  
thanne seide this goodman to hire ageyn :

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- and 3it he enjoyned hire more over tho  
alle þe good dedis that sche scholde do,  
and thus he be-tawht hire to god almyht,  
and hom a3en sche wente anon Ryht. 780
- and sends  
her home.**
- The devil  
rages.** thanne, whanne the devel aspide al this,  
and that his pray he scholde thus mis,  
thanne was the cursede schrewe wondir wroth,  
that he to hire was thanne so loth. 784
- After two  
months,** So dwelled sche there two monthes oþer thre,  
and ful holy lif ladde, ful Sekerle,
- her condition  
is noticed.** Tyl that sche gan to barnysche ryht faste,  
[leaf 91 d] And Was Aspied Atte laste, 788
- Before  
friends and  
relations,** where-offen hire Frenedes angred ful sore,  
and so dyde sche 3it wel more,
- she protests  
her inno-  
cence** & seyde : " so god haue Mercy on me,  
J ne kan not weten how it scholde be." 792
- thanne seiden hire Frenedis to hire tho :  
" why, han there so many men knowen 3ow so,  
that 3e ne weten hos Jt is ?  
now mafey, thanne this goth amys ! " 796
- time after  
time,** " thanne preye j god that j neuere deliuered be,  
3if j knew Ewere of manes compeyne,  
othyr Ewere wyste of this aventure,  
how to me jt is comen, j 3ow ensure." 800
- but they dis-  
believe her,** thanne hire Frenedis blessid hem echon,  
and to hire they seyden anon :  
" this thyng ne myhte nevere be  
be 3ow ne be non womman, Sikirle. 804  
but on him, j trowe, 3e troste,  
that he 3ow excusen moste ;  
But, Jn Sekyr, Jt wele not be,  
werfore vs sore Repentyth, Sekyrle ; 808
- and point out  
her sure fate.** For also sone as the jvge it wot,  
anon, with-owten Faille, deyen 3e mot."
- Thanne, whanne this woman herde this,  
Ful sore dismayed Jt was, J-wys, 812  
and seyde : " So god of my Sowle haue mercy,

- J neuere ne knew ne sawh that mannes body  
that me hath don this jlke dede,  
as jn alle my werkis so god me spede!" 816  
thanne wenten hire frendis from hire anon,  
and for a fool these wommen helden hire echon.  
"now certes, fowle loste is zoure bewte,  
that thus han jt lost jn Swiche degre!" 820  
whanne that sche herde these wommen thus speke,  
anon to hire confessour gan sche to Reke,  
and tolde hym of this wommans answeere,  
as that to hire sche hadde Seyde Ere. 824  
anon as this good man Sawh that sche  
Qwyk with childe was, certeinle,  
and mochel he merveilled of this chaunce,  
& anon axede hire of that penaunce— 828  
"that to-forn tyme the joyned j for this,  
hast thou it don?" "3e, leve Sire, j-wis,  
that haue j don, Syre, with-owten faille!"  
"but cam he evere sethen, the owht to asaille, 832  
owthir trespacedest pou euere ony more,  
but only that thou hast told me be-fore,  
Ne neuere but onys jt cam to the?"  
"No, so me good helpe, Sire, Sikerle!" 836
- Whanne that the goodman herde hire thus telle  
Of this aventure, how it befelle,  
anon a book he took to hym tho,  
and jis mater jn Scripture he let thrynne do. 840  
"Now be 3e Sewr what j schal say :  
anon as this child is born, jn fay,  
of on thing j schal knowe, certeyn :  
3if þat ony tale 3e han tolde me jn veyn. 844  
and 3if to me 3e han mad a lesyng,  
Ful Siker 3e ben of zoure hyndryng ;  
and 3if to me the sothe han 3e told,  
Jt schal 3ow helpen many fold, 848  
For thanne ful Syker mown 3e ben  
that 3e scholen nethir deth felen ne sen.  
but 3it gret drede 3e mown hauen a throwe,  
For anon as the justice doth it knowe, 852
- When she perseveres,  
they consider her a fool.  
The afflicted woman repairs to the hermit,  
who asks about her penance,  
and whether the devil has annoyed her again.  
The hermit takes a book, and writes down all these things.  
The truth, he says, shall be known at the birth of the child,  
and accordingly she shall perish  
or be saved.

- [leaf 92 a] Anon they Welen to-gederys conseylle,  
 and 3ow for-juggen for here avaylle,  
 and seyn that ded scholen 3e be,  
 For that 3e han trespaced Jn avowtre. 856
- For the im-  
 pending trial
- but that anon as they han 3ow take,  
 doth me to wetene for 3owre owne sake,  
 and j schal comen to 3ow. jn Socowrengge,  
 and god schal ben thanne 3oure helpinge ; 860
- he promises  
 her his help,
- For, Seker, 3e mown ben perto bold,  
 and it be as 3e han me told.”  
 thanne seyde this good man to hire tho :
- and sends her  
 home again.
- “ A3en to 3oure hows hom that 3e go,  
 and loke, good lif that 3e lede,  
 For to a good ende jt wyle 3ow spede.” 864
- and thus wente sche hom ageyn,  
 as j 3ow sey nowe, Jn certeyn, 868
- When the  
 judges are  
 informed,
- and ful benyngnely lyvede there,  
 Tyl that it cam the justice to the ere.  
 thanne comen [they] jnto the Same town  
 onliche for this Wommanes Enchesown, 872
- and pere sche was taken and to-forn hem browht,  
 to weten 3if sche cowde Excusen hire owht.
- and imprison  
 her,
- Whanne sche was taken and jn prason don,  
 sche sent aftyr this good man anon, 876
- and he thedyr cam jn ful gret hye,  
 as faste as [he] myht gon, Sekerlye ;  
 and thider cam he Neuere so sone,  
 that to-foren the justice sche was browht anone. 880
- the hermit  
 speaks with  
 them,
- The justices clepeden this good man,  
 and tolden hym how that sche seide than,  
 For sche hem tolde, ful certeynly,  
 that sche knew nevere of mannes compeny. 884
- “ Trowe 3e,” quod the justice thanne,  
 “ that this myhte ben *with-owten* feleschepe of manne ? ”  
 thanne seide to hem this goodman ageyn :  
 “ J sey not that j thenke now, jn certeyn, 888

853. The last word was miswritten, blotted out, and written once more.

866. MS. *fforio*.

871. *thāne* corrected from *and* ; the pronoun omitted.

878. MS. *as myht*.

- but and 3e welen don aftyr me,  
 at this tyme juged schal sche not be,  
 Neper not as longe as gret sche Js,  
 3if that 3e wele don be myn avys. 892  
 For it were Neyther Skele ne Resown  
 To putten that child to ony distrocciown,  
 that neuere jn non wyse deservyd the ded,  
 3if owghtes that 3e welen don be my Red." 896  
 " Syre, we scholen don as we 3ow say :  
 aftyr 3ow we scholen werken this day."  
 " 3if that 3e welen werken aftyr me,"  
 quod this goodman thanne, " Sykirle, 900  
 jnto a strong wards scholen 3e hire putte,  
 and strong lokes vppon hire Schette,  
 and putte hire jnto a strong towr,  
 and with hire tweyne wommen for hire honour, 904  
 hire forto helpen at hire deliuerance  
 and hire to socowren jn that chawnce ;  
 and that owt from hire mown they not gon,  
 No more thanne sche may from hem don ; 908  
 and that they there to-gederis be,  
 tyl that child be born ful vtterle,  
 and tyl that it may it somewhat Susteyne ;  
 this js my Reed, j sey 3ow certaygne. 912  
 thanne scholen 3e knowen and sen more thing  
 thanne 3e owht knowen at this begynneng,  
 and forjuggen mown 3e thanne this wommanne  
 as lyk that 3e fynden resown thanne. 916  
 This js my conseille, and 3e welen it do,  
 And 3if not 3e Wylen, J parte 3ow fro." [leaf 92 b]  
 thus wrowhten they thanne al jn fere  
 aftyr that goodmannes cownseyl there, 920  
 and putten hire jn-to [a] strong towr,  
 & with hire tweyne wommen for hire honour,  
 Swich as to mester scholde be  
 That longeth to wommans parturite, 924  
 and a Fenestre open be enchosown  
 here vyaundes to taken bothe vpe & down,

899. 3e added above the line.

921. MS. *jn to strong*.

and what Necessaryes hem belonged also,  
 vpe at that wyndowe to hem taken tho. 928  
 and whanne that thus be this goodmannes conseille  
 jn the towr they weren browht, Sawns faille,  
 thanne spak this good man to hem jn hy,  
 and to this damysele he seide, trewly : 932  
 "Loke that anon as thou delyveryd be,  
 that faste jt be crystened & smartle ;  
 and to-fore the justice whanne þou schalt go,  
 Loke anon that thou sende me vnto." 936  
 and thus jn the towr abod sche there,  
 tyl sche was deliuered jn hard manere,  
 and was deliuered of a knave child,  
 that was bothen vn louely & vn-myld. 940  
 and whanne this child was j-bore,  
 they merveilleden gretly that weren thore,  
 For it hadde bothe wyt and knowenge  
 aftyr the schrewed fadris engendrynge. 944  
 but, for the devel wrowhte so falsly,  
 God to his evs hath taken jt, trewly,  
 thorwgh the modris verray Repentaunce,  
 and for fulfylleng of hire penance, 948  
 and for hire good beleve jn holy chirche,  
 and for the goode dedis that sche dyde wirche,  
 for that cawse nolde god jn non degre  
 that the devel with hym meddelid, Sikirle. 952  
 and 3it the devel mad his engendryng,  
 For that of al thinges he scholde haue knowyng,  
 bothe þat js to comen and that js gon,  
 For many merveilles he thoughte be hym to don. 956  
 but oure lord knew the repentance  
 Of his modyr, with-owten variaunce,  
 and wiste ful wel that azens hire wille  
 that this aventure cam hire vntylle. 960  
 For the goode lord knew ful wel  
 that be hire wil sche synnede neuere a del,  
 and hym graunted bothe wit and knowenge  
 Of many thinges that weren comenge ; 964

The hermit  
 recommends  
 immediate  
 baptism,

and a mes-  
 sage to be  
 sent to him  
 before the  
 trial.

A male child  
 is born,

ugly and  
 rough,

with its  
 father's wits,

but destined  
 to be a serv-  
 ant of God  
 on account  
 of its  
 mother's  
 repentance,

good deeds,

and inno-  
 cence of the  
 whole thing.

931. MS. *an hy*. 948. *hir'* corrected from *his*.  
 955. *ad* corrected afterwards from *an*.

thus wolde god that he scholde knowe  
of manye thinges vppon a rowe.

For 3if goddis wille it hadde j-be,  
the devel schold han had his partye  
and to god 3elden that was his ryht,  
but that it likede to this lord of myht  
hym to taken jnto his power  
and holych owt of the develis daunger.

968

Otherwise the  
devil would  
have had his  
share in the  
child.

972

Thus was there thanne this child j-bore,  
of wheche these wommen dredden sore,  
For more Rowghere that child it was  
thanne evere they Syen jn ony plas.  
they schewed it thanne to þe modyr anon,  
sche took vpe hire hond and blessed hire thusson,  
and Seyde anon : "so Crist me Spede,  
For this child haue J gret drede."

976

The women  
in attendance  
are fright-  
ened at the  
sight of the  
infant.

980

So is the  
mother.

Thanne seyden to Hyre these Wommen A-geyn :  
"So for hym schalt thou suffren ful gret peyn."

[leaf 92 c]

thanne comanded the modir there  
down it to leten Jn alle manere—  
"and that j-cristened anon it be,  
thus j 3ow preye for charyte."

984

She has him  
christened  
at once,

thanne axeden these wommen of hire anon  
what name they scholden leyn hym vppon.

988

. . . . .  
. . . . .

anon leten they down this child there,  
and that anon j-cristened it were,  
and that jt named scholde j-be  
after his grauntfadyr, ful sekerle,  
whiche goodman that hyghte merlyne,  
that the devel gan so Engyne.

992

and calls him  
by her  
father's  
name, Merlin.

and thus this child j-cristened was,  
and deliuered azen to þe modris plas.

996

Thanne thus the modyr gan hym norree,  
tyl ten mounthes old he was, Sekerle ;  
and with-june tho x mounthes he was so bold,

The child  
grows very  
fast.

968. *partye*, *y* corrected from *e*.

999. *mouthes* afterwards crossed out and replaced by *dayes*.



that thyke tyme he semede two ȝeres old. 1000

and whanne xviiij mounthes weren fulliche j-past,  
To the modyr seiden thes wommen jn hast :

“dame, fulfayn wolde we hennes ben  
and to owre owne place hom gon aȝen, 1004

For certein thinges we han to do ;  
Sykerly, dame, we wylen the fro.”

thanne spak aȝen the modyr anon :

“ȝif it so be, ȝe from me gon, 1008  
anon be jugement j schal ben ded,  
For j ne knowe non other red.”

thanne wepte this modyr and made sory chere,  
and preyde hem with hire abyden ȝit there. 1012

thanne ȝit styлле they gonne abyde,  
and to a prevy wyndowe wente þat tyde.  
and the modir this child gan beholde,  
& there jn hire armes sche gan it folde ; 1016

Anon ful tendirly wepte sche thanne,  
& thus sche seide to this ȝong manne :

“ a, Faire sone,” quod sche thanne tho,  
“ for the moste j suffre bothe deth & wo, 1020  
and to me ben j-put ful mochel hard peyne,  
the wheche is wrong, god wot certeyne.

For there nis non man, but god alone,  
that whot how this cause doth gone ; 1024

but this non man wil beleven, certeinle,  
wherfore j moste nedis ded now be,  
and thus with gret wrong j schal suffre ded.”  
Sore wepyng thus seide sche jn that sted. 1028

And as the modyr this mone gan make,  
hire sone on hire lokede with Eyn so blake,  
and seide : “ modir, dismaye the nowht,  
for fore me schalt þou neuere to deth be browht.” 1032

whanne that the modyr herde hym so speke,  
For drede sche let it owt of hire armes reke,  
so that for drede the child fyl a-down,  
and gan to cryen with a gret Sown. 1036

thanne comen anon these wommen, certayn,

1001. *moūthes* afterwards crossed out and replaced by *dayes*.

After 18 months the attendants want to go home,

but are persuaded to stay yet for a while.

The mother weepingly says to the child in her arms

that she must die for its sake,

as nobody believes her.

The child says she shall not.

In her fright, she drops it; the child cries, the women rush thither.

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# HISTORY

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- “ ʒe lyen, false schrewes, bothe two,  
of that ʒe han my modyr told,  
for þerto schal neuere man be so bold.”  
and whanne they syen hym so on take,  
For drede and sorwe they gonne to qwake,  
and seiden : “ This ne may non child be :  
Jt is the deuel, ful Sykirle.  
that we han seid, doth it vs here telle ;  
we supposen, it be a deuel of helle.”  
thane aposid they him of wordis mo,  
and thus to hem he Seide vnto :
- “ ʒe han don wel moche more Synne  
thane my modyr, that is here with-jinne.”  
Anon they merveyllled mochel more,  
that he cowde tellen thinges, weren don to-fore.  
“ we schole gon tellen to hem that be-nethe be,  
how this child doth Speken, Sekyrle.”
- thane to this wyndowe comen they anone,  
and cleped the peple to hem fulsone,  
and tolden how þat the child spak there,  
& howgh that he seyde and jn what manere.  
thussonne so wyde this tydyng sprong,  
that to the jugge it cam er owht long,  
where-offen he merveilledde wondir sore,  
that jn swich maner the child spak thore.  
thane bespak the justice anon :
- “ Now were it tyme, juggement to don !”  
and sente anon to that Jayller  
That jn the towre hem kepte ther,  
that at the ende of xl dawes  
to bringen hire forth to han hire lawes.  
whanne the modyr of merlyn herde this,  
That set was the day of hire, j-wys,  
Fvl mochel Sorwe made sche thanne,  
and sente anon aftyr this good manne,  
That Hire Was Wont to confessen before ;  
aftyr hym sente sche to comen to hire thore.
- Thus dwelde sche algates stille

They are  
frightened,  
and say he  
must be a  
devil.

He replies by  
telling them  
about their  
secret sins.

They run to  
the window,  
and inform  
the people.

The judge  
hears about  
it,

and fixes the  
day for her  
trial.

She sends for  
the hermit.  
[leaf 93 a]

the dayes of juggement to fulfille.  
 and whanne they weren past Everichon  
 except viij dayes, that weren not gon, 1116  
 thanne lyvede sche jn sorwe and care,  
 and wiste neuere thanne how sche schold fare,  
 but that sche scholde brend j-be ;  
 sche knew non othir, ful Sykerle. 1120  
 and al this tyme wente hire sone, jn feye,  
 abowte jn the towr and him gan to pleye.  
 thanne seiden these wommen to him anon :  
 " Ful litel thenkest þou what is to don,  
 and how this wyke, ful Sikerle,  
 thy modir for the moste nedis brend j-be."  
 Thanne be-spak merlyn anon  
 to his modir there thussonne : 1128  
 " Now, faire modyr, j 3ow praye,  
 For me non thing that 3e dismaye,  
 for there js non man on lyve here  
 that 3ow schal demen jn non manere,  
 Neþer neuere 3ow juggen to þe ded,  
 whiles that j lyve, jn non sted,  
 ne neuere non deth to suffren, j-wys,  
 Sauf onlich be god, that almyhty js." 1136  
 whanne the modyr vndirstood this,  
 thanne was sche ful of joye & blis,  
 and seide : " this child moste nedis wys be,  
 Swich thynges to tellen now, Sykerle." 1140  
 thus bod sche tyl the same day  
 that to juggement scholde sche gon, jn fay,  
 that owt of the towr was sche do,  
 and the tweyne wommen with hire also, 1144  
 and hire sone in hyre arm sche bar,  
 tyl to-fore the jugges that sche cam thar.  
 thanne the justice at that tyde  
 thike two women token beside, 1148  
 and of hem axeden, with-owten lak,  
 3if it were soth that the child spak.  
 thanne tolden hem tho wommen verrayly

During her  
grief and  
anguish,

her son is  
unconcerned.

The women  
reprove him.

He tells his  
mother again  
not to be  
afraid,

for she shall  
not die.

On the ap-  
pointed day,

she appears  
before the  
judges, who  
ask the  
women if  
the child  
had really  
spoken,

how that he to hem Spak apertly. 1152

and remark  
that much  
wisdom is  
required to  
save its  
mother.

thanne seide the jugge to hem ageyn :  
“ful mochel moste he konnen & knowen, certayn,  
zif he schole owht his modyr Save,  
mochel more konneꝝg moste he have.” 1156

The hermit,  
who has  
arrived in  
the mean-  
time,

and be this jlke same tyme,  
as that it happede the ovr of pryme,  
this goodman to hire was comen ful ryht,  
that hire thanne scholde cownceillen aryht. 1160

thanne seide on of the jugges hire vnto :  
“hast þou ony cownseil, what wylt thou do ?  
for martirdom thou most Suffren here ;  
good cownseil to the now profyt were.” 1164

thanne answerid this womman agayn :  
“with this good man wolde j speken fulfayn.”  
and they hire zoven leve therto.

has a private  
consultation  
with his  
confessant,

so jnto a chambre they gonne to go, 1168  
and hire sone beleft with-owte

amonges the peple, a ful gret rowte ;  
and with speche they gonnen hym asaylle,  
but lytel owther nowht it dyde avaylle. 1172

and al this while that jt was so,  
his modir hire confessour spak vnto.

& whanne sche hadde told hym al hire wylle,

; [leaf 93 b]

Thanne spak the confessour Hire vntylle, 1176

during which  
he also is as-  
sured that  
the child  
has spoken.

and axede hire zif it certeyn were  
that hire sone spak so there.  
“ze, sire,” sche seide, “certeynly,  
to me hath he spoken, ful verrayly.” 1180

“Jn goddis Name,” quod this good man tho,  
“j hope, som Merveilles it wele tornen vnto.”

She reap-  
pears in  
court,

thanne comen they owt bothe jn fere,  
and comen jnto place as þe jugges were, 1184  
and took hire child jn hire armes two,  
ryht so to-fore the jugge sche gan to go.  
thus stood sche to-forn hem, certaygne.

is asked  
about her  
child's father,

anon the jugge gan hire Refreyne, 1188  
and axede hire ho þat the fadyr were  
of that child that sche held there.

thanne answerid the modyr with gret pite :

- “j wot not othir but ded to be ; 1192 and declares  
 but so god on my Sowle haue Mercye, that she  
 medlid j neuere with mannes compenye, knows not.  
 Ne neuere j wiste ho þat the fadyr was,  
 neþer neuere knew j man jn that cas, 1196  
 Ne neuere obeyed to non man, Sykerle,  
 that sweche thinges scholde don by me.”  
 “3e, 3e,” quod this justices tho,  
 “we konnen not beleven that it is so 1200 The judges  
 as thou dost vs to vndirstonde ; say they  
 Jt was neuere provid jn-non londe.” cannot  
 thanne taken the jugges these wommen on side, believe her,  
 and axeden 3if swich a thing myhte be-tyde, 1204 ask also the  
 that a woman a child scholde bere two women  
 whiche neuere jn Mannes compeny ne were. on the point,  
 thanne seiden they : “Nay, ful sikyrle,  
 with-owten mannes compenye it myhte not be.” 1208  
 Thanne seiden these jugges to hyre ageyn and declare  
 that—“ded nedys most 3e ben, certayn, she must die.  
 for thus wommen seyn, trewely,  
 that with-owten mannes compeny 1212  
 a child neuere scholdest thou have ;  
 thus they me seyn, so god me save !”  
 thanne owt of his modris armes stirt Merlyne anon,  
 and angerlich seide toforh hem Echon : 1216 Then Merlin  
 suddenly  
 “that schalt þou Nevere, justice, bringen abowte, intervenes.  
 my modyr to brennen, with-owten dowte,  
 For sche ne hath not deservid therto.  
 and 3it more J schal sein the also, 1220 His mother  
 is guiltless,  
 that 3if trewe jostice thou schost be he says,  
 To alle that han don avowtre  
 with opere thanne with here lordis, certeyn,  
 of mo thanne of two partes that is here pleyn, 1224 but more  
 than two-  
 thirde of the  
 women pres-  
 ent are  
 guilty.  
 more than twey partes of wommen that ben here.  
 and my modyr was neuere 3it gyilty  
 with non man jn Swich maner of foly ; 1228  
 but swich a body as hire was take,

1194. MS. *compenye*.

sche hath forth browht with gret wrake.  
and, Sire justice, but thou leve me,  
axe this good man here openle." 1232

The hermit  
is asked,  
and testifies  
her inno-  
cence,

the justices axeden this goodman tho  
3if it be—"as he seith vs vnto."  
"3e," quod this good man, "ful Sekerly,  
sche hath me told ful feithfully, 1236

the devil  
being the  
offender.

ful often & with ful weping chere,  
that jn Mannes compenye neuere sche were,  
but that welfowle Encombred sche was  
with the fals Enemy jn hire owne plas, 1240  
hire thus Encombrede jn slepyng ;

[leaf 93 c]

And vppon my Sowle to taaken this thing.  
but jn alle my lyf here before  
herde j nevere of swich thing spoken ore." 1244

Merlin re-  
minds the  
hermit of  
the book.

thanne spak Merlyne a3en Ryht tho,  
and this goodman spak vnto :

"3e han it don j-wreten Jn a book,  
my concepsiown, and 3e wyle lok, 1248  
and þerby mown 3e ful wel knowe  
the lyveng of my modir al this throwe."

"thou seist soth," quod this good man,  
"lytel wot thy modyr whens þat thou cam." 1252

The women  
are ques-  
tioned,

thanne cleped they forth these two wommen,  
and axeden hem wheþer it were so then,  
& also Enqwerede aftyr thengendrure  
and aftyr his birthe, j 3ow Ensure. 1256

and their  
testimony  
agrees with  
the book.

3if that the goode holy Mannes book  
and they acorden, they wylen look.  
So that these wommen and the book acordid wel,  
of the goodmannes wrytyng, Everydel. 1260

Yet the  
judges are  
not satisfied.

3it thanne seide the justices tho,  
For this scholde sche be qwynt neuere the mo.

Merlin,  
growing  
angry,

Thanne merlyn gan to wraththen hym Sore,  
and ful angerly to the justice spak thore : 1264

"J knowe moche Bettere my fadyr, Jn fay,  
thanne thou dost thyn, J dar wel Say,

1239. *welfowle*, *w* through correction.

1249. *3e* added above the line.

- and thy modyr knoweth bettere, certeinly, .  
 ho that the be-gat, j telle þe feythfully, 1268  
 Bettere thanne my modyr, j sey 3ow pleyn, .  
 For sche knew neuere my Fadyr, jn certeyn.  
 and therefore, Sire Justice, J telle to the  
 that thy modyr more worthy Js, brent to be, 1272  
 For sche is fals to hire lord so dere,  
 and so was neuere my modyr jn non manere."  
 thanne was this justice wondyr angry tho,  
 and thus to that child he Spak vnto : 1276  
 "3if of my modir Swich thing thou konne seye,  
 J schal the holden for trewe, jn feye."  
 thanne seide merlyn agen to hym there :  
 " Ful wel knowe j thy modrys manere, 1280  
 that moche more sche hath decerved to be ded  
 thanne evere dyde my modyr jn ony sted.  
 and but 3if thou fynde that j trewe seye,  
 hardylich let Ellis my modyr deye." 1284  
 thanne seide the justyse to hym ageyn :  
 " 3if thou konne proven that thou seist pleyn,  
 Thy modyr from brenneng schalt thou save,  
 and al thyn owne axeng thou schalt have . . . 1288  
 but natheles, and it be as thou dost telle,  
 thanne schal j don brene bothe ful snelle,  
 bothe myn owne modyr and ek thyn,  
 and Bryngen hem bothe to a schort fyn." 1292  
 " that schal neuere lyn Jn thy powere  
 my modyr to deth to putten here,  
 whiles that thou lyvest here, ony threwe,  
 For 3if nede be, mo Skiles j schal the Schewe." 1296
- Thanne anon respyt gonnen they take  
 For the justices modris Sake,  
 xv dayes thanne next Sewenge,  
 hire forto bringen to Rekenenge, 1300  
 and diden hire seke bothe fer & nygh,  
 To hire answer to comen apertly.

brings an  
accusation  
against the  
chief judge's  
mother.

The irate  
judge tells  
him to prove  
it, and his  
mother shall  
be free.

Merlin says  
he can.

The judge  
first renews  
his promise,

then threat-  
ens to burn  
both the  
mothers.

Merlin defies  
him.

A summons  
is sent to the  
judge's  
mother.

1268. *that, at* blurred. 1274. *so* added above the line.

1284. *modyr, r* on erasure.

1295. *threwe*, the first *e* corrected from *o*.



In the mean-  
time, Merlin  
remains  
silent.

and jn the mene while they Enqwered there  
of that child Jn diuers manere, 1304

but neuere to hem wolde he speken non word,  
Tyl the day cam of here acord,

and whanne this womman comen was,  
The Justices modyr, Jnto that plas. 1308

On her ar-  
rival, Merlin  
is confronted  
with her  
before the  
people.

thus cam the justices modyr thedyr jn hye ;  
thanne merlyn was after sent, trewlye,  
owt of preson Jn hasty manere . 1312

to-forn the peple to comen there.  
thanne seide the justice to merlyn tho :  
" lo, here my modir, that thou spoke offen so ! "

He suggests  
more private  
proceedings,  
indoors.

thanne seyde the child to hym ageyn :  
" thou ne art ful wys, j telle the pleyn ! 1316

Tak thy modyr jnto a chambre anon  
and of thy beste frendes, and þedir 3e gon,  
and þere to-foren 3ow J schal come  
Jn excuseng of my modyr al & Some, 1320

which that knoweth god almyhty  
and also hire confessour, ful sothfastly."

Nobody  
objects.

thanne abasched weren they Sore,  
that they ne cowde Speken wordis no more. 1324

When in the  
room, Merlin  
puts some  
preliminary  
questions to  
the judge,

thanne seide merlyne to hem Echon :  
" 3if j delyvere my modir of this cryme anon,  
schal sche thanne ony more jn warde be  
for 3ow oper for ony of this Meyne ? " 1328

thanne answerid the justice to hym ageyn :  
" sche schal ben ful qwyt thanne, jn certayn."  
thanne seide the justyce to merlyn tho :  
" Now sey to my modyr that thou kanst do, 1332

be whiche thy modir qwit scholde be ;  
haue j-do, and sey on here to-fore ME ! "

and indicates  
the connec-  
tion of the  
two cases.

" j schal non thing vppon thy modyr seye  
but that schal my modyr aqwytten, jn good feye. 1336

and 3if sche have forfeled wylling,  
j wile that thou to deth hire bryng.  
hast not thou Enswred me  
and also my modyr, ful certeinle, 1340

1315. MS. *just* crossed out after *the*.

1320. *al, l* corrected from *c*.

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"jt be-houeth," quod merlyne, "that 3e here telle  
 ho was 3oure sonnes fadyr, ful snelle, 1380  
 For wel 3e weten, his Fadyr he nas  
 Of hym that he supposith jn this plas."  
 thanne baschet the Lady wondir sore,  
 & axede merlyne hos sone ellis he wore. 1384  
 "Ful wel knowest thou," quod merlyn tho,  
 "that thou seist, it nis not So,  
 but a prestis sone of 3owre he js ;  
 this woste thou wel, with-owten mys, 1388  
 be this same tokene, j telle the,  
 that thou to hym seidest in prevyte.  
 Ne hadde 3e but Selde to-gederis leyn,  
 that to hym thou seydest, ful pleyn, 1392  
 that be hym with childe thou were ;  
 and he seide : ' nay, haue 3e non fere !'  
 thanne seide he, that scholde neuere be,  
 Be hym with childe gon, Sykerle. 1396  
 and for this skele thus seide he, trewelye,  
 For thou schost medlen with non mannes compenye.  
 and 3it more dyde he therto :  
 as often as he with 3ow medlyd so, 1400  
 he put jt anon jn Scripture ;  
 that j seye, is soth, j 3ow ensure.  
 thanne was jt told to 3oure lord  
 of 3oure manere, every word, 1404  
 but with fals othes 3e to hym dyd swere  
 that it not so was Jn non manere.  
 thanne vnnethis wolde 3e abyde,  
 but to 3e preest wente anon that tyde, 1408  
 and seiden to hym with-owten wordis mo :  
 ' Me js be-tyd ful mochel wo,  
 that thus with childe be 3ow am j,  
 J am ful wo-be-gon now, trewly !' 1412  
 dame, js not this trowthe, that j now say ?  
 And here to-fore me sey 3e other Nay !

The lady is  
confused.

Merlin states  
further that  
the judge's  
father is a  
priest,

reveals her  
intimate con-  
versation  
with her  
lover,

his noting  
down of  
each coltion,

and her false  
oaths to her  
husband.

He then asks  
if it is not  
true.

1383. *baschet*, *b* apparently through correction.

1387. *of* (?) added above the line ; 3 through correction, blurred.

1394. *he*, *h* corrected from *f*.

1396. *childs*, *d* through correction, blurred.

- and 3if thow wylt not the sothe beknowe,  
 mochel wers schal j sein afor al this Rowe." 1416
- "modyr," quod the justice, "is this trewe?"  
 "what, sone, levest thou this schrewed hewe?"  
 "A," quod merlyne, "wylt thou thanne so,  
 thanne schal j telle what thou dist mo. 1420
- whanne that thou knew certeyn, þou were *with* childe,  
 thow wentest to purchase, as a womman ful mylde,  
 be the same preest, thi pes to have,  
 of thin owne lord, he scholde þe save, 1424
- and that his owne it was eche del,  
 the wheche was fals, thou knew ful wel.  
 and sethen that tyme, J sey 3ow here,  
 haven 3e bothe lyved that lyf jn fere, 1428
- and 3it 3e lyven bothe jn-to this day ;  
 Takith this for trowthe, as j 3ow say.  
 and the Nyht to-fore that 3e scholde gone,  
 that preest, to 3ow he cam fulsone, 1432
- and browht 3ow a gret pece on the weye,  
 and thus to 3ow tho gan he seye :  
 'loke that jn alle thyng 3e fulfille  
 that my sone to 3ow schal sein vntylle.' " 1436
- Whanne the justices modyr herde hym so seyn,  
 and that he seide, was trowthe, ful pleyn,  
 Thanne gan sche Syghen & maken gret mone. 1440
- Thanne thus sche thowhte be hire-selve Alone,  
 that Nedis the trowthe moste sche Seye  
 oþer elles to ben confowndid vtterlye.  
 thanne hire sone seide to hire ageyn :  
 " hos sone j am, telleth me now pleyn. 1444
- For wel j wot, J am 3oure child,  
 & to 3ow j am bothe mek and myld.  
 Telle me now trowthe, j 3ow preye,  
 of that this child doth here Seye ! " 1448
- " Now, Swete sone, haue mercy on me !  
 as he Seyth, it is, ful Sekyrle."  
 " ha thanne," quod the justice tho,

She still  
denies it.

Merlin goes  
on to state

that she  
bought her  
husband's  
silence,

continued her  
adulterous  
life with the  
priest,

and spent  
with him the  
very last  
night before  
her de-  
parture.

Then the  
judge's  
[leaf 94b]  
mother  
breaks down,

and pleads  
guilty.

1440. *thowhte*, *ht* through correction.

1443. *seide* added above the line.

The judge  
understands  
that Merlin's  
mother is  
innocent,

“ Now j se wel how it doth go !  
this child knoweth bettere his fadyr, j-wis,  
thanne j do myn, with-owten mys.

1452

Now se j that it were non resown  
thy modir oper the to don distrocciown.

1456

and implores  
him to name  
his father.

For for goddis love, telle þou me here  
what maner of wyht thy fadyr were.”

Merlin re-  
lates

thanne seide merlyne to hym ageyn :

“ that schal j gladliche, jn certeyn,  
more for thy love thanne for thy drede,  
j sey the certeyn, so god me spede !

1460

Syre, j wele that thou knowe, trewely,  
that on my mody[r] me engendred the enemy.

1464

that his  
father is an  
evil spirit of  
the order  
called “ Equi-  
bedes,”

For Sweche Spirites as they be,  
ben j-cleped Equibedes, j telle the ;  
and from the Eyr jnto the Erthe they gon  
Swich maner of werkys here forto don.

1468

And knowe thou wel, justice, certeinlye,

that j haue bothe here wyt and memorye,

and by hem knowe j ful wel

thy modris werkyng everydel.

1472

For thinges that ben past, j knowe,  
and thinges that ben comeng vppon a rowe.

And also it is owre lordis wille

that bothe wit & memorye j schal have þere-tylle

1476

on his behalve, more thanne a Naturel man

jn this Erththe knoweth oper kan,

for the love of my modir so dere,

that hire penaunce fulfilde here,

1480

that the goodman ʒaf hire jn charge

(sche it fulfylde bothe fully and large) ;

that so be vertu of hire goodnesse

God graunttyd me ʒit more largesse :

1484

to knowen thynges that weren comenge,

J sey the, justice, with-owten lesynge.

and this schalt þou proven ryht wel

and the sothe to knowen every del.”

1488

To prove  
this,

1464. MS. *than on my mody* ; in *engendred* the *e* of the second syllable is corrected from *r*.

1468. *werkys*, *r* corrected from *k*.

- Anon he took the justice on syde,  
& thus him told that jlike tyde : he predicts
- “Thy modyr wil discoueren me anone,  
come sche hom ones, neuere so sone, 1492  
and tellen to him that the be-gat,  
alle that j haue to the seid and what.  
and whanne that he wot al this,  
For drede of þe thanne wyle he fleen, j-wys. 1496 the tragic  
thanne the deuel, whos servaunt he hath be, end of the  
priest.  
to a water schal leden hym ful pryvyle,  
and þere he schal hym-self distroye,  
his owne Sowle to gret anoye. 1500  
and hereby myhtest þou haue knoweng  
that j can tellen of thinges comeng.”  
“Now, and it be trewe as thou tellest me,  
Evere schal j the trosten ful feith-fulle, 1504 The judge  
and Neuere j schal the misbeleve declares that  
if that comes  
true, he will  
ever believe  
him.  
For non man that owht can on þe preve.”
- Thanne thus owt of cownseyl gounen they go, [leaf 94 c]  
and to-fore the peple come they tho, 1508 They go out  
and there schewed the justice anon, Sykerle, again to the  
people,  
that ful wel aqwit his modyr hadde he, and Merlin's  
mother is  
released.  
bothe be good Resown and be Ryht—  
“thus hath he his modyr from the deth now dyht.” 1512  
thanne joyeden the peple Everychon, The people  
rejoice.  
and thankede god he hadde so don.  
So thus delyverede merlyne tho  
his modyr from Brenneg, peyne, & wo. 1516
- and merlyne with the justice beleste Styllle,  
For he thowhte to werkyn aftyr his wylle,  
and sente tweyne men with his modir anon,  
To weten how that cawse scholde goon, 1520 The judge  
also to knowen 3if it trewe were sends two  
spies to  
watch his  
mother.  
that this chyld hath told hym there.  
Assone as his modyr hom comen was,  
sche tolde the preest al the cas 1524 Arrived  
of the merveilles Everychon home, she  
tells the  
priest every-  
thing.

1496. MS. of þe, added above the line.

1515. So, S corrected from a.

1516. MS. Brënnëg.

that toforn hire sone was seid & don.

Anon as the preest herde of this,

fulsore thanne was he astoned, j-wis,

1528

He is afraid  
of the judge,

and supposid the justice wold hym slo.

thanne wyste he neuere what to do,

but owt of the town he wente anon,

and drowns  
himself.

Thanne to a ryvere he cam thus son,

1532

and pere he dyde hym-Self dystroye,

For the justice hym schold not anoye.

lo, thus the devel with hym wrowhte,

tyl that he hadde browht hym to nowhte.

1536

and this openly Syen thike twey men,

that hom with that lady comen then ;

The spies  
report it to  
the judge.

and whanne to the juge they comen ageyn,

of alle this aventure they tolden hym, certeyn.

1540

& whanne the justice herde al this,

anon he merveilled ful gretly, j-wis,

and there to merlyn told it thus sone ;

thanne began this merlyn to lawhen anone.

1544

On Merlin's  
request,

“ Now j preye the, justice,” quod Merlyn tho,

“ that to holy Blase thou wost tellen this vnto,

wich that is my modris confessour,

a ful holy man Ju Everych ovr.”

1548

the judge  
tells it to  
the hermit,  
the holy  
Blasy.

thanne tolde the justice to Blase, ful pleyn,

how that this aventure befyl, certeyn.

thanne wente merlyn and his modyr jn fere,

the justice and Blase, alle to-gederis there,

1552

and wente whider hem likede best,

Jnto what place as hem best lest.

Blasy won-  
ders at the  
child's  
faculties,

This Blasye a worthy clerk he was,

and mochel merveille hadde in pat plas

1556

that so zong a child as was he,

Swich wit scholde haue jn ony degre,

that but two 3er and an half he was old,

and that he was so wis, so Redy, and so bold ;

1560

he merveilled whens it scholde be,

& assaied merlyne jn ful many degre.

thanne seide merlyne to hym ageyn :

and tests him  
in many  
ways.

1533. *dystroye*, the first *y* corrected from *r*.

“ þe more that þou me asayeest, jn oertheyn, 1564  
 . . . . .  
 . . . . .  
 3if thou wilt me trosten and beleve,  
 of the love of god j schal the preve,  
 the whiche to Endeles lyf it schal þe brynge,  
 and thou wilt don aftyr my techinge.” 1568  
 thanne answerede this Blasye ageyn :  
 “ what? toforn this tyme j haue herd seyn  
 that only the develis sone thou were,  
 How schost thou thanne swich thynges Don Here?” 1572  
 “ lo,” quod merlyne, “ a custowme it Js  
 of alle schrewed hertis, J-wys,  
 that [they] rathere the Evel thanne good scholen speke,  
 on here em-oristene to ben awreke. 1576  
 thou seist, the develis sone that j am,  
 as þou myhtest han seid, from god þat j cam,  
 and that he graunted me bothe wit & memorye ;  
 what schold it han greved the thus to seye ? 1580  
 For it is goddis wille that j knowe  
 thinges to-comeng vppon a Rowe,  
 only for the same Enchesown  
 that þe devel hath me forgon. 1584  
 and 3it haue j not \* myn Engyneng,  
 that of kynde j hadde atte begynneng,  
 but of me scholen they neuere han power,  
 for that han they lost Everywher, 1588  
 For me to putten jn so worthy a vessel,  
 of wheche hadde they part neuere a del,  
 and jn Swich a maner conceyved they me,  
 For they knew not of goddis prevyte. 1592  
 and þerfore alle j-lost they bene ;  
 of this be thou Seker and not jn wene.  
 and loke thou beleve that j schal seyn,  
 For of merveilles j schal tellen the, ful pleyn, 1596  
 of whiche thou wylt haue gret merveylling,

Merlin asks Blasy to trust him.

Blasy reminds him of the fact that he is the devil's son.

[leaf 94 d]

Merlin reproves him,

and says he has come from God,

as God has given him divinatory power,

and the devils have lost their share in him.

He asks him again to believe in his predictions,

1564. *asayeest*, the first *a* squeezed in afterwards.  
 1567. *Endeles*, *E* partly obliterated. 1575. MS. *that rathere*.  
 1585. A participle (*forgon*, *j-lost*, *lost*?) is missing.  
 1592. *they* added above the line.



how sweche wyttes myhte jnto ony man synk.

and write  
them in a  
book.

Blayse, anon that thow make a book,  
for here-aftyr many man schal þer-on look." 1600

thanne seide Blayse to merlyne anon :

"A book may j do maken ful sone,

Blasy con-  
jures Merlin  
not to deceive  
him.

but j coniwre þe be on god of myhtes most,  
which is fadir, sone, & holygost, 1604

that thou nowht deceyve me,

Nethir be thy werk engyned to be,

Ne to werkyn non thing azens goddis wylle,

Ne nothyng to don that scholde plesen hym ylle." 1608

Merlin pro-  
mises to  
forsake what-  
ever Blasy  
finds wrong.

"ha, Sire Blayse," quod merlyne tho,

"and j azens goddis wille ony thing do,

Loke that þou telle it me anon,

and j wele beleven jt thusson. 1612

but gete the bothe penne, jnke, and parchemyn,

this book to be-gynnen and Bryngen to fyn,

and j schal the tellen Every del

how that this book þou schalt wryten ful wel." 1616

Blasy gets  
his writing  
materials,

Thanne Blayse anon, so god me save,

dide ordeynen alle thinges him Nedid to have ;

and whanne that al thing redy was,

and Merlin  
tells him

thanne cam merlyn jnto that plas, 1620

and anon be-gan him telle

of Christ,

of cristes deth, how it befelle,

of Joseph of  
Arimathia,

also of Josepe of armathye,

how of hym it happede, trewelye, 1624

and of Aleyn, and of Perown also,

& of his compenye, how they departid tho.

and thus endyd he of josepe there

& of al his Feleschepe also jn fere, 1628

and gan to tellen hym furtherere more

and of the  
consultation  
of the devils.

of þe parlement of þe develis thore,

and how thei conseylled hem be-twen

that a child jn the erthe j bore schold ben 1632

that here wyt scholde haue & ek memorye,

1598. *man* corrected from *many*.

1603. *þe* squeezed in afterwards.

1631. *thei*, *i* squeezed in afterwards.

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# HISTORY

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the reader  
is referred  
to Martin de  
Beure's  
"History of  
Brute."

They scholen hem fynde, hos so that it sowht,  
jn the Story of Brwttes book ;  
there scholen 3e it fynde, and 3e welen look ; 1672  
which that Martyn de Bewre traunslated here  
From latyn jnto romaunce jn his manere.  
but leve we now of Brwttes book,  
and aftyr this storye now lete vs look. 1676

Chap. II.  
King Costan-  
tin of Britain  
[leaf 95 b]

Jn Bretaygne somtyme a kyng there was  
That costantyn was clepid jn that plas,  
Wheche that A gret Whyle Regnede there,  
and was a man of ful gret powere. 1680

has three  
sons :

and thre sones hadde that same kyng,  
whiche that weren but Bachelerys 3yng.  
the eldest Sone costantyn hyghte ;  
the secund Awrely Ambros was clepyd ryhte, 1684

Costantin,

Pendragon,  
and Uter.

Owthor Pendragon, whethyr 3e wylen haue ;  
the thrydde hyhte vter, so god me Save !  
this costantyn hadde a man jn his lond  
That hyghte Fortager, as j vndirstond ; 1688

His greatest  
vassal is  
Fortager.

When the  
king dies,

This Fortager was holden a ful wis man.  
and happede costantyn an old man was than,  
So that be Nature of kynde he deyde.  
thanne the cownseyl amonges hem Seyde, 1692  
and axeden ho scholde ben here kyng.

his eldest  
son, Costan-  
tin, becomes  
king,

Anon thus becomen they jn emparlyng.  
thussone thanne acordid they Everychon  
the eldest Sone to maken kyng anon, 1696  
whiche that hyghte costantyn

with the good  
will of For-  
tager,

(Fulsone of his regne made he his fyn) ;  
for azens Resown hadde it be  
ony oper kyng to han mad, sekerle. 1700

To this emparlyng acordyd fortager  
and also alle the Barowns that weren ther.  
so that alle the cownseylle assented, Sykerle,  
That this Fortager Styward schold be, 1704

1670. *it* added above the line.

1681. *hadde* added above the line.

1686. *The* corrected from *Te*. 1690. *an*, *a* corrected from *o*.

bothe the kyng and the rewme to governen alle,  
what maner of adventures so myghte befall.

and under his  
protection.

And thus this Fortager, in certeyn,  
of al that rewme his wil he hadde, ful pleyn, 1708

Sawf only Constans occupied the crowne,  
but more governaunce ne hadde he, nethir vpe ne downe.

So that this Fortager, beloved & dred he was  
Ouer al the Rewme, in every plas; 1712

Fortager is  
both loved  
and dreaded.

For bothen wys and witty he was holde,  
but ouerprowd wax he mani folde.

For in that Rewme, in non degre  
myghte non man so moche don as dyde he. 1716

So that hit happede vppon a day  
that there aryvede a Navye with gret aray.

One day, a  
hostile fleet  
lands.

Thanne the kyng wente anon to Fortager,  
and anon fulfaire hym preyde ther  
his Lond to helpen forto defende  
with oþer helpe he wolde aftyr sende. 1720

King Costan-  
tin goes to  
Fortager for  
help,

“For we ben alle at þowre comandement,  
bothen j & al this rewme, verament.” 1724

“Syre,” quod Fortager to the kyng,  
“the peple of þoure hauen me in hatyng;  
therefore let hem helpen now þow here,

but is re-  
fused.

For j ne schal entermeten in non manere,  
Nethyr for non man that doth me praye,  
Ne for non thing that ony man kan saye.” 1728

Whanne that kyng costantyn herde this,  
and ek þe peple þat with him þere was, j-wis,

The king re-  
turns home,

That of hym Socour scholde they han non,  
homwardis azen they gonne to gon,  
and ordeyned hem in eche degre 1732

with here enemyes to fyhten, ful sekylle. 1736  
but of here enemyes scomfyted they were,  
and anon to the flyht they weren put there,

and is de-  
feated by his  
enemies.

and losten manye of here meyne,  
Of wheche dethes was gret pyte, 1740

1719. *wente*, added above the line.

1737. *Scomfyted they*, *d t* damaged (hole in the paper).

[leaf 95 c]

And seyden that thyke los Hem not scholde Han falle,  
and Fortager hadde ben amongis hem alle.

The people  
grow dis-  
satisfied with  
the king,

that so towardis the kyng they fillen jn hate,  
and from hym widdrowen bothe erly and late,  
So that of evel herte they seiden hem be-twene  
that he non lengere here kyng Schold beene.

1744

and ask For-  
tager to be  
king instead.

Thanne to this Fortager comen they anon,  
and þere to him they seiden thus son :

1748

“Sire, with-owten kyng we be,

and that is nowht worth, Sire, parde ;

So that for goddis love be thou kyng

azens owre Enemyes jn defendyng.

1752

For we knowen non man jn al this lond

That so wel vs scholde governe, as j vndirstond.”

Fortager says  
he will not,  
as long as the  
king is alive.

thanne quod Fortager to hem ageyn :

“As longe as the kyng lyveth, jn certeyn,

1756

Neuere non kyng ne schal j be,

nethyr of non thyng to entermeten me.”

thanne seiden they to him jn fere :

“jt is vs levere, the kyng ded were.”

1760

“3if he were ded,” thanne quod he,

“and 3e liked thanne kyng to maken me,

thanne wolde j don my powere

3ow to defende bothe fer & nere.”

1764

They under-  
stand his  
meaning,

whanne they vndirstodyn his meneng,

anon from hym they maden departyng,

and tolden here frendis of his answer,

how that Fortager to hem seide there.

1768

and decide to  
murder the  
king.

“thanne is it bettere that we þe kyng sle,

and thanne may fortageroure kyng be,

and that be vs kyng he is mad,”

thus ech of hem to othir seid.

1772

and so wile he thanne fulfillen hire wille—

“and to owre cownseyl consentyn vntylle.”

Twelve men  
are chosen  
for the pur-  
pose.

thanne chosen they anon amonges hem alle

be whom this aventure myhte befalle,

1776

So that amonges hem weren there twelfe

that this aventure token on hem-selve.

1741. *not* added above the line.1759. MS. *hem*.1760. *vs, v* corrected from *l*.

- So forth this xij wenten anon,  
and jnto þe kynges halle comen thus son,  
and so there with here swerdis so kene  
at his mete here kyng dyden they slene  
(and 3it was there non man jn the halle tho  
That ony word hem dorst speken vnto),  
and wenten anon to Fortager,  
& tolden hym how they hadden don ther.  
thanne Semblawnt of wraththe Fortager gan make  
(but operwyse jn his herte he gan it Take),  
and thus to hem he seyde tho :
- “Evel han 3e don 3oure kyng to Slo!  
and the Beste men j wende 3e hadde been  
that jn al this rewme a man Scholde seen ;  
& perfore riht sore it forthinketh me  
that ony swich thing be 3ow scholde be.”  
but algates thus was the kyng ded  
be thike xij false Mennes Reed.  
thanne gonnen they to spekyn hem be-twene  
how that Fortager here kyng scholde bene.  
At wheche cownceyl weren two goode men,  
that þe tothere tweyne bretheren kepten than,  
bothen Awriele and ek vter,  
the kynges bretheren that last was ther.
- Whanne these tweyne goode men vndirstood this,  
that Fortager scholde ben kyng, j-wys,  
Thanne knewen they that mater ful Wel,  
that be hym this thyng was don Echedel.  
Anon token they cownceyl betwixen hem two  
what with theke chyldren myhten they do.  
“Sethen that Fortager oure lord hath do slayn,  
So wele he these two children, jn certayn.  
For anon as that he kyng Js,  
Ful mochel sorwen he wyle werkyn, j-wis.  
and we loveden here Fadyr ful wel,  
For be hym oure goodes we hadden moche del ;
- 1780 The con-  
spirers slay  
the king in  
his hall.
- 1784
- 1788 When they  
tell Fortager  
of their deed,  
he pretends to  
be angry,
- and rebukes  
them.
- 1792
- 1796 However, the  
people speak  
of Fortager as  
the successor  
to the throne.
- 1800 At the meet-  
ing there are  
two men  
present who  
have the care  
of Pendragon  
and Uter.
- 1804 They under-  
stand Forta-  
ger's under-  
hand  
[leaf 95 d]  
dealings,
- 1808
- and the  
danger which  
threatens  
their wards.
- 1812 Out of grati-  
tude to the  
father,

1784. *hem*, *e* through correction.1800. *tweyne*, *we* damaged (cf. footnote to l. 1737).1810. *he* added above the line.

and therefore worthy j-blamed weren we  
deseysse to sen be hem Jn ony degre." 1816

they resolve to  
flee with the  
children

thanne thus token they here cownseyl,  
that they thennes wolde fien sauuz fayl,  
and that the children scholde with hem go,  
lest that Fortager hem wolde don slo. 1820

to Wales.

"So þat therfore, Siker, avised we be  
Forto Fleen jnto a straunge contre,  
and towardes wales welen we go,  
and ek the children with vs bothe two." 1824

The princes  
grow up in  
Bourges.

So that they wenten forth here weye,  
thike worthy goode men bothe tweye ;  
So that jn a oyte dweldyn they thanne  
that Boorges was clepid of many a manne ; 1828  
and there longe j-norsched weren they bothe,  
with these goode men, j sey 3ow forsothe.

After  
Fortager's  
coronation,

Now thanne scheweth this Storyo  
how that Fortager kyng was, Sekerlye. 1832  
and whanne that Sacrid he was kyng,

the murder-  
ers appear  
before him  
again.

thanne to hym these Barowns woren comeng,  
the same that Slowen kyng costantyn  
(therfore hadden they ful Evele fyn), 1836  
and stoden tofor Fortager vppon a rowe,

He at first  
pretends not  
to know  
them,

& countenaunce he made as he cowde not hem knowe,  
& lyk as to-Fore he ne hadde neuere hem seyn ;  
this cowntenaunce made Fortager, jn certeyn. 1840

then, when  
they urge the  
service they  
have rendered  
him,

thanne they to hym aproched Neer,  
and thus they seide to kyng fortager :  
"by vs a kyng J-mad thow were,  
& kyng costance we slowen for the here." 1844

and whanne kyng Fortager herde this,

Anon he leet hem to be taken, j-wis.

"For ded moste 3e Nedys been,  
For 3owre owne juggement hauen 3e 3oven clen, 1848  
That seyn 3e slowen 3owre owne lord,  
3e mosten be ded be 3owre owne word.

j se wel, the same wele 3e don be me,  
but j schal 3ow bettere don kepen, Sykerle." 1852

has them  
arrested,  
[leaf 96 a]  
sentences  
them to  
death,

and whanne the xij Barowns herde this, Ful sore they weren abasched, j-wys. So that thanne Fortager ryht anon let hem don drawen everichon, and to hors hem bond, & so to-drowe, and thus these xij knyhtes he slowe ; For of hem non pece with othyr lefte, So that from the Bodyes Jt was reſte.	1856	and causes them to be drawn asunder by horses.
thanne these men that distroyed were, moche worthy kynrede hadden they there. and to Fortager comen they anon, and seiden : “ mochel schame hast þou vs don, that thououre kynrede hast thus slayn and so veleynowsly to deth hem put, certayn. For neuere Servise we scholen the do, for þououre kynrede thus dydest Slo.” whanne Fortager herde they gonnen hym manace, anon angry was he jn that place, and seide, 3if they Spoken ony more, the same jewys scholden they han thore. of wheche wordis they hadden gret dyspyt, as who that ful lytel doweden jt, and seiden to Fortager there anon : “ thow dost vs manacen everichon, but we don the to vndirstonde : As longe as we han Frendis oper Londe, Gold other Sylver, owther oper entaylle, the schal nethyr failen werre ne bataylle. and we defyen the what thou kanst do, For falsly the kyngdom occupiest thou so, and Falaly & vntrewely occupyest the crowne, with-owten ryht Skele owther Resowne. for wete thow wel, Ryht jn good feye, as evel deth 3it schalt thou deye.” So that thus, jn this manere degre, betwixen the kyng & þe barowns began þe melle ; and gret peple asembled vppon a day, and on Fortager they comen, the sothe to say,	1860	Their relatives expostulate,
	1864	
	1868	and menace the king.
	1872	He angrily threatens them with the same fate.
	1876	They defy him,
	1880	vow venge- ance,
	1884	rail at his treachery,
	1888	and predict for him an evil end.  Thus a feud arises ;

1871. MS. *seiden*.1876. *Manacen*, *na* on erasure, the *a* corrected from *e*.



the king sustains heavy losses,

& gret distrocciown diden him there,  
and of his token they many presonere.

1892

So that jn this wyse kyng Fortager  
that Lond governede longe there,

but gets the upper hand.

and hem drof owt of the lond  
as For a whyle, as j vndirstond.

1896

On account of his cruelty, also his own people rise against him.

Whanne owt of þe lond they were drevyn echon,

Ful spetous to his peple he be-cam anon,  
that amonges hem Suffren it myht they not longe,

1900

but azens hym to rysen gonnen they fonge,  
and benomen hym gret partye of his lond,

and with strenkthes on hym comen, j vndirstond.

whanne that Fortager vndirstood this,

Ful sorweful was he thanne j-wys,

1904

and wende his Lond to hauen forgon.

He then offers reconciliation,

thanne abowten messageris sente he ful son

to alle his Frennis Jn eche contre,

that al abowtes jn his rewm pes forto be.

1908

which is gladly accepted.

and whanne they vndirstooden that pes wolde he,

Ful glad weren they alle, ful sekerle.

[leaf 96 b]

Thanne cam Augwys to Fortager,

During these struggles, he has had the help of a heathen man, Augwis, who now gives him his daughter in marriage. The people strongly object to this.

and hym Servede ful longe ther,

1912

tyl that al his stryf were j-don.

thanne Augwis and Fortager to-gederis spoken son,

and his owne dowhter he ʒaf hym to wyve,

wherfore his peple wraththed as blyve,

1916

for þat he lefte a part of his creaunce,

benchesown of his wyf, with-owte variaunce,

and for that cristened not sche was,

his meynes love lost he jn that plas;

1920

and that wyste wel kyng Fortager.

As danger threatens also from the two exiled princes,

and also of costantynes sones he dredde ther,

whiche that weren jn strawnge contre,

hym wolde owt-seken, ful Sykyrle,

1924

Ful wel he wyste, not for his prow,

as Sykerly as that j telle it ʒow.

thanne thowhte he forto do maken anon

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- of his towr and of the Fallyng.  
 thanne of the wisest clerkes took he anon,  
 and jnto cownseyl gonne they gon, 1968  
 & axede hem, 3if they knewen ony Resown,  
 why that his werk fyl so a-down.  
 "For, sekerly, it is j-told to me  
 that but be 3ow wyst it may not be." 1972  
 thanne answerid they hym jn here manere  
 That of sweche Craft knew they not there.  
 "but Somme clerkys here amongis vs ben  
 that of Astronomey konnen, as j wen." 1976  
 thanne quod fortager: "enqweryth 3e  
 whiche of 3oure felesche[pe] that jt be."  
 thanne Ech of hem axeden oper there  
 whiche of that craft konneng were. 1980  
 thanne of that compenye weren there tweyne  
 that of that craft cowden, certeyne,  
 as Mochel as ony men lyveng;  
 thus was jt reported to the kyng. 1984  
 that so the clerkes Emparled Jn fere,  
 that atte laste of hem sevene there were,  
 and they weren lad anon to-fore the kyng  
 Forto tellen hym the aventure of this thing. 1988  
 thanne axede hem the kyng anon  
 3if owht of that craft cowde they don,  
 and why that his Towr ne myhte not stonde,  
 hym forto telle that, myhten [they] fonde. 1992  
 and they seiden that they cowden wel  
 of that cas tellen hym Every del.  
 thanne swoor the kyng, so god hym save,  
 they scholde han what good that they wolde have. 1996  
 thanne departyd this cownseille anon  
 of these clerkis there Everychon.  
 and theke same sevene beleften there style  
 The kynges Talent there to fulfille, 2000  
 Forto schewen there here konneng,  
 alle the cause of the Towris fallyng.

1969. MS. *axede*. 1978. MS. *felesche*; cf. ll. 1628, 2440.1992. MS. *hym forto that myhtē fonde* with *telle* added above the line.1994. MS. *hem*.

These clerkis gonnen to stodyen welsore, and eche of hem there provede his lore ;	2004	set to work,
So that the more they stodyed, þe forthere they were. thanne cam the kyng and axede hem there, how that j-scholde stondyn of his thyng.	2007	and got on fairly,
And as 3it thanne cowden they telleñ him non tydyng, but axeden hym viij dayes of respyt. thanne quod the kyng : “ wel me lykyth Jt, but loke that 3e otterly be that day of my towr the sothe that 3e me say.”	2012	but do not arrive at a definite conclusion. They then obtain a re- spite of eight days.
Thanne wenten they to here counseil ageyn, and eche of hem gan to oþer seyn :		After fresh endeavours,
“ what scholen wee werkyn jn this thing hit Forto Bryngen to a good endyng ? ”	2016	
thanne bespak on of the Sevene there :		
“ let eche be hym-Selve his wyt schewen here, how that jt Semeth hym of this cas, let hym here Schewen jt jn this plas.”	2020	each working by himself,
and eche there schewede his verdit sone, So that alle they acordid jnto one, Sawf that of the towr knew they non thyng what was the cause of the Fallyng.	2024	they all agree that they have not found out the cause of the falling of the tower, but that they, instead, have seen in the stars another wonder:
But on gret merveille there they sye, where-offen alle, ful trewelye, Ful sore abasched alle they were, For that merveille that they syen there,	2028	
that a child jn this Erthe j-boreñ was whiche Erthly Fadir hadde neuere jn non plas. thanne eche of hem to othir gan say :		a fatherless child has been born on earth.
“ Let vs ben avised be the morwe of þe day.”	2032	
Thanne vppon the morwe they sembled Eft sone, and jnto on thing they acordid Echone :		
So that of this child that there was bore, how that his lyf Scholde be forlore,	2036	To have this child killed, and its blood put into the foundation of the tower— [leaf 96 d]
And his blood j-leyd jn the fundement Of that jlke towr, verament, 3if that towr scholde Evere abyde.		

2014. *gan*, *g* through correction. 2025. *syce*, *y* corrected from *e*.  
2030. *whiche*, *e* stuck on to the preceding *h*.

thus they seyden that jlke tyde, 2040

Everich a mayster be hym-self alone,

and thus alle acordid they jn-to one.

“and lete vs maken the kyng thus beleve,

Oþer ellis of oure lyves he wyle vs depreve ; 2044

and that theke child he do seken anon,

also faste as messengeris mown gon.”

thane thus endid they here cownseil there,

that anon so to-forn þe kyng j-browht they were, 2048

and eche be hym-self tolde his avis

afor the kyng there and alle his.

thane, whanne the kyng and alle his cownsaylle

herden hem thus tellen, with-owten faylle, 2052

and seiden alle : “it myhte wel be,

Swich a thing, Jn alle degre,

3if so it be that a man be bore

with-owten Erthly fadyr, as 3e seiden before ; 2056

and thus han 3e me told everyechone,

Ech of 3ow maistres be 3owre one.”

“and but 3e it Fynde as we 3ow say,

Ellis doth be vs what 3ow lyst, jnfay !” 2060

thane seyde the kyng to hem ageyn,

he wolde hem jn warde putten, certeyn,

Tyl that the sothe he myhte knowe.

thane seiden they to hym vppon a rowe : 2064

“ Anon as that he Fownden Js, þat child so 3yng,

Loketh that 3e don hym Slen for ony thyng,

and that the blood be to 3ow browht,

and for non thyng they leven jt nowht.” 2068

the kyng hem putte alle sevens anon

Jn a ful strong hows of lym and ston,

and deliuered hem jn what hem nede was,

therby to ben Sosteyued jn that plas. 2072

Thanne ordeyned the kyng messengeris ful snelle,

xij worthy gentyles, as j 3ow telle,

that they scholden alle anon forth gon

this Fadirles child to seken welson. 2076

and these xij men the kyng made swere,

that is what they resolve to advise the king, in order to hide their ignorance and save their own lives.

The king and his council deem the remedy acceptable.

After the astrologers have repeated their assertion,

and given instructions as to the bringing of the child's blood,

they are locked up in a tower, pending the issue.

Twelve messengers are sent out in search of Merlin ;

they must swear

- that where so Ewere j-fownden he were,  
that they scholden hym Slen anon—  
“and that his Blood jn a sawf place 3e don,  
and that it Sawfly be browht to me,  
though two 3er owte that 3e be.  
and loke that 3e fynden hym for ony thing,  
though that 3e maken the lengere taryeng.”  
and thus the messengeris, forth they gon,  
be tweyne & tweyne here weye token they son,  
and sowhten jn manye dyvers contre  
that child to fynde, 3if hit myhte be.  
So that atte laste fowre metton jn fere,  
as that here aventure behappede there.
- Thus ryden these fowre Jn compenye,  
tyl vppon a day jt happede, ful trowelye,  
Thorwh a fayr medewe as they gone ryde,  
weren many children pleyeng jn that tyde.  
and merlyne, that knew alle thencheson  
of tho messengeris comeng so son,  
and wiste ful wel that they him sowghte,  
anon to a riche mannes sone he rawhte.  
For he wiste ful wel that he wolde wroth be,  
3if that he hym smete, fulle Sykerle ;  
Thanne lefte He vpe His staf Anon  
and overthwert the Schenys smot him thus son.  
Anon this child be-gan to crye  
with a lowd voys ful angerlye,  
and there Reprovyd this merlyne,  
and clepid him “fowle false fowndelyne,  
that Nevere Fadyr haddest thow here,  
thou fowle fowndelyng, thou fals bismere.”  
and whanne 3e messengeris herden of this,  
Towardis that child they drowen, j-wys,  
and hym axede jn here manere  
what he was that hym so smot 3ere.  
thanne answerid the child anon ageyn :  
“It is a wommans sone here, jn certeyn,  
that wot neuere ho that the Fadyr was,  
Nethir ho that him begat, jn non plas.”
- to kill him  
wherever  
they find him.
- 2080
- 2084
- They search,  
two and two  
together, in  
divers  
countries.
- 2088
- Two of these  
pairs acci-  
dentally fall  
in with each  
other,
- 2092
- and one day  
ride together  
through a  
meadow,
- 2096
- where some  
children are  
at play.  
Merlin is one  
of them.  
Knowing the  
errand of the  
messengers,  
he on purpose  
strikes a  
playfellow :
- 2100
- [leaf 97 a]
- 2104
- the latter  
begins to cry,
- 2108
- and calls him  
a nasty  
foundling.
- 2112
- The  
messengers'  
attention is  
roued,  
they question  
the struck  
child,
- 2116

and Merlin himself steps forward and tells them that he is the one they seek.

whanne merlyne herde that he seide so,  
Towardis hem faste he gan to go,  
and spak to hem with a lawheng chere :  
“J am he whom that 3e seken here, 2120

And also hos deth that 3e han swore ;  
lo, here j stonde now 3ow before !  
For that my blood with 3ow scholde 3e bere  
To kyng Fortager jn alle manere.” 2124

The messengers are surprised,

and whanne that the messengeris herden hym seyn so,  
anon thanne alle abasched weren they tho,  
and so tolden hym it was, ful certeynle.  
“3e, that wiste j ful wel longe er 3e.” 2128

and say he must go with them.

thanne seide the messengeris to hym ageyn :  
“with vs mostest thou gon, Jn certeyn.”

He replies that he will gladly do so, if they promise not to kill him.

“that ful gladliche wyl j now do,  
3if it so be that 3e not me Slo.” 2132

but 3it merlyn wiste Ful wel  
pat perto talent hadden they neuere a del.  
but merlyne Seyde this be Enchesown  
To wyten what they wolden seyn anon, 2136

He will also tell why the tower cannot stand.

and seide to hem : “3if that 3e wilen grawnten me  
that 3e welen neither me distroyen ne sle,  
with 3ow wile j gon forto Fonde  
and telle why that þe towr ne may not stonde.” 2140

Still more surprised, they agree rather to be forsworn than slay such a child.

& whanne they herden the child tho speken this,  
thanne mochel more abasched weren they, j-wys,  
and seiden that—“this child wondris doth speke ;  
Jt were pyte on hym to ben awreke.” 2144

So that eche to othyr gan forto seyn :  
“Rathere forsworn scholen we ben, jn certeyn,  
thanne jn ony wyse hym Scholde we Sle,  
Sekyrly, for vs Jt Schal not now be.” 2148

Merlin invites them to stay at his mother's and Holy Blasys's place.

“Sires,” quod merlyne, “with me scholen 3e go,  
and 3owre herberwe j schal bryngen 3ow vnto,  
and loggen jn place there as my modyr js,  
& also anothis good man, with-owten mys ; 2152  
For with-owten here leve j ne may not go,  
Certein, Sires, J sey 3ow vnto.”

Thanne answeryd these messengeris ageyn :

“ With the to gon we ben ful fayn  
jnto what place thow wylt vs lede ;  
with the scholen we go *with-owten drede.*”

2156

They accept  
the invita-  
tion,

So wenten they with merlyn jnto that plas,  
jnto a nonnerye, there his modyr was,  
and merlyne chargede that meyne echon  
Ful good chere the messengeris to don.

2160

and Merlin  
provides  
good cheer.

Anon as that of here hors they weren lyht adown,  
To-forn Blasye he dyde hem comen anon.

2164

In front of  
Blasy, he  
gives a full  
account

“ Lo, Sire,” quod merlyne to Blasye tho,  
“ behold here tho men that me seken to slo.

And j 3ow preye, sires, now alle jn fere  
That trewe Witnessse 3e Welen beren me Here

2168

[leaf 97 b]

To-forn this goodman that here Js,  
3if that j lye owther sey owht amys.

haue j not Told 3ow the cause why  
that 3e me comen to seken, verrayly?”

2172

of the facts:

and they seiden : “ 3is, ful Sykerle !”  
of wheche they wondrid how it myhte be.

thanne seide merlyn to Blayse there :

“ now vndirstondith what j schal sein here.”

2176

To the messengeris thanne seide he tho :

“ Kyng Fortager now comen 3e fro,  
whiche kyng, a gret towr doth he make  
onliche for strengthe for his owne sake,

2180

king Forta-  
ger's tower,

the wheche towr ne may not stonde

its falling,

For non werkyng of mannes honde,  
but that jn an ovr down doth it go,  
as mochel as they maken jn a mounthe oper two.

2184

wherfore that the kyng, ful wroth he js,  
and aftyr his clergyse hath sent, J-wys,  
but of this non Resown conne they telle,

the consulta-  
tion of the  
astrologers,

of that towr, why that it Felle ;

2188

Ne non othir thyng ne cowden they se,  
but that a child born scholde there be  
that hadde non erthly fadyr here.

and vppon this they acordid jn fere,  
that swich a child they scholden sle,

2192 their advice,

and the blood to-forn hym j-browht to be,



- to leyn that blood jn the fundement,  
 thanne scholde the towr stondyn, verament. 2196
- and whanne that þe kyng herde of this,  
 thanne merveilled he mochel here-offen, j-wys.  
 and so the clerkis comanded him anon  
 that nedis this thing scholde be don. 2200
- and anon as they me Fownde,  
 they scholden slen me that jlke stownde,  
 and my blood forth with hem bere  
 to kyng Fortager, tyl they comen there, 2204  
 and don tempre my blood with that mortere ;  
 thanne seiden [they] the towr scholde stondyn there.
- Anon kyng fortager thorwh here Red  
 Sente xij messengeris jn-to Every sted, 2208  
 of wheche xij these fowre now be  
 that hider ben comen forto seken me.  
 but ferst alle xij he mad hem to swere,  
 vppon here Sewraunce, to-forn him there, 2212  
 that be ony weye they scholden me sle  
 the ferste tyme they myhten me Se.
- and as thorwgh the medewe they gonne Ryde  
 where as manye children pleyden that tyde, 2216  
 j knew ful wel here cause anon,  
 and to þe beste of hem alle j gan to to gon,  
 and him there smot j wondyr sore,  
 For that j wyste ful wel before 2220  
 that the werste he wolde sein be me  
 that he cowde onne thinken jn ony degre.  
 and that dede j for non othyr thing,  
 but for these men of me scholden hauen knoweng. 2224  
 Now, maister Blayse," quod merlyne, "j preye the,  
 So axe now of hem zif this trewe be."
- " Now certes, maister," quod the messengeris, " j-wis,  
 Ryht as he seith, forsothe now it Js. 2228  
 as god vs brynge jnto owre contre,  
 Jt is ful trewe that he telleth the."
- " Now certes," quod this maister thanne,  
 "& he mot lyve, he wil ben a wys manne, 2232

the king's  
surprise,

the sending  
of the twelve  
sworn mes-  
sengers,

the meeting  
in the  
meadow,

and the in-  
cident with  
the playmate.

The messen-  
gers confirm  
his words,

Blasy praises  
his wisdom,

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# HISTORY

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han me forlost, and god wyl me save,  
 and me hath chosen to his Servise,  
 Swich forto don as j kan devyse, 2272  
 that non man neper kan don but J,  
 J seye 3ow, maister, ful trewely.  
 and therefore me behoueth to go  
 thedyr as these men comen fro 2276  
 jnto this contre to seken me here ;  
 with hem wyle j forth gon jn fere.  
 and there schal J so moche thing seyn,  
 that þe peple jn me schal beleven, pleyn, 2280  
 and holden me for the wisest man one  
 that on Erthe Js except god alone.  
 and thider schalt þou come and þere fulfylle  
 The werk that j to þe spak of vntylle. 2284  
 but with me thedyr schalt thou not gone,  
 but aftyr thedir schal thow comen alone,  
 and axen jnto Northumberland,  
 þe whiche is a wilde contre, þou vndirstand. 2288  
 and þere schalt þow knowelichyng haue  
 þere forto dwellen and þere to be save.  
 and thider schal j comen to the  
 and the Schewen many diuers secre, 2292  
 & also bryngen to the alle maner of thyng  
 That behoueth to thy werkyng.  
 and ful wel alowed schalt thou be  
 For thy Travaille, ful Sykerle : 2296  
 jn this world, joye to thy lyf,  
 and aftir, Endles blisse with-owten stryf.  
 and as longe as jn this world here  
 that ony man lyveth jn goddis manere, 2300  
 that werk evere beloved schal be  
 and be herd of the peple ful hertyle.  
 and weteth wel that my gret travaylle  
 begynneth not 3it, with-owten Faylle, 2304  
 Ne not ne schal jn non wyse,  
 Tyl that come the fowrthe kyng, a man of pryse.  
 and jn his tyme myn travaylle Schal be,

and chosen  
me for His  
service.

Therefore I  
must go with  
these men to  
their country  
and disclose  
great things.

Thou shalt  
come thither  
later on ;

but now thou  
shalt go to  
Northumber-  
land.

There I will  
visit thee and  
help thee on  
with thy  
work.

Thy reward  
shall be great,

and thy book  
shall be ever  
loved.

As for my  
own great  
labour, it will  
begin only in  
the time of  
the fourth

[leaf 97 d]  
king,

- also the adventures of gret Breteygne, sykirle ; 2308  
 hos Name schal ben kyng Arthowr, whose name shall be Arthur.  
 a ful worthy kyng and of gret honour.  
 thanne schalt thou comen jnto that contre 2312  
 of whiche that ferst [j] told of the. Then thou shalt come into the same country,  
 and thedyr to the schal J fonge  
 Ful often-tymes, Ewere amonge,  
 the forto maken to vndyrstonde  
 alle thynges that ben don jn breteygne londe, 2316  
 and ek that after scholen befalle, and I will tell all things about Britain,  
 Jn thy book to putten hem alle.  
 For wete thou wel, Jn certeyn,  
 mochel more schal it be herd, & more pleyn. 2320  
 For there ne schal nothing jn this lond be,  
 Nethir litel ne mochel, jn non degre,  
 Nethir don ne wrowht jn non manere,  
 That to thy book profitable were, 2324  
 anon jn thy Book it schal be do, for thee to put into thy book,  
 For knowen schal it be for Ewere mo.  
 and the Name of thy Bok schal be  
 J-clepyd seint Graal, ful Sykirle." 2328  
 which shall be called St. Graal."  
 and thus merlyne to his maister spak there,  
 and hym thus tolde jn dyvers manere  
 what maner of thing that he scholde do,  
 Ere that he diparted his maister fro. 2332  
 and "maister" he clepid him for this manere,  
 For maister to his modir he was Everywhere.  
 whanne Blayse with merlyn thus hadde j-spoken,  
 Thanne was his herte jn joye be-loken, 2336  
 and to merlyne he seide anon tho : and Blasy is happy  
 " what so thou comandest me to do, and resigned.  
 and j mowe it don jn ony degre,  
 J schal it don, ful sekerle." 2340
- Thanne anon merlyne tornede ageyn  
 To the messengeres his weye, ful pleyn,  
 and seide that he wolde nedes go  
 his leve of his modir to taken tho. 2344  
 After this, Merlin with the messengers

2312. MS. *ferst told.*2337. *he added above the line.*

goes to take  
leave of his  
mother.

Thanne ledde he these messengeris forth anon,  
and to his modir gonne they gon.

He says that  
he himself  
must depart,

“ Swete modyr, j telle now the,  
here ben comen men from fer contre 2348

and of strange place to seken me here,  
wherfore with hem moste j go jn alle manere.

therfore j come my leve to take,  
that non morneng for me 3e make ; 2352

in fulfilment  
of God's will,

and forto fulfille goddis Servyse  
Thider most j gon jn alle wyse.

For j ne may not his wyl fulfyllen,  
Tyl jnto that Lond j come vntylle, 2356

whedir so evere he wil me lede  
there his wille forto spede.

and that  
Blasy must  
go also.

and Blaise, that is 3oure maister dere,  
thedyr schal comen also jn fere ; 2360

So that bothen vs tweyne moste 3e forgon,  
and for vs here behoveth 3ow to dwellen alon.”

The mother  
commends  
him to God,

thanne seide to hym his modir agein :  
“ sethen it may non oper ben, jn certeyn, 2364

j comande 3ow to god al-myht,  
For it is Nethyr jn my power ne myht

3ow with-holden azens 3oure wille,  
what that evere j seye 3ow vntylle. 2368

and only  
wishes Blasy  
could stay.

But siker, sone, and 3oure willes be,  
j wolde that Blayse schold leven with me.”

“ Forsothe, modir, he ne may not So,  
For Nedylynges thedyr moste He go.” 2372

[leaf 98 a]

Merlin and  
Blasy depart  
in different  
directions.

And thus merlyne of his modir took cownge,  
and forth with the messengeris wente, ful sikerle.  
& Blayse wente forthe jnto Northumberlond,  
lyk as merlyn dyde hym to vndirstond. 2376

Merlin and  
the four mes-  
sengers, on  
their road,  
overtake a  
churl who  
has bought a  
pair of strong  
shoes

merlyne and these messengeris Jn fere,  
alle forth to-gederis Riden they there.  
So that thorwgh a town gonnen they Ryde,  
where as market was the same tyde. 2380

& whanne the town they were past Everychon,  
a cherl to-For hem Syen they gon,  
that him hadde j-bowht a peire stronge schon,

- and ek strong clowt lethir to sette þere-on.  
 and whanne that merlyne this cherl gan se,  
 he gan anon to lawghen ful prevyle.  
 thanne axeden hym the messengeris there  
 why he lawghed, & wherfore it were.  
 2384 and leather to mend them with.  
 Merlin laughs quietly.  
 When asked for the reason,  
 2388  
 “Sires, j lawghe,” quod merlyne thanne,  
 “at hym that zondir goth, zone cherlich manne,  
 that hym bowht ful stronge schon  
 and ek stronge clowtes to setten þer-on.  
 2392  
 And j zow seye, ful certeynly,  
 that he schal dyen ful sodeynly,  
 Er that he come to his owne place;  
 Swich schal ben both his hape & his grace.”  
 2396  
 and whanne they herden hym, that he seide so,  
 Ful mochel merveyl hadden they tho.  
 thanne seiden they that fayn they wolde knowe  
 zif it scholde happen with-jinne a throwe.  
 2400  
 and so that tweyne folweden that jlke veleyn,  
 and tweyne with merlyne Ryden, certeyn.  
 they folwed not this cherl passyng a myle,  
 that he ne was ded with-jinne a whyle,  
 2404 and see him expire on the road.  
 and Evene a-myddes the hye weye,  
 there gan this veleyn forto deye.  
 and his schon vndir his arm were,  
 and ek his clowt lethir also there.  
 2408  
 Anon as they hadden seyn this syht,  
 To here felawes they wenten with al here myht,  
 and tolden hem of that they hadden seyn,  
 and howh that þe veleyn to-forn hem gan deyen.  
 2412  
 “Now certes,” quod these messengeris azen,  
 “alle theke clerkis, but Folys they been,  
 that wolde don vs this wyse man to sle,  
 but for non thing jt ne schal not be.  
 2416  
 For on myn owne Body leverere hadde j here  
 To suffren gret peynes jn dyvers manere,  
 thanne his body ony harm scholde haue,  
 also god me wysse other Save !”  
 2420  
 and so they seiden Everychon,  
 alle that with hym gonne forto gon.  
 thanne thankid they hym al jnfere,  
 they thank Merlin.  
 MERLIN.

- of that merveille he told hem there. 2424
- The messengers are amazed at Merlin knowing whatever they speak or do. and sore a-basched weren they schon,  
For they cowden non thing nethir speken ne don,  
but that he knew alle here entent;  
thus thanne seiden they, verament. 2428
- Proceeding on their journey, Forth thanne Riden they in here jorne,  
Tyl that jn Fortageris lond they be,  
and with-jnnen his strengthe and his powere,  
alle the iiij messengeris and merlyne jn fere. 2432
- [leaf 98 b] they see a child being carried to the grave. As thorwgh A town thanne lay here Way,  
A chyld to-ward Beryeng was there j-bore,  
and moche ful sore wepyng was there-fore. 2436
- Merlin laughs. the prestes and clerkis, ful faste they songe,  
as lowde as they myhten with here tonge.  
thanne gan this merlyn to lawghen anon,  
as he with his Feleschep gan forth to gon, 2440
- He points to the man weeping behind the bier, and seide to his felawes: "merveilles J se."  
"Now, goode child," quod they, "what mown tho be?"  
"Se 3e not," quod merlyn, "now here  
this goode man that Folweth the bere, 2444  
that so sore wepeth and maketh swich doel?"  
"3is, sekyr," quod they, "we sen hym wel."  
"and se 3e not the preest that goth to-fore,  
That so meryly now syngeth thore?" 2448
- and to the priest singing in front. "3is, child, that don we, ful Sykirly."  
"3e, the Sorwe scholde he maken, trewly,  
For, be myn hevye, the child is his,  
and non thyng his that folweth, j-wys; 2452  
& therefore the Sorwe the preest scholde make  
that the goodman doth For the childis sake."  
"what, trowen 3e [not] that the child his be?"  
"Nay, Sires," quod merlyne, "ful Sykirle." 2456  
"Leve child, how mowen we the sothe knowe?"  
"Goth forth," quod merlyne, "on a rowe,  
and axeth the modyr the cause why  
why that hire husbond wepeth so sorryly. 2460  
Anon wele sche sein it is for his chyld,  
that to hym was bothe mek and myld.

and loke that 3e answeren hire ageyn  
that it was neuere his, Jn certeyn, 2464  
but that the prestes child it Js  
That to-forn goth and syngeth, J-wys."

Forth thanne wente the messengeris anon,  
and to this womman there gonnen they gon, 2468  
& token hire on syde evene ryht there,  
aposynge hire thus jn this manere ;

every word, ryht as merlyne bad,  
anon to this womman there they sayd. 2472  
and whanne this womman herde this,

Ful sore abasched sche was, j-wys,  
and to hem seide Jn this manere :

"me thynketh, to 3ow may j not lyen here, 2476  
For trewly, as 3e seyn now, it Js,  
j may not the contrarye seyn, j-wys.

but lordynges, j preye 3ow for charite  
that to my lord ne discureth not me, 2480  
For owther he wolde me slen anon,

owther owt of his compenye j scholde be don."  
and whanne they knewen that it was so,

agen to merlyne gonnen they to go, 2484  
and thankyde hym of his Talkyng,  
of whiche they hadden gret Merveyllyng.

and so jn here jorne gonnen they ryde,  
Towardis kyng Fortager þat same tyde. 2488  
and whanne they comen there the kyng was,

thanne seiden tweyne of hem jn that plas,  
and spoken to merlyne j[n] the plyht, 2492  
that to the kyng wolden they gon ful ryht,  
and tellen hym what they han fownde.

thanne preyden they merlyne that jlke stownde  
hem forto cownseillon, what they scholde say,  
lest they weren blamed Jn ony way, 2496

For be-cawse they hadden hym not slayn,  
as they weren comawnded, jn certayn.

"For, be aventure, we scholen ben schent,  
that we ne hadden þe slayn, verament." 2500



[leaf 98 c]  
Merlin in-  
structs the  
messengers

“Now, leve Sires,” quod merlyne thanne,  
“and 3e wil don as J schal 3ow kenne,  
J-blamed scholen 3e neuere be  
Jn non manere wise, Sires, for me. 2504

what to  
relate to King  
Fortager,

Anon to kyng Fortager faste scholen 3e go,  
and jn this wyse that 3e seyne hym vnto :  
lik as that 3e haven me j-fownde,  
and that j kan hym tellen with-jnne a stownde 2508

and what to  
demand of  
him.

why that his towr ne may not stonde ;  
and that wile j ful sone taken on honde,  
on covenaut the clerkis he wil Slen,  
lik as they desireden J scholde haue ben. 2512

For telleth hym that j knowe the cause why  
wherfore they wolden me don slen, trewly.  
and whanne 3e haven told hym al this,  
loketh his byddyng 3e don with-owten mys.” 2516

The messen-  
gers repair to  
the king,

thus departyd the messengeris from hym, trewelye,  
and to kyng Fortager anon comen they jn hye.  
whanne that kyng Fortager gan hem beholde,  
Ful joyeful he was Jn many Folde, 2520  
and axede of hem how they hadden sped  
of thike arende that he on hem leyd.

and describe  
how they  
have found  
Merlin.

“Sire,” quod these messengeris, “so as we myhte,  
we scholen 3ow it tellen anon Ryhte.” 2524  
thanne took hem the kyng Jn cownseyl anon,  
and they hym tolde there Ryht son  
how that they hadden merlyne j-fownde,  
jn what manere, and with-jnne what stownde. 2528

The king  
asks who this  
Merlin is.

“and but 3if it hadde ben his owne wille,  
we cowde nevere hauen comen hym vntylle.”  
thanne seide the kyng to hem Ryht tho :  
“what is thike merlyne þat 3e speken of so ? 2532

j bad 3ow seken, ful plenerlye,  
a Fadirles child, ful vtterlye,  
that was neuere begeten of erthly man ;  
of this mater telleth me, as 3e kan ! 2536

and þerto the blood of hym me brynge,  
this was 3oure charge, with-owten lesynge.”

They say,  
he is that  
fatherless  
child,

“Sire, this same merlyne Js he  
of whom that 3e speken, ful sykirle. 2540

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how that 3oure trowthe 3e scholen saven Ryht wel." 2576

Merlin rides  
to meet the  
king,

Thus with merlyne Ryden they forth Jn fere,  
Tyl that with kyng Fortager metten they there,  
and anon as evere merlyne hym Say,  
streyth to the kyng he took his way, 2580

and seide : "sire kyng, ful wel thou be !  
A word jn cownseil wolde j speken with the."

takes him and  
the messen-  
gers aside,

Anon took he there the kyng on syde,  
and ek clepede the messengeres at þat tyde 2584  
That hym forto seken j-charged were  
the sothe of hym forto enqwere.

"why that the Towr stonden ne myhte,  
j schal the tellen, Syre, anon Ryhte, 2588

tells up the  
astrologers'  
malign  
advice,

and how þat thow comandedest me to sle  
Be the cownseil of elerkys that false be,  
and my blood al forto take 2592  
and þer-with thy morteer for to make.

but 3it they Fayllen of here art,  
for of that konnenge hauen they non part.

demands that  
the astrolo-  
gers shall be  
punished,

but sire kyng, and þou wilt enswren me here 2596  
the same Jewyse to don jn alle manere  
vppon hem as thou wost hauen don be me,  
J schal the tellen, ful sykerle,

the cause why þat thy towr doth falle,  
so openly, that 3e scholen knowen it alle, 2600

and under-  
takes, on that  
condition, to  
make the  
tower stand.

and declaren openly alle 3ow be-Fore  
how þat it schal lasten for euere more.  
3if thou wylt don as j the say,  
telle me now, sire kyng, owther 3e oper nay." 2604

thanne answered the kyng ageyn :

The king  
complies.

"3if þou do as that þou seist, jn certeyn,  
the same jewise scholen they have 2608  
as þou scholdest han had, so god me save."

"go we, sire, thanne," quod merlyne tho,  
"thedir that thy towr þou begynnest so,  
and thike same clerkis brynge with the,  
thanne there the sothe mihtest þou se, 2612

3if they connen owht seyn, amonges hem alle,

2608. *scholdest*; the first vowel is apparently an *a*.

whi that thy towr doth so down falle,"  
 so wenten they forth alle jn fere,  
 and the clerkis sent after were  
 to thike there as the towr was dyht;  
 thedyr comen they alle anon ryht.

2616 They all go  
to the tower.

And whanne they weren assembled everichon,  
 merlyne hem thanne aposede anon,  
 and axede on of the wysest clerkes  
 why that so fyl adown the kynges werkes.

2620 There Merlin  
asks the as-  
trogers if  
they can ex-  
plain its  
falling.

thanne answered this clerk him ageyn:  
 "we ne connen not it tellen, jn certeyn,  
 but the kyng we tolden jn what degre  
 wherby his werk sosteyned scholde be."

2624 They say:  
"No,

"3e," quod the kyng to the clerkis thanne,  
 "3e boden me don seken after swich a manne  
 that Neuere erthly Fadyr hadde,  
 and hym don Slen, thus 3e me hadde.

but we have  
told the king  
a remedy."

and Swich a man j Not where to fynde,

For me Wolde thenken Jt Were Al azens kynde."

2632 [leaf 99 a]

and thanne bespak there merlyne anon,  
 and seide to the clerkis Everychon:

Merlin re-  
plies:

"Lordynges, a fool that 3e wolden maken the kyng,  
 To don hym to seken so wondirful a thyng:  
 a man that Neuere erthly Fadyr hadde,  
 jnto this world be born and forth bradde.

"You deluded  
the king,

but 3e non thyng ne dyden Jt for his prow,  
 but what the cause was, j schal tellen yt 3ow:

2640

For wel 3e wysten that 3e scholden deye,  
 but 3if that the trowthe 3e tolden, jn feye.

for you feared  
his anger  
at your  
ignorance."

and for that 3e cowden non othirwyse do,  
 therefore 3e boden hym Swich a man to slo,  
 and the Blood of hym al forto take,

2644

the wheche his Towr stonden Scholde make.  
 and thus thoughten 3e that man to don sle,  
 3oure-self to askapen, 3if it myhte be."

2648

and whanne they herden the chyld thus seyn,  
 Ful sore abasched weren they, certeyn,

The astrolo-  
gers are con-  
founded.

2640. yt added above the line, y blurred.

and wisten wel thanne forsothe anon  
that deyen scholden they everychon. 2652

Merlin continues:

“ behold, Sire kyng,” quod merlyne tho,  
“ Now sen here 3e how this doth go,  
that these clerkys ne wilen not me don sle,  
with my blood 3owre towr j-mad to be, 2656

the astrologers' object was not to make the tower stand, but to rid themselves of him.

but that amonges hem loot is pere cast  
that for me they mosten deyen Jn hast.  
and now axeth hem 3if it be not so,  
for sekyl, how so the game now go, 2660

Non of hem js here so hardye  
jn my precense to maken ony lye.

“ Seyth he soth ? ” quod the kyng anon.

The astrologers confess,

“ 3e, Sykerly,” quod the clerkys everychon, 2664  
“ But we connen not weten, jn non degre,  
how that al this thyng knowen scholde he.

and ask to be spared long enough to see the tower made to stand.

Sire, we 3ow preyen as oure Soverein lord,  
alle we 3oure clerkes, be on acord, 2668

that owre lyves 3e wolden graunten vs here,  
tyl that the Sothe we myhten sen jn Fere,  
how that he Scholde this towr don stonde  
be ony werk of mannes honde.” 2672

Their request is granted.

“ Now certes, lordynges,” quod merlyne anon,

“ and tyl that 3e sen the same thyng don,  
and why that the towr doth so falle,  
Erst Schal there non deyen of 3ow alle.” 2676

thanne thankede they merlyne everychon,  
alle these clerkis be on and be on.

Merlin explains all about the tower :

thanne quod merlyne to kyng Fortager :  
“ wylt thou now knowen the sothe her 2680

why that thy werk doth so down Falle,  
j schal openly it tellen amonges 3ow alle.  
Now herkene, Sire kyng, what j schal say :

under the ground is a great water,

here vndir this grownd, j dar wel lay, 2684

There goth a water bothe sterne & gret,

and under the water two dragons,

vndyr wheche water ben there 3et

Tweyne wondirful Stowte dragowns, 2688

3e moste oryble that ben Jn ony Regiowns,

one white, the other red,

of wheche on Js al whit, anothir is Red,

of the dragowns that ben Jn that sted.

- Aboven wheche dragowns there ben, certeyn,  
 tweyne grete stones, that ben ful pleyn,  
 that over-whelmen bothe dragowns,  
 whiche that ben so wondirful of faciouns.  
 and whanne thei Felen the water Sore peyse  
 vppon hem bothe, & doth hem deseysel,  
 thanne tornen they hem bothe with gret myht,  
 and meveth al the erthe evene vpryht,  
 whiche meveng that maketh thy werk to falle ;  
 this Scholen ze knowen bothe gret and smalle.  
 So that my borwes, aqwyt scholen they be,  
 And thy clerkis beheveded, ful trewle.  
 and therefore asaye zif that J soth seye,  
 owther be ony weys that J do lye.  
 For of this mater thy clerkis knowen non thyng,  
 Ful Siker thou be, For alle here werkyng.”  
 “ Now certes,” quod Fortager to merlyne thanne,  
 “ and this be soth, thou art a trewe manne,  
 and therto the wysest that evere was bore  
 of erthlych men that konnen of lore.”  
 “ Now, merlyne,” quod kyng Fortagere,  
 “ of on thing that thow wost tellen me here :  
 how that this erthe myhte be don away ;  
 J preye the, merlyne, the Sothe me Say.”  
 “ with cartes sone may jt be led henne,  
 & vppon the Bakkes of many menne.”  
 thanne kyng Fortager let ordeynen anon  
 bothe cartes and werkmen many on.  
 and merlyne comaunded there jn haste  
 that the clerkys Scholden they kepen wel faste.  
 thus werkmen wrowhten bothe day & nyht,  
 tyl that to this water they comen ful ryht.  
 and whanne they hadden this water j-fownde,  
 anon they tolden it the kyng that stownde.  
 thanne gan the kyng thedyr to gon  
 with ful gret joye ryht anon.  
 and merlyne with hym thedyr he ladde,  
 For he wrowghte alle thyng as he hym badde.

2692 with two large flat stones over them ;

2696 the dragons, annoyed by the pressure, turn, and make the earth quake.

2700

[leaf 99 b]

2704 Merlin exhorts the king to test the truth of his words.

2708

2712 On the king's question concerning the means of removing the earth,

2716 Merlin recommends carts and carriers.

2720

Labourers work day and night, till they find the water.

2724

Then the king goes thither with Merlin.

2728

The king  
speaks  
admiringly  
of Merlin to  
his council.

and whanne thider j-come they weren Echon,  
this merveillous water they behelden thusson.  
thanne to hym clepyd he his cownsaylle,  
and seide: "lordinges, with-owten Faylle, 2732

this child is wondir wis with-alle,  
that can thus tellen how it schal falle,  
and of this water that here now Js;  
jt merveylleth me ful mochel, j-wys. 2736

and seith he that vndir this water so clere  
ben tweyne dragowns dwellyng jn fere.  
and 3it wot j Neuere what j schal do,  
tyl he som cownseyl zeve me therto." 2740

He then asks  
him about  
the removal  
of the water.

thanne cleped he merlyne to hym anon,  
of þat water to weten what scholde be don.  
quod merlyne: "grete diches we scholen here make,  
wherthorwgh this water schal forth Schake, 2744  
thorwh this medewe here anon,  
and thus this water schal forth gon."

Ditches are  
dug.

Thus weren these diches sone there mad,  
as merlyne it ordeynede, comaunded, and bad. 2748  
and this water his cowrs there hadde,  
and be this craft jnto othire contres ladde.

Merlin pre-  
dicts that  
the dragons  
will fight,  
and that one  
will be killed.

thanne cam merlyne to kyng fortagera,  
and thus anon tolde hym there 2752  
that—"also sone as the dragouns to-gyderes fele,  
be-twixen hem schal be-gynnen a sory mele,  
For they to-gederis ful sore scholen fyhte,  
and the ton the tothyr Schal slen owt ryhte. 2756

He wants all  
the barons  
to see the  
fight.

and therefore Sende thou thy messengeris anon  
To alle thy Barowns now Everychon,  
to sen this bataylle that schal ben here  
of these dragowns that scholen fyhten jn fere; 2760

Messengers  
are sent out.

For the bataylle of hem and that chawNSE  
Nis not with-owten gret Signyfyawnse."  
thanne sente kyng Fortager forth anon  
his messengerys, az faste as they myhten gon, 2764  
to warnen bothe Barown, bachelor, & knyht,

2762. *Signyfyawnse*, the first *y* through correction.

3076 Being told  
that Pen-  
dragon and  
Uter have  
come to take  
vengeance on  
Fortager,

3080 the  
treacherous  
usurper,

3084 they refuse  
to fight.

3088 Fortager,  
mad with  
rage,  
exhorts his  
adherers.

3096  
D, The people  
receive their  
lawful prince.

3100 Fortager flees  
to a castle.

3104 The princes  
attack it,  
and set fire  
to it.

3108 Fortager  
perishes in  
the flames.

[leaf 100 d]



of swich thyng as thow tellest me.

Merlin tells that the red dragon shall be slain,

J wele that thow knowe here, jn certayn,  
that the Rede be the white schal ben slayn.

2808

but fyrst gret peyne Schal he have,  
er from the Rede he may gon save.

and that his death is of great significance.

and the deth of the Rede dragoun  
Schal notyse ful gret Significacioun,  
and the victorie of the dragoun so whyt.

2812

For the it is ful hard to knowen Jt,  
but tyl that the Bataylle be alle j-do,  
of this thing schalt thou knowen no mo."

2816

whanne this peple thidir comen Echon,

One of the stones is removed, and the white dragon appears.

Ful hastely hadden they vpe the ston.

thanne Syen they this whyte dragoun,  
that was wondyr oryble of Facyoun.

2820

and whanne this peple this dragoun there say,  
they weren sore abaschet, alle with-owten Nay.

and whanne that thus they hadden J-do,

Then they go to the other stone, and find the red dragon, more horrible than the white,

To the tothyr ston wente they tho.

2824

thanne the Rede dragoun syen they there,  
that more oryble was thanne the toper were.

thanne was the peple abasched wel more  
an hundred Fold thanne they weren to-fore ;

2828

For more Feers he was & more hydows,  
also more egre, & mochel more Spytows,

thanne the whyte was Jn ony degre,

thus thoughte the peple, ful certeynle.

2832

So that thoughte kyng Fortager

that the Rede the white scholde scomfyten ther.

thanne seide merlyne to the kyng :

"Now haue my borwes Excused for alle thyng !"

2836

"merlyne," quod Fortager, "so they be,

Of alle thinges qwyt, ful Sekerle."

[leaf 99 d]  
A terrible struggle begins ;

Thanne to-gederis Ronnen these dragouns tweyne

Ful vigerously there, Jn certeyne,

2840

with here teeth and here pawes so scharpe,

that wondyr Jt is of here Fyhtyng to carpe.

Fo[r] Neuere herden ze telle jnto this day

2839. *tweyne*, the last letters almost obliterated.

2843. MS. *fo*.

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# HISTORY

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To heren what that j schal seyen here."

thanne dede fortager his comaundement ;  
and whanne they weren comen alle present, 2884

Merlin first  
reproves the  
astrologers  
for under-  
taking what  
they cannot  
accomplish.  
thanne seide Merlyne amonges hem alle :  
" 3e clerkis ben folys, what so befalle,  
to entermeten 3ow of ony thyng,  
but 3if 3e cowden bryngen it to endyng. 2888

and in as moche as folys that 3e be,  
and fowle han faylled, ful certeinle,  
3e ben worthy to haven 3owre gwerdon,  
that 3e han deservyd be Ryht Reson. 2892

He tells of  
their dark  
studies,  
and how the  
devil has  
shown them  
that they  
must die for  
Merlin's  
sake.  
wel wot j 3e syen that j was bore,  
but he that schewede it to 3ow thore,  
schewed 3ow there ful openlye  
that For me scholden 3e Nedys deye ; 2896

and also gret doel he schewed 3ow there,  
For he hadde me lost jn swich manere ;  
whiche was 3oure cause, ful certeynle,  
to comaunden kyng Fortager me forto sle. 2900

but swych a lord j hope that j have,  
thorwgh goddis helpe, me forto save ;  
and the devel a lyere schal j make,  
3e scholen neuere deyen for my sake, 2904

3if that Sewrawnce 3e wylen me do  
of thyng that j schal speken 3ow vnto."  
Whanne that they Herdyn merlyne so seyn,

The astrolo-  
gers are  
delighted.  
thanne ful of Joye weren they, ful pleyn, 2908  
So of here deth Excused to be,  
and sciden to merlyne ful benyngnele :

" what Ewere thou biddist vs to don,  
we scholen it Fulfillen Ryht anon. 2912

For we knowen wel, with-owten lesynge,  
that þou art the wysest man levenge."

Merlin com-  
mands them  
to give up  
their prac-  
tices,  
" 3e scholen me Ensuren, Er that 3e gon,  
of this craft neuere to entermeten Non. 2916

and j comande 3ow alle jn fere  
To ben confessid with herte clere,  
and 3oure flesch to putten jn discyplyne  
to strong subiecciown & to gret pyne, 2920  
that 3owre Sowles ne dampned be ;

to confess,  
and to do  
penance.

doth as j counseille 3ow, certeinle !”  
So that they thankyd hym everychon,  
and grauntyd his comaundement to don.

2924 The astrologers gratefully assent.

Thus merlyne deliuered the clerkys echon,  
that hym deden seken for this encheson.  
thanne to merlyne spak kyng Fortagere :

They are released.

“ thou behyghtest forto tellen me here  
the signefycaciown of the dragowns tweyne.”

2928

“ The white dragown, j telle the certeyne,  
Signefyeth here the sone of costantyn,  
That falsly was browht to euele fyn.”

2932

Then Merlin explains that the white dragon signifies Pen-dragon.

and whanne Fortager herde this,  
Ful sore he was aschamed, J-wys.

Fortager feels confused.

Thanne seide merlyne to Fortager a3e :

Merlin adds,

“ and thou wylt konnen me non mawgre,  
j schal the tellen the syngnefyauunce  
of alle thynges, with-owten dowtaunce.”

2936

“ here Js non man,” quod Fortager thanne,

“ but of my counseyl every manne ;  
where-fore, Sire merlyne, j preye the  
the syngnefyauunce that þou wost tellen me.”

2940

before the whole council,

“ The rede dragown here doth syngnefy  
thyn owne persone, ful trewelye ;

2944

that the red dragon is the king himself.

and why, Sire, and jn what manere,  
J schal tellen the anon Ryht here.

wel knowest thou, kyng Fortagere,  
that kyng costantynes children al jn fere  
dwelden here aftyr here Fadriss ded,

2948

He reminds him of the three princes,

that hadden Neyther counseyl ne red.

and 3if þou haddest don thy dever, trewely,  
thou scholdest hem han kept ful tendyrly,  
and to have 3oven hem ful trewe counsaylle,

2952

whom he ought to have protected ;

that myhte ony thyng to the Rewm avaylle.

and wel knowest thou jn what manere  
the hertes of the peple thou hast geten here.

2956

the way he stole the people's hearts ;

and whanne thou knew alle here entent,  
and that they loveden the, verament,

- his refusal to help the young king; thanne, whanne thou knew this, certeynle,  
From alle maner of Nedis thou withdrowh the. 2960  
and whanne that the peple Sowhte socowr  
of the to haven For here grete langowr,  
and the desireden kyng forto han ben,  
thou hem answeredest as þou schalt sen : 2964
- his artful manner of rejecting the crown; Ful smotheliche and jn this manere  
To hem thou answeredest, al jn fere,  
that thow woldest neuere here kyng be,  
whyles that the kyng lyvede, ful sykerle. 2968  
Thanne they that thou toldest to this tale,  
Thowghten the kyng to werkyn Bale,  
and knewen wel be thy maner of spekyng  
that thou desiredest the kynges mordryng ; 2972
- the murder of King Costantin; the flight of the princes; and so hym they slowen ful falsly.  
thanne fledden bothe his bretheren ful prevyly  
For the drede that they hadde of the.  
and thus art thow kyng ful false, 2976
- [leaf 100 b] And thus the Regne thou occupyest With Wrong,  
and gret distrocciown dost Evere among.  
thanne, whanne they comen azen to the  
be whiche the kyng ded was, Sykerle, 2980  
thanne distroyedest þou hem Everychon,  
so that on lyve ne lefte not on.”
- thanne seide the cownseil to Fortager there :  
“Herkene what merlyne seith now here.” 2984
- Fortager acknowledges the truth of Merlin's words, “3is, Forsothe,” quod kyng Fortager,  
“He seyth ful soth that he seith her.  
and j knowe ful wel that thou art  
a passing wis man jn Every part. 2988
- and desires to know about his own death. but of on thing, merlyne, j preye to the  
the sothe that thow wost tellen to me :  
on what deth that J schal deye.”
- Merlin applies more distinctly to Fortager what he has said of the red “that kan j wel,” quod merlyne, “trewelye. 2992  
have j not told to the the signyfiaunce  
of bothe dragouns, with-owten varyaunce ?  
3it j wele that thou knowe be me  
that the Rede dragown, Sykerle, 2996

2980. *ded*, the last *d* through correction.2994. *varyaunce*, *v* corrected from *f*.

- Signefyeth thyn owne persone,  
that was so strong and myhty of bone ;  
and the whit dragown signefieth, certeinle,  
the tweyne bretheren that now fled j-be, 3000 *and of the  
whitodragon,*  
For drede that thou wost han hem slayn ;  
this js the signyfyauce, Jn certayn.  
and why so longe they fowhten so snelle,  
the signyfyauce j schal the telle : 3004 *their long  
fight,*  
jt signyfieth that thou hast so long j-holde  
wrongfully here erytage with werkis bolde.  
and þat the white dragown þe Rede brande so,  
the same the children scholen the do. 3008 *and the burn-  
ing of the  
red one.*  
and knowe thou wel now, jn certeyn,  
that thike tyme thy towr stont but jn veyn,  
and the ne schal waraunte nonthyng, jn feye ;  
and jn this maner, Fortager, schalt thou deye." 3012  
thanne, whanne Fortager herde this,  
anon he axede of merlyne, J-wys,  
where that thyke tweyne children be.  
"jn the see," quod merlyne, "ful Sykerle, 3016 *Merlin  
answers :  
"On the sea,  
on their way  
here,  
to take ven-  
geance!"*  
with ful gret strengthe and gret Navye,  
jnto this lond to a-ryven, ful Sekerlye,  
veniance of the to taken here,  
that slowh here brothir jn swich manere. 3020  
and wete þou wel, with-jnne thre monthis day  
they scholen aryven, sire, jn good fay !"

- Ful sory was kyng Fortager tho,  
whanne he herde tellen it scholde be so, 3024 *Chap. III.  
King Forta-  
ger, greatly  
troubled,*  
and axede of merlyne anon Ryht  
3if that ony othirwyse it myhte ben dyht.  
"Nay, syker, Fortager," quod merlyne tho,  
"Non othirwyse now ne may it go." 3028  
and whanne that fortager wiste al this,  
that tho children scholde comen, j-wys,  
thanne warnede he his peple anon  
that to hym scholden they comen ful son,  
azens that jlke same day 3032 *calls in his  
forces.*  
That merlyne hym of tolde, with-owten Nay.

- Fortager goes  
to Win-  
chester. So that to wynchestre he gan to go,  
and al his power with him tho. 3036  
but the cawse wiste neuere a man,  
but they that of his cownseyl weren than.
- Merliu goes  
to Northum-  
berland, and whanne merlyne hadde endyd this mater,  
thanne took he his leve of kyng Fortager, 3040  
and thanne forth to blase he gan to gon,  
and told hym of these merveilles echon.
- [leaf 100 c] So that Blayse gan hem to Wryte,  
and jnto his Book forto endyte. 3044
- and stays  
with Blasy. So that merlyne with Blayse dwellede there,  
tyl þe bretheren aftyr hym gonnen enqwere.  
and kyng Fortager at wynchestre abod,  
as he be merlyne ferst vndirstood. 3048  
And that same day, with-owten lesynge,  
the peple of Wynchestre syen comenge
- The people of  
Winchester  
see a large  
fleet ap-  
proaching. Fer jn the see a ful gret Navye,  
where-offen they merveilled, ful trowelye ; 3052  
jn whiche vesselys weren, certeynle,  
both costantynes sones, as j telle the.
- Fortager  
orders his  
men to defend  
the harbour. and whanne that Fortager herde of this,  
Ful sore he was abasched, j-wys, 3056  
and comaunded his men to armes anon  
alle so faste as they myhten gon,  
and also his port forto defende,  
therto he bad hem forto atende. 3060
- They perceive  
the banners  
of their right-  
ful king. & whanne at the port they weren echon,  
thanne behelden they jn-to the se anon,  
and Syen here ryhtful kynges banere  
Ful openly displayed ryht there, 3064  
wheche weren the armes of costantyn ;  
they knewen the gonfanouns wele & fyn.  
thanne merveillede this peple everichon  
how that this thing thus myhte be don. 3068
- The fleet  
lands. So that these vesselis aryvede to londe,  
as J do 3ow to vndirstonde.  
and whanne to londe a-ryved they were,  
thanne axede the peple of hem there 3072

what manere of peple was there with-jnne. thanne answerid they, & wolde not blyzne :		
“ They ben the vesselis of Pendragown, that to this Rewm hath good Resown ; and also vter, his brothir so dere, jnto his Rewm with him cometh here of Fortager Forto taken veniaunce, that hem hath don ful gret Noysaunce, and as a fals man, J vndirstond, vntrewely & vniostly halt he here lond.”	3076	Being told that Pen- dragon and Uter have come to take vengeance on Fortager,
and whanne that the peple vndirstod this, that it was here owne lord, J-wys, That with hym browhte so gret meyne, thanne weren they abasched, ful Sykyrle, and nolden non thyng azens hem do, Lest aftyr it myhte hem tornez to moche wo, and comen and seiden to Fortager, that azens hem wolden they not fyhten ther. and whanne Fortager this vndirstood, thanne for wraththe he was nyhe wood. thanne spak he to his owne men, that hym wolde not Forsaken than, the castel wel to kepen ouer alle thyng.	3080	the treacherous usurper,
so seyden they wolden, with-owten fayllyng. thanne a-ryvede these schepis there-anon, and the peple of the cunte thider faste gonne gon, and azens hym they wenten be on acord, & there hym resceyveden as here lord.	3084	they refuse to fight.
thanne kyng Fortager with his meyne, to his castel wenten they ful hastyle. and there bothe bretheren be on asent hym vigerously asayllede, verament. So that Pandragoun Fyr dede jn caste jnto that castel, that brende ryht faste, where-jnne this Fortager Syker was brent, as this storye scheweth, verament.	3088	Fortager, mad with rage,
And thus taken bothe bretheryn Jn Fere harde veniaunce on here enemyes there.	3092	exhorts his adherers.
	3096	The people receive their lawful prince.
	3100	Fortager flees to a castle.
	3104	The princes attack it, and set fire to it.
	3108	Fortager perishes in the flames.

[leaf 100 d]



Fortager's  
kinsmen (see  
p. 52) are  
driven into  
another  
castle.

thanne the kynnes-men of Fortager  
vppon the crystene werreden ther, 3112  
and the tweyne bretheren gonnen hem asaylle,  
and jnto a castel hem droven, Sauns faylle.

The princes  
confer how  
to conquer it.

thanne took pandragon cownseyl there,  
and vter his brothyr, alle Jn fere, 3116  
how that thike castel they myhten wynne  
and ek the peple that was with-jinne.

Five barons  
who were  
present at the  
dragons'  
fight,

at whiche cownseyl fyve barouns there were,  
that to-forn tyme the dragowns syen fyhten there, 3120  
and herden al the significaciown.

tell the  
princes about  
Merlin,

how that merlyne tolde al & Som  
of tho tweyne dragowns to Fortager,  
To Pandragown and to his brothir they tolden ther, 3124  
and of the merveylles everychon  
that merlyne hem tolde be on and be ou.

“and wete ze wel, Syres, that he Js on  
the wysest man, except god alon.” 3128

thanne seide Pandragown to these Barowns :

“where dwellith that man & in whiche Regyowns?”

but do not  
know where  
to find him.

“we weten neuere,” quod they ageyn,  
“where hym to fynden, Jn certeyn, 3132

Neper jn what contre hym to have,  
also god oure sowles moot save !

and 3if he be owht jn this partye,  
we scholen hym fynde, wel Sekerlye.” 3136

Messengers  
are sent in  
search of  
him.

thanne forth sente pandragown anon  
messengeris, as faste as they cowde gon,  
To serchen al the lond owt ryht,  
3if that there cowde ony wyht 3140  
hem tellen merlyne Forto Fynde,  
that holden was so gentyll & kynde.

Merlin meets  
them in a  
town,  
where they  
are taking  
a meal.

And merlyne, that knew al this ful wel,  
Tolde it to Blayse thanne everydel, 3144

and from Blayse thanne wente anon,

& Forth to a town he gan to gon,

there as the messengeris at mete were.

and jn this gyse to hem cam he there : 3148

3113. MS. *him*. 3130. *in* added above the line.

3141. *ffynde*, *n* corrected from *y*.

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—two of  
those five  
barons are  
dead  
already—

and wete 3e wel that of thyke barownes fyve  
there ben but thre now left on lyve, 3188

that Ferst tolden the kyng of merlyne,  
whiche that cowde so mochel of devyne.  
and perfore to 3owre lord that 3e telle,  
what maner aventure so hym befalle, 3192

and to come  
here him-  
self."

3if that merlyne he wyle with speke,  
jnto this contre hym-Self moste reke,  
and aftyr him Serchen jn market & town  
abowtes al this contre Jn vyrown." 3196

The messen-  
gers look at  
each other  
in surprise,  
and Merlin  
disappears.

The messengeris vndirstoden riht wel  
what to hem that seide merlyne everydel,  
an ech of hem on other lokede welfaste ;  
thussonne merlyne owt of here syhte was paste. 3200

thanne spoken they to-gederes hem be-twene :

"with the devel haven we spoken, j wene.

what Scholen we don of this mateer

That he to vs spak of now heer?" 3204

They resolve  
to return  
home.

"Infeyth," quod on of that compenye,

"To owre lord welfaste we scholen vs hye,

and aforh hym to rehersen we scholen ben bolde

Every word as this man hath vs tolde." 3208

and forth they Ryden Everychon,

Tyl jnto that ost they comen anon

Before the  
king and his  
retinue,

There as the kyng was with his meyne ;

Streyht to hym comen they, ful Sykerle. 3212

whanne þat kyng Pandragoon gan be-holde,

For joye he be-gan his armes to Folde,

and hem axede anon there presente :

"han 3e owht Fownde for that 3e wente?" 3216

they tell what  
has happened.

"The sothe to tellen we 3ow enswre,

how it vs happede, and what aventure."

That tolden they the kyng, with-owten lak,

jn what maner this veleyh to hem Spak. 3220

Those ac-  
quainted with  
Merlin,  
marvel at  
the hideous  
shape of the  
soothsayer,

thanne they that herden hem speken jn this manere,

that to-forh tyme knewen merlyne there,

Merveyllede that ony so hydows a man

to hem swich materis Scholde meven than. 3224

For they wisten not, with-owten dowtance,

- that merlyne cowde taken ony oper semblaunce  
 but onlyche his owne Jn properte ;  
 Of this merveyleden they, ful certeynle. 3228  
 but thanne wisten they there ageyn  
 that no man ne cowde not, jn certeyn,  
 tellen of the wondris alle  
 Sauf on[1]y merlyne, how so befalle. 3232  
 thanne axeden [they] þe messengeris jn hye  
 jn what maner of contre that they hym sye.  
 thanne answerede the messengeris ageyn :  
 “ To oure Jn he cam, Jn certeyn, 3236  
 there as we eten, 3e mown vndirstond,  
 jn the contre of Northhumberlond.”  
 thanne seiden they holiche, al that rowte,  
 that jt was merlyne with-owten dowte, 3240  
 & that he desirede aftyr here knoweng,  
 onliche that there him scholde seken the kyng.  
 and whanne they oomen jnto Northhumberlond,  
 as J do 3ow vtterly forto vndirstond, 3244  
 Non tydynges ne cowden they heren ther  
 of merlyne, the devyn, nethir Fer ne Ner.  
 and as the kyng there gan forth to Ryde  
 Jn his jornes be eche a syde, 3248  
 and as thorwgh a pleyn he gan to gon  
 and with him his Meyne Everichon,  
 they syen a drove of bestes ful gret  
 and therto an herdeman keping that hepe. 3252  
 so that they axede hym anon  
 whens he was, & whedir he wolde gon,  
 “ Sires, j do 3ow to vndirstonde  
 that j am of Northhumberlonde. 3256  
 and Rihtnow a good man cam to me,  
 and seide that kyng Pandragon sikerle  
 jn this contre a man scholde Seke  
 that is bothe wys, good, and meke.” 3260  
 “ that is fulsoth,” quothen they thanne,  
 “ kanst þou vs owht tellen of that manne ? ”

but understand that no one but Merlin can have told such things.

Hearing that the incident took place in Northumberland,

all feel convinced.

The king goes to Northumberland in [leaf 101 b] search of Merlin.

One day they see a herd with a drove of cattle.

The herd speaks to the king's men about Merlin.

3232. MS. *ony*. 3233. MS. *axeden þe*.

3237. *there*, the first *e* blurred.

3241. & added in the left margin. 3244. *vtterly*, *v* blurred.

thanne answerid this vyleyn ageyn :

The herd says  
he has some  
news to im-  
part to the  
king  
privately,

“ 3e, and J myhte sen the kyng, jn certeyn,  
j wolde hym tellen of swich tydyng  
of wheche to 3ow j ne wele Schewen non thing.” 3264

“ thanne com with me,” quod this good man,  
“ and to the kyng j wele schewen the anon.” 3268

thanne quod this vileyn to him ageyn :

but is not  
willing to  
leave his  
cattle.

“ My bestes scholde j Evele kepen, jn certein ;  
but 3if he wele comen hidir to me,  
J schal hym tellen, ful certeinle, 3272

Where he schal fynde that ilke persone  
For whom jnto this oontre he is gone.”

The king is  
informed,

thanne departyd he from this vileyn anon,  
and to the kyng streyht is he gon, 3276

and tolde the kyng jn Wordis fewe  
the Wordis of the vilein al on rewe.

“ Anon lede me thedyr,” quod the kyng,  
“ and lete vs make non lengere taryeng !” 3280

and comes  
quickly to  
the spot.

thus thanne ladde he forth þe kyng jn hye  
to that same herdeman, ful trewelye.

thanne seide this goodman to that vyleyn :

“ lo, Felawe, here is the kyng, certeyn ; 3284

Now telle him here thy lykyng,

For siker þou be, this is the kyng.”

“ Thou seek-  
est Merlin,”  
says the herd.

“ Sire kyng, forsothe J telle now the  
that merlyne thou sekyst, ful sekyrle. 3288

but to fynden he is ful ylle,

but 3if hym-self wile concente þertylle.

“ Go into the  
nearest town,  
and he shall  
come to  
thee.”

And therefore jnto the nexte town thou go,  
and thussonne he schal comen the to. 3292

with the [to spe]ken þere wil he ful ryht,

J sey the tr[ewe]ly, ful gentyll knyht.”

“ how schal j hym knowen ?” quod the kyng,

“ but 3if of hym J hadde som tokenyng ?” 3296

“ Sire kyng, 3if that thou leve not me,

Sey ellis of Fals cownseyl that j be !”

The king  
believes him.

“ J mistroste not,” quod the kyng tho,

“ But that it is trewe thou seist me to.” 3300

3293-94. Hole burnt in the paper.

3300. *it*, corrected from *is*.

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jn what maner vter haugwys hadde slayn.  
 thanne charged the kyng hem ful hyghly  
 that this thing, algates to kepen Jt prevy, 3340

The king en-  
 joins secrecy,

and is full of  
 wonder.

and Merveillede gretliche ouer alle thyng  
 how merlyne of this scholde haue knoweng,  
 and Jn his herte Merveilled ful gretle

Jn what maner that haugwys ded scholde be, 3344  
 and thowhte of merlyne more to Enqwere,  
 3if of that mater he cowde tellen hym there.

When coming  
 out of church  
 the same day,  
 he is accosted  
 by a seemly  
 man,

so that al a day jn that town gan he abyde,  
 and as from the Mynstre he cam. þat tyde, 3348

with hym there mette a semly man,  
 and to kyng Pandragon he seide than :  
 "Sire kyng, al heyl and wel thou be!  
 here jn this town what thyng scken 3e?" 3352

"J abyde merlyne," quod the kyng,  
 "with hym to haue som maner of spekyng."

"Sire kyng," quod this good man thanne,  
 "j ne hold 3ow not 3it so wys a manne 3356

merlyne to knowen, though 3e hym sye,  
 J sey 3ow, sire kyng, ful sekyrlye.

who says he  
 is Merlin.

and þerfore clepeth hem that him han se,  
 and axe of hem 3if that merlyne j be." 3360

The king's  
 followers are  
 summoned;

So that the kyng, for hem he sente anon,  
 and toforn hym comen they everychon.

"Lordynges," quod the kyng to hem thanne,  
 "here byden we merlyne, þat worthy manne. 3364

Js þere ony of 3ow that hym kan knowe,  
 and he here stood jn this rowe?"

they say they  
 would cer-  
 tainly recog-  
 nize Merlin,  
 if they saw  
 him.

"Forsothe, sire kyng, that may not be  
 but 3if we hym Syen, ful sikerle." 3368

thanne seide this goodman to the kyng :  
 "this were now a wondirful thing,

how that anothir man they scholde knowe,  
 whanne þat hem-self they konnen neþer hy ne lowe." 3372

thanne answered these lordis ageyn :

"his werkis we knowen not, jn certeyn,  
 but his Semblaunce we knowen ful wel,

- and we hym syen Everydel." 3376
- thanne seide this goodman to hem ageyn :
- "how scholde ze ony man knowen, jn certeyn,  
but zif ze knowen his Semblance?
- This Were to me a Wondyrful chawnce." 3380 [leaf 101 d]
- thanne clepede merlyne the kyng anon,  
and jnto a prevy chambre they gonne to gon,  
and seide: "sire kyng, J am joyful of the  
and of zoure brothyr, sire, ful certeinle. 3384
- For J am the same persone, *with-owten* dwere,  
that ze comen forto Seken here.
- Now goth owt of this chambre anon,  
and ledeth me toforn hem Echon 3388
- that tolden to zow they cowde knowen me,  
and they alle wylen seyn, ful sykerle,  
that ze haven fownden the same merlyne  
whiche that they clepen the goode devyne." 3392
- thanne wente Pandragown forth anon,  
and clepid his Meyne Everychon.
- thanne took merlyne his owne Semblance,  
that he to-forn hadde, *with-owten* variaunce. 3396
- and thanne, anon as they hym Syc,  
they seiden it was merlyne, trewlye.
- "thanne avyse zow wel," quod the kyng,  
"that it be merlyne *with-owten* lesyng." 3400
- and they seiden: "wel we hym knowe  
among alle this peple jn this Rowe."
- "j wolde fayn weten," quod the kyng,  
"zif j Evere to zow spak ony thyng,  
er that j cam jnto this town ;  
of this wolde j fayn knowen þe Resown."
- "Sire," quod merlyne to the kyng thanne,  
"For certeyn, J am the same manne 3408
- that walkede zondir jn zone forestes,  
kepyng alle tho forseid bestes.
- also the same man am J 3412
- that told zow of haugwys, trewely."
- thanne seide the kyng to hem ageyn :
- "Evele knowen ze merlyne, jn certeyn!"
- thanne axede the kyng of merlyne there
- Merlin takes the king into a private room,
- repeats who he is,
- and asks to be brought before the retinue again.
- Merlin assumes his natural shape,
- and is recognized by all.
- In answer to the king's question,
- he says he is the same as the cowherd,
- and the same who told him of Augwis' death.



- how of augwis he knew and jn what manere. 3416
- Merlin further tells how he warned Uter against Augwis,  
 "Sire," quod Merlyne, "as it not ben scholde,  
 Augwys vter mordred han wolde.  
 Anon to thy brothyr j wente jn hye,  
 and told hym al his purpos vtterlye, 3420  
 and how that augwys hym ordeynede to sle ;  
 al this j told hym, ful Sykerle.  
 and 3it he ne wolde not me beleve,  
 tyl that the sothe him-self dede preve. 3424  
 so that 3owre brothir wook alone al nyht,  
 tyl that the sothe he preven myht,  
 and Ewere awayted the comenge  
 of Augwis, þat was so crewel a kyng. 3428  
 thanne atte laste cam this haugwis  
 jnto vteris pavyloun, þat was of prys.  
 and 3oure brothir let hym entren anon,  
 with a scharpe knyf drawen, jnto his won, 3432  
 hym forto hauen slayn, verayment.  
 so þat vter he sowhte al abowtes þe tent,  
 but he ne cowde hym not Fynde,  
 wherfore he mornede jn his mynde. 3436  
 and owt a3en he wolde han gon,  
 but 3oure brothir mette with hym anon.  
 So there fowhten they to-gederis, jn certayn,  
 that vter, 3oure brothyr, hath hym slayn." 3440

Whanne that the kyng herde al this,  
 anon he axede of hym, j-wis,  
 jn what Semblance he myhte be,  
 whanne that with his brothir spak he. 3444

Merlin was on that occasion in an old man's shape.  
 [leaf 102 a]  
 "Sire," quod Merlyne thanne a-geyn,  
 "Jn lykenesse of an old man, certeyn."  
 "Tolde 3e Owht hym What man 3e Were?"  
 "Nay, sire," quod Merlyne, "jn non manere ; 3448  
 Nethyr he ne schal not it knowen for me,  
 tyl 3owre-Self it hym telle, ful Sikerle."

The king asks Merlin to go with him.  
 Thanne seide to hym Pandragown, the kyng :  
 "Now, dere Frend, j preye 3ow ouer alle thyng 3452  
 that 3e wylen now gon with me,  
 For of 3oure cownseyl have j nede, parde."

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Uter is surprised that the king should know anything about this,

Of that 3e me Seyn jn this throwe 3491  
 whiche j wende neuere but that god and j hadde knowe.  
 and therefore I preye 3ow, for charyte,  
 how that 3e jt wiste, now telleth me."

"J seye 3ow sekerly," quod Pandragown,  
 "j Jt now knowe be good Resown. 3496

but, brothir vter, what good man was he  
 that from the deth warawnted the?"

"be the oth þat j owe to 3ow, my kyng,  
 j schal 3ow trewly seyn, to my knoweng. 3500  
 j not what maner of man jt was,

but says that the warner seemed to be a good man.

but a good man he semede jn every plas,  
 and therefore the bettere j gan hym leve,  
 For aftyr, the sothe he dede me preve." 3504

"Cowde 3e hym knowen," quod Pandragown tho,  
 "jn ony place and he to-fore 3ow go?"

"3e, sire, forsothe," quod vter thanne,  
 "J schal hym knowen to-forn aouthir manne." 3508

The king tells that on a certain day the same man will call again.

"wel, Sire vter, thanne warne j the  
 that with-jnne xij dayes he wyle here be,  
 and only with 3ow wil he speke,  
 and to 3ow his herte wyle he breke. 3512

but of on thing j preye 3ow, certeinle :

that al that day 3e ben to-forn me,  
 that j myhte knowen, as wel as 3e,  
 what maner of man þat so he be." 3516

Uter promises to remain in the king's presence the whole of that day.  
 [leaf 102 b]

And vter be-hyghte that so he Wolde,  
 and not to letten for 3ong neþer olde.  
 and thus bothe the bretheren Ju fere  
 of diuers materis spoken there. 3520

Merlin informs Blasy of the last events,

and merlyne forth to Blasye wente,  
 and tolde hym alle these poyntes, veramente,  
 how the tweyne bretheryn of hym gonne speke,  
 & how þat vter of his fo gan hym wreke, 3524

and how that Pandragown wolde hym asaye  
 be many poyntes and many a waye.  
 thanne axede blasie of merlyne there  
 how they lyveden and jn what manere. 3528

3492. The first j added above the line.

3527. blasie added above the line.

thane seide merlyne to blasie ageyn  
that—"bothe ben they 3onge men, jn certeyn,  
and gret nede they haven of good cownsaylle  
of swich a man that myhte hem avaylle. 3532

of life and  
character of  
the princes,

but fyrst jnto mirthe j wolde hem drawe  
with lawghenges & boordes to maken hem fawe.

and of his  
own plans for  
the nearest  
future.

For j wot wel where woneth a fayr lady  
that vter Loveth, paramours, trewely, 3536  
and so streyht to hym wyl j gon  
with a lettre from his love anon.

For j knowe alle the wordis preve  
that betwixen hem to-fore tyme hath be." 3540

And þe xj day thanne next Sewenge,  
To cowrt cam merlyne faste rennenge  
jn liknesse of a groom messenger  
that from his Love to hym cam ther, 3544  
and seide: "my lady greteth 3ow wel  
with herte and Body everydel,

On the fixed  
day,  
Merlin comes  
running to  
court as a  
messenger  
from Uter's  
lady-love.

and sente 3ow here a lettre to rede  
alone be 3oure-self jn prevy stede." 3548

thane took vter this lettre, verament,  
and wende his love hadde it hym sent,  
and ryht gret Joye he gan to make  
of þe lettre for his loves sake. 3552

The delighted  
prince takes  
the letter  
supposed to  
be sent by  
her,

thane spak the lettre jn this manere,  
þat the messenger he scholde lestene & here  
and trowen that he to hym seide,  
For so on hym hire arende sche leyde. 3556

and this messenger tolde many prevy thyng  
that vter had offen ryht good knoweng,  
so that þe bettyr wil hadde he to dwelle  
For thinges þe messenger gan hym telle. 3560

and listens  
privately to  
the bearer.

thus alday taryede kyng Pandragown,  
Tyl the lyht of day was ny agon,  
and merveilled of merlynes taryenge,  
and why that so Longe was his dwellenge. 3564

Pendragon  
wonders at  
Merlin's  
delay.

thussone merlyne drowh hym on syde,  
and þere took anothis lyknesse that tyde, 3564

Merlin calls  
Uter's  
attention:

3531. *cownsayll*, *a* corrected from *e*.

3539. *preve*, the first *e* corrected from *y*.

he stands  
there now in  
the warner's  
shape (cf. l.  
3446).

Uter em-  
braces him,

and fetches  
Pendragon.

Both princes  
are full of  
joy.

[leaf 102 c]

Pendragon  
informs his  
brother that  
their visitor  
is the wisest  
of men,

and that the  
warner and  
the letter-  
carrier are the  
same person.

Uter is  
incredulous.

- Evene the same fygure and semblaunce  
as whanne he warned vter of his chaunce. 3568
- Anon as vter him gan be-holde,  
he hym knew and jn armes gan folde,  
and preyede hym for alle cowrtesye  
with hym to abyden stedfastlye, 3572  
and that he wolde speken with the kyng  
with-owten ony more taryeng.
- thanne tolde vter to Pandragown  
that this good man was comen to town. 3576  
thanne axede the kyng of vter there  
3if it were the same jn alle manere.  
"3e, sire," quod vter, "with-owten dowte."  
so forth wenten they bothe jn þat rowte, 3580  
and comen bothe to this good man,  
and þer of hym gret joye made than.
- "wile 3e þat j to my brothir vter proclame  
what man 3e ben and what is 3oure name?" 3584
- "3e, sire, J Wyle Wyth Ryht good Wylle  
that to 3oure brothyr 3e seyn it vntylle."  
thanne seide Pandragown to his brothyr dere:  
"knowen 3e owht this man that is here? 3588  
J telle 3ow, brothir, ful certeinlye,  
that this is the wisest man, trewlye,  
that here on lyve may now be,  
Of whom we han gret wester, ful sikerle. 3592  
For sweche konneng hath this man,  
as here to-forn hym tellen j 3ow kan.  
for to 3ow cam non other messengere  
but only this man that Js here. 3596  
and þe lettres tok 3ow this same man  
that seide how he from 3oure love cam."  
thanne abascht hym vter ful sore,  
and of that man he wondred thore. 3600
- "how may j beleven this jlke thyng?  
this were to me gret merveylling!"  
"As wel mown 3e knowen this jlke dede  
as of oper thinges þat he to 3ow afore seide." 3604

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Merlin promises his help in all troubles,

but weteth wel that j schal haue knowenge  
Of alle 3owre nedis, with-owten varienge ; 3644  
and Neuere deseisse schal j be 3ow se,  
but that j schal helpen 3ow, Sekerle.  
and þerfore chargeth not whanne j go,  
For schortly schal j comen 3ow to. 3648

and witten to be openly welcomed when he comes to court.

[leaf 102 d]

and whanne that j come jnto 3oure howshold,  
loke þat 3e joyen many fold  
aforn 3owre meyne jn my Syht,  
That there-offen mowe knowen Every Wyht." 3652

Thus belefte merlyne with the kyng,  
and with his Brother vter was dwellyng.  
so atte laste from hem wolde he gon, 3655

He goes

jn swich semblaunce þat they myhten hym knowen echon.

and comes,

So that whanne a3en he cam,  
of hym made joye bothe child & man,  
and wenten and tolden to the kyng  
at eche tyme of merlynes comyng. 3660

and algates whanne þe kyng þere-of herde,  
Ful mochel joye of hym he ferde,  
and algates wente hym forto mete,  
were jt jn feld oþer Jn strete, 3664  
and gret joye of hym made.

and ek al the meyne was ful glade,  
and token the kyng anon on syde,  
& thore hym tolde þat Jlike tyde 3668  
that he was the beste devyn, trewly,  
Except god that is al-myhtty.

" Now preyeth hym, Jn alle wyse,  
that he wolde tellen 3ow jn what gyse 3672

how that the castel to bryngen to ende,  
and how this werre atte laste schal wende,  
and of his kyn to haven victorye ;  
of this axe 3e hym, ful certeynlye." 3676

the kyng answerede hem ageyn  
that ryht gladliche he wolde it seyn.

whanne the thrydde day j-comen was,

3646. MS. *helpen*.

3648. *schortly*, r corrected from *l*.

The people want his advice with regard to the beleaged castle.

- the cownseyl assemblede al jn on plas. 3680 The king's council assembles,
- thanne the kyng aforon his cownseil
- enqwered of merlyne wondirly wel :
- “ Now, dere Frend,” quod the kyng thanne, and Merlin is consulted
- “ J knowe 3ow For Ryht a wys manne, 3684
- and for the beste devyn J 3ow knowe
- jn al this world, owthyr hyghe oþer lowe.
- that 3e wolden me tallen, j 3ow preye, 3688
- of diuers thynges that J schal seye,
- and how this castel that j schal have, about the castle.
- and Ek my meyne, to kepen hem save.”
- thanne answeride merlyne a-geyn :
- “ Syre, j wolde that 3e wisten, ful fayn : 3692
- For sethen his kynnes-men haugwis hadden lost,
- Sethen that tyme maden they non bost,
- ne rekken but lytel, the sothe to say,
- owt of this lond to gon here way ; 3696
- and to morwe vndir trewe hem besende,
- thanne fulsone schole 3e knowen the ende,
- how they scholen profren to 3elden ageyn
- al þat they holden of 3oure fadyr, certeyn. 3700
- but 3it scholen 3e not don so,
- For whanne here answerere cometh 3ow vnto,
- 3e scholen 3ow offren hem to conveye
- be sauf coundit and be Ryht weye, 3704
- and owt of 3oure lond hem dou lede,
- and scheping hem ordeynen jnto what stede,
- jnto what contre that they wylen gon ;
- thus to hem scholen 3e answeren anon.” 3708
- thanne the kyng Sente forth vlfyn
- and thre other knyhtes with hym ;
- and merlyne hem charged with this message,
- as they weren knyhtes of hygh parage. 3712
- The king accordingly sends Ulfyn (cf. ll. 4745 ff.) and three other knights as negotiators.

Forth these messengeris token here way  
 Streyht to the castel, as J 3ow say.  
 and whanne they with-jinne syen hem comenge,  
 azens hem they comen *with-owten* taryenge,  
 and axede of hem 3if—“ messengeris 3e be ? ”  
 thanne vlfyn answerede & seide : “ 3e,

3716 The people in the castle receive them,



listen to their  
message,

the kyng 3ow sente be vs to seyn  
that thre wykys trwys scholen 3e hauen, certeyn." 3720

"thanne to counseyl scholen we go,  
To wyten how that we mown do.

[leaf 103 a]  
consider their  
own helpless  
condition,

Ryht Wondirfully sore Anoyed We be  
of haugwis deth, ful certeynle ; 3724

and therto hauen we non vytaylle  
hire forto abyden, sires, saunsfaylle,  
Neþer non Refrescheng we mown have  
of oure frendis here vs to save ; 3728

and jnto swich a day 3e grauntyn vs trewe,  
but here to abyden, it wolde vs rewe.

For it were ful evel soiornenge  
jn a place with-owten vytayllynge. 3732

and offer to  
yield up the  
castle

but we hym don to vndirstonde  
that this castel [we] deliueren jnto his honde,  
and al the lond that longeth therto,  
and we of hym to holdyn it for euere mo, 3736

and pay an  
annual  
tribute.

and þerto Every 3er hym forto 3elde  
thrytty knyhtes with spere and schelde,  
an hundryd destreres, & as many of palfray,  
and an hundrid fawkowns, the sothe to say." 3740

And they acordyd alle Jn on.

The negotia-  
tors bring  
back this  
answer.

so with this answeere wente þe Messengeres anon,  
and tolden the kyng word and ende,  
of this castel how it scholde wende. 3744

and whanne the kyng herde here answeere,  
anon he axede of merlyne riht there  
what were here-offen best forto do.

Merlin  
repeats his  
previous  
advice.

"3e," quod merlyne, "thow schalt not don so, 3748

For gret peryl it myhte be jn tyme comenge,  
and stille jn this lond they weren dwellenge.

but j schal tellen the what thou schalt do :  
anon sende a3en, with-owten mo, 3752

and bidde hem delyveren that castel,

For therto anon they scholen ben Lel,

For they ne hauen non maner of vytaylle,

J seye 3ow, Sires, with-owten faylle. 3756

3734. The pronoun is missing.

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- [leaf 103 b] And of hym gret Joye thus he Wrowhte,  
but evere anothir was Jn his thowhte. 3796
- One of the barons, in the presence of the king and twenty knights,  
there this barown clepede to-fore the kyng  
twenty knyhtes, with-owten leseng.  
“Now wile 3e sen,” quod this Barown thanne,  
“Merlyne here, so worthy a manne,  
that tolde the kyng howh Fortagere  
jn his castel scholde brenne riht pere.—  
and therefore preye j 3ow, for charite,  
of my siknesse that 3e wolden tellen me,  
& that 3e welen tellen me vtterlye  
On what maner of deth that j schal dye.” 3800
- asks Merlin to foretell his death.  
and therefore preye j 3ow, for charite,  
of my siknesse that 3e wolden tellen me,  
& that 3e welen tellen me vtterlye  
On what maner of deth that j schal dye.” 3804
- Merlin, knowing the baron's bitter heart,  
Thanne answerede merlyne, that knew ful wel  
his Malencolyvs herte Everydel : 3808  
“3e han me preid that j schal Seye  
to 3ow of 3oure deth, trewelye.  
knowe 3e wel that pe same day  
that deyen 3e scholen, wit-owten nay,  
of an hors 3owre Nekke schal to-breke.” 3812  
Aforn alle these knyhtes thus gan he speke.  
thanne seide the Barown to the kyng :  
“God me defende from his talkyng !” 3816  
tho wente he hom jn-to his contre,  
and there a while dwelled he,  
and cam a3en thedir as pe kyng was,  
and Feynede hym sore syk jn that plas, 3820  
and him forto sen he preyde the kyng,  
and algates merlyne with hym bryng,  
so that merlyne ne knowe jn non degre  
For what maner cause thedir cometh he. 3824  
thanne cam merlyne to the kyng,  
and axede hym what was his willyng.  
“3e Mosten to towne gon with me,  
a sik man j preye 3ow pere forto se.” 3828  
thanne clepid the kyng his prevy meyne  
with him to gon that man to se.  
and whanne that thedyr they weren comen echon,
- Later on, the baron comes to the king and feigns to be sick.  
and goes to the baron.

3805. &amp; added in the left margin.

3813. *an*, *a* through rough correction.

- thane seide to the kyng this sik man anon : 3832 The baron  
wants to  
know if he is  
to die from  
his sickness.
- “Sire, j preye 3ow, for charyte,  
that 3owre devyne may tellen me  
3yf j schal deyen of this syknesse,  
oper ellis to suffren ony more distresse.” 3836
- “Sire kyng,” anon quod merlyne thanne,  
“of þis syknesse schal not deyen this manne.”  
thane answerede the syk man, trewelye :  
“now, good sire, of what syknesse schal j deye?” 3840  
“No,” says  
Merlin,
- “Forsothe, hangenge schalt thou ende,  
and hangen þou schalt into thin ende.”  
and with that tornede him merlyn there,  
and made a semblaunce as wroth he were. 3844  
“thou shalt  
hang!”
- thus whanne merlyne was forth gon,  
this barown to the kyng seyde anon :  
“Now mowen 3e knowen be his spelle,  
a fool he is swyche thynges to telle,  
that swyche tweyn dethes me doth devyse  
whiche ben not cordyng jn non wyse !  
And the thrydde tyme 3it j schal asaye :  
To morwe wil j gon to on abbeye,  
and that 3e wolden thider hye,  
and merlyne jn 3oure compenye,  
and the abbot 3ow schal seyn  
that on of his monkes is Sik, certein,  
and 3ow schal preyen, for charite,  
thike sike monk þat 3e wolden comen se  
and merlyne with 3ow forto brynge.”  
the kyng him grantyd his askyng. 3848  
The baron  
points out the  
inconsist-  
ency of the  
predictions.
- vppon the morewen, whanne it was day,  
the kyng him Rod to that abbay,  
and merlyne thedyr with hym Rod,  
So herden they masse, and þere abod. 3852  
and says he  
will try the  
third time,
- Atte laste cam the Abbot there,  
and to the kyng seide jn this manere :  
“Ha, Sire kyng, and 3owre wylle Jt be,  
that an old syk monk 3e wolden com se,  
and 3owre devyne with 3ow to brynge, 3856  
counterfeit-  
ing a sick  
monk.
- Next morn-  
ing, the king  
and Merlin  
ride to the  
monastery.
- 3860
- 3864 [leaf 103 c]
- 3868 They are  
solicited to  
go and see  
the monk.

3832. *thāne*, abbreviation mark in different ink.3849. *dethes* added above the line.

and it were ȝowre wille, Sire kyng.

thanne seide the kyng to merlyne tho :

“Sire, with me wile ȝe owht go?”

3872

“ȝe, sire,” quod merlyne, “ful gladly!”

and took the kyng on syde jn hy :

“Whanne ferst j a-qweynted with ȝow bothe,  
thanne non fool helden ȝe me, forsothe.

3876

what, trowen ȝe that J ne knowe, sekerlye,  
vppon what deth this fool schal deye?

For now sore merveillen scholen ȝe ful snelle  
of a thing that j schal hym telle.”

3880

quod the kyng thanne to merlyne :

“may it be trewe he schal have swich fyne?”

“Now, Sire,” quod merlyne, “but ȝif it trewe be,  
Neuere here-aftyr ne leve thow me!

3884

and ȝit er that j parte from his compenye,  
J shal hym tellen how that he schal dye.”

So wenten they forth al jn fere,

lyk as the abbot hem ladde there.

3888

thanne seide the abbot to the kyng :

“Sire, and j dorste preyen ȝow of on thyng :

that ȝowre devyn ȝow wolde seye

ȝif this monk of this maladye schal deye.”

3892

and merlyne answerede anon there

jn maner as that wroth he were,

and seide to the abbot vntylle :

“he may arysen, ȝif that he wylle,

3896

For siknesse here ne feleth he non,

but that he may bothe rysen & gon.

and þerto, abbot, to the J seye

that thike day whanne he schal deye,

3900

his nekke he schal breken vnto,

and an honged, and be spilt also.

. Now Nedyth hym to feyne no more,

For his herte j knowe bothe here & thore.”

3904

thanne ros hym vpe this Ilke Barown,

and seide þere to kyng Pendragown :

“Now mown ȝe knowen his folye,

that seith on swich maner þat j scholde deye.

3908

Merlin  
privately  
reproves the  
king for being  
a party to  
these pre-  
tences.

He says,  
however, he  
will foretell  
the baron's  
death once  
more.

In reply to  
the abbot's  
request,

Merlin says  
that the man  
may rise, if  
he chooses,

and that he  
will break his  
neck, hang,  
and drown.

The baron  
maintains  
that Merlin  
is a fool,

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For faste they welen of me enqwere 3948

Merlin says  
he will avoid  
further  
queries,

of diuers maters, what so they be,  
but answe're geten they non, Sikerle,  
For j wyle no more so openly seye,  
that the peple schal vndirstonden, jn feye." 3952

and goes off  
to Blasy.

So wente merlyne to Blaysye anon,  
and told him of these thynges echon, 3956  
and of opere, that to comen were ;  
jn this maner departyd merlyne pere.

Those present  
at the baron's  
death arrive  
at court.

There dwellede merlyne to þe vj day,  
tyl they that at the deth weren, [comen], Jn fay, 3960

Merlin's wis-  
dom is fully  
acknow-  
ledged.

and tolden the kyng how that it stood,  
howhe þis barown was persched jn that flood,  
and seiden that merlyne was þe wysest man  
that Jn al this world was lyveng than. 3964

For of hym was neuere thyng seid ne don,  
but 3if he jnto Scripture dide it putten anon.  
and thus began merlynes prophecye  
of the kynges of Engelond, certeynlye, 3968

Blasy con-  
tinues his  
book.

and of othere many thynges also.  
he dide holy Blasye it wryten tho.  
thane axede Blayse of merlyne there :  
" wryten they also jn this manere ?" 3972

At court, they  
write down

" Nay, certeynly, non of hem alle,  
but they wryten that schal befalle,  
which thynges they scholen Neuere knowe,  
Tyl that they be-fallen vppon a rowe." 3976

Thanne Retornede merlyne to cowrt ageyn,  
and azens hym they comen, jn certeyn,  
and tolden hym of that Ilke tydyng,  
as thowg pere-offen he ne hadde knowen non thing. 3980

his dark  
prophecies.

Thanne sette on merlyne and gan to telle  
Ful dyrke worrdes of prophecyes felle,  
where-offen a book they maden anon.  
thane forth to the kyng merlyne gan gon, 3984

and there to hem seyde he ful petowsly :  
 “J love 3oure bothe worschepis Badyly ;  
 haven 3e not now vndirstondyng  
 of haugwys kynnes-men exylyng, 3988  
 that owt of this lond 3e deden don dryve,  
 aftyr that haugwys hadde left his lyve ?”  
 “3is, this wele knowen we, Jn certeyn ;  
 but for what cause do 3e this seyn ?” 3992  
 “J sey,” quod merlyne, “for this Enchesown,  
 That haugwys kynnes-men Everychon,  
 with-jnnen hem-Self they don thus speke,  
 that of haugwys deth they welen hem wreke. 3996  
 So that they maken gret congregacyown  
 of dyvers peple al abowtes Jn verown,  
 and hopen this lond forto conqwere  
 and ek forto haven the victorye here.”  
 thanne, whanne þe kyng herde this,  
 and also his Brothyr vter, j-wys,  
 Of these tydynges they merveyllid gretle,  
 And axeden Of Merlyne Howh this Myhte be. 4000  
 “haven they there so gret plente  
 Of Fensable peple Jn alle degre ?”  
 “3e,” quod merlyne, “with-owten dowte,  
 they haven more peple hem abowte 4008  
 thanne 3e owther 3owre brothyr, jn feye,  
 For azens on of 3owris they haven tweye ;  
 and but 3if 3e werkyn Ryht wysly,  
 3e scholen ben discomfyt & stroyed, trewely.” 4012  
 “we scholen werkyn aftyr 3owre wylle,  
 what that evere 3e welen seyn vs vntylle.”  
 thanne axeden they merlyne anon there  
 whanne they scholden comen and jn what manere. 4016  
 “Atte the Elleveneth day, ful trewly ;  
 but loke that 3e kepen this prevy,  
 and j defende 3ow, as J now kan,  
 that there-offen 3e ne tellen neuere man. 4020  
 but aftyr my cownseyl that 3e don,  
 and sendeth aftyr alle 3oure men anon,  
 and that they ben here with-owten let

Merlin  
pitifully in-  
forms the  
king

that Auguis'  
kinsmen

will attack  
the country

[leaf 101 a]

with superior  
forces,

in eleven  
days.  
This, how-  
ever, is to be  
kept a secret.



Merlin gives instructions with regard to the impending battle.

the laste wyke of the mounthe of junet, 4024  
 to assemblen vppon Salisbery pleyn  
 3owre enemyes to withstondyn ageyn.  
 so that on of 3ow with half 3owre meyne,  
 be-twixen hem and þe se scholen gon, Sykerle; 4028  
 and so tweyne dayes 3e scholen abyde,  
 and on the thrydde to fyhten, what so betyde.  
 & 3if 3e thus wilen don, trewely,  
 J dar 3ow behoten the victory." 4032

The brothers inquire if the battle will be fatal to either of them.

thanne seiden the bretheren to merlyne there :  
 " Now, goode merlyne, telle vs now here  
 3if ony of vs jn bataylle schal ded be."  
 thanne answeyd merlyne : " ful Sykerle, 4036  
 there nas neuere thyng that hadde begynneng,  
 but of necescite it moste hauen endyng,  
 Ne neuere man owghte the deth drede,  
 3if he it Resceyue Jn tyme of nede. 4040

Merlin makes them swear, on their relics,

and therefore wolde J thanne," quod merlyne,  
 " doth bryngen me 3owre relykes, þat ben so fyne,  
 and þer-vppon bothe scholen 3e swere  
 that 3e scholen don as j schal 3ow lere 4044  
 bothen for 3owre prow and worschepe also,  
 and aftyr that schal j tellen 3ow mo."

thus sworn they bothe at his Byddyng.  
 thanne anon seide merlyne to the kyng : 4048  
 " 3e hauen sworn to me, with-owten faylle,

to be true to God and themselves,

Trewe men to be Jn this Bataylle  
 azens god and 3owre owne persone,  
 how so that Evere the game doth gone. 4052  
 For to hym-Self may non man trewe be,  
 but 3if to god he be trewe, Sykerle.  
 and that 3e confessen 3ow generally  
 Forto fyhten azens 3owre enemy. 4056

and promises them victory.

and aftyr mown 3e ben ful Sure  
 hem ouercomen bothe clene & pure,  
 for they beleven not on the Trenite.  
 And now herkene what j sey the : 4060  
 Sethen holychirche cam jnto this lond,

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that they scholde comen Everichon 4100

Forto confessen his peple Jn fere,  
that they weren clene Jn alle manere.

The entire  
army is  
confessed

and so thorwh the ost Everychon  
they weren confessed thanne anon, 4104

and eche to oper forzaf þere his maltalent,

and absolved.

and therto clene asoylled, verament.

thanne seide the kyng to Merlyne there  
that tydynges he hadde of here powere, 4108

and howh they weren aryved Echon,

alle his enemyes, be on & be on.

thanne seide Merlyne to hym ageyn :

“ that is ful trewe, jn certeyn ! ” 4112

thanne axede the kyng of Merlyne tho

Jn what maner that he scholde do.

“ 3e scholen to morwenz senden 3oure brothir vter

and half 3oure Meyne to ben with hym ther. 4116

and whanne 3owre enemyes ben owt of þe see,

thanne betwixen hem and þe water schal he be.

and thanne wilen they resemblen anon

here jnto this contre forto gon. 4120

and thus tweyne dayes schal he werken there,

and þe thridde day jn the Eyr schal apere

a Red dragown, & þanne Mown 3e fyhte

and the victorye to haven, j seye 3ow Ryhte.” 4124

adding that a  
dragon will  
appear in the  
air.

The plan of  
operation  
thus settled,

To this cownseyl acordid ful wel

both pandragown an vter Everydel.

and ful gret joye bothen they made,

and of this cownseil they weren ful glade. 4128

thanne seide vter to Merlyne anon :

“ Jnto tho partyes now wyle j gon.”

“ Loke that 3e thanne ben a good knyht ! ”

and thus departyd they that Jlike Nyht. 4132

so that vter took forth his jorne,

and with hym half here Meyne.

so that be-twene þe see and his enemyes he abod,

and with his Meyne thus forth he rod. 4136

thanne seide Merlyne : “ abasche the non thyng

For deth ne bataylle, be my cownseyllyng ! ”

Uter goes  
with half the  
army to cut  
off the enemy  
from the sea.

- And Whanne that Vter herde this, [leaf 104 c]  
 Ful mochel his herte was esyd, J-wys. 4140
- thanne wente merlyne Jnto North-humberlond  
 to Blaysye, his maistryr, as J vndirstond,  
 and let this putten Jnto Scripture  
 and many mo thynges, J 3ow ensure. 4144  
 Merlin goes to North-umberland.
- thanne rod vter with his meyne  
 aftyr merlynes cownseil, ful Sykerle,  
 and lay be-twene the Schepis & that ost,  
 whiche that they dredden most. 4148
- So lay Vter Styll ryht there  
 thre dayes Jn this manere,  
 and atte the Selve thrydde day  
 the kyng remevyd, the sothe to say, 4152  
 and kam So Nyhe that meyne,  
 that eche of hem myht other se.  
 and whanne the ost beheld al this,  
 that on bothe sides they weren beset, j-wys, 4156  
 and that to here Schipes they myhte not gon  
 with-owten bataylle of here fon,  
 thanne jn the Eyr aperede that syht 4160  
 that merlyne afore tyme hem tolde ful ryht,  
 of wheche Syhte the enemyes of the kyng  
 hadden gret drede, with-owten lesyng.  
 thanne seide the kyng to his meyne anon : The king  
 " To armes and to hors let vs now gon, 4164  
 and also Faste as we mown ryde,  
 vpponoure enemyes this Jlike tyde."  
 and whanne that vter Say the kyng so do,  
 anon with his meyne he remevede also, 4168  
 that so on bothe sydes beset they were.  
 thanne began anon strong bataylle there  
 and gret occisiown on bothe syde,  
 and mochel peple ded at that tyde. 4172  
 but haugwis kynnesmen hadden the werre,  
 Not-withstondyng they comen from ferre.  
 but of this bataylle j Reherse no more,  
 whiche of hem that best bar hym thore. 4176  
 and carry the day.

4172. *at that t* through correction, partly on erasure.

The king falls  
with many  
barons,

but Pandragown the kyng was there ded,  
and manye of his barowns in that sted.

thanne thus recordith this Storye,

that vter hadde there the victorie,

4180

but of the  
enemies not  
one escapes.

and þat of his enemyes ne sckaped neuer on,

that ded they weren, other taken, echon.

thus endid the bataylle of Salisbery there,

where pandragown was slayn Jn this manere.

4184

Uter suc-  
ceeds his  
brother.

thanne hadde vter the Rem Jn governaunce,  
as was bothe resown, ryht, and chaunce.

thanne vter dide assemblen his meyne anon,

and let beryen his dede men Everichon,

4188

After raising  
tomb-stones  
over the  
fallen,

and on every tombe wrot the name,

what he was, and of what fame.

but as towching his brothyr the kyng,

vppon his tombe made he non wrytyng.

4192

For a gret Fool he is, with-owten dowte,

that a kynges tombe ne kan knowen *with-owte*,

For heyre and richere thanne ony oper it was

that weren J-beried Jn that plas.

4196

he goes to  
Logres  
(London),

thanne remevid vter to Logres anon,

and with hym his prelacye everychon ;

where he is  
crowned.

And there was he sacred and crowned kyng,

and of alle the rewme hadde he the governeng.

4200

Thus was vter kyng of the Lond,

and alle homages resceyvede, J vndirstond.

thanne the Fyftenethe day after Sewenge

Merlin, com-  
ing to court,

cometh merlyne to the cowrt of the kyng.

4204

gret was the joye the kyng of hym made,

and alle the howshold of hym was glade.

[leaf 104 d]

Thanne seide merlyne to Vter there :

tells Uter to  
adopt his  
brother's  
name, and  
to design  
a dragon like  
the one seen  
in the air,

“ thy brotheris name J wolde thou bere ;

4208

& benchesown of the dragown, J-wis,

that jn the Eyr aperede, with-owten mys,

and after thyke dragowns semblaunce,

J wolde thou madist on, *with-owten variaunce.*”

4212

This kyng let maken this dragown anon

of gold, also faste as it myhte be don,

and vppon a lawnce Jt Sette, Sanz faylle,

4209. & added in the left margin.

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Of pandragown, J the ENSWRE.

The people  
are surprised  
at the size  
of the stones.

thanne vter Pendragown with gret meyne  
To the pleyn of Salisbery wente hem to se. 4256

and whanne they behelden this grete mervaylle,  
thanne seide the peple, with-owten Faylle,  
that alle the world hem ne cowde meve,  
thowg that they scholden the sothe preve. 4260

Merlin under-  
takes to raise  
them,

thanne seide merlyne : "J schal hem dresse  
mochel bettere thanne they lyn, J-wysse."  
"howh myhte that be?" quod the kyng anone,  
"that may non man do but god alone." 4264

sends away  
the people,

thanne quod merlyne to hem anon :  
"Goth 3e now hennes everychon,  
and j schal hem dresen, as j have hyht,  
oper ellis my covenant held j not a-ryht." 4268

and performs  
the task.

So that merlyne belefte there styлле,  
and his covenawnt he dide fulfille.

Thanne cam merlyne to the kyng  
as to a man þat he lovede with-owten feyneng, 4272

Merlin then  
says to the  
king, he will  
reveal to him  
a great secret.

and seide : "Sire kyng, herkeneth to me!  
j moste to 3ow discure a gret prevyete,  
on the prevyest that evere 3e knewe,  
And therefore to 3ow J Wele Jt Schewe, 4276

[leaf 105 a]

Whiche schal ben ryht a strange thing,  
as j 3ow say atte the begynneng ;  
and that 3e discure me to non lyveng man."  
his axeng anon the kyng grauntid hym than. 4280

He tells him  
the double  
source of his  
skill and  
divinatory  
power.

"J wele that 3e vndirstonde me, ful pleyn :  
Al the connenge that J have, certeyn,  
onlych it cometh of the enemy ;  
and therto god, that is almyhty, 4284

Wit and memorie hath grauntid to me  
thynges that ben comeng to knowen, certeinle ;  
and be that Sovereyn vertw  
the enemy hath lost, as j telle 3ow, 4288

alle the part that he hadde jn me,  
thorwh goddis wille, sire, Sykerle.

Sire, now have 3e ful knowlechyng

4264. *do* added above the line.

4274. *discure, re* (?) altered from *r*'.

[4285. MS. *grauntid*.

*gret, g* corrected from *p*.

- From whens that cometh al my konnenge. 4292
- Now j wele tellen the what Js goddis wylle,  
and thow wylt herkene and lestene theretylle.  
and whanne thou knowest of my menyng,  
loke that thou Folwe it Jn werkyng. 4296
- Sire kyng, now vndirstonde thou me,  
that god decendid from þe maieste  
jn-to this erthe the Synneris to Save,  
and for that he wolde here sowles have. 4300
- Also beleve wel that his sene he made  
among his disciples to maken hem glade,  
and þat he to hem seide Jn this manere :  
' on of 3ow schal betraien me þat is here.' 4304
- Also, Sire kyng, vndirstonde thou me,  
that moche povert and diseise suffrede he  
of the jewes, and they falsly him Slowe  
azens the lawe, with fals witnessse j-nowe,  
and vppon the croys for vs he deyde. 4308
- thanne cam a knyht, as to-foren 3e herd seide,  
and axed the body, For his gwerdown,  
of hym that for vs hadde paid rawnsom. 4312
- Sire, aftyr that, he ros from ded  
Jn scomfiture of the fowle qwed.  
and happede aftyr his vp-Rysyng,  
this knyht with his sowdiours was walkyng 4316
- Jn a place of wast and desert,  
and with hym many of his lignage, apert.  
Sire, þere happede, a famyne cam hem vppon,  
and to this knyht, here maister, they compleyned anon. 4321
- Anon thanne this knyht made his preyere  
that god som Tokenyng wolde schewen hem þere,  
the cause to suffren Swich deseise,  
that he myhte it knowen, & it wolde him plese. 4324
- Anon thanne hadde he comandement  
a table forto maken, verament,  
jn mynde of þe table and of swete jesus,  
at which he sat jn Symon lepres hows, 4328

Martin fur-  
ther relates

of Christ  
coming to  
earth to save  
sinners,

of His sup-  
per with His  
disciples,

of His death,

and of Jo-  
seph, who  
buried His  
body.

After the  
resurrection,

this Joseph  
travelled with  
his retinue  
in a desert,

his provisions  
ran short,

and he prayed  
to God.

He was com-  
manded to  
make a table,  
in memory  
of the Lord's  
table,

4306. *povert*, *r* corrected from *p* rather indistinctly.

4313. In the right margin : *Nota*.



to cover it  
with a cloth,  
and place  
thereon the  
holy vessel  
(St. Graal)

and that table to koueren (& not to lette)  
with whit cloth, and þer-vppon þe holy vessel sette—  
'and that the vessel be kouered also  
with fair whit cloth, how so euere 3e do!' 4332

which he,  
when in  
prison, had  
received as  
a comfort  
from God.

whiche vessel browhte the kyng of blys  
To this knyht jnto presown, j-wys,  
where as he was two and fowrty 3er,  
whiche vessel al his hol comfort was ther, 4336  
and be this vessel departyd he  
the goode from the evel, ful sikerle.

A void place  
was left at  
the table,

and, Sire, at this Table euer there was  
Jn memorie of crist kept a voide plas, 4340

to signify the  
place once  
occupied by  
Judas.

whiche specyal place doth Signefye  
the place that judas jn Sat, trewelye,  
which he Forsook, whanne god hadde sayd :  
'on of 3ow hath me betrayed 4344  
that with me here doth drynke and ete.'  
(Jt hadde ben bettere he dyde it lete.)

[leaf 105 b]

So Was this place there voyde styлле,  
tyl that aftyr-ward be goddis wylle 4348  
anothir, hyht mathy, was there-jne j-set,  
as to hym there Jt cam be lot,  
and to fulfille þe nombre of þe postelis twelve,  
for thus wold god it scholde ben him-selve. 4352

Just as that  
place was  
afterwards  
filled by St.  
Matthew,

and, Sire, this voyde place þat at þe [table] Is,  
Signefieth be josepe, Sire, j-wis ;  
and lik as maththy was chosen therto,  
riht so was josepe, wit-owten mo, 4356

thus Joseph  
here took the  
empty seat.

So that these tweyne tables covenable were,  
and thus pleside crist mennes hertes there.  
Sire, this peple clepede this vessel  
'the Sank Ryal' oþer ellys 'Seint Graal.' 4360

Now the king  
is exhorted to  
make a third  
table.

And, sire, 3if 3e welen don aftyr me,  
the thrydde table, jn worschepe of þe Trenite,  
3e scholen be-gynne, as j 3ow schal Say, 4364  
and 3ow to gret worschepe it schal torne eche day,  
and to 3oure Sowle gret mede also,  
and manye benefettes 3ow schal comen to,  
and thorwgh this world this word schal springe,

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“ 3e, sire, to morwen schole 3e sen the manere  
 and that 3e wenden neuere forto han seye :  
 Fyfty worthy knyhtes, Sire, jn feye, 4408  
 of the beste that ben with-jnne thi lond,  
 certein j do 3ow to vndyrstond.  
 and þerby myht thou knowen thy worthy men,  
 that j have chosen be fyve sithes ten. 4412  
 Also the voide place þere schalt thou se,  
 that 3it fulfyld it may not be.”  
 Thus merlyne at that Ryal Feste  
 ches there Fyfty knyhtes of the beste, 4416  
 and preide hem to Sitten al jn Fere  
 and there to eten with ryht good chere.  
 Ryht so they deden be on an on,  
 and glad they weren everychon. 4420  
 thanne merlyne, that was so ful of craft,  
 abowtes he wente, and not ne laft,  
 and clepid the kyng there forto se  
 how that they Seten Jn here degre, 4424  
 and schewed him also the voide place  
 that thike tyme atte the table wase.  
 but what that place dide signifie,  
 Niste þe kyng ne non of his compenye. 4428

And whanne merlyne thus hadde j-don,  
 he preyde the kyng to sitten anon.  
 and thus viij dayes contened þe feste Ryal  
 To lordes and ladyes and damyselis with-al ; 4432  
 and there ful grete 3iftes 3af the kyng  
 bothe to lordis and to ladyes and to damyselis so 3yng.  
 and whanne this feste gan vp to breke,  
 thanne to þe Fyfty knyhtes þe kyng gan to reke, 4436  
 and axede how hem likede there,  
 and of here Syttyng jn alle manere.  
 thanne they the kyng answerid ful sone :  
 “ Jt Js owre wylle neuere hens to gone 4440  
 Neþer neuere to parten oure compenye onsondyr,  
 For so as we loven to-gederis, it is gret wondir,

4414. *fulfyld*, *d* squeezed in afterwards.4429. *whāne* added above the line.

Merlin pro-  
mises the  
king an unex-  
pected sight.

[leaf 105 c]  
He chooses  
fifty knights,

and places  
them round  
the table.

Then he calls  
the king,  
and shows  
him the  
knights and  
the empty  
seat.

The king  
joins the  
party;  
the feast is  
continued  
for a week;  
handsome  
presents are  
given.

The knights  
say they  
would like to  
stay for ever,  
in brotherly  
love.

- For as bretheren we loven to-gederis jn fere,  
and, tyl deth vs sondre, neuere to departen ere." 4444
- And whanne the kyng herde this,  
gret merveille he hadde þer-offen, j-wys.  
þanne charged the kyng to hem anon  
to hym ben loveng and trewe Everychon. 4448
- þanne departed al this compenye,  
Eche man to his own contre, trewelye.
- þanne cam the kyng to merlyne there,  
and axede him þanne jn this manere : 4452
- "Telle me 3if that goddis wylle jt be  
this Table fulfilled that J schal Se?"
- "wyte thow wel certeyn, Sire kyng,  
that jn thy tyme it schal neuere haven endyng,  
Nethyr he that jt schal fulfyllen,  
js not 3it be-geten, j sey the tulle.  
but jn the kynges tyme jt schal be-falle  
that after the schal regnen in pured & palle ; 4456
- and he that hym begeten schal,  
knoweth not what aventure him schal befall.  
and that same that is to be bore,  
Schal fulfillen the place thore, 4460
- lyk as josepe dide jn his manere  
the Signefiaunce after maththy there.  
and þefore, Sire, j preye to the  
thy festes here to holden, certeinle." 4464
- "Now certes, merlyne," quod the kyng tho,  
"and at thy wille it schal be do."  
þanne seide merlyne to the kyng :  
"Sire, it is tyme to maken a partyng ;  
and knowe 3e wel now, syre kyng,  
that after myn hens departyng  
of a long tyme 3e schole not me se,  
J Seye 3ou, Sire kyng, ful certeinle." 4468
- þanne axede the kyng of hym a3e  
whethir at his festes he wolde not be.  
þanne answered merlyne jn this manere :  
"Atte alle tyme j may not ben here." 4472
- 4476
- 4480

The king  
wonders at  
this ;

he exhorts  
them to be  
loving and  
true.

The king  
asks Merlin  
about the  
void seat.

Merlin re-  
plies: "It  
shall not be  
filled in thy  
time ;  
its occupier  
is not yet be-  
gotten.

Continue thy  
feasts here!"

Merlin takes  
leave,

and says he  
will not be  
back for a  
long time.

4468. *thy*, *y* corrected from *e* ; cf. l. 4604.

4473. *now* added above the line.

Merlin repairs to  
Blasy.

Thanne wente merlyne to blasye anon,  
and þe establementes of þe table told hym echon  
and of other thynges manye also

[leaf 105 d]

That At thyke tyme Were to comen tho. 4484

and there dwelde merlyne two 3er styllle,  
that the kynges cowrt he nolde comen tulle.

In Cardwell,  
some courtiers murmur  
at the seat  
being left  
empty.

So happede it at Cardweille vppon a day  
that they whiche lovede not merlyne, gonne to say, 4488

and axeden a qwestiown of the kyng :  
why that place was voyde of syttyng,  
and why that som good man mihte [not] sytten there,  
and thanne the table fulfilled were. 4492

The king  
tells them  
of Merlin's  
prediction ;

thanne answeyrd the kyng : " certeynle,  
For a gret merveyll that merlyne tolde me,  
that it scholde Nevere ben be my day,  
and thus merlyne to me gan say. 4496

and 3it he that him engendren schal,  
Nys not 3it born, more with-al,  
that this table schal fulfyllle."

but they  
scoffingly  
declare,  
that there are  
as good men  
to be found  
now as ever  
will be,

they lawhen wel faste, as men þat weren jlle. 4500

" Sire, beleve 3e thanne that jn tyme comenge  
þat better men scholen ben thanne be now reignenge,  
and that jn 3owre lond [not] as goode there be  
as evere here-aftyr scholen comen, sikerle ?" 4504

" Now certes, j wot neuere," quod the kyng.

and urge the  
king to let  
them try the  
seat.

" No[w] we reden 3ow to putten jt jn asayeng."  
" Certes," quod the kyng, " j drede me þanne sore  
that merlyne wolde ben angry there-fore." 4508

" Sire, thanne, and 3e wylen 3yven vs leve,  
his Falsnesse forsothe we scholen preve."

After some  
hesitation,

" and j wiste merlyne wroth wolde not be,  
wel fayn wolde j asayen it, ful sykerle." 4512

" 3e, Sire, 3if that merlyne know of this,  
Siker, there wile he ben, j-wys ;  
and þerfore suffreth vs forto asaye,  
Now, goode Sire kyng, alle we 3ow praye." 4516

the king gives  
his consent.

So that the kyng hem graunted it forto do,  
whanne that the feste cam therto.

4482. *hym*, MS. *hem*.

4491, 4503. The negation is missing.

4506. MS. *No*.

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[leaf 106 a]

There the fyfty knyhtes Seten Echon.

“ J am comen forto Sitten here  
 Forto beren 3ow compenye al jn fere.” 4556

The intruder  
is met with  
silence.

and they to hym Seiden neuer a word,  
 but humblely stille seten at that bord,  
 and behelden what that he wolde do,  
 and so dyde the kyng and manyon mo. 4560

He has  
scarcely  
taken the  
seat,

thanne thussonne he hym sette adown  
 amonges al that peple there jn virown.  
 and assone as he was set jn that sted,  
 he Sank a-down lik a plom of led. 4564

when he  
sinks down  
lifeless

Ne non man wyste how it cam to,  
 Neper why he Suffrede that deth ful wo,  
 Ne where his body becomen was,  
 there wiste no man jn that plas. 4568

and disap-  
pears.

thanne comanded the kyng anon  
 To thyke worthy men Everychon  
 that anon they scholden vp ryse,  
 and so they dyden jn hasty wyse, 4572

All rise.

and merveillously astoned this cowrt thanne was,  
 and also the kyng most jn that plas.

thus thanne taryede there the kyng

tyl Fyftene dayes aftyr, with-owten leseng. 4576

A fortnight  
later,  
Merlin comes  
to court.

and be that tyme merlyne to cowrt was gon,  
 Of hos comenge weren glad manyon,  
 and specyaly aboven alle othere the kyng,  
 that azens merlyne wente jn metyng. 4580

Anon as merlyne the kyng gan beholde,  
 these same wordis to hym he tolde :

He reproves  
the king.

“ certeyn, 3e haven Ryht Evele j-do  
 ony man jn þat place to suffren sitten so ! ” 4584

“ Now sikerly, merlyne, ” quod the kyng,

The king ex-  
cuses himself.

“ they jt deden and me begyleng. ”  
 “ certis, ” quod merlyne to the kyng than,  
 “ Ryht so it fareth be manye a man. 4588

ho that often desireth to be-gylen anothisr,  
 atte laste on him-self falleth the fothyr.

and that, Sire kyng, myht thou proven here  
 vppon this man jn alle manere.” 4592

thanne aftyrward preide the kyng merlyne,

- that was his owne and worthy devyn,  
 where that man were, and how be hym it felle,  
 he preide that merlyne hym wolde telle. 4596 The king asks Merlin what has become of the dead courtier.
- thane answered merlyne to him ryht there :  
 “ what nedeth the aftyr hym Enqwere ?  
 For thowh thou wistest howh with hym it stood,  
 Jt scholde don the but litel good. 4600 Merlin gives him no satisfaction on this point ;
- but thenke on hem that there don Sytte,  
 and how that thow schalt wel meynteayne jtte  
 and othir thynges that belongen to the,  
 thy cowrt, thy festes, and thy Meyne, 4604 he tells him rather to mind his people and his feasts,
- that thou hast begonnen jn this town.  
 Now myht þou se, the table js of Renown,  
 of Renown and of dignete gret ;  
 here sixt þou proved, and thow wilt wet. 4608
- Now, sire kyng, from the wyl j gon,  
 loke thou kepe wel these thynges Echon,  
 and that thow do aftyr Myn cownsaille,  
 for j suppose it wyle the somewhat avaylle.” 4612 and follow Merlin's instructions.
- Thus departyd merlyne from the kyng tho,  
 and jnto othir contres gan forto go.  
 thanne the kyng, where he scholde holden his feste,  
 Faire howses let he maken aftyr his heste. 4616 The king erects fine buildings at Cardwell, and appoints general festivals to be held there regularly .
- Thanne dede proclame the kyng anon  
 alle these festes, Everichon,  
 that Eche man at Cardwel scholde be  
 atte these festes as 3e scholen se : 4620
- that is, at the feste of Cristemasse,  
 Esterne, & pentecost, as j gesse,  
 and þe feste of alle halwen also,  
 To Cardweylle they scholde comen to. 4624 at Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, and All Saints' Day. [leaf 106 b]
- so that jt happede atte a Cristemasse feste,  
 the kyng Somownd his barowns, bothe lest & Meste,  
 and warned hem Jn this manere,  
 that Eche lady with hire lord scholde ben there, 4628 One Christmas, the ladies are also invited to the feast.
- here dowhtres, here Sostren, here Necez also,  
 to Cardweille jn gales scholden alle go,



and also bothe knyhtes and bachelere,  
jn alle wises they scholden ben there. 4632

Amongst  
others,

Jt were to longe here Names to telle,  
but of certeyn persones j schal 3ow spelle.

there appear  
the duke of  
Tyndagel  
and his wife  
Ygwern.

there was the dewk of tyndagel  
and ygwerne, his wyf, that he loved ful wel, 4636  
where-offen spekyth this storrye,  
and a-forn opere putteth it jn memorye.

The king at  
once falls in  
love with  
Ygwern.

Anon the kyng his love there sette  
(Myht no mau womman loven bette), 4640  
and cow[n]tenance to hire made he non,  
but hire beheld most of echon.

She notices it,

so atte laste sche gan aspye  
that the kyng hire lovede prevylye, 4644  
as sche gan aspyen be his chere.

and avoids  
him.

and þerfore sche schoned afor him to comen there,  
For sche was bothe good and fayr, trewly,  
and loved god and hire lord Sovereynly. 4648

The king  
distributes  
costly pre-  
sents;

and the kyng, for love of this lady fre,  
ziftes abowtes sente, ful gret plente  
of jewelys and many oper preciows thynges,  
Nowches, and broches, and manye Riche Rynges. 4652

to Ygwern  
he sends a  
precious  
jewel,

and to Ygwerne he sente a precyows jwel,  
that he supposede scholde plesen here wel.  
and sche sawh that to alle other ladyes he sente,  
So dorste sche not refwsen his presente. 4656

which she  
dare not  
refuse.

and in hire herte this lady gan to Remene  
that for hire love he dyde jt ful clene,  
and that sche scholde his zifte Receyve,  
that from his love sche scholde not weyve. 4660

Thus the kyng there held his Festis  
with Ryalte, mynstrales, and many gestis.  
and algates he was with-owten wyf,  
and thus jn love Morneng he ledde his lyf. 4664

The enam-  
oured prince,

For so was he set jn love of ygwerne,  
that from loves dart non man myht hym werne.

4641. MS. *cowtenance*. 4648. *hir'* corrected from *his*.

4653. MS. *yGwerne*, *a* corrected from *w*.

4666. *lovcs*, *f* inserted afterwards.

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thus departyd this cowrt thanne,  
and the kyng there lefte an hevy manne.

The king  
spends a year  
in yearning.

so al that 3er jn angwysch lyved he  
for Ygwernes love, ful syker 3e be. 4708

and whanne it cam to thende of the 3ere,  
he compleyned hym of his angwysch þere,  
that cerleyn, for the love of ygwerne,  
No man to morne ne myhte hym werne. 4712

His privy  
council ad-  
vise him

thanne answerid his prevy cownseyl ageyn :  
“ what wil 3e þat we do, telle vs now pleyn ! ”

“ j wyle that 3e wolden me rede  
how that of hire J myhte spede.” 4716

thanne seiden they to the kyng anon :

not to go  
into Ygwerne's  
country,

“ 3if 3e owht jnto that contre gon,  
anon discured scholen 3e be,  
and þat were non worschepe to 3ow, Sykerle.” 4720

“ cownseilleth me thanne what j schal do ! ”

and they to the kyng thus answerede vnto :

but to have  
a feast again  
at Cardwell,

“ the beste cownseyl Js, that we can,  
that 3e don Somowne Every man 4724

to ben at cardweille atte 3owre feste,

and here ladyes, bothe lest and meste,

and that xv dayes it schal laste,

that eche schal abyde, tyl that be paste, 4728

and so with-jnne thike xv dayes

and there en-  
joy Ygwerne's  
society.

with ygwerne mown 3e haven bothe dalyaunce & playes.”

this cownseille plesid ful wel the kyng,

and he dyde aftyr here cownseilleng. 4732

So thanne sente the kyng messengeris anon

To alle his Barowns thanne, Everychon,

At Pentecost,  
the nobility  
assemble,

at Pentecost at cardweille forto be,

eche Barown and his lady so fre. 4736

So comen they thedyr Everychon

the kynges comaundement forto don.

and the king  
bears his  
crown  
throughout  
the feast.

At that Feste the kyng Bar corowne

jn chirche, jn paleys, jn feld and towne. 4740

and grete 3iftes 3af the kyng, certeinle,

bothe to lordis and ladyes, aftyr here degre.

4707. *lyved*, *y* corrected from *e*.

4713. *cownseyl*, *l* squeezed in afterwards.

- At that Feste ful joyful was the kyng,  
 whanne that he Sawh that Fayre assemblyng. 4744  
 So that he clepede on of his olde cownseiller,  
 that ful mochel he trusted jn ther,  
 hos name vlphyn thanne was,  
 that the kyng clepede jn that plas, 4748  
 and axede of hym how that he scholde do  
 for Ygwernes love, that wrowht hym wo—  
 “that nethyr Sleping ne wakyng non reste, certeyne!  
 So that hire love doth me distreyne, 4752  
 and but j haue the bettere cownsaille,  
 j am Siker to deyen, *with-owten* faylle.”  
 thanne spak vlphyn, and lette for non schame :  
 “Now Sekerly, Sire, ze ben to blame, 4756  
 that for a wommans love wenen to deye!  
 and it were to me ward, Sire, be my feye,  
 as pore man as J am here on,  
 and j lovede so as ze now don, 4760  
 j wolde neuere deyen for hire Sake,  
 but som othir menes thanne wolde j make,  
 owthyr *with* faire speche or ziftes grete,  
 With dalyaunce, and With love hyre threte, 4764  
 and to hem that ben hire abowte  
 gret ziftes to zyven, al that Rowte.  
 and azens this maner of werkyng  
 herde j neuere wommans cownterpletynge. 4768  
 and thou thy-self that art a kyng,  
 wherto makyst thou al this Morneng?”  
 thanne spak the kyng to vlphyn ageyn :  
 “thou seist wondirly wel, jn certeyn, 4772  
 and therto thow knowest what longeth perto  
 Swich maner of werkyng forto do.  
 and pefore, vlphyn, J the preye,  
 helpe what pou canst be ony weye, 4776  
 and to my cofres thou go anon,  
 & ches what jewelis pou wilt amonges hem Echon,  
 and zeve to hem that ben hire abowtes there,  
 of hire that j myhte haven the better chere.” 4780  
 “Now Resteth, Sire,” quod vlphyn tho,  
 “and al my deligence j wele now do.”

The king asks  
 the advice of  
 his confidant,  
 Ulfin (cf. l.  
 3700),

with regard  
 to his love-  
 affair.

Ulfin en-  
 courages the  
 king,

recommend-  
 ing fair words  
 [leaf 106d]  
 and great  
 presents,

which no  
 woman can  
 resist.

The king  
 charges Ulfin  
 to distribute  
 jewels.

thus vndirtook Sire vlphynes there  
to helpen the kyng aftyr his powere. 4784  
thanne was the kyng joyful jn þat stede,  
For wel he hopede that vlphyn scholde spede.  
and so that alle thike xv dayes  
the kyng made gret joye and many playes, 4788  
and algates the dewk jn his compenye,  
and many grete jewelis 3af he, Sekerlye.  
thanne jn this mene while also  
vlphyn to ygwerne spak vnto, 4792  
and manye a riche jewel he hire browhte,  
whiche þat hire best scholde plesen him thowhte.  
but ygwerne Resceyvede non of al this,  
For why he it dede, wel thowhte sche, j-wys. 4796  
so that jt happede vppon a day  
that ygwerne to vlphyn thus gan say :  
“sey, vlphyn, what Js the cause and why  
Swiche 3iftes me to profren so prevyly?” 4800  
“Lady, for 3owre bewte and 3owre semblance,  
For 3owre discresciown and good dalyawnce,  
For 3owre hyghe wyt and 3owre bownte,  
alle these Londis goodis, 3owre they be, 4804  
and alle mennes persones to 3ow scholen obeye  
as to here owne Sovereyn lady, Sekerlye.”  
“how myhte this be,” quod Ygwerne thanne,  
“that to me scholde obeye so manye a manne?” 4808  
“For his herte haven 3e al only  
to whom alle men scholen obeien lowly.”  
“O Lord god, ho may that be?  
j preye the, vlphyn, telle þou now me!” 4812  
“the kynges herte,” seide vlphyn than.  
Anon to blessen sche hire be-gan,  
and seyde : “how longe hath the kyng a tretour be,  
that my lord So worschepith to-forn me, 4816  
and me wolde don so fowl a schame,  
and þerto bryngen me jnto endeles blame?  
Therefore, sire vlphyn, j warne the,

The king  
lives in joy  
and bounty.

Ulfin brings  
Ygwern  
many a costly  
jewel.

The lady  
refuses the  
gifts,

and remon-  
strates.

Ulfin praises  
her high  
qualities,

and tells her  
that she pos-  
sesses the  
king's heart.

Ygwern con-  
demns the  
king.

4784. *his*, *f* through correction.

4809. *al* added above the line.

4813. *than*, *a* rendered distincter afterwards.

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a ful riche cowpe stood to-fore the kyng,  
and vlyphyn, that was to-forn him knelyug :  
“ Syre, take 3e this cuppe & sende Ygwerne,  
and for 3owre loue to drynken let hire not werne. 4860

Ulfin kneeling before the king, suggests that he should send a gold cup to Ygwern.

preye 3e the dewk jt myhte so be,  
and as hire owne stille it to kepen for the.”  
thanne to this dewk spak the kyng,  
and him preyde to fulfillen his askyng, 4864

The king speaks to the duke,

that he wolde that cowpe to ygwerne sende—  
“ and for my love to drynken, and me hauen jn Mende ;  
and that sche the cowpe kepe now style,  
to don ther-with at hire owne wylle.” 4868

who unsuspectingly and gratefully tells his confidant Bretel

thanne answerede that worthy manne,  
that non maner of evel thowhte he thanne,  
and clepyd a knyht, that him stood besyde,  
that with hym was prevy jn Eche tyde : 4872

to take the cup to Ygwern.

“ Tak 3e this cowpe here Ryht anon,  
and to 3owre lady there-with 3e gou,  
and seyth to hire on this manere,  
that sche here-offen drynke with ryht good chere, 4876  
hertylich for love of the kyng,  
and the cowpe to kepen to hire weldyng.”

Bretel goes,

This knyht Bretel wyth þe cowpe wente ful softe,  
and the dewk the kyng there-offen thankyde ofte. 4880

Forth this Bretel to chambre gau gon,  
There as these ladyes eten Everychon,  
and toforn his lady he knelyd a-down,  
as to a worthy lady of renown. 4884

and delivers the duke's message.

“ Lady, this cowpe 3ow sendeth the kyng,  
and my Lord 3ow comandeth ouer alle thing  
For the kynges love to drynken with good chere,  
and stille þe cowpe to kepen jn fair manere.” 4888

Whanne this lady these wordis herde,  
ful red sche wax, and aschamed sche ferde,  
and dorste not Refusen hire lordis byddyng, 4891  
and drank of this cowpe, and wolde han sent it the kyng.  
thanne seide Bretel to that lady fre :

Ygwern grows red for shame, but drinks out of the cup.

4860. *loue* added afterwards above the line.

4879. *wyth*, *y* corrected from *e*.

- " stille it to kepen my lord comanded the,  
 and so the kyng hym faire preide,  
 perfore doth ze as j have zow seyde ! " 4896  
 thanne say this lady þat for good ne ylle  
 but that thike cowpe sche moste kepen styлле.  
 and Bretel azen to halle was goeng,  
 and on Ygwernes be-halve thankyd þe kyng, 4900  
 Not-withstondyng sche seide non word  
 To Bretel, whiles sche sat atte bord.  
 Ful mochel joye made the kyng tho,  
 that ygwerne his cowpe resceyved so. 4904  
 thanne vlphyn anon to chambre þe weye gon take,  
 To sen what semblaunce Ygwerne dide make.  
 And þere He Fond Hyre jn pensyfnesse,  
 angry of chere, and ful of hevynesse. 4908  
 and whanne the tables j-drawen were,  
 anon cleped sche vlphyn to hire there,  
 and Seide : " be tresown thy lord the kyng  
 me a cowpe hath sent, azens my willyng,  
 but lytel wynnenge to hym schal jt be,  
 For my lord j wele it tellen, Sykerle,  
 what tresown that the kyng and ze  
 han purchased azens my lord & me ! " 4912  
 thanne answerid here vlphyn ageyn :  
 " beth wel war what ze don Seyn ! "  
 thanne answerede this lady fre :  
 " blame haue he þat spare for hym oþer the 4920  
 that j ne schal tellen, Every word,  
 the tresown of the and of thy lord ! "  
 Thens vlphynes departyd, and cam to halle,  
 There as weren these lordis alle. 4924  
 the kyng hadde whaschen and þe bord j-drawe,  
 and jn herte was the kyng bothen joyful and fawe,  
 and took the dewk be the hond anon :  
 " Sire, juto chambre now lete vs gon 4928  
 and sen the chere of these ladyes gent. "  
 " J graunte, " quod the dewk, " Sire, verament. "  
 thanne wente the kyng & þe dewk anon,  
 there as Ygwerne et, þei comen thussone. 4932  
 thanne wiste ygwerne ful witterly

Ygwern is  
requested to  
keep the cup.

Bretel returns  
to the king  
and thanks  
him on Yg-  
wern's behalf,  
although she  
has said  
nothing.

The king is  
delighted.

Ulfin goes to  
see Ygwern,  
whom he  
finds angry  
[leaf 107 b]  
and sad.

She com-  
plains of  
treason, and  
declares she  
will inform  
her husband.

Ulfin tells her  
to beware,

but cannot  
deter her.

The king,  
after his  
meal, goes  
with the duke  
to the ladies'  
room.



that for here jt was only.

so this sche suffrede al that day

with sorweful herte and sore afray.

4936

At night,  
Ygwern  
retires,  
weepingly, to  
her lodgings.

So that at nyht to hire ostel sche wente

with hevy chere and wepyng, veramente.

and whanne the dewk Sawh hire of that chere,

he axede hire what that hire Eylede there,

4940

and Embracede hire jn his armes two,

and axede hire what the cawse was tho.

She tells her  
husband

“ Forsothe to 3ow non thing wyl j hele,

but j schal tellen 3ow Everydele

4944

as to my lord that j love most of alle thing

aboven alle creatures jn Erthe leveng.

of the king's  
love,

here js the kyng, my lord and 3owre,

he loveth me with gret dishonoure.

4948

For alle these cowrtes, and this feste,

and þe sonde of these ladyes, bothe lest and neste,

js not for non thing but only for me,

that j with 3ow scholde comen, Sykerle.

4952

his many  
presents,

thus many 3iftes he hath me sente,

and j non Resceyved, verament.

and thus be bretel 3e sente me to say

the ruse with  
the cup,

the cowpe þat j scholde Resceyve this day,

4956

and that for his love drynken J scholde,

and aftyr to kepen the cuppe of goolde,

that Syker j hadde as leef ded forto haue be

as jt han Resceyved so, Sykerle.

4960

and her  
constant  
annoyance.

and what for hym and fore vlphyn

j may non Reste haven, souereyn myn !”

“ Thanne se j be 3oure wordis here,

with-owten velonye to remeve, a maistrye it were.”

4964

She begs to  
be taken  
home to  
Tyndagel.

“ 3e, worthy sovereyn, j preye to the

To tyndagel that 3e wolden leden me,

and jn this place non lengere abyden here,

but jn owre owne lordschepe þat we were !”

4968

The irate  
duke sends  
for his men,

and whanne the dewk herde al this,

anon ful wroth he was, j-wys,

and sente aftyr his knyhtes faste,

that to hym they scholde comen jn haste.

4972

and whanne to hym they were comen Echon,

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Whanne the dewk vndirstood al this,  
 that nedis he moste azen comen, j-wis, 5012  
 jn the same degre that he was there,  
 thanne moste with hym gon ygwerne, his fere,  
 and that wolde he for non maner of thyng,  
 and ryht so sente he to seyne to the kyng, 5016  
 and seide : “ to oowrt j wele not gon  
 amongis hem that ben my fon ! ”  
 thus thanne wente þe messengeris ageyn,  
 and the answeere tolde the kyng, ful pleyn. 5020  
 thanne, whanne these messengeris weren agon,  
 þe dewk aftyr his cownseille thanne sente anon,  
 and tolde hem the cause ful pleynly,  
 the cause of his comeng so hastely, 5024  
 and what schame the kyng gan hym purchase,  
 that cawsed hym to voyden owt of þat plase.  
 and whanne they herden his pleyneng,  
 they zoven the dewk good comfortyng, 5028  
 and seiden : “ he þat schame to his lige wyle purchase,  
 on hym may be-happen the same grace ! ”  
 Thanne preyde hem the dewk anon  
 þem of helpe and socour everichon, 5032  
 and his lond helpen to defende,  
 zif þe kyng on hym ony werre wolde sende.  
 so that him they grawntyd, with-owten stryf,  
 To lesen bothe here hedes and lyf. 5036  
 whanne þe messengeris to Cordwel were comen jn fore,  
 The kyng they fownden and þe barowns there.  
 and word for word they tolden the kyng  
 what maner was þe dewkis answeyng. 5040  
 thanne seiden þe barowns that weren there,  
 they merveilled mochel of his answeere,  
 For they helden hym a ful wys man,  
 what that so evere eylede hym than. 5044  
 thanne preide the kyng his barowns anon  
 hym helpen to avengen of his fon  
 and of the dispyt he hath him do—  
 “ and my feste thus distorbled so.” 5048  
 Thanne answerede these barowns ageyn,  
 And preyden the Kyng alle, Ful pleyn,

The duke  
 refuses to  
 return to the  
 court.

The duke  
 sends for his  
 counsellors,  
 and tells  
 them the  
 cause of his  
 sudden de-  
 parture.

The promise  
 him their  
 help.

When the  
 king's mes-  
 sengers  
 return with  
 the duke's  
 reply,

the barons  
 are surprised.

The king  
 asks them to  
 assist him.

- of fowrty dayes to zeven hym warneng ;  
and the kyng hem grauntyd here askyng. 5052  
thane sente the kyng messengeris ful Lel  
to the dewk of tyndagel,  
and seide, atte the fowrtythe day  
he wolde him visite, 3if he may. 5056  
and þerto he preide his barowns Echou  
redy to ben with hym thedyr to gon.
- and whanne the dewk herde this tydyng,  
the dewk hym purveyed jn alle thing, 5060  
and abowtes sente faste to his meyne  
hym helpen forto socoure jn that degre.  
and they senten answeze a3en there,  
they wolden jt don to here powere. 5064  
thane seide the dewk to his cownseylle,  
he ne hadde but twey castelis þat myhte avaylle—  
“ whiche nethir of thike two  
he schal neuere wynne, what he kan do. 5068  
þefore jn tyndagel j schal leven Ygwerne,  
and ten knyhtes hire forto governe,  
the wheche of non assawt 3yven cure  
of non man lyvenge, J 3ow Enswre. 5072  
and to the tothyr j wele go,  
þere to defenden me fro my fo,  
For of non assawt j ne rekke,  
thowh he a3ens me ordeyne neuer so wykke ! ” 5076  
and that castel ful strong he gan to make  
al only for the kynges Sake.
- thane to þe kyng comen þe messengeres ageyn,  
and tolden þe answeze to þe kyng, ful pleyn, 5080  
that he wolde defenden hym to his myht,  
as he was trewe an a gentyl knyht.  
thane sente the kyng aftyr his barown  
thorwh-owt al his regiown, 5084  
and made hem to semblen al jn fere  
atte the entre of the dewkis lond þere,  
beside a ryver jn a fair mede ;  
the barowns þere semblede jn þat stede. 5088  
and whanne they weren assembled Euerichon,  
the kyng rehersed the dispyt anon  
and puts the case before them.

Word is sent  
to the duke  
that the king  
will visit him  
on the  
fortieth day.

The duke  
gathers pro-  
visions,

is promised  
help by his  
men,

leaves Yg-  
wern in  
Tyndagel,

and goes  
himself to  
the other  
strong castle  
that he  
possesses.

The king is  
told of the  
duke's reso-  
lute behav-  
lour.

He summons  
his barons to  
meet on the  
border,

that the dewk dyde jn his plas,  
at his feste there he was. 5092

The king  
invades the  
duke's land.

and thus entred þe kyng with his meyne  
jnto þe dewkis lond, ful Sykerle,  
and there sesede he al his lond,  
as J do 3ow now forto vndirstond. 5096

He hears  
about the two  
castles,

thanne was Jt told to the kyng  
that jn tyndagel, with-owten lesyng,  
that þere-jnne was Ygwerne þat dewchesse  
Jn strong hold and jn distresse, 5100

and the dewk jn a-nothyr castel was,  
that was not allynges so strong a plas.  
thanne axede the kyng anon cownsaile,  
whiche castel he scholde ferst assaylle. 5104

and resolves  
to try to take  
the duke's  
castle first.

thanne cownseille they 3oven hym everichon  
that ferst to the dewkys he scholde gon.  
and þerto the kyng grauntyd as faste,  
and to that castel anon ryden they jn haste. 5108

thanne spak the kyng to vlphyn tho,  
and axede hym there what he scholde do.  
"but 3if that j myhte Sen ygwerne,  
of sore morneng kan non man me werne." 5112

Ulfin exhorts  
him to be  
patient in the  
meantime.

thanne seide vlphyn to hym ageyne :  
"3it a while 3e mosten Suffren peyne ;  
for a thing þat may not 3it be,  
to the Ende moste ben suffred, parde !" 5116

[leaf 108 a]

The castle,  
however,  
cannot be  
taken,  
and the king  
frets.

Longe lay the kyng At this Castel,  
but hit avayllede hym nevere a del,  
So that he was Jn his gret morneng,  
for to that castel he myhte don non thing, 5120  
and alther most for love of the dewchesse,  
whiche browhte his herte jn gret distresse.

One day,  
he is seen  
weeping in  
his tent.

So that vppon a day, as jt fyl thore,  
jn his pavylown he wepte ful sore. 5124  
and his meyne gonnen it to aspye,  
and thens they wenten ful prevylye.

5096. *now*, *N* through correction.

5109. *thāne*, the *n*-mark and the top part of *e* in blacker ink.

5119. *gret* added above the line.

5120. MS. *forto*.

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and j wot wel he wil me telle myn entent,  
that this was þe cause J fore hym sent."

"of on thing," quod vlphin, "J schal 3ow telle :  
he is heyl and sownd jn flesch and felle. 5168

and 3if he 3ow love as 3e suppose he do,  
he wyl non while now ben 3ow fro,  
3if that he knowe 3owre distresse  
owther ony part of 3oure hevynesse ; 5172  
that sone tydynges scholen 3e here  
of hym, and þerfore be of Ryht good chere !"

Thus comforted sire vlphyn the kyng,  
and bad hym to beleven his morneng, 5176

and þere to senden aftyr his men,  
and to hem gret joye to make than ;  
and to hem gret joye to make than ;  
his peyne so scholde he thanne forzete,  
and solace and mirthe there to hym gete. 5180

the kyng hym seide, he wolde so do—  
"but my love may j not forzeten so."  
thanne thus the castel the kyng gan assaile,  
but lytel oper nowht jt dede hym avaylle. 5184

Jt happede vppon a day that vlphyn Rod  
thorwh-owt þe ost, and not abod,  
And mette there With a semly man,  
that this Sire vlphyn knew not than. 5188

thanne seide this good man to vlphyn tho :  
"Sire, j wolde with 3ow speken a word oper two."  
thanne seide sire vlphyn to hym ageyn :  
"and with 3ow, Sire, now jn oerteyn !" 5192

So forth they wenten, ful wel j wot,  
vlphyn on hors-bak, & þe good man on fot.  
and there Sire vlphyn alyht a-down  
with that good man to han Som resown. 5196

Sire vlphyn axede what he was.  
he seide : "as an old man 3e sen jn þis plas,  
and of my 3owthe wysdom j kan  
as mochel as som other man"— 5200  
and þere tolde vlphyn of manye a thyng

5172. *hevynesse*, *y* corrected from *e*.

5190. *with*, *w* corrected from *3*.

Ulfín hopes  
that Merlin  
will soon  
arrive.

Ulfín asks  
the king to  
cease fret-  
ting, and be  
merry with  
his men.

Renewed  
attacks prove  
fruitless.

One day,  
Ulfín rides  
out, and  
meets a  
[leaf 108 b]  
seemly old  
man,

who desires  
to speak with  
him.

Ulfín alights,

and asks who  
he is.

- that to vlphyn there was wel knoweng,  
and atte laste tolde hym Jn cownseyl  
how he hadde j-ben atte Tyndagel,  
and that but lytel while ago—  
“ where as a good man Seide me vnto  
that 3owre kyng lovede the dewkis wyf,  
and for hire distressed sore of his lif,  
and 3oure kyng hath distroyed his lond,  
For he ladde ygwerne from cardweill, j vndirstond.  
and, Sire, and 3e wylen vndirstonden me,  
3if 3owre kyng wyle 3even me large fe,  
J knowe where that is a good man  
that 3ow with ygwerne schal don speken than,  
and that ful wel kan cownseillen 3oure kyng  
of al his love to haven fondyng.”  
and whanne that vlphyn herde al this,  
he merveilled what man he was, j-wis,  
and preide hym to leven alle manere of thing,  
and that man to bringen to the kyng  
that of his love him cowde cownseille,  
the bettere that it hym myhte avaylle.  
thanne seide this olde man ageyn :  
“ J wile ferst knowen my wages, certeyn.”  
thanne axede of hym vlphyn there :  
“ where schal j 3ow fynde, telle me now here.”  
“ To morwen 3e scholen me here fynde  
betwene this and þe ost, haue þis jn mynde.”  
and so there departyd they ful snelle,  
and seide to vlphyn þat he wolde hym telle  
vppon the morwen Swiche tydyng—  
“ that to thin herte schal ben gret lykyng.”  
Anon Sire vlphyn to the kyng gan gon,  
and told hym these wordis Everichon.  
thanne, whanne the kyng herde al this,  
he lowhe and made gret joye and blis.  
thanne seide the kyng to vlphyn a3e :  
“ knowe 3e þat man, and 3e hym se ?”  
“ 3e, sire, it is Ryht an old man

5204 The old man says he knows of the king's love for Ygwern,

5208

5212 and that he, for a handsome reward, will tell of one who can help the king.

5216

Ulfm eagerly asks him to bring the man.

5220

5224

The old man wants first to know his reward.

5228

They appoint to meet again next morning.

5232

Ulfm returns home with the good news.

5236

The king is delighted, and inquires about the man.



and feble, as j discryven kan." 5240

The king  
inquires  
about the  
appointed  
meeting.

"Sire vlphin, whanne hath he behoten the  
azen to meten with 3ow, certeine?"

"To morwen j moste with hym mete,  
and hym to tellen what 3e him behete." 5244

thanne seide the kyng, with-owten drede:

"thedyr, vlphyn, j preye thou me lede!"

"Sire, gladly," quod vlphyn, "that wyl j do."

He is willing  
to give any  
reward.

"and 3if behynden me 3e speken hym vnto,  
So behoteth hym what he wyle have,

oper ony thing that he wyle of 3ow crave!"

and thus abyden they al that nyht,

and the kyng was bothe joyful and lyht, 5252

mochel meriere thanne he was to-fore,

that ony of his men knewen thore.

Next morn-  
ing Ulfyn and  
the king ride  
forth.

On the morwe, aftyr masse, thanne vlphyn rod,

and the kyng aftyr not longe abod, 5256

but rod jnto swich a partye

[leaf 108 c]

As he Was Gyded, sekerlye.

and whanne the ost they gonnen to pase,

a lame man Syen they jn that plase, 5260

that nethir ne myht gon ne Se,

thus semed hem, ful certeine.

So that anon they pasten hym by,

and thussonne he sette vps a lowd Cry. 5264

he seide: "sire kyng, god fulfille thi wille,

alle that thin herte desireth vntylle!

and 3if þou wilt 3even me ony thyng,

j schal fulfille thyn owne desireng." 5268

thanne loked the kyng on vlphin ful snelle,

and seide: "is thys he that scholde me telle

of myn desir and of myn honour?

how hast þou, vlphyn, don thyn labour?" 5272

"Nay, Sire," quod vlphyn, "jt nis not he

that j schold hauen, Sire, Sikerle,

that scholde me tellen of thy chawmse,

jt nys not he, with-owten variaunce." 5276

The king  
looks at Ulfyn,  
and asks if  
that is the  
man.

Ulfyn says no.

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wherto comest þou azen to me?" 5316

Ulfu tells the king what the cripple has said.

thanne seide vlphyn to hym ageyn :

" he seith 3e knewen hym, jn certeyn,  
and konnen me tellen what that he is ;  
thus to me, Sire kyng, he seide j-wys." 5320

The king declares that the seemly old man and the cripple are the same person :

" Sye thou that man that spak to the  
jn semblaunce of an old man so feythfulle ?—  
and this man that thow sye here this day,  
al it is on, Sire vlphin, with-owten nay." 5324

" A, Sire kyng, how may this be, Sure,  
that a man him-self scholde disfigure ?"

[leaf 108 d]

" 3e, Syre, J Hym knowe Wel and fyne,  
For this same man, it js merlyne !" 5328

Merlin.

Azen thanne wenten they bothe jn fere  
anon with merlyne to speken there.

Meanwhile, Merlin has gone to the king's tent in his natural shape.

and merlyne was gon to þe kynges tente  
jn his Ryht Semblaunce, veramente,  
and axede aftyr the kyng anon. 5332

The king, being told,

thanne to seken wente messengeres þusson,  
and metten the kyng, and him tolde  
that merlyne was comen and hym haven wolde. 5336

quickly makes for home.

thanne was the kyng so joyful a man,  
that on word ne cowde he speken than,  
but tornede ageyn with al his myht,  
and to hym clepede vlphyn ful Ryht, 5340

and seide : " it is as j the seye :  
Merlyne js comen now, certeinlye !"

Ulfu commends Merlin's power.

quod vlphyn : " now that 3e haven hym at 3owre wille,  
alle 3oure desire he may fulfyllen. 5344

and loke þat [3e] graunten hym that he wyl have,  
owther of 3oure good what he wyl krave,  
For þere nys no man þat kan so wel as he  
to ygwernes love 3ow bryngen, sykerle." 5348

thanne to hym seide the kyng ageyn :

" his wille wile j fulfillen, carteyn !"

They find Merlin in the tent.

Thus riden they forth to þe kynges tente,  
there Fowuden merlyn anon presente. 5352

- and whanne the kyng hym gan aspye,  
to hym he ran ful hastyllye,  
and hym embraced, and kyste also,  
and ful gret joye he made him tho,  
and seide that ryht welcomen he was,  
and often hym kyste jn that plas,  
and seide : "to 3ow j wolde me compleyne,  
but 3e knowen it as wel as j, certeyne ;  
For was there neuere non man  
that me can declaren that 3e kan ;  
and þerfore j preye 3ow, for charite,  
of myn hertly desir to helpen me !"  
"j vndirstonde 3ow wel, with-owten nay,  
but with-owten [vlphyn] j schal nowht Say."  
thanne wenten they alle thre on syde,  
and jn cownseill spoken that jlke tyde.  
thanne tolde the kyng to Merlyne anone  
that to vlphyn he tolde thussonne—  
"that 3e weren that olde man,  
and sethen the toper þat he beheld than."  
thanne vlphyn faste beheld him there :  
"may it so ben ju ony manere,  
lyk as the kyng here telleth me ?"  
"3e, Sire vlphyn," quod merlyne, "certeinle !  
For assone as he the to me sente,  
thanne wist y wel he hadde knoweliching, veramente."  
"Now, Sire kyng," quod vlphyn thanne,  
"Speke 3e to merlyne, this good manne,  
of Swich thinges as 3e haven to do,  
and that he wolde 3ow helpen þerto."  
thanne seide the kyng to hym ageyn  
that— "j kan neþer non thing don ne seyn,  
that he ne knoweth myn hole entent,  
thowh j scholde maken lesynges, verament.  
and sethen that al myn herte þat he doth knowe  
and alle myn prevy thowhtes vppon a rowe,  
wherfore j preye 3ow, for charyte,  
To Ygwernes love that 3e helpen me.

The king  
gives him a  
hearty  
welcome,  
5356

and refers to  
his own sore  
distress.  
5360

Merlin says  
he under-  
stands him.  
5364

The king  
tells Merlin  
of his having  
seen through  
his twofold  
disguise.  
5368

Ulfin is in-  
credulous,  
5372

but Merlin  
confirms the  
king's words.  
5376

5380

The king  
avows that  
Merlin knows  
all his  
thoughts,  
5384

5388

and implores  
his assist-  
ance.

5366. MS. *with owten j.*

5375. *lyk, l* through correction. 5378. MS. *wifty.*

and what thing that evere thou biddest me do,  
J schal it fulfillen with-owten mo!" 5392

Merlin, on  
a certain  
condition,  
promises to  
help the  
king to the  
[leaf 109 v]  
possession of  
Ygweru.

thanne seide to hym Merlyne ageyn :  
"and thow wilt fulfyllen, jn certeyn,  
Of thing that j schal axen of the,  
Ryht Wel thyn Arende J-sped schal be, 5396  
and jn hire chambre schalt thow Slepe,  
and jnto hire bed schalt thow lepe,  
and liggen to-gederis bothe two,  
body to body, Er that thow go." 5400

Ulfyn rejoices;

thanne gan to lawhen Sire vlphyn,  
whanne he herde that so spak Merlyn.  
thanne seide the kyng to Merlyne tho :  
"herkeneth now what j sey 3ow vnto : 5404

the king is  
willing to  
give Merlin  
anything  
within his  
power.

loke what maner of thing that 3e wilen crave ;  
and it mowe be fownden, 3e scholen it have !"   
thanne answeyrd Merlyne, ful certeinle :  
"how þere-offen myht y Syker now be ?" 5408

thanne seide the kyng to Merlyne ageyn :  
"what Sewraunce axen 3e, sey me ful pleyn,  
and j schal fulfillen thy wille,  
what so evere come me vntylle !" 5412

Merlin wants  
Ulfyn to be  
security  
for the ful-  
filment of  
the king's  
promise.

"j wyle that vlphyn swere to me  
that þere-offen siker schal j be.  
and whanne to me hath he sworn Everydel,  
vppon the Morwen, wete thou Ryht wel 5416  
that al thy wil schalt thow have  
of me, swich thing as þou dost crave."  
thanne seide the kyng, he wolde fulfille  
alle þat evere he seide hym vntylle. 5420

Not without  
scruples,  
Ulfyn com-  
plies.

thanne axede Merlyne of vlphyn there  
3if that Sewrawnce he wolde swere.  
"Jt forthenketh me," quod vlphyn, "trewely,  
that oth to swere, natheles wele j." 5424

The king's  
relics are  
brought.

Whanne Merlyne herde this acord,  
anon gan he lawhen at that word,  
and axede whanne þe Surawnce mad scholde be.  
thanne anon the kyng let bryngen, Sykerle, 5428  
alle the Reliques that he hadde there,

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- thus scholen we gon, with-owten variaunce.  
 but whanne we gon alle jn fere,  
 3oure barowns azen þat 3e Retourne þere, 5472  
 and chargeth hem jn alle wyse  
 that to þe castel they maken non aprise  
 jnto þe tyme that 3e comen ageyn ;  
 that 3e hem 3yven warneng ful pleyn. 5476  
 and that to non man that 3e sende  
 whedyr 3e schole gon, j 3ow forfende."  
 thanne swor the kyng be his oth,  
 he wold it not don for lef ne loth. 5480  
 "thanne Trosteth me, with-owten variaunces,  
 J schal 3ow delyveren these semblaunces."
- The king follows Merlin's directions,  
 Anon the kyng dyde his devere  
 of thinges that merlyne comanded hym þere. 5484  
 and whanne that thus hadde he do,  
 thanne anon to merlyne gan he go,  
 and seide : "J have fulfild 3owre byddyng,  
 Now do 3e myn ouer alle thyng !" 5488  
 "Lete vs Remeve," quod merlyne, "welsone,  
 and alle thre to-gederis scholen we gone."
- and the three start for Tyndagel.  
 So longe alle thre to-gederis paste,  
 that to tyndagel they comen atte laste. 5492  
 thanne seide merlyne to the kyng :  
 "betwixen vlphyn and me make 3oure abydyng."  
 and whanne merlyne hadde wrowht al his thyng,  
 thanne seide he anon to the kyng : 5496  
 "Take 3e this herbe that is here,  
 and Frote 3owre visage al jn fere,  
 3oure hondis, 3oure body, 3oure feet also ;  
 jn alle wyse that 3e thus do." 5500  
 the kyng thanne dide his comaundement.  
 thanne hadde he hol semblaunce, verament,  
 lik as the dewk it hadde j-be,  
 j Seye 3ow, Sires, ful certeinle. 5504  
 thanne cam merlyne to þe kyng :

and is invested with the figure of the duke.

5470. The line was omitted and then written down the margin.  
 5492. *tyndagel*, *dag* through correction (probably from *gel*).

“be-thenke 3ow now of a thyng :

3if evere jordayn that 3e sye.”

“3is,” quod the kyng thanne, “Sekerlye !”

5508

thussonne hadde vlphyn jordayns lyknesse ;

To-forn the kyng he gan him dresse.

and whanne the kyng beheld al this,

he merveilled howh it myhte ben, j-wis.

5512

thanne axede the kyng of vlphyn there :

“how thenkest þou be my semblaunce here ?”

“Sire,” quod vlphyn, “be this day

j knowe 3ow not but for þe dewk, jn fay !”

5516

and the kyng him tolde, *with-owten varyawnce,*

that evene hadde he jordayns Semblawnce.

and thanne loked they bothe vppon merlyn tho,

and Bretelis semblaunce hem semede bothe two.

thanne thus abyden they al jn fere,

tyl that the day was past so clere.

5520

and whanne the day was over past,

toward the castel they comen jn hast,

and comen to the castel gate,

and merlyne, as Bretel, clepid þere-ate.

thanne þe meyne that was þere with-jinne,

comen to the 3ate, and wolden not blyne.

5524

and whanne they Syen the dewk verrayly,

as to here Semeng, ful certainly :

“openeth the 3ate, taketh jn 3owre lord !”

thus seide merlyne jn Bretelis word.

5532

thanne thowhten alle þat with-jinne weren than,

that it was the dewk, Bretel, & jordayn.

thanne Bretel charged al that meyne

That jn alle thinges they scholde kepen it preve—

5536

“And telleth non man of the dukes comenge,

J 3ow charge aboven alle thyngge.”

but certein peple jnowe þere were

that the dwchesse it tolde to there.

5540

and tyl they comen jnto þe jnnere paleys,

er thanne wolde they not Ses.

The king is  
desired to  
think of  
Jordan,

and in the  
same moment  
Ulfin stands  
before him  
in Jordan's  
shape.

Merlin puts  
on the ap-  
pearance of  
Bretel.

In the  
evening,  
they all go  
to Ygwern's  
castle.

Merlin tells  
the garrison  
to let in their  
lord,

[leaf 109 c]  
and to keep  
his arrival  
secret.

5506. *a* added above the line.

5509. *vlphyn*, *v* corrected from *j*.

5522. *waf*, *f* corrected from *t*.



and Merlyn took the kyng on side,  
and hym cownseilled that jlke tyde 5544  
that of lyht chere he Scholde be.

The king,  
attended by  
Merlin and  
Ulfen, goes  
into Ygwern's  
bed-room.

and so jnto chambre wenten they alle thre,  
there as Ygwerne on bedde lay ;  
alle thre they weren, the sothe to say. 5548

and as hastely as they myhte,  
the kyng sone they gonnen vndyhte,  
tyl that with ygwerne jn bedde he was,  
where Arthewr was be-geten jn þat plas. 5552

She is joyful  
at the arrival  
of the pre-  
tended  
husband.

gret Joye thanne made that lady,  
that hire lord wende haue had, verrayly,  
which that sche lovede Jn herte and thowht ;  
but thanne anothis was to hire j-browht. 5556

In the morn-  
ing, there  
arrives news  
of a battle in  
which the  
duke has  
been killed.

and thus to-gederis they lyen that nyht,  
the dwchesse and that gentyl knyht,  
and tyl on the morwen, that it was day,  
that jn the town they gonne to say 5560  
that the dewk j-slayn there was,  
and his styward taken Jn that plas.

Merlin steals  
into the bed-  
room,

Anon cam merlyne ful prevyly  
þere as the kyng lay the lady by, 5564

and asks the  
king to rise

and seide : " Sire, now Ryseth vp anon,  
For merveillous tydynges here now gon,  
that algates 3e scholden ben ded ;  
þerfore Rise vpe owt of this sted ! 5568

and to hasten  
horne, as his  
people must  
think him  
dead.

and that 3e weren at 3owre castel,  
For al 3owre peple weneth ful wel  
that Sekerly 3e scholden ben slayn ;  
Swiche wordis ben comen, Jn certayn." 5572

" Non wondir," quod the kyng tho,  
" For so prevyly j gan from hem go,  
that there-offen ne wyste knyht ne sweyne  
Sauf onliche J and 3e tweyne." 5576

The king  
rises,

thanne vpe he Ros, and noz lenger abod,  
and to-forn hem alle that there stod

bids a loving  
farewell to  
Ygwern,

he took his leve of gentyl Ygwerne,  
and hire often kyste, and wolde not werne, 5580

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how that the dewk ded was so son.  
 and they hym tolden, ful certeynlye,  
 how that cas befyl, ful openlye : 5620  
 “ Jt happede, as sone as 3e were gon,  
 Ful preve we kepten vs everychon ;  
 and that parceyved the dewk thussonne,  
 that owt of the ost 3e were gone, 5624  
 and dyde armen his men jn haste,  
 that so on vs they comen welfaste,  
 and mochel harm deden on owre meyne.  
 anon to armes thanne gonnen we fle, 5628  
 and vppon hem we precede welfaste,  
 tyl to the 3ates we comen atte laste.  
 So there the dewk fawht sore, certeyn,  
 tyl that his hors vndyr hym was Slayn, 5632  
 and there the dewk was beten adown  
 with 3owre men abowtes jn virown,  
 whiche that knewen hym non thyng,  
 that so oawhte he there his endyng. 5636  
 and the remenaunt of his meyne fowhten wel sore,  
 whanne that they syen here lord ded thore.”  
 Thanne ouerthowhte the kyng ful sore, j-wis,  
 of the dewkys deth, with-owten mys. 5640

Chap. V.

Thus, as this Storye Reherseth wel,  
 Ended the dewk of tyndagel ;  
 and the kyng ouerthowhte welsore  
 of the aventure pat was fallen thore. 5644

He summons  
 his council,  
 and wishes  
 to give com-  
 pensation.

Anon his cownseyl thanne dide he calle  
 This trespas to a-menden forth withalle,  
 and that his meyne hym blamen ne scholde,  
 but that amendis fayn maken he wolde. 5648  
 thanne be-spak vlfyn, ful certeynle,  
 that with the kyng was ful preve.  
 “Sirs,” seide vlfhyn, “sethen jt is now so,  
 nedly amendis moste be do.” 5652

Ulfin takes  
 the barons  
 aside,

thanne took vlfhyne the barowns on syde,  
 and with hem cownseilede at that tyde.

5652. *Nedly*, e through correction.

- “ how mown we best amendes make  
to this lady for hire lordis sake  
and to hire frendes everychon,  
that for his deth maken gret mon ?  
of wheche the kyng now doth 3ow preye  
hym to cownseillen jn the beste weye.” 5656 *and asks  
their opinion.*
- “ that welen we don with good wille,  
and owre wittes it fulfyllle.  
but, goode vlphyn, alle we 3ow preye,  
the beste cownseille þat 3e welen vs seye,  
For 3e knowen best the kynges entent,  
what he thynketh to don, verament.” 5660
- “ hopen 3e thanne that j am so preve  
with the kyng Jn alle degre ?” 5664 *The barons  
defer to Ulfin,*
- “ Sere, 3e, we knowen the for a wys man,  
and mochel of good cownseyl thow oan.”  
thanne seide vlphyn to hem ageyn :  
“ myn avis j schal 3ow seyn, certeyn,  
and thanne 3if ony bettere 3e konnen do,  
that 3e wolde seyen jt me vnto.  
J wolde that the kyng wolde don sende  
Alle abowtes, jnto everich ende  
Where that the dewk Hath ony meyne,  
at Tyndagel to maken Semble.  
and thedyr wolde j that the kyng wente  
there with hem to meten jn good entente,  
and don his Frendis comen hym before,  
and also the lady that is thore.  
so that the kyng hym qwyten schal, certeynle,  
afore alle the peple that there be ;  
that 3if they Refusen his proferyng,  
3e scholen holden hem folis ouer alle thing,  
and the kyng to holden a passyng wys man,  
that so mochel wele proferyn hem than.” 5668 *whom they  
consider a  
wise man.*
- thanne answerede these barowns ageyn :  
“ to 3ow we acorden, Jn certeyn !” 5672
- thanne comen they alle to-fore the kyng,  
and tolden hym al of here cownseyllyng,  
and how they cownseilled hem betwen ;  
what therby hym thowhte, now let Sen : 5676 *Ulfin  
proposes a  
general meet-  
ing at Tyn-  
[leaf 110 a]  
dagel,*
- 5680
- 5684 *where the  
king is to  
offer satis-  
faction.*
- 5688
- 5692 *The barons  
approve of  
this.*  
*The proposal  
is put before  
the king.*

The king  
consents,  
and sends  
messengers  
to the late  
duke's  
kinsmen.

Anon the kyng concentyd therto,  
and comanded messengeris faste forto go 5696  
with his lettres jnto Eche contra,  
To the dewkis kennemen, ful sekerle,  
and that to hym they scholde comen Echon,  
Jn pes and trews to comen an gon, 5700  
and there amendement to maken, certeyne,  
of alle thing they wolde compleyne.  
3it thowhte the kyng thanne ful wel  
For to remeve jnto Cardewel. 5704

Merlin in-  
forms the  
king that  
the advice  
given him by  
the barons  
is in reality  
Ulfín's.

thanne merlyne to the kyng cam anon,  
and to hym tolde there thusson :  
"weten 3e hos js this cownsaylle?"  
"Nay," quod the kyng, "with-owten faille, 5708  
but that al my Baronye  
hath me thus cownceilled, trewelye!"  
"Nay," quod merlyne, "jt nys not so,  
But vlphynes cownseyl halpe þerto. 5712

For he is bothe wis and war,  
and þe pes amonges hem declarede thar  
bettere thanne alle they cowden devyse  
owther it ordeynen Jn ony wyse." 5716

thanne axede the kyng of merlyn  
what thing it was that thowhte vlphyn.  
and þere merlyn declared hym anon  
alle vlphynes thowhtes Everichon. 5720

and whanne the kyng herde al this,  
Ful mochel Joye he made, j-wys.  
"how thenken 3e?" quod the kyng tho,  
"myht it ony wyse bettere be do?" 5724

"Nay," quod merlyne, "ful Sekerle,  
Jt is the beste cownseille þat may be ;  
thanne hast thou thyn hertly entent,  
that thou hast desired, verament. 5728

Now from the thanne wele j gon,  
but with vlphyn and the j wele speken alon.  
and whanne from 3ow that j am past,  
thanne mihtest þou axen vlphyn jn hast 5732

He further  
reveals to the  
king Ulfín's  
secret plan  
(pp. 160 f.),

of which  
he greatly  
approves.

Finally he  
wishes to  
speak with  
Ulfín and  
the king to-  
gether.

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to him I will  
speak."

but onlich schal j speken with vlphyn.  
and what that evere to hym j seye,  
loke ze it beleven be ony weye!"

5772

Ulfín writes  
down the en-  
gendering of  
the child.  
Then Merlin  
says to the  
king pri-  
vately:  
"Ygwern  
shall be thy  
spouse,

Thus wrot vlphyn thengendrynge  
there anon at the kynges byddyng.  
and merlyne took the kyng on Syde,  
and hym there tolde at that tyde:

5776

but say no-  
thing to her  
of your  
previous in-  
tercourse.

"Syre kyng, Ygwerne thou schalt take,  
and trostyly sche schal be thy make.  
and loke thow be war Jn alle degre  
that sche ne knowe nothing of the,  
Neþer that thou hast be hire j-leye;  
j the defende be ony weye.

5780

For that schal ben cause, wel þou wost,  
that sche wele offen abaschen hire most.

5784

If thou ask  
who is the  
father of  
her child,  
she shall not  
be able to  
answer, and  
be much  
ashamed."

For 3if thow axe that lady mylde  
be whom that sche goth so with childe,  
sche schal not konnen the answer  
ho that is the fadyr, Jn non manere,  
So þat gret schame to hire schal be,  
whanne þou to hire spekyst of swich degre.'

5788

The king and  
Ulfín go to  
Cardwell;

Thus took merlyne his leve there,  
and the kyng and vlphyn leften jn fere,  
and gonnen to taken here jornay  
streyht to cardwell, the sothe to say.

5792

Merlin goes  
to Blasy.

and merlyne forth to Blasye wente  
hym forto tellen his hol entente  
of this aventure and othere mo;  
Jnto scripture they deden it tho.

5796

So now we knowen be that scripture  
of these adventures, J 3ow enswre.

5800

The king  
speaks of  
the peace-  
making  
with his  
counsellors.

and whanne the kyng cam to kardweille,  
anon sente he after his cownseyll,  
and axede hem what was best to do  
of this pes-makyng, with-owten mo.

5804

thanne answered they hym anon ageyn:  
"pes to þe dewchesse maken, jn certeyn,

5775. *and, d* through correction (probably from *ð*).

and to the dewkes Frendis also,  
that to tyndagel now ben j-go"— 5808

and that they scholde agreen ouer al thing.  
jn Resoun to acordement of the kyng.

Thus wenten the barowns to tyndagel,  
and the kyng abod at cardweille, 5812

And took vlphyn there thanne onside,  
And to hym seide there Jn that tyde,  
and axede hym of that cownseyl there,  
how þerby hym lykede Jn his manere.

The king  
speaks with  
[leaf 110 c]  
Ulfin on the  
point.

and he answerede : " sire, Ryht wel  
me liketh therby now Every del." 5816

thanne seide the kyng to hym ageyn :

" vlphyn, the pes thow hast ordeyned, certeyn,  
and with-jinne thyn herte thou hast it knyht,  
and what it is, wel knowe Jch Jt!"

5820 He says that  
he knows  
Ulfin's plan,

" thanne, 3if that the pes be ordeyned by me,  
and 3if 3e it knowen thanne, Sykerle,  
thanne connen 3e the sothe Seye,  
3if that it owht 3ow plese, Jn feye."

5824

Anon thanne answerede þe kyng vlphyn,  
and seide : " it pleseth me now wel and fyn,  
and lyk so as thow devised hast here,  
J wolde it were wrowht Jn alle manere."

5828 and that he is  
well pleased  
with it.

" Nou, goode sere, entermete 3ow non thing,  
J schal it bryngen to good Endyng."

5832

Therto the kyng him preyde ful faste,  
and that Jt myhte be don Jn al haste.

thus endyd they here cownsaille,  
and forth wenten the messengeris, with-owten faille, 5836

The king's  
messengers  
go to Tyn-  
dagel,

Tyl that they comen to Tyndagel,  
where as they fownden that lady Lol  
and alle the dewkis Frendis also,  
that to that lady j-comen weren tho. 5840

thanne tolde these messengeres þere anon,  
Toforn tho lordis Everichon,

how that worthy dewk of high parage  
there was slayn be his owne owtrage, 5844

and speak  
before the  
assembled  
nobility of the  
duke's death,

and seiden that the kyng ouerthowht Ryht sore  
of that dede that was don thore,



and of the  
king's desire  
to make  
peace.

wherfore gladly he wolde maken the pee—

“ and therefore vs hider he ches

5848

To that lady and his kyn also ;

This is the cause we comen 3ow to.”

The duchess's  
counsellors  
are favour-  
ably disposed,

thanne sien wel the ladyes cownsail

that forto stryven, it wolde not avail,

5852

and concentyd ful wel hem to.

go to her,

And to that lady they wenten tho,

and tolden hire the answeere, as it was,

of þe kynges messengeres jn þat plas,

5856

and how he was slayn be owtrage—

“ 3owre worthy lord of hygh parage.

and wete 3e wel now, jn certeyn,

that azens the kyng mown 3e not geyn.

5860

and advise  
her to listen  
to the king's  
offer.

and þerfore lesteneth and tent that 3e take

what maner of pes that the kyng wyl make.

and jn swich manere mown they seye,

that they scholen not ben refused, jn feye.

5864

For of tweyne badde it is good to take ✓

the bettere, and jt not forsake.

lo, lady, thus to 3ow we Say,

now 3e mown don as 3ow liketh this day !”

5868

The duchess  
consents,

Thanne answerid this lady ageyn :

“ 3owre cownseyl j nele forsaken, certeyn,

For of my lordis cownseyl 3e were,

and so of myn 3e scholen ben here.

5872

For j ne knowe non better jn my lond,

That j myhte better trosten, j vndirstond.”

Her counsel-  
lors return to  
the king's  
messengers,

Thanne departyd they from here cownseyl anon,

and to the kynges messengeris gone they gon.

5876

thanne [on] of the wisest to hem Spak there,

and thus hem answerede Jn this manere :

“ Jt Js my ladyes hol entent

to weten what þe kyng meneth, verament,

5880

of hire lord, that thus ded Js,

what his mendis scholde ben, with-owten mys.”

and ask for  
particulars.

thanne answerede the messengeris ageyn :

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The king  
sends word  
to know what  
satisfaction  
they desire.

what amendis that they wolden asken þere. 5924

thanne answerede the ladyes conseil ageyn :

“ this was not owre comeng, jn certeyn,

Forto asken here ony thyng,

but to knowen the wyl of the kyng, 5928

and what pes and what acord

he wolde maken for this worthy lord.

and this is owre ladyes entent,

we seye 3ow, sires, now verament.” 5932

thanne the cownseyl vppon the kynges side

anon to the kyng comen that tyde,

and tolden hym of the ladyes answer,

that be hire conseyl sche seide there. 5936

and whanne the kyng herde al this,

a wys lady he held hire, J-wys.

thanne clepyd he his Barowns Everichon,

anon to conseyl thanne gonnen they gon, 5940

and axede of hem jn what manere

they thowhten forto maken þe pes þere.

thanne answered the cownseyl ageyn :

“ we knowen non so wel, jn certeyn, 5944

that þe pes kan ordeynen and make

So wel as 3e for the dewkis Sake.”

thanne seide the kyng to hem there :

“ jn 3owre ordenaunce j have put it here, 5948

and what that Evere to me 3e do,

certeyn, j wele concenten þerto,

and neuere 3owre ordenaunce j schal with-seye,

what so Evere 3e demen, jn feye !” 5952

thanne answerede the cownseil tho :

“ Sire, a gret charge 3e putten vs vnto,

That we ne doren not vndirtake,

But 3if that Sewraunce 3e Welen vs make 5956

that what so Evere we granten of the,

there-offen to haven non mawgre.”

thanne spak vlfhyn with-owten taryeng :

“ J trowe that a fool 3e holden the kyng, 5960

whanne 3e welen not beleven his word,

þat he to 3ow seith be his owne acord !”

“ 3is, hym beleven we, ful Sekerlye,

They say  
they will  
leave it with  
the king.

The king  
thinks the  
duchess a  
wise lady.

He asks his  
barons to  
settle the  
peace.  
They want to  
get out of it,

but the king  
insists.

After much  
hesitation,

[leaf 111 a]

they under-  
take the task,

- but of on thyng we wolden hym preye : 5964 but desire  
that 3e with vs myhten be Ulfin to be  
this pes forto enden feythfulke, their helper  
and to discuren to the kyng and spokes-  
man.
- what that Js owre conseillyng ; 5968
- and we after 3oure conseil wil do,  
what so Ewere belonge perto."
- Whanne the kyng herde hem axen this,  
Semblaunce of gladnesse he made, j-wys,  
and seide to vlphyn with wordis sadde :  
" A Riche man j haue the made,  
Ek norsched, and wis pou art perto ;  
perfore with hem schalt pou forth go  
and conseille hem as thou best can,  
For j holde the a ful wys man."  
5972 The king  
gladly
- thanne seide vlphyn to the kyng :  
" Sire, j 3ow warne of on thyng :  
that kyng ne prynce owhte not to be  
to famulyer with his Meyne,  
Nethyr to lowliche he scholde hym make  
the hertes of his men forto take."  
5976 tells Ulfin to  
join the  
barons.
- thus wente vlphyn to cownseil anon,  
and alle the Barowns everichon.  
and whanne ensembled they weren jn fere,  
thanne axeden they of vlphyn there  
what hym thoughte best to do.  
thanne seide vlphyn hem vnto :  
" wel weten 3e that the kyng  
on vs hath put alle manere of thyng.  
5980 Ulfin passes  
a remark on  
princes  
and their  
courtiers.
- Now perfore to the lady let vs now gon,  
to weten 3if that sche so wyle don !"  
thanne wente they forth anon jn hye  
to pat lady & to hire conseil, trewelye,  
and tolden hem of the kynges wylle,  
how he ensured was hem vntylle  
and forto holden hym fully agre,  
what ende so they maden, Sykerlc—  
5984 Ulfin goes  
with the  
barons.
- " perfore we comen to weten of 3ow here  
3if 3e wylen don jn that manere."  
5988
- 6000
- 5992
- 5996 He wants  
them first to  
ascertain  
whether also  
the duchess  
will hold her-  
self bound by  
their decision.

The counsel-  
lors of the  
duchess  
having taken  
the matter  
into consider-  
ation,

thanne answereden they, with-owten faille,  
here-vppon it were good to taken consaille,

6004

and seiden anon hem be-twene  
that in better cas myht it not bene  
thanne þe kyng to putten it on his lordynges,  
bothe high and lowh, of alle maner of thinges.

6008

“ what myhte the kyng bettere do ?  
þefore, lady, concenteth 3e þerto ! ”

the duchess  
agrees,

So that this lady with-owten more  
Concented to here conseille thore.

6012

and assur-  
ances are  
given on  
both sides.

thanne was þere mad Siker assuraunce  
on bothe partyes, with-owten variaunce.

thanne to conseyl gonne þese barowns gon,  
and Ech of other enqwered anon ;  
thanne Eche man his avis gan seyn.

6016

Anon of vlpbyn axeden they pleyn  
how him thowhte be here avys.

Then Ulfu  
says :

“ Sires, riht ful wel, as men of prys !

6020

Now myn avis j schal 3ow telle,  
and 3e welen lestene to my spelle.

“ You know  
that the duke  
was killed  
innocently,  
[leaf 111 b]

wel weten 3e the dewk ded was  
be the kynges strengthe jn that plas,  
And trespaced non thyng, As J 3ow seye,  
jn non cawse, that he scholde deye,

6024

his wife is  
left with  
child,

and that the lady Js left with childe,  
and þerto hire londis ben mad bothe bare and wilde,  
and therto a good womman sche is, Sikerle,  
welful of wysdom and of Bownte.

6028

and his kins-  
men have  
suffered great  
losses ;  
hence com-  
pensation  
must be  
given.

more over the dewkes kynnes-men also  
Ful mochel harm & los han cawht þerto.  
and þefore me Semeth ryht good Resoun  
that the kyng hem make Restetucioun,

6032

So that here love he myhte have  
and jn his lond to dwellen more save.

6036

On the other  
side, our king  
has no wife ;

On the tothir side 3e knowen Echon,  
that owre kyng ne haveth wyf non,

So that me semeth be myn avys,

6019. MS. *hem*.6022. *3e* added above the line.6028. *3e* through correction, daubed.6036. *jn, j* through correction.

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Then all  
assemble.

and the lady was aftyr sente,  
and alle tho that at thike conseyll were,  
anon to-forn the kyng they comen there.  
thanne, whanne assembled they weren Echon,

6076

Ulfyn re-  
hearses the  
conditions  
of peace.

vlphyn there stood vp ryht anon,  
and amonges hem alle declared this pes  
Jn every poynt, Er that he wolde ses,  
and axede of þe barowns, with-owten faylle :

6080

“ was not this now 3owre consaylle ? ”

6084

These are  
accepted by  
the duchess's  
party,

Anon therto they acordeden alle,  
bope that weren jn tente oper jn halle.  
thanne seide vlphyn to the kyng :

“ how sey 3e be this acordyng,  
thus to maken these good mennes pes  
and ek the ladyes here neuertheles ? ”

6088

swowed by  
king Uter,

“ 3is, ” quod the kyng anon tho,

“ and the ladyes and here frendis concentyn þerto. ”

6092

[leaf 111 c]

“ More Over We ben Acorded Jn fere  
that kyng Loth of orcanye, that Js here,  
that the dewkis dowhter he schal wedde,  
and as a qwene to his lond ben ledde. ”

6096

and support-  
ed by king  
Loth of  
Orkney.

thanne answered kyng loth ageyn,  
and seide to hem there ful pleyn :

“ Sires, non thing scholen 3e bydden me do,  
that j wele gladlich concentyn þerto,  
So that to the kynges honour it be  
oper profyt to his crowne, certeynle ! ”

6100

The duchess's  
people

thanne Spak vlphin to þe toper partye,  
that on þe ladyes Side weren, trewelye,  
wheche weren ferst pytows & of hevy chere,  
and aftyr for joye they wepten there.

6104

weep for joy,

and the same that answerede vlphyn thore,  
vnnethe myhte speken, he wepte so sore,

6108

praise the  
amends,

and seide þat þer was neuere kyng ne kayser  
That bettere amendis myhte maken ther.  
thanne wente the cownseil and þe lady jn fere,  
and amonges hem they seiden there

6112

and extol the  
king's justice  
and truth.

that ther was neuere non Erthly man  
that bettere amendis myht maken than.  
“ For so just and trewe we knowen þe kyng,

that we welen acordyn to this endyng !” 6116

and thus thanne was knygt vpe the pes  
on bothe partyes there, with-owten les.

thus wedded vter pendragown  
Ygwerne, as tho was resown, 6120

Evene vppon þe twentythe day  
after that with Ygwerne jn hire chambre he lay.

and ek the same day j-wedded was there  
kyng loth of orcanye with merye chere ; 6124

and vnder on feste bothe weren they holde  
with manye knyhtes bothe worthy and bolde.

The two royal  
weddings  
take place on  
the 20th day  
after the  
king's  
nightly visit  
at Tyndagel.

Thanne thus the kyng Ygwerne hadde,  
and to bedde with hym was ladde— 6128

Tyl that sche barnesched wondir faste.

so that þe kyng hire axede atte laste,  
and a nyht, as the kyng be hire lay,  
there thus to Ygwerne he gan to say : 6132

“hos is this child, my lady milde,  
that 3e gon with so grete with childe ?

For myn 3e knowen may jt not be,  
Sethen j 3ow weddede, ful sikerle ; 6136

For jn scripture J-put it Js,  
as often as J 3ow knew, j-wys.

And with the dewk with childe not 3e be,  
For hym Syen 3e not, ful Sikerle, 6140

many day to-forn that he ded was ;  
with 3ow ne cam he jn non plas.”

and thus the kyng hire chalanged tho,  
whiche browht Ygwerne jn mochel wo. 6144

so there anon, ful sore wepyngge,  
answerede Igwerne to the kynge :

“ non lesyng Schal j maken, Sekerle,  
what so Evere that 3e don by me ; 6148

and that on me 3e haven Mercye,  
For sekerly j ne Schal not lye ;

and more over forto ensuren me  
that 3e me Refusen Jn Non degre !” 6152

“seyth on,” thanne quod the kyng,

“and j wyle graunten 3ow 3oure askyng ;

When  
Ygwern's  
condition  
begins to be  
noticeable,  
the king says  
to her :

“Whose is  
this child ?

It cannot  
be mine,

nor yet the  
duke's.”

Ygwern  
weeps,

declares that  
she will tell  
the truth,

and mplores  
his mercy.



The king  
promises  
Ygwern not  
to reject her.

so what so Ewere that 3e me telle,  
For nothing 3ow Forsaken j Nylle." 6156

Anon whanne that Ygwerne herde this,  
Ful joyful thanne was sche, j-wys.

"Sire, of merveilles J schal 3ow seyn,  
and the sothe tellen 3ow ful pleyn!" 6160

[leaf 111 d]  
Ygwern tells  
of the nightly  
visit

Thanne Anon gan sche to telle  
how that aventure be hyre gan falle.  
sche seide, a man, with-owten variaunce,  
to hire cam Jn hire lordis Semblaunce, 6164

And with hym tweyne of his knyhtes  
Jn here owne Semblaunce owt-ryhtes—

in her bed-  
room.

"jn whiche of alle men lyvenge  
my lord thanne trosted ouer alle thynges. 6168

and so jnto my chambre entred he,  
that al my meyne it dyde pere se.

And so with me he lay that nyht,  
For my lord j wende it hadde ben ryht. 6172

So that Nyht conceyved J was  
with this child, swich was my gras;  
and that same nyht my lord was slayn,  
This wot J wel, Sire kyng, certayn." 6176

The king re-  
quests her  
to keep the  
matter quiet,

thanne, whanne the kyng herde hire so telle,  
anon to hire he seyde ful snelle:

"loke that 3e kepen this preve  
From alle the peple jn cristiente. 6180

and 3if that 3e that thing discure,

to 3ow it is schame, J 3ow enswre.

For wel 3e knowen, 3oure lordis jt nys,  
ne myn nethyr, with-owten mys. 6184

and to let  
him have  
the child,  
as soon as  
it is born.

Therefore J preye 3ow, graunt it to me,  
anon as hit is j-born of the;  
and that 3e wolde don my comandement,  
To deliueren hit to whom pat me list, verament." 6188

"Sire," quod thanne this lady so fre,  
"what Ewere 3ow list, 3e mown do be me,  
and of me haven al 3owre wylle,

what that Ewere 3e seyn me vntylle!" 6192

6168. *variaunce*, the second *a* through correction, large.

6175. *lord* corrected afterwards from *lor'*.

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[leaf 112 a]  
 "There is in  
 this country,"  
 says Merlin,  
 "a passing  
 good man  
 (called An-  
 tron, l. 6520,  
 or Ankor,  
 l. 6478), with  
 an excellent  
 wife.

"In this contre there Js A passing good man,  
 on the beste of thy Region here,  
 and therto a good womman to his fere,  
 the wisest and the moste discreet,  
 For of alle vertwes sche is Repleet.  
 but hire lord js not þe moste richest man,  
 therefore, sire kyng, not forthan

6232

J wolde that 3e aftyr hym sente,  
 and of 3owre goodis him 3even, veramente !  
 For his wyf jn gesyne doth lye  
 of a knave child, sire, ful Sekerlye.

6236

and that 3e myhten him so plese,  
 that jn tyme comeng he myhte 3ow ese  
 this child to kepe and to norrye,  
 that hym deliuered schal ben, sekerlye,  
 and þat his wyves mylk Sowkyn hit may,

6244

and hire owne child to ben put away

6248

Forto sowken Som othyr womman."

thus seide merlyne to the kyng than.

thanne anon to merlyne seide the kyng :

"As thow wylt, hit schal ben Jn alle thyng !"

6252

thanne merlyne, his leve he took anon,  
 and to blayse his maister he gan to gon.

and the kyng sente aftyr this good man,

lyk as this Storye tellen 3ow kan.

6256

So whanne this goodman to cowrt was gon,

the kyng, with hym there mette he anon,

and with hym gret Joye gan make,

where-offen merveille þe good man gan take,

6260

that the kyng of hym so mochel made,

and why that with hym he was so glade.

"Now, goode dere frend," quod the kyng,

"Herkene now to myn talkyng.

6264

Nedis j moste discoveren to the

a thing that Js of gret prevyte :

of an aventure þat js me befalle,

J schal the tellen Ende and alle.

6268

and as thow art my lige man,

So be myn helpe Jn that thou kan,

6244. MS. *comeng.*

Send for the  
 man, and give  
 him of your  
 goods,  
 that his wife,  
 who has just  
 had a son,  
 may take  
 your child,

and send her  
 own out to be  
 nursed by  
 another  
 woman."

The king  
 sends for  
 the man,

welcomes  
 him heartily,

and says :  
 "I must tell  
 thee a great  
 secret,

for I want  
 thy help

- and conseyll to kepen hit to 3owre powere,  
and it neuere discuren, fer ne nere!" 6272 and thy  
discretion.
- To the kyng thanne seide this good man tho:  
"Sire, 3owre comaundement schal j do,  
and to my powere hit fulfille,  
what so Ewere 3e sein me vntylle." 6276
- "Thus me dremede this oper nyht,"  
Seyde the kyng thanne to this knyht,  
"that thou were one the goode man  
whiche is dwellyng jn my kyngdam. 6280  
And so me thowhte on cam to me,  
and merveilles me tolde, certeynle:  
Ferst that to me 3e been trewe lige man,  
and that a child on 3owre wif engendred 3e han, 6284 and that thy  
wife has just  
had a child.  
the whiche child, J-born it Js,  
as he me tolde, with-owten mys.  
So that man comaunded me  
pat jn alle wyse J scholde preyen the 6288 Thou wert to  
send thy own  
child away,  
that thy chyld owt scholdest pou do  
To som oper womman and norschen it so.  
And thy wyf anothir child kepen scholde,  
and there-with to have plente of golde, 6292 and let thy  
wife take  
another child  
instead,  
which will be  
brought to  
her."  
the wheche child to hire schal ben browht;  
but there-offen the peple may weter nowht.  
Now do this, bewsire, j preye to the,  
and ful wel thy mede j-qwyt schal be!" 6296
- Whanne that the goodman herde this,  
anon to þe kyng he answerede, j-wys:  
"of a wondyr thyng 3e axen me,  
that me semeth azens nature scholde be, 6300 The man  
replies that  
it seems a  
wonderful  
thing,  
my chyld to Sowken ony oper womman  
but his owne modyr that bar hym than.  
3yt Nevertheles, Sire, this Wyle J do:  
asayen 3if pat my wyf concente þerto. 6304 [leaf 112 b]  
but says he  
will speak to  
his wife,  
And 3it of on thing J wolde 3ow preye:  
whanne pat child scholde be born, me for to seye,  
and whanne Jt scholde be browht to me;  
of this wolde J knowen the certeinte." 6308 and inquires  
when it is  
to be.

6289. MS. þ<sup>u</sup> owt do, with owt crossed out afterwards.

The king  
can give no  
particulars,

than answerede the kyng ful snelle :

“sire, thereoffen the soþe can j not telle.”

Anon answerede azen this good man,

and to the kyng there seide he than :

6312

“what thing jn this world 3e comaunden me,

J wyle it don, that may plesen the !”

but makes  
fine presents.

thane 3af hym the kyng gret 3iftes thore,

For whiche this goodman abascht hym ryht sore.

6316

The man  
goes home.

And hom to his wyf he goth ageyn,

and of alle this mater telleth hire ful pleyn,

whiche sche jt thowhte a straunge thyng :

hire owne child owt to putten jn norscheng,

6320

and sche anothir child to susteyne & fynde ;

this thowhte þe lady it were azens kynde.

His wife  
likewise  
finds the  
demand  
strange.

thane answerede this goodman ful mildely,

and seide to his wyf, that was hym by :

6324

“there is non thyng that longeth hym to,

but nedis for owre lord we mosten Jt do.

and þerto so moche tresor and Fe

he hath vs 3oven, dame, certeynle.

6328

also the  
king's pre-  
sents

more ouer vs hath he behoten to do

what thyng that vs behoveth also.

and þerfore j wele that we fulfille

Jn alle thinges the kynges wylle.

6332

and 3it more ouer j wyle also

that certeyn, wyf, 3e concenten herto !”

thane answerede anon this goode womman,

and to hire lord & souerayn seide sche than :

6336

“my sovereyn,” sche seide, “3owre owne am J,

and so Js also this chyld, trewly,

and there-fore with vs do 3e 3owre wylle,

For 3owre comaundement am j Bedy to fulfille.

6340

for on thing J hote 3ow now certeinle :

azens 3owre wille schal j neuere be,

as ferforth as j have wyt oþer konnenge ?”

thane Reioysched this goodman Jn alle thynges,

6344

and preyde his wyf ful tendirlye

that a norse to geten hire Jn hye

here child to norschen with honour,

So that he myhte kepen both tyme & owr,

6348

and they  
make prepar-  
ations for  
receiving  
the child.

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“worthy lord,” quod the qwene tho,  
 “3oure comaundement now wyl j do.”  
 “To morwen aftyr the mydnyht,  
 be the helpe of god almyht, 6392

The king re-  
 peats Merlin's  
 prediction

thanne delyuered scholen 3e be,  
 as j 3ow seye now Sykerle.  
 and of on thing J 3ow preye :

and com-  
 mand,

that whanne Jt is born, be ony weye 6396

To on of 3owre prevyest wommen  
 that anon byt be delyvered then,  
 and that sche take that chyld so kynde  
 To the ferste man that sche doth fynde ; 6400

and enjoins  
 secrecy,

and that 3e comaunden that persone  
 that thedyr with that child doth gone,  
 that sche 3ow discure jn non degre,  
 how that of chyld deliuered 3e be. 6404

to keep  
 people from  
 talking.

For thanne the peple wolde seyn  
 Jt were neuere myn, Jn certeyn ;  
 No more it were lyk so forto be,  
 Faire lady, sethen that j wedded the.” 6408

The queen  
 promises  
 to obey.

“Sire kyng,” quod this lady thanne,  
 “Ho hit engendred, j not what manne ;  
 þerfore wyl j don 3owre comandement,  
 as womman that is schamed, verament,  
 of the grete mis-aventure  
 that to me is happed, j 3ow ensure.

She wonders,  
 however, at  
 the king  
 knowing so  
 well of her  
 delivery.

but of on thyng sore wondryth me :  
 to myn deliuerance 3e ben so preve.” 6416

“now j 3ow preye,” quod þe kyng tho,  
 “algates my comandement that 3e do.”  
 “3is, worthy lord, with-owten stryf,  
 3if so be þat god graunte me lyf!” 6420

Thus departyd bothe kyng and qwene  
 of the conseyl that was hem be-twene,  
 and the qweene abod þere goddis grace.

Next evening,  
 the queen  
 feels the  
 throes.

So that on the morwen, jn that place, 6424  
 at evensong tyme of the belle,  
 jn hire wombe felte sche throwes ful snelle,  
 and travailled forth al that nyht

- jnto þat ovr as the kyng tolde hire ryht. 6428  
 so that be goddis helpe delyuered sche was  
 aftyr midnyht, as happed the cas.  
 And anon as that child was þere bore,  
 a prevy womman clepyd sche to hire thore, 6432  
 and Seide: "oom hydyr, my dere frend,  
 do take this child bothe Faire and hend,  
 and bere Jt to the halle dore anon,  
 and there a man schole 3e fynden son. 6436  
 For what man so evere he be,  
 this child hym deliuere, j preye the.  
 And that man that 3e wel beholde,  
 Of What manere of kynde He ben scholde. 6440  
 goth now and doth as J 3ow preye!"  
 "3is, Sikyr, lady!" this womman gan seye.  
 this womman took that child anon,  
 and jnto riche clothes sche dede it don, 6444  
 and so browht hit to the halle dore,  
 where as a ful old man fond sche thore,  
 that onlovely was of Face & lere,  
 and seide: "Sire, what bydest thou here?" 6448  
 "J abyde that thou hast me browht,  
 For ellis hydyr hadde j comen nowht."  
 "what answeere schal j 3even My lady so dere,  
 to whom j have be-taken hire child here?" 6452  
 thanne answerede hire this old man tho:  
 "what that j am, hast thou not to do,  
 but do that thou comaunded were:  
 deliuere me the chyld þat thow hast þere!" 6456  
 thanne took sche hym this chyld anon,  
 and thussonne from hire was he gon,  
 that sche ne wyst jnto whiche plase.  
 tho a3en sche wente as comen sche wase, 6460  
 and tolde the lady bothe word and Ende,  
 how sche hadde delyverid þat chyld so hende  
 To ryht a passyng ful old man—  
 "but what he was, telle j ne can, 6464  
 For as sone as the child he nam,  
 Syker, j ne wyste where he becam."  
 thanne was the qwene of hevy chere,  
 The queen is sad.

After mid-  
night the  
child is born.

The queen  
tells a  
woman

to take the  
child to the  
hall door,  
hand it over  
to the man  
whom she  
shall meet  
there,

and notice  
carefully  
[leaf 112 d]  
what kind  
of a man  
he is.

The woman  
obsys.

At the door  
she finds an  
ugly old man  
(Merlin),

who says he  
is waiting  
for what  
she brings.

He refuses to  
give further  
information,

and dis-  
appears with  
the child.

The woman  
returns to  
the queen  
and tells her  
what has  
happened.



and fulsore mornede & wepte there. 6468

Merlin goes with the child to its intended foster-father, Ankor (or Antron),

but he that the chyld hadde tho,  
ful faste jn his weye he gan to go,  
Tyl that he cam to this good man,  
that Ankor there was clepyd than. 6472

who is just on his way to mass.

And as to masse ward as he wente,  
god to Serven with good entente,  
thanne took merlyne a-nothyr Semblauce,  
of a fayr old man, with-owten variaunce. 6476

Merlin appears to Ankor in another shape: that of a nice old man.

Thanne clepyd merlyne that good man pere,  
and seide: "Ankor, com speke with me here."  
"j come to 3ow," quod Ankor tho,  
"with good wille to speken 3ow vnto." 6480

He gives him the child,

quod þis old man: "j have þe browht a chyld,  
whiche that Js bothen mek and myld;

asks him to keep it well,

and that thow it kepe as richely  
and as thin owne þou wost don tendirly. 6484

and promises him great rewards.

loke that 3e dou as j 3ow say,  
and gret profyt schalt þou hauen, with-owten delay,  
and ek thyn Eyres Encresyd scholen be,  
as j the Seye, Sire, ful certeinle." 6488

Ankor understands that the child is the one spoken of by the king.

"A," quod Ankor, "j trowe this be he  
that the kyng spak offen to me."  
"So is hit, Ankor, with-owten faylle,  
as j the here telle jn consaylle, 6492

For hit js the preyere of the kyng  
and of goode ladyes, with-owten lesyng."  
thanne took Ankor this chyld so fre,  
that was so 3ong and ful of bewte, 6496  
and axede of this old man there  
3if that this child owht crystened were.

Merlin tells Ankor to have it christened,

"Nay, but do thow it cristene anon  
jn this mynstre, Er thou ferthere gon." 6500  
thanne axede Ankor of hym tho  
what name he scholde 3even hym vnto.

and to call it Arthur.

"Nemne hym Arthewr, j preye to the;  
For mochel worschepe by hym schalt þou se 6504  
and ful gret Encres to the and thyne,  
and thow hit worschepe & hit propyne.

[leaf 118 a].

So thanne vnnethis schalt thou knowe

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hym to helpe avenge jn his Ryht,  
and to-gederis they wolden gon,  
as trewe lordis for here kyng scholde don. 6548

The barons  
promise their  
help,

Anon they seiden, with ryht good wylle  
his preyere thanne they wolde fulfyllen.  
thanne Beden these lordis forth anon,

and encounter  
the enemies,

and with here enemyes they metten thusson, 6552  
that a gret partye of the lond  
they hadden j-treted jnto here hond.

thanne this meyne vppon þe kynges side  
with here enemyes asembled that tyde. 6556

but are de-  
feated.

Anon thusson j-scomfyt they were,  
and mochel of here peple losten there.  
whanne this bode was browht to þe kyng,  
thanne jn his herte made he morneng. 6560

The king  
grieves.

so they that leften of the bataylle,  
to the kyng they comen, with-owten faille.  
and the tothir partye enforsede hem faste,  
So that furtheren jnto the lond ben they paste. 6564

Then Merlin  
arrives.

Thanne merlyne, that knew of alle this thyng,  
Ful faste he hyede hym to the kyng.

The king,  
filled with joy  
and hope,

Anon as Pendragoun merlyne þere say,  
Ful mochel joye made he that day, 6568  
and thowhte of merlyne comfort to haue,  
be wheche his Rem he hopede to Save.

welcomes  
him,

And whanne that merlyne to-fore hym cam,  
anon be the hond he hym nam. 6572  
thanne merlyne hym axede of his chere,  
why that he thanne so hevy were—

[leaf 113 b]

“3yt Wel J Wot that syk 3e be,  
and fulsore afrayed, as thinketh me.” 6576

and tells him  
his distress.

thanne answerede Pendragoun a3en tho:  
“merlyne, ful good encheson j haue þerto,  
For myn owne men mi lond distroye,  
that j wende wolden me nowht anoye, 6580  
and slayn my men þere jn bataylle,  
that litel j wende wolde me asaylle.”

“Battle with-  
out a head  
cannot be,”  
says Merlin.

“Now,” quod merlyn, “here mown 3e se ✓  
þat bataille with-owten hed may not be.” 6584  
“Thanne, for goddis love,” quod the kyng,

"Merlyne, conseille me now of this thing!"

Anon seide merlyne to hym ageyn :

"on thing j schal telle the for certeyn,  
whiche word trewe proved schal be,  
3if that thou now wilt leven me.

6588

Merlin continues:

Do semblen alle thy peple anon,  
and that to-gederis that they fast gon.

6592

"Assemble thy forces,

Anon as they ben sembled jn fere,  
thanne do the ordeyn an hors bere,  
and to bataylle with hem thou go  
agens thyn enemyes, pat thou do so.

6596

go with them on a horse litter,

For wete thou now wel, jn certeyne,  
hem schalt thou ouercomen, ful pleyne.

and whanne thou hast don this bataylle,  
thanne scha[<sup>l</sup>]t pou wel knowen, with-owten faille,  
what vaylleth the Lond pat js lordles,  
whanne hit hath nede rankewr to ses.

6600

and thou shalt be victorious.

Agens the Lond that hath Sovereyn,  
hit lyte avaylleth, j telle the pleyne.

6604

and whanne this bataylle thow hast j-do,  
herk me now what j sey the vnto :

After the battle,

departe thy good Jn dyvers manere  
For thi sowle, whiles pat pou lyvest here,  
and to the pore 3yve thou thy tresor.

6608

distribute thy goods for the benefit of thy soul,

& why j seye, wilt thou se wherfor ?

For j hit knowe wel jn my mynde  
that pou myht not longe lyven be kynde.

6612

for thou canst not live long.

therfore j wele that pou schalt knowe  
of hem that grete goodis han be Rowe,  
and deyen, and leven hem behynde,

& vppon here Sowles haven [not] mynde  
that to departen jn here lyvenge

6616

Whoever leaves great riches behind,

to pore jn here Sowles fortherynge,  
j sey, that good after here partyng,

hit nys not here, with-owten lesyng,  
but here it is, & moche more therto,

6620

gives them up to persons who care but little for his soul.

that for here sowlis litel wil do.

For wete pou wel with-owten dwere

The devil will appear to thee. He appears more particularly to rich people who do not give, while they are still alive.

that þe devel to the schal apere, 6624  
and specyaly to hem that han tresor,  
that to powre wil not depart to-for,  
whiles that they ben on lyve here ;  
hit vailleth hem not, *with-owten* dwere. 6628

and þou that Nedis mostest here deye,  
j the warne, Sire, now certeinlye,  
Thy good departe, thy soule to save,  
Jn hevене blysse the joye to have. 6632

The joy of this world is nothing.

For the joye of this world here  
azens that js nowht, in non manere.  
and for why, j schal tellen to the,  
3if that þou wylt now lesten to me : 6636

It falls.

jn this world hath non man so gret joye,  
that hit ne schal faylle and hym anoye ;  
and jn the tothir js joye endeles,  
that evere is dureng, & schal neuere ses. 6640

But heavenly joy lasts.

and ho that disseise Suffreth here,  
To him jn hevене js restored there."

[leaf 113 c]  
Each man of property must do something to earn everlasting life. All the more thou, whom God has sent so great wealth.

" Thanne moste eche man Jn His Degre,  
that god to hath graunted lond oper fe, 6644  
loke that he purchase Jn this lyf here  
the lyf evere lastyng elleswhere.  
than thou, that hast so mochel richesse  
of tresowr, of goold, an of prowesse, 6648  
and al god hath sent the by grase,  
bethenk the in how lytel a spase !

I have loved thee long ;

J haue the loved ful many a day,  
and 3it J do, *with-owten* delay. 6652

but who loves thee so truly as thou oughtst to love thyself?

but ho loveth the so trewelye  
as thou thy-self owhtest, pleynlye ?  
J have the told hit vndirfonge :  
aftir this victory lyvest þou not longe. 6656

All is in vain, if the end is not good.

For alle þe thinges that þou kanst make,  
Nis but a good ende forto take.  
and thowh alle þe good þat þou myht do,  
but 3if thin ende be good therto, 6660

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Merlin tells  
the king that  
Arthur has  
become a  
handsome,  
well-bred  
young man.

For he is become a fair yong man,  
and mochel norture forsothe he kan."

6700

Thanne axede the kyng hym hertyle  
3if Ewere his sone he scholde owht se.  
"3e," quod merlyne, "ones, Jn fay,  
and neuere more aftyr that day!"

6704

After  
Merlin's  
departure,

the king  
summons  
his forces,

goes with  
them in a  
horse-litter,

[leaf 113 d]

and wins the  
battle.

He then goes  
to London,

and dis-  
tributes his  
goods  
amongst  
the poor,

and by the  
advise of  
Holy Church,

keeping  
nothing for  
himself.

Thus departyd merlyne and þe kyng,  
as j 3ow seye with-owten leseng.

the kyng let Somowne his ost anon  
vppon his enemyes forto gon,

6708

and let hym leggen jn on hors bera,  
as 3e to-fore herden telle here.

thanne there thus sembled batailles two,

And mochel Harm Was there J-do.

6712

So that be the cownseyl of here kyng

of here enemyes hadden they conqweryng,

and of hem Slowen ful gret plente,

that ful gret deol it was to Se;

6716

And the Rem was set Jn reste and pes,

& neuere aftyr jn his tyme non distres.

thanne thowhte the kyng of merlynes Sawe,

that to the deth ward scholde he drawe.

6720

Anon faste to Londone he gan hye,

and sente aftyr his Tresorye,

and jn his Rewm he delt jt faste,

whiles his lif Jn Erthe dyde laste,

and gret almesse to powre dyde he

with his owne hondis, Ful Sykerle.

6724

and the Remnawnt of vn-Mevable good

that jn his Lond bothe lay and stood,

6728

aftyr the cownseille of holy chirche

he hit disposede, there-with to wirche.

and thus his good departyd the kyng,

that to hym-Self he lefte non thyug

6732

where-offen he myhte haven Remembraunce,

that he Jt ne delte (swich was his chaunce)

For the love of god & his modyr dere

Be merlynes cownseyl Jn this manere.

6736

- Fvl meek and bonewre was the kyng  
 azens god and the world, with-owten lesyng ;  
 and also to the peple of holy chirche  
 Evere ful humbely gan he wirche. 6740  
 So that thus longe Syk he lay,  
 Tyl that hit happede vppon a day  
 that al his peple j-sembled were  
 at the cyte of londone alle jn fere,  
 and for his deth made gret morneng,  
 that so sone deyen scholde the kyng—  
 For they knewen wel, ful certeynlye,  
 That Nedis the kyng moste dye, 6744  
 For of thre dayes he ne spak  
 To hem non word, with-owten lak—  
 Thanne cam merlyne thedyr anon,  
 that alle these thynges knew echon. 6748  
 thanne comen they to merlyn alle,  
 and tolden hym how it was befallē,  
 & how that the kyng was ded,  
 thus they hym tolde Jn that sted—  
 “ whiche that ze loveden so wel,  
 and ek to 3ow was so good and lel.”  
 “ ze seyn not wel,” quod merlyne thanne,  
 “ He ne may not deyen, so good a manne,  
 That so good ende here doth make,  
 and so moche deleth for goddis Sake.  
 Neper hym-self nys not 3it ded,  
 al-though he seme as blw as led.” 6752  
 Thanne they hym tolde þat—“ he ne spak  
 thre dayes non word, with-owte lak,  
 Ne neuere schal speken jn this world !”  
 thus to merlyne seiden they with on acord. 6756  
 thanne seide merlyne : “ be goddis myht  
 J hym schal don speken this nyht.  
 Cometh now on, and Seweth me,  
 and hym speken scholen ze heren and se.” 6760  
 “ thanne js hit the grettest merveille  
 that evere we Syen, with-owten faylle !”  
 that jnto the chambre gonnen they gon,  
 and opened the wyndowes Everychon. 6764
- The king is long sick.
- His people are assembled about him.
- When he has lain speechless for three days, Merlin arrives.
- The people say to him that the king is dead.
- But Merlin replies : “ A man who has done so much good, cannot die.
- And king Uter is not dead.”
- The people say that the king cannot speak.
- Merlin replies that they shall hear him speak once more.
- They all go into his room.



The people  
inform the  
dying king  
that Merlin  
[leaf 114. a]  
has come.

thanne seiden they to the kyng Jn fere :  
“Lo, Sire, merlyne Js comen to 3ow here,  
That 3e Weren Wonted to loven so Wel,  
and he hath 3ow hit qwyt Every del.”

6780

The king  
recognises  
him.

thanne to hymward tornede the kyng  
with al his strengthe and his konneng,  
and contenance made there to Merlyne,  
so that he hym knew ful wel a[nd] fyne.

6784

Merlin asks  
the people  
to draw close  
to the bed-  
side.

thanne spak merlyne to the peple anon,  
bothe to temperal & speritwal everichon,  
and seide : “Sires, draweth 3ow now nere  
that desiren 3owre kyng to speken to here.”  
thanne axeden they merlyne howhe that myhte be.  
“Cometh,” quod merlyne, “and stondyth be me !”

6788

Merlin whis-  
pers into the  
king's ear :

Thanne wente merlyne to the beddis hed,  
and there to the kyng spak Jn that sted,  
Softely rowneng Jn the kynges Ere :

6792

“Sire, a fair  
end hast  
thou made.

“Sire, a fair ende hast thou mad here,  
3if hit Jn thy conciense now be  
as thy Semblaunce here scheweth to me.

6796

After thee  
shall reign  
Arthur,  
thy son,

And on thyng J telle the Jn certeyne :  
that be goddis grace aftyr the schal Regne  
Arthewr, that Js thy sone so fre ;  
of al this Rewm kyng schal he be,  
and he schal fulfyllle the table rownde,  
whiche that be the now Js here fownde.”

6800

and he shall  
fill the round  
table.”

The king  
turns round,  
and asks  
them all to  
pray for him.

And whanne the kyng herde this,  
Ful sone to hym ward he torned, j-wys,  
and preide the peple Everychon  
To god alle for hym to preyen anon.

6804

thanne seide merlyne anon with-al :  
“this 3e laste word that Evere speken he schal !”

6808

The same  
night, the  
king dies.

thanne wondreden alle that weren there,  
how that he spak Jn Swich manere.  
And so that Nyht he made his ende,  
& to hevne blysse his Sowle gan wende.  
Anon alle the prelacye of that lond

6812

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- 3if that 3e wilen acorden to me ;  
 herketh now what my cownseil schal be !” 6852  
 they seiden to hym the[y] wolden asente,  
 alle the hole cownseyl, veramente.  
 “ This newm J have loved,” quod merlyn,  
 “ and ek al the peple that Js there-Jn. 6856  
 3e knowen ful wel al jn fere  
 that 3owre kyng now ded Js here,  
 which deide atte qwyn3yme of seint martyn  
 this knowen 3e alle wel and fyn. 6860  
 And hennes Jnto cristemasse  
 we ne haven but Ryht a schort spasse.  
 and 3if 3e wilen don after my cownsaille,  
 J schal 3ow Seyen, with-owten faylle, 6864  
 god to worschepen, the world to plese,  
 and to 3owre hertes bothe joye and ese.”  
 thanne seiden they alle to hym ageyn,  
 to hym they wolden concenten, certeyn. 6868  
 “ 3e vndirstondyn alle ful wel  
 that now cometh the feste of nowel,  
 jn whiche the goode Lord was bore,  
 that savede hem þat weren forlore. 6872  
 and as he Js lord over alle thyng,  
 Ek aboven alle oper he is kyng ;  
 and as verrayly as a maiden hym bere,  
 of good cownceyll preye 3e him here ! 6876  
 For j dar be borewgh, and 3e him preye  
 jn this manere as j 3ow seye,  
 and that eche man preye jn his degre  
 with good herte and jn hvmylyte : 6880  
 lik as he was born Jn this feste,  
 3owre preieris to heren, of mest and leste,  
 and as kyng of kynges he was bore,  
 3oure Symple preieris to heren thore, 6884  
 and as of alle thynges he is Governour,  
 3ow a kyng to chesen of honowr,  
 that at this Feste chosen myhte he  
 be som tokeneng that they myhten se, 6888

- the peple to governe and god to plesse,  
and ek the rem to setten In use,  
So that the peple knewen aryhte  
that the Lecciown were be goddis myhte— 6892  
and 3if 3e wylen don as J 3ow seye,  
Som tokeneng scholen 3e haven, certainleye!"  
thanne seiden they, so god hem Save,  
Jt was the beste counseil that they myhten have— 6896  
"For there nys non man erthliche bore  
that bettyr counseille myhte 3even þerfore."  
thanne alle the clergyse there anon  
thorwgh the Rewm dyde notyse thus son 6900  
that Jn Every chirche and abbeye  
bothe riche and powre scholden preye,  
what thorwgh here preyere and holychirche,  
god to hem Som miracle scholde werche. 6904  
herto acordid they al jn fere,  
and merlyne of hem his leve took þere  
Jnto othir contres forto gon.  
thanne axeden they merlyne anon 6908  
3if that this thyng trewe scholde be.  
"3e, j hope," quod merlyne, "Sykerle!  
For no more nyle j comen 3ow to,  
Tyl that the elecciown be j-do." 6912  
thanne wente merlyne to blayse jn haste,  
and of these merveilles told hym faste;  
And of thinges that to comen Were,  
To his maystir Blasye tolde he there. 6916  
and thereby haven we now knowenge  
of alle these materis, with-owten varyenge.  
thanne anon alle the Barownye  
and also forth-with the clergye 6920  
To Londone wenten al jn fere  
there forto maken here preyere,  
and there abyden jnto cristemasse  
jn here preyeris, bothe more & lasse. 6924  
And Antron, that Norsched hadde Arthowr,  
atte halwentyd with gret honour

you cer-  
tainly shall  
have such a  
token."

The clergy  
ordain  
prayers  
throughout  
the kingdom.

Then Merlin  
takes leave.

Merlin goes  
to Blasy.

[leaf 114c]

The barons  
and the  
prelates go  
to London

for Christ-  
mas.

6891. MS. *knoweþ myhte aryhte*, with *o* corrected into *e*, and *myhte* crossed out.

Antron, who  
has had his  
son (Kay)  
knighted at  
All-Hallows,

his owne sone let dubben a knyht.  
and Arthewr was woxen bothe strong & wyht,  
and was past Sevene 3er old,

6928

ek perto was he bothe wyhte and bold ;  
and his owne Sone he dide hym calle,  
For so wende Arthewr it hadde befallē,  
and that his fadyr he hadde j-be,  
& thus wende Arthewr, ful sikerle.

6932

also goes to  
London with  
his children.

So that Antron to Londone gan go,  
and with hym his children bothe two.

6936

On Christmas  
eve, there  
is a large  
congregation,

Thanne vppon the even of cristemasse  
there sembled the peple more and lasse,  
bothe the clergye and the baronage  
and manye a man of hygh parage,  
to fulfille merlynes comaundement,  
that he hem bad with good entent.

6940

praying  
steadfastly  
to God for  
a ruler.

For but Symple lif ledden they there,  
and fulstedfast weren jn here preyere  
To god for swich a governour

6944

the cristene to defende Jn kueri schowr  
and cristes lawe to meingteigne,

The lond to governe and to susteigne.

6948

And thus abyden they, tyl masse was don,  
gret multitude of peple and manion.

Some, how-  
ever, consider  
such prayers  
foolish.

And Some seiden that Folyis they were  
Swich maner of preieris to makyn there.

6952

“ what, wene 3e,” quod somme, “ that god almyht  
here kyng to chesen down wolde alyht ?

lo, these folis wenez for here preiere  
be miracle a kyng to hauen here !”

6956

thus the Masse there gan he Synge,  
a ful holy man, wel faste preyenge.

Before masse,  
a holy man  
addresses the  
people :  
“ You are  
assembled  
here

and 3it er that he the Masse bigan,  
To alle that peple spak he than :

6960

“ Here Jn this plase assembled 3e ben  
For thre Skelis, as 3e schole Sen,  
and for 3oure profyt Everywhare,

for the weal  
of your souls,

and which they ben, J schal 3ow declare :  
Ferst for the hele of 3oure sowles alle,

6964

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In the middle  
of the stone  
is an anvil,

and in þe middis of this ston behelden they tho  
a merveillous Stythy, with-owten mo,  
as thowgh a smythis Styth it were,  
half a foote of heythe, with-owten dwere.

7008

In the middle  
of the anvill  
is fixed a  
sword.

and jn þe middis of this Stythþy þer was  
a Fayr Sword pyhte Jn that plas  
thorwgh the Stythy Jnto the harde ston,  
that they hit Syen there everychon.

7012

Those who  
first behold  
this sight,

And whanne that they beheldyn this  
that owt of þe minstre ferst wente, j-wis,  
Jnto the minstre they entred thanne,  
and tolde hit anon to this holy manne  
that here masse gan to Synge,

7016

return into  
the cathedral,  
and tell the  
archbishop.

which was Erchebischope, with-outen lesinge,  
Of Orbrice, as tellith this storye,  
and as hit is put into memorye.

7020

The arch-  
bishop takes  
holy water,  
goes to the  
stone, bows  
down devout-  
ly, and dis-  
covers a  
golden in-  
scription,

and whanne that the holy man herde of this,  
anon holywater thanne took he, j-wys,  
and wente to the sword with-jnne a throwe,  
and therto obeysched hym wondirly lowe ;  
where as lettres of gold beheld he there,  
that Jn this manere endyted were,  
and seiden openliche declarenge :

7024

to the effect  
that he who  
can draw out  
the sword,  
shall be king.

that swich a man schold ben here kynge  
that owt of þe stethy the sword myhte drawe,  
he scholde be governour of lond and lawe ;  
For god wyle that hit so now be,  
as schewyth be miracle, & non but he.

7028

7032

The arch-  
bishop tells  
the people.

and thanne this Erchebischope anon  
amonges the peple schewid it thus son.

Ten laymen  
and five  
clerks are  
set to watch  
the stone.

thussone this ston Jn warde was pyt  
of x worthy men, to kepen hyt,  
and to fyve clerkis of hygh clergye  
with the tothyr meyne that ston to gye,  
and seiden that god ful mochel hadde j-do,  
that swich myracle wolde schewen hem so.

7036

7040

The others  
return to  
mass.

thanne in they wenten anon to masse

7005. Small erasure after *ston*.

7029. þ squeezed in afterwards.

- hit owt to heren, bothe more and lasse,  
 more-ouer to zelden god here thankynge,  
 and te deum laudamus thei gonne to synge. 7044 Thanks-  
givings are  
offered.
- And whanne that te devm was j-doon,  
 From the awter he torned anon,  
 and seide: "sires, now mown ze se  
 that amonges zow somme goode men be, 7048 After Te  
Deum, the  
archbishop  
again ad-  
dresses the  
people,
- that god here now thorwgh zoure preyere  
 To vs swich tokenynges hath schewed here.  
 wherfore here J comande zow alle  
 that, vppon what man this lot befalle, 7052 exhorting  
them not to  
oppose, on  
any account,  
him whom  
God shall  
choose;
- For love, for hate, neper for envye,  
 whethir to pore or to riche it happe, trewlye,  
 that non man azens this Elexiounz ne be,  
 Sethen it is goddis wille, as ze mown se. 7056
- For Ho so contrarieth His signefiance,  
 J drede on him that he wil werke veniance!" [leaf 115 a]  
for such  
opposition  
would be  
avenged.
- Thanne forth this goodman his masse gan synge,  
 zeving to god bothe lawde and preysinge. 7060
- and whanne the masse was al j-don,  
 alle to that ston they wenten Echon. After mass,  
all go to  
the stone.
- thanne ech of other gan to Enqwere  
 whiche that ferst Scholde assayen there 7064
- that swerd owt of that styth to drawe,  
 and to ben governour bothe of lond & lawe.  
 thanne acordid they to-gideris Echon  
 that of hem ne scholde assayen it non 7068 It is decided  
that only  
those chosen  
by the arch-  
bishop shall  
try the  
sword.
- othir thanne the Erschebischope schold chese,  
 Jn forveture his worschepe forto lese.  
 thanne began there ful gret discord  
 betwixen *comunnes*, gentyles, and lord, 7072 However,  
such as con-  
sider them-  
selves more  
privileged,  
are dis-  
satisfied.
- that to ony Enerytaunce hadden Ryht.  
 to that swerd they wenten *wit* al here myht,  
 which that ferst myhte wynnen therto  
 vppon that Swerd his myht to do. 7076
- thanne seide therchebischope to hem agein:  
 "Amonges zow here, in certeyn,

7054. MS. *whethir or pore or to*, the last *r* corrected from *t*.



The arch-  
bishop  
admonishes  
the people,  
saying that  
no one knows  
the pre-  
ordination  
of God,

Nis non So wis ne non worthy  
that goddis wyl here knoweth, trewely,  
whiche of 3ow that he wyle chese,  
othir wich of 3ow the stat schal lese.  
but of on thing J dar 3ow wel say :

7080

and that  
noble birth  
and wealth  
avail nothing  
here.

that Neythir gentrye ne Richesse this day  
Ne schal not onlych his wille hauen here,  
Sauf onliche god be his powere.

7084

For, Sires, 3it j sey 3ow furthermore,  
J trowe that he 3it ne be not bore  
that this swerd here owt schal drawe,  
To ben 3owr lord of lond and lawe."

7088

All quietly  
withdraw  
from the  
stone.

thanne acordedyn they alle, with-owten faille,  
anon to that Erchebischoppis cownsaylle,  
and withdrowen hem thanne everichone  
From that swerd ryht alle anone.

7092

The arch-  
bishop weep-  
ingly com-  
mends their  
humility,

thanne wepe the Bischope for pure pyte,  
thanne jn hem he sawgh swich humylyte,  
and seide : " this meknesse jnto 3ow entred Js  
be vertw of cryst, with-owten mys !  
and j wile that 3e knowen owt ryht  
that aftyr the wylle of god almyht  
J wile werken, Sires, ful otterly,  
Goddis wraththe to eschewen pleynty.

7096

7100

and asks  
them to wait  
till after the  
festival.

Abydeth tyl that this feste be do,  
and the swerd to assayen schole we gon to."

7104

So they do.

So whanne this feste was J-past,  
To that swerd they wenten jn hast.

Then the  
archbishop  
says :

" Now, sires, beholdith here goddis myht,  
that he for vs hath wrowht aryht !

7108

" When  
justice was  
first in-  
stituted,  
the sword  
was given to  
uphold it ;

For ferst whanne crist ordeyned justise,  
Sires, j 3ow seye, hit was jn this wyse :  
be the spere and be the swerd  
he ordeyned to gouerne al middillerd.

7112

now, by  
means of the  
sword, our  
election shall  
be made.

For the swerd was ferst betake,  
holy chirche to defendyn from wrake.  
and here be the swerd is oure eleccioun,  
this Reem to governen al and Som.

7116

7102. *Goddis*, *G* through correction.

7116. *Som*, *S* through correction.

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Finally, ten men are appointed to guard the sword, with orders not to prevent anybody from trying it.

To .x. worthy men to kepen Jt fast, 7156  
and that they Scholde non man lette  
hit to asayen, ho that myht it fette  
and forto taken it owt of þat ston,  
That he were markyd nyht anon. 7160

Fruitless trying goes on for a week.

So that thus the swerd asayed was  
.viij. dayes to-gederis Jn that plas.  
and whanne eche man hadde asayed his myht,  
Thanne seide therchebischope anon ryht: 7164

Then the archbishop holds forth the power of God.

“Now mown 3e alle wel vndirstonde  
that this is werk of goddis sonde,  
For power of this swerd hath non man, pleyn,  
but hym that god hath chosen, certeyn!” 7168

The people vow they will not leave the town, till they see the issue.

thanne sworn they alle jn that place  
that owt of thike town they wolde not pace,  
Tyl they wyste the victorye ho scholde have;  
thus Sworen they alle, so god hem save. 7172

All go to their lodgings.

thanne, whanne the Masse thus was j-do,  
Eche man to his ostage gan forto go.  
and whanne thei hadden eten Everychon,  
to this swerd they wenten alle anon, 7176

Then a tournament is got up,

and þere eche man torneyed with oper,  
þe sone azens fadyr, brothir azens broþir.  
and Evere behelden these .x. worthy men  
Ho that the swerd scholde beren then. 7180

and the ten guardians look on

more ouer thei beheld the gret Tornaye,  
how eche man his myht gan there asaye.  
(So happede that antronys sone þat Tyde  
knyht was mad in armes to ryde, 7184

with the rest.

at halewyntyd to-fore þat hygh feste  
of cristemasse, as hit lyht in geste.)  
and the sothe to tellen, ful Sekirle,  
al that town wente to that torne. 7188

Sir Kay calls on Arthur to fetch his sword from their hostel.

and whanne þat tornement begonnen was,  
that sire kay clepid arthewr jn þat plas.  
“dere brothyr,” seyde sire kay anon,  
“That to owre ostage 3e woldo gon,  
and that my swerd 3e bringen to me, 7192

7175, 7181. *thei*, *i* squeezed in afterwards.  
7186. *hit*, *t* on erasure.

how so euere hit happe, j preye to þe."

thane arthewr, þat was ful Servisable,  
Forth took his weye, with-owten fable,  
As faste prekende As He myhte Ryde,  
hom to his ostage that jlke tyde.

7196 Arthur rides  
home to the  
hostel,  
[leaf 115 c]

and whanne to his ost that he was gon,  
nethir man ne womman fonde he non,  
but alle weren they gon, with-owten delaye,  
Forto Sen that grete Tornaye.

7200 but finds no  
one at home,

So whanne his brotheris swerd he myhte not gete,  
Ful tendirly the teres he dide down lete,  
and so wepyngly he torned ageyn,

7204 and, to his  
great dis-  
tress, cannot  
get at the  
sword.

Tyl þat to-fore the mynstre he cam, ful pleyn,  
and sawgh that swerd where hit stood

In returning  
past the  
cathedral, he  
7208 sees the  
sword in the  
stone,

Faste jn þe ston, & þerto he 3ood,  
For toforn asaied he neuere that game  
The Swerd to geten to haven a fame.

For 3if the swerd he myhte arere,  
To his brothir he wolde hit bere.

7212 thinks that  
he may take  
that instead,

and assone as he gan asaye,  
the swerd he gat with-owten delaye,  
and vndir his lappe hit kepte preve,  
and þer-with to his brothir he gan to fle.

gets it out  
easily,

and whanne sire kay sawh hym komenge,  
agens his brothir he gan to flynge,  
also faste as he myhte ryde,

7216 hides it under  
his lappet,  
and hastens  
to his bro-  
ther.

his swerd to haven at that tyde,  
and seide: "Brothyr, J 3ow praye,  
3eve me my swerd, & not 3e delaye!"

7220

"now oertein, brothir, j ne have hit nowht,  
but here anothir j have 3ow browht."  
and from vndir his cote he drowh it owt.

7224 receives the  
sword,  
recognises it  
at once,

Anon he hit knew, with-owten dowt,  
that the same swerd hit was anon  
whiche tofore þe mynstre stood jn þe ston.

7228

Anon he thoughte þanne, with-owten lesyng,  
that be that swerd he scholde be kyng.

and resolves  
to make a  
deceitful  
use of it.

thane comaunded he his brothir arthewr anon

7202. *grete*, *r* corrected from *e*.

7209. MS. *ffortoforn*.

- Kay sends Arthur to fetch his father.      aftyr Antron his Fadyr Forto gon, 7232  
 where þat evere he myhte hym gete,  
 and þat for non thing he scholde leta.  
 So longe wente arthewr, that he him fond,
- When Antron arrives,      and Forth hym þere browhte be þe hond. 7236  
 thanne, whanne Sire kay his Fadyr beheld,  
 where as he hovede vndir his Scheld :
- Kay shows him the sword, and says he hopes to be king.      “ Lo, be-hold, fadyr, j schal be kyng ; 7240  
 This swerd to me is good tokenyng.  
 For this same stak Jn the ston,  
 whiche han asayed hyt ful manyon.  
 So that Thus is now my destene  
 that nedis be this swerd kyng moste j be !” 7244
- Antron is surprised,      And whanne the Fadyr beheld al this,  
 and asks Kay how he came by it.      Ful mochel merveille he hadde, j-wys,  
 and axede Sire kay ful pleyntyly      and axede Sire kay ful pleyntyly 7248  
 how he thike swerd þat he cam by.  
 anon he him answered, & not forsook,  
 That owt of the ston he hit took.  
 and whanne that Antron herde this,
- Kay answers that he took it out of the stone.      he hym belevyd non thing, j-wis, 7252  
 but seide pleyntyly he made gabbyng,  
 hym forto tellen ony swich thing.
- Antron does not believe him.      So forth they wenten bothe jn fere  
 To-ward the mynstre anon ryht there. 7256  
 and whanne that Antron Sawh the ston,  
 Ek also the swerd away was gon,
- Father and son repair to the stone.      thanne seide Antron To his sone : “ sire kay,  
 Loke that the sothe 3e me now say 7260  
 how þat 3e komez now be this swerd ;  
 Sey me þe sothe, and be not aferd.
- Antron exhorts Kay to tell the truth,      And 3if ony lesyng 3e to me make,  
 For 3oure Fadir 3e me neuere take ; 7264  
 and 3if 3e me maken ony lesyng,  
 J schal hit wel knowen, with-owten fayllyng ;
- [leaf 115 d] at the peril of being dis-owned      and þerto 3ow to loven neuere schal J  
 and forfeit-      For non man þat to me speketh, trewely !” 7268  
 ing his love.

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Neþer ho the be-gat, j hit not knowe,  
whethir he were man hy oper lowe!" 7308

Arthur weeps  
with disap-  
pointment,

and whanne Arthewr this vndirstood,  
That his Fadyr denoyede his blood,  
he wepte ful harde teres smerte  
For tendirnesse witi humble herte, 7312

and wonders  
how he,  
being of ob-  
scure birth,  
can attain  
such dis-  
tinction.

and seide: "dere sire, howgh may this be,  
that swich good oper worschepe scholde turne to me,  
this or ony othir worldly thing,  
Sethen 3e me knowen not of myn E[n]gendryng?" 7316

Antron in-  
quires again  
about his re-  
ward, in case  
Arthur should  
have that  
grace.

"3is, Sire, a Fadyr hauen 3e be kynde,  
what so Ewere j putte 3ow jn Mynde.

but, Sire, and hit be þe wille of god almyht  
That to this grace 3e comen be ryht, 7320

and 3if hit mowe be Fortheryd by me,  
Sire, what schal thanne my mede be?"

thanne answerid Arthewr to hym welsone:  
"What 3e wilen desiren of ony bone." 7324

Antron  
further re-  
lates of his  
wife's sacri-  
fice,  
[leaf 116 a]

thanne sette on Antron also blyve,  
and tolde Arthewr of al his lyve,  
And How His Norse that His Wyf Was,  
and Norsched his sone kay Jn othyr plas, 7328

and sook the mylk of a straunge womman—  
"and my wyf 3ow Fostred, as 3he wel can;  
Therefore to me, Sire, and to myn sone  
3e owhten to Sen a good Gwerdone. 7332

and of their  
joint tender  
care.

For 3ow haue j norsched as tendirly,  
bothe J and my wyf, Sire, trewely,  
as Ewere child norsched myhte be,  
j telle 3ow, sire arthewr, ful sikerle!" 7336

Arthur im-  
plores him

"thanne preye j 3ow," quod Arthewr thanne,  
"lik as 3e bien a worschepful manne,

still to con-  
sider him  
his son.

That 3e wolden not disnoyen me,  
but J as 3owre sone Ewere forto be. 7340

For 3if that 3e wyle me thus forsake,  
thanne wot j not how on to take.  
and 3if that god this grace me sende,  
to 3ow & to 3owre sone j wil ben ful kende. 7344

For what thing that 3e desiren of me,  
certein, Sire, grauntyd sone schal jt be!"

Arthur is willing to give his foster-father anything he shall choose.

"Sire," quod Antron, "J ne schal axen non thing  
That myhte tornen to 3owre hyndring, 7348

Nethyr 3owre Lond, ne 3owre richesse,  
ne non thing that 3ow schal distresse.

But of on thing J wolde 3ow praye,  
and that 3e hit me not with-naye, 7352

Antron desires Arthur to make Kay his steward,

but that kay, my sone, 3owre steward be  
alle 3owre Londes forto over-se;

And thowh that he to 3ow forfete,  
owthir to ony other, Jn Jre or hete, 7356

Nethir for non trespas that he may do,

From that offys to putten hym fro,

but as longe as his lyf may endure,  
of 3oure stewardschepe to ben Sure. 7360

and to forgive his foster-brother any transgression,

And though he be vnkurteys or vnkynde,

thanne jn 3oure herte 3e have jn mynde

That of a-nothir my[1]k Norsched was he

thanne of his owne modyr, Sekyrle. 7364

remembering that the latter has had to drink another woman's milk.

and perfore Suffren him more 3e moste

Thanne to ony other, as J 3ow troste.

wherfore of this bone J preye to the,

and that 3e wylen not wernen it to me!" 7368

Thanne answerid Arthewr ful sone anon:

"Alle 3owre hole askynge j graunt Sone."

Arthur gives the promise,

Thussone Antron took Arthewr anon,

and to the hygh awter þanne gonne they gon. 7372

there Arthewr Swor on his Surawnce

that heste to holden, with-owten variaunce.

and confirms it by a solemn oath.

And whanne he hadde thus his oth mad,

Thanne antron & sire kay weren ful glad. 7376

So toward the Torneye thanne gonne they gon,

but homward they comen everychon;

And that day fynysched was the gret Torneye,

So that toward the mynstre they comen jn hye 7380

By this time, the people return from the tournament, and go to even-song.

There alle here Evensong forto here,

7363. MS. *myk*.

7367. *bone* added above the line.



For ȝit of theleccioun they weren jn dwere.

Antron goes  
with his  
friends before  
the arch-  
bishop,

Thanne clepede antron his Frendis anon,  
and tofore therchebisschope gonne they gon, 7384  
and Seyde : “ Sire, here J ȝow praye,  
Lesteneth to me now what j schal Saye.

and says that  
his son would  
like to try the  
sword before  
all the lords.

Sire bisschope, j haue a ȝong Sone here  
That Js non knyht, and ȝit wolde he lere 7388  
To asayen the swerd that Js Jn the ston  
aforn these Lordynges here Everychon.

The barons  
are sum-  
moned.

Sire Bisschope, of this he doth me preye,  
Therefore the arende here J to ȝow Seye.” 7392

Thanne clepyd weren alle the Barouns to semble,  
aforn that ston to aperen, ful Sykirle.

So whanne assembled they weren Echon,  
Antron to Arthewr thanne seide anon : 7396

“ go forth, and asaye this swerd ryht here,

[leaf 116 b]

Hyt Owt to drawen ȝyf ȝe konne lere.”

In the pres-  
ence of all,  
Arthur pulls  
out the  
sword,

Anon Arthewr to this swerd wente  
aforn alle the peple there presente, 7400

and that swerd there pulde owt Ryht sone,  
anon to the Byschope there-with gan gone,

and offers it  
to the arch-  
bishop,

and offryd hit vpe jnto his hond  
Toforn alle þe peple þat there dyd stond. 7404

The Bysschope resceyved hit ful blyve,

who joyfully  
embraces  
him.

and ful joyful was in his lyve.

So that Arthewr jn his armes þere gan he brase

aforn al the people Jn that plase, 7408

and Te deum laudamus he gan to Synge,

With song  
and ringing  
of bells,  
Arthur is  
carried by the  
clergy into  
the cathedral.

Therto alle the bellys anon gonnen ryngge.

So thus to the mynstre they gonne hym bere,

The Bysschope with the clergye þat was there. 7412

But the  
barons are  
sad,

Thanne alle the Baronage that þere was,

Gret sorewe and morneng maden jn þat plas,

and Seyden, certein, hit Scholde neuere be,

a knave to be set Jn so hygh degre, 7416

and disallow  
the election.

Neyther to ben here Sovereyn ne kyng ;

They wolde hit Suffren for non thing.

7382. *dicere*, the first *e* added above the line.

7414. *Maden*, *m* corrected from *j*.

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that jn hevене ne erthe he ne hath non pere !”

The barons  
repy that  
they do not  
oppose God's  
will, but are  
annoyed at  
Arthur's low  
birth.

“Sire, we ne erren not azens goddis wylle,  
but of on thing hyt greveth vs ylle : 7460

that a knave here owre kyng scholde be  
and over vs to haven the Sovereynthe.”

“Now, lordynges,” quod therchebysschope thanne,  
“he that js bothe god and manne, 7464

knoweth bettyr what js Forto done

[leaf 116c]

Thanne Alle the Compenye Of 3ow Echone !”

Anon whanne the Barouns herden al this,  
Ful sore they weren abasched, j-wys, 7468

They there-  
fore desire the  
archbishop to  
let the sword  
remain in its  
place till  
Candlemass.

and besowghten the Byschope alle jn Fere  
That thike swerd myhte styлле abyden there  
Jnto the Feste Seweng of kandilmasse,  
hyt there to asayen bothe more & lasse 7472

that neuere the Swerd assayed to-fore,  
thanne here myghtes to assayen thore.

The arch-  
bishop  
assents.

Thussone therchebisschope hem grauntyd anon  
That al here askyng there scholde be done. 7476

At Candle-  
mass,

So whanne this Feste tho comen was,  
The peple gan semblen jn-to that plas,  
and hit assaieden there everychon,  
but of al that peple was there not on 7480

people try  
the sword  
again, but  
ever in vain.

That the swerd there owt taken myhte ;  
hit was the lasse wondyr : they hadden non Ryhte.  
Thanne Seyde the Bysschope anon ryht to hem alle :  
“now knowen 3e what ryht to 3ow doth falle, 7484  
therfore welen we now assayen goddis wylle.”

Arthur, at  
the word of  
the arch-  
bishop,

And anon to arthewr he seyde vntylle :  
“Go forth now, Arthewr, my child so dere,  
To schewen what god wyl don for the here ; 7488  
and 3yf he wyle that thou here Lord be,  
the Swerd go take owt, now let se !”

draws it out  
as easily as  
if nothing  
kept it.

Thanne wente forth arthewr ryht anone,  
and that Swerd pulde owt thussonne, 7492  
and as lyhtly took hit jn-to his hand,  
as thowgh non thyng hyt hadde withstand,  
and took hyt to therchebisschope anon ryht,

- Thankynge only god of his grete myht. 7496  
 Therchebisschope and the clergyes alle  
 beheldyn how this kas be-gan to falle.  
 They wepten alle for joye jn that place,  
 and only thankyd god of his grete grace. 7500  
 Thanne axede the Bysschope hem jn vyrown :  
 “ which of 3ow may contraryen this Elecciown ? ”  
 Anon answerede the riche men ageyn,  
 and preyden the Bysschope, in certeyn,  
 3yt forto Suffren that swerd to stonde—  
 “ Tyl hyt han assayed mo men Jn Londe ;  
 that schal ben at Pask now next sewenge,  
 so longe to abyden, for ony thyng. 7508  
 And 3yf at that tyme there be non man  
 that thanne the swerd owt taken ne kan,  
 ellis, Syre bisschope, be thin comaundement  
 hym wilen we obeyen alle, verament. 7512  
 And but 3yf 3e welen granten vs this heste,  
 elles everyman let don his beste ! ”  
 “ wylen 3e, ” quod therchebisschope thanne,  
 “ with good herte obeyen, everymanne,  
 and J hyt Suffre jnto that day ? ” 7516  
 “ 3e, sire, ” they seyden alle, with-owten delay.  
 Thanne seyde therchebisschope to Arthewr tho :  
 “ dere Syre, to the ston a3en that 3e go,  
 and Setteth the swerd there-jnne ageyn. 7520  
 For of on thing j dar Seyen 3ow pleyn :  
 3e scholen neuere fayllen of that thyng  
 that 3ow hath behoten owre hevene kyng. ” 7524  
 Thanne Arthewr styrte hym forth before,  
 and the swerd jn his place putte ryht thore.  
 Anon was ordeyned be comaundement  
 That swerd to kepen tho, verament, 7528  
 Ten worthy men, and clerkys Fyve,  
 and fyve lower men of good lyve.  
 The swerd that tyme as faste there was  
 as evere to-fore hit stood jn that plas. 7532  
 Thus abod the kynges Arthewr Sacreng

Into the feste of eſterne next comeng.

[leaf 116 d]  
The arch-  
biſhop ex-  
horts Arthur  
to a good life,

Therchebyſſchope Seyde to Arthewr thanne : 7535

“thou ſchalt ben here kyng, here governour & manne,

Therefore loke evere a goodman that thou be

From this tyme forward Jn alle degre.

and cheſe now whiche of thy conſeyl ſcholen be,

and jn thin houſhold to haven onest meyne, 7540

Evene as this day that thou were kyng alone,

lik as thou ſchalt be helpe of hevene kyng in trone.”

“Sire,” quod arthewr, “j wyle ful wel

jn goddis ordenaunce putten me echedel ; 7544

and aftyr ʒoure cownſeyl, Syre, wyle j do,

whethir hit me torne to wele oþer wo.

and therefore Swich meyne that [ʒe] me cheſe

bothe god and holychirche forto pleſe. 7548

and Antron.

And clepyth my Fadyr to ʒowre counſayl,

For he is a man that may mochel avayl.”

Thanne clepyd the byſſchope his fadyr Antron,

and bad with hym that he ſcholde gon. 7552

thuſſone he tolde hym every word,

how Artheur and he weren atte acord.

thanne anon choſen they tweyne conſeylleris

of worthy men and gret perys. 7556

That ſo be here counſeyl, j vndirſtond,

sire kay was mad ſteward of his lond.

and alle the remenant abyden ſtylle

into the feste of Paſk with ryht good wylle. 7560

and whanne that feste was comen than,

To Londone they comen every man.

On Eaſter  
eve the  
barons are  
ſummoned to  
the arch-  
biſhop's  
palace.

Vppon Paſk evenen the biſſchope forth Sente

aftyr alle the baronage, veramente, 7564

Jn his paleys to maken here Semble ;

This was his wylle, ful certeinle.

Thanne axede he hem of alle here wylle,

ʒif to that chyld they wolden conſentyn vntylle. 7568

Thanne anſweryd the Baronage ageyn :

“we wyl not contraryen, jn certeyn,

The wyl of oure Lord, hevene kyng.

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There as to-fore It stood, *with-owten leyn,*  
 and that to hem he wolde speke  
 and somewhat of his herte to hem breke. 7612

“Sires, that schal j do with good wylle,  
 and 3e to me wyl lestene vntylle ;  
 and of what thing that 3e preyen me,  
 J Schal It 3ow grawnten, Sires, certeynle.” 7616

Thanne ladden they hym to the mynstre anon  
 To speken with hym there Everychon.

“Sire, we vndirstonde Jn owre entent  
 That 3e ben owre Lord, verament ; 7620  
 and what 3e desiren from this day,  
 we wylen hit performen, *with-owten nay,*  
 and therto owre londes of 3ow to holde,  
 and homage to don 3ow ful manyfolde, 7624  
 of 3oure Sacryng 3if Respyt that 3e do  
 into pentecost, certein, *with-owten mo ;*  
 and neuere the lasse kyng scholen 3e be,  
 and kepen 3owre stat, worschype, & dignete.” 7628

“How Schold j,” quod arthewr thanne,  
 “Homage Resceyven of ony manne,  
 Tyl J-Sacred Fulliche that j be  
 and jn my stat at alle manere degre ? 7632

But of the Respyt that 3e me preye,  
 j wele not denyen hit Jn non weye.  
 3yt, that j schal not Sacred be,  
 Sires, j Sey 3ow now certeinle, 7636

That Nethyr kyngdom ne worschepe j desire  
 but be wyl of the kyng of the hygh Empyre.  
 And ek 3if that 3e consenten therto,  
 Ful moche the bettere hit may be do.” 7640

Thanne answeyrd the Baronage ageyn,  
 and of this chyld Seyden, Jn certeyn :  
 “3if he mowe lyven and enduren may,  
 [he] Schal ben ryht wys, the sothe to say, 7644  
 [F]or wondyrly he doth vs answeere here

7632. MS. *degr'c.*

7644-46, 7652-56. The beginning letters were more or less damaged or destroyed through the leaf getting stuck to, and then pulled off from, the strip of parchment used for mending the preceding leaf.

The barons  
ask Arthur to  
open his  
heart to  
them.

They take  
him into the  
cathedral,

and say that  
they will ac-  
knowledge  
him as their  
lord and do  
him homage,

but want to  
have the coro-  
nation post-  
poned.

Arthur says  
he will re-  
ceive no  
homage,

but will grant  
the postpone-  
ment,

desiring no-  
thing except  
by the will of  
the Heavenly  
King.

The barons  
praise his  
wisdom.

[j]n Every poynt, with-owten dwere!"

Thanne seide to hym the Baronage ageyn :

"Sire, of on thing we preyen 3ow pleyn :

7648

now at this pentecost 3e Sacred scholen be

and Resceyven 3owre crowne and dignete.

and with-jnne this Terme obeyen welen we,

To don 3ow homage, Servyse, and Fe,

7652

[a]s owre Erchebisschope wyl vs telle ;

we wylen werken aftyr his spelle."

thanne alle ornamentis browht they forth, sykirle,

That to a kyng belonged Jn alle degre,

7656

Forto assayen Jn here manere

3yf owht covetous that he were.

Thanne axede this worthy Arthewr anon

of these estates alle be on & on,

7660

and what eche man was jn his degre.

So that good departed there anon thanne he,

and 3af bothe Riche Robes, gold, and Fe

To Erl, Barouns, & knyhtes, ful gret plente ;

7664

and the gold and þe Sylver that hym browht was,

anon he departyd jn that plas

To sweche as hym thowhte best weren there,

So that Love he gat hym every where.

7668

Thus departed Arthewr His 3yftes Alle

that to hym weren browht, bothe grete and smalle.

and whanne they syen hym of alle thinges so gent,

anon they Seyden Jn here entent

7672

That a worthy man he Scholde be

and neuere covetous jn non degre.

"But verrayly vs semeth Jn his avyse,

and he hadde Resceyved his dygnete,

7676

that to hym gret grace scholde Resorte,

as Evere to ony man that was of his porte.

For Every man he Rewardyth aftyr his degre,

and Every stat gwerdoneth ful pryncypale!"

7680

And Neuere Evel tach jn hym they fownde

of alle that tyme Jn thyke stownde.

The barons  
repeat their  
demand.

The barons  
bring forth  
all the royal  
ornaments,  
to see if  
Arthur is  
covetous.

Arthur liber-  
ally distri-  
butes clothes,  
gold, and  
silver  
amongst the  
worthiest.

[leaf 117 b]

The people  
express their  
approval

of his liber-  
ality

and discrimi-  
nation.

7646, 7652-56. See the preceding footnote.

7668. *gold* through correction.



So thus the Sacreng there gan abyde  
jnto pentecost, that holy tyde. 7684

For Whit-  
Sunday, the  
people re-  
assemble in  
London,  
and try the  
sword,

Thanne Sembled they echon ageyn  
at londone eftsones, J Sey 3ow pleyn.  
There the swerd a3en they gonne asaye  
To pullen Jt owt, ho so pullen maye. 7688

in vain, as  
before.

but there was non man jn that plase  
That swerd to taken, ne hadde non grase.

The arch-  
bishop gets  
everything  
ready for the  
coronation.

Thanne therchebisschope anon ryht  
alle thinges aparayllede, j 3ow plyht, 7692  
Bothe corowne, .Septre, and the sacrynge,  
al this he ordeyned, with-owten lesynge.

On Whitsun  
eve, Arthur is  
knighted.

Vppon the whitsonne Even, satirday at nyht,  
therchebisschope took cownseyl at Barown & knyht, 7696  
and that nyht Arthur knyht was mad,  
er ony more dignite that he had.

Next morn-  
ing, in the  
cathedral, the  
archbishop

and that Nyht in preyeris lay Everyman,  
Tyl vppon the morwen that hit dawen began. 7700

So vppon the morewen, whanne hit was day lyht,  
To the maister chirche cam bothe barown & knyht.  
Thanne bespak therchebisschope Ful sone :

“ Sires, 3e weten what 3e han to done. 7704

Lo, here this man of goddis chesing

To ben bothe 3oure Gouvernour & kyng !

beholdith here vestures, and Robys Ryal,

and the corowne of this lond with-al, 7708

Be the counseyl of Ryalis and of oper mo  
this coronacioun here forto ben do.

3it wolde j weten not For than

3if that here be ony Swich man 7712

that this Eleccion here wolde with-seye ;  
of this the sothe wolde j knowen, Jn feye.”

thanne answerid they alle be on assent :

“ we wylen he be crowned, verament.” 7716

“ Thanne with this,” quod the bisschope thanne,

“ So he haue the hertis here of Euary manne,  
what a3ens hym hath be wrowht jnto this day,  
he it to 3ow for3evith for Evere and ay.” 7720

Thanne knelyd they down al jn fere,

The barons  
kneel,

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For pite he wepe, & many mo, j-wys. 7760

Arthur  
swears,

So that he there Swor be god almyhty  
althis to susteyne with herte ful trewly—

“And be alle thynges that jn erthe be,  
J schal hem Sosteyne jn my degre.” 7764

kneels down,

with this anon Arthewr he knelyd adown  
amonges al the peple that was jn vyrown.

takes up the  
sword,

Anon the Sward there vpe he took,  
Seenge many man that on hym gan look,  
and as lyhtly took hyt vpe ryht there,  
as Jn the ston hyt not ne were. 7768

bears it to  
the altar,

So bar he the swerd forth jn his hond,  
and to thawter they hym ladde, 3e vndirstond, 7772

and is  
crowned.

and there hym Sacryd, with-owten dowte,  
& as to here kyng they gonne to hym lowte.  
Ek anoynt he was anon therto,  
& alle that belonged to a kyng also. 7776

After the  
coronation,  
the people  
leave the  
cathedral.

Whanne this coronacion j-Endyd was,  
and the masse j-Fenysched be goddis gras,  
owt of the mynstre alle wenten they anon,  
and behelden there aftyr this Ston, 7780

The stone  
with the  
anvil is gone!

But they ne wyste where hit was do,  
So sodeynliche aweye was hit hem fro.  
And jn this maner Arthew[r] kyng chosen was,  
as 3e han me herd behersyn jn this plas. 7784

[leaf 117 d]  
Chap. VII.

To Arthur's  
court come,  
with hun-  
dreds of  
knights,  
king Loth of  
Orkney,

Thus Here-Aftyr the Storye Doth telle  
what aftyr in kyng Arthewris cort befelle,  
that aftyre his coronacioun the 3er Sewenge  
To his cowrt repeyrede bothe knyht & kyng. 7788

king Uriens  
of Gory,

To that court cam the kyng of orkanye  
with Fyve hundred knyhtes jn his compenye.  
Also thedyr kam þe kyng of gore, þat hyht vryens,  
with Foure hundred knyhtes Jn his presens. 7792

king Newtris  
of Garlot,

thanne kam the kyng newtris Garlot,

7769. *ād* corrected from *as*.

7774. MS. *gōnne*.

7782. *was, w* corrected from *a*.

7788. MS. *Arthew*.

7784. The remainder of the column blank; in the left margin:  
*Coronacō arthur'*.

7787. *aftyr'*, *r'* squeezed in.

that kyng Artheuris Sostir weddid, wel j wot,  
and with him vij hundred knyhtes of pris.

And aftyr hym to cowrt þere kam j-wis 7796

the kyng that was of ryht Gorre,

that Carados of brebas hyht, Sykerle;

Therto he was knyht of þe table rownde,

and with hym vj hundred knyhtes Sownde. 7800

king Carados  
of Right  
Gory,

Aftyr hym kam kyng auguysyaax so fre,  
that kyng of scotland was, Sykerle,

a 3ong man, ful hardy, & gret of prowesse,

with fyve hundred knyhtes, more ne lesse. 7804

Aftyr hym to court kam kyng ydyers

with fowre hundred knyhtes stowt & Fers,

wel j-armed & harneysed owt ryht,

Thowgh anon they scholde gon to fyht. 7808

king  
Augwysas of  
Scotland,

and king  
Ydiere (of  
Cornwall).

whanne these kynges were Sembled jn fere,

of hem gret joye made kyng Arthewr there,

and many grete festes he hem made

with grete presentes & 3iftes to maken hem glade. 7812

Every lord there aftyr his degre,

grete jewelis he hem 3af, Sykirle.

whanne these Barowns beheldyn al this,

the grete presentes and jewellis of pris

and the grete festyng that he hem made,

anon there-offen dysdeyn they hadde,

and amongis hem-Self they gonne to say:

“we mown ben Sory to abyden this day, 7820

To sen a knave of so lowe degre,

kyng of this Rem that he scholde be!”

Anon his 3iftes they Refused Echon,

and streyht to the kyng wenten anon,

and deden hym wel forto vndirstonde

they ne held hym non kyng of that londe,

and boden hym faste thens to hye

owt of that lond ryht Schortlye,

For but 3yf he wolde the lond forsake,

they wolden hym werche bothe tene & wrake,

Arthur is  
much pleased,

makes great  
feasts in their  
honour, and  
bestows  
ample gifts.

In the barons,  
however, the  
old envy and  
pride are  
roused.

They refuse  
his gifts,

disown him  
as their king,

and threaten  
his life.

7801. See Notes.

7815. MS. *beheldyng*.

7824. *wentz*, *w* corrected from *g*.

and but ȝif he thus dede, sekerlye,  
 ellis to the dethward he scholde hye. 7832  
 whanne kyng Arthewr herde here grete manas,  
 thanne owt of strengthe of karlion gan he pas,  
 and there logged hym *prevyly* jn the town,  
 For mochel he dred hym of tresown ; 7836  
 where as he abod fyftene dayes,  
 þat but fewe wysten where, þe sothe to saye.  
 thanne happed it aftyr, as j ȝow telle,  
 that merlyn jnto þat town cam, as befelle, 7840  
 and jn his owne Semblawnce aperede openlye,  
 For that of the peple he wolde be seye.  
 And thussonne as they hym Sye,  
 gretly they merveilled, Sekirlye. 7844  
 Anon the lordis aftyr him gonne sende,  
 and merlyne ful gladliche to hem gan wende.  
 Anon as these Barowns Syen him comeng,  
 azens hym they wenten jn metynge, 7848  
 and of hym gret joye they made,  
 and jnto a fair paleys they him ladde,  
 that stood be a reverys syde,  
 & jnto a fair mede there gonne they byde. 7852  
 Whanne Jn that place that they Were,  
 anon merlyn they aresownd there,  
 and this to hym was here askyng,  
 how that hym likede be here newe kyng— 7856  
 “That therchebisschope of dover hath crowned here  
 azensoure leve Jn alle manere.”  
 “Certes, lordynges,” quod merlyne tho,  
 “they myhte non bettere hauen j-do.” 7860  
 “what mene ȝe?” quod the barowns thanne,  
 “how speke ȝe of this jlke manne?  
 jn this rem many worthy lordis there be,  
 more worthy to ocupien that worthy degre 7864  
 thanne a knave that noman doth knowe  
 whens he cam, of hygh oper lowe!”  
 “ȝe Seyn as that ȝe thinken,” quod merlyn,  
 “but now wylen ȝe heren of cownseyl myn, 7868  
 and vndirstondith what j schal Seye :

7838. *to*, MS. *ta*.7867. *that* corrected from *the*.King Arthur  
must fly and  
be in hiding.Merlin  
arrives.The barons  
send for him,take him into  
a palace,

[leaf 118 a]

and ask his  
opinion of the  
new king.Merlin great-  
ly commends  
him.The barons  
urge Arthur's  
low birth.

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A MIDDLE-ENGLISH METRICAL VERSION  
OF A FRENCH ROMANCE,

BY

HERRY LOVELICH,

SKINNER AND CITIZEN OF LONDON (AB. 1450 A.D.)

EDITED

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BY

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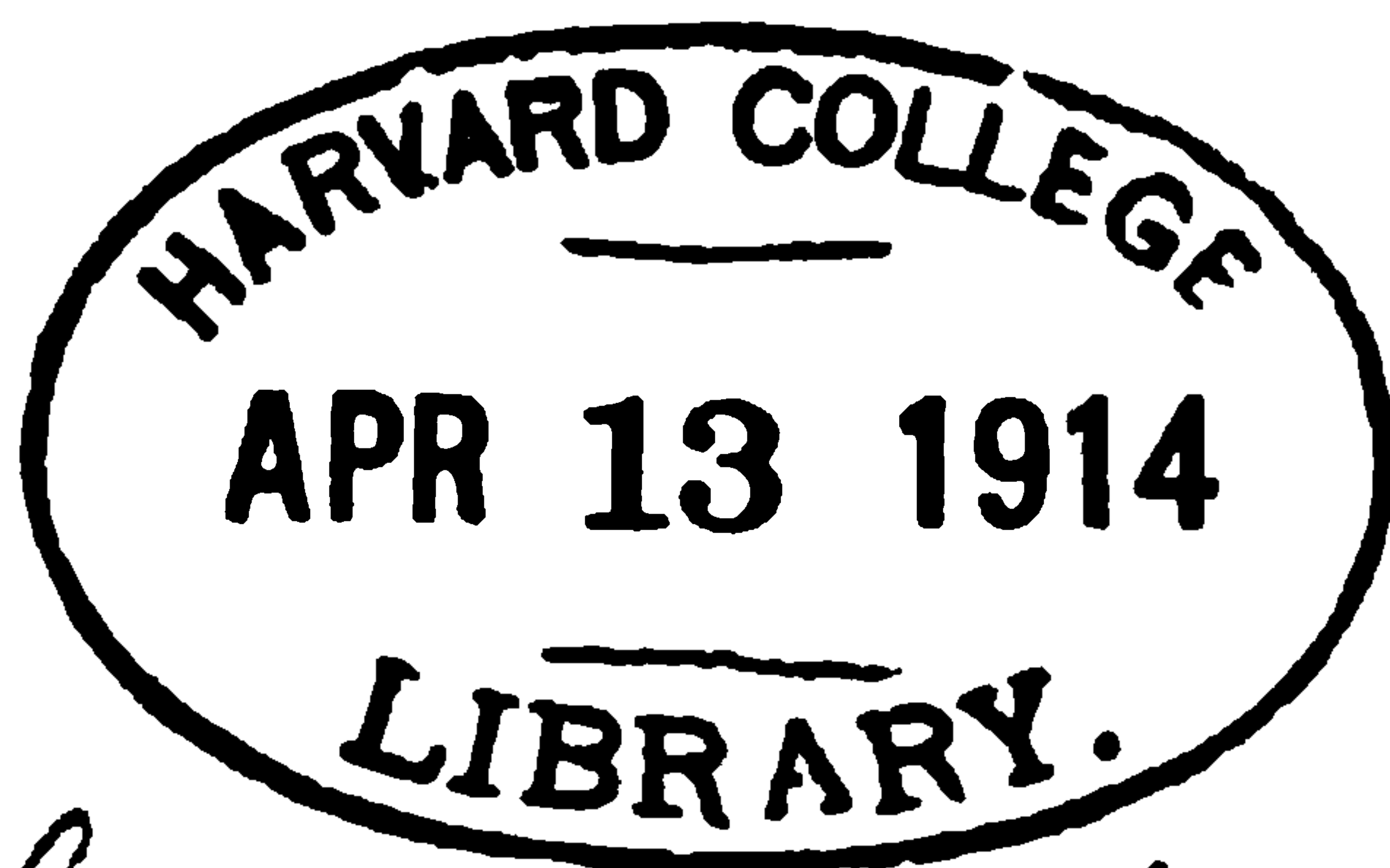
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- Breteaus  
summons  
Arthur  
7908  
where as kyng arthur he fond thusson.  
“ Syre kyng, the Baronage aftyr 3ow doth sende,  
and therchebisschope of dover with 3ou schal wende,  
the bisschope of londone, and Antron also.”
- and Ulfen.  
7912  
and from thens Breteaus to vlphin gan go,  
and seide that he moste come to the Baronye,  
also faste as he myhte thanne hye.
- The latter is  
delighted,  
7916  
whanne vlphin of merlyn herde Speken aryht,  
thanne jn his herte he was ful lyht,  
and ful gret joye he hadde thanne, Sykir[1]e,  
for he wyste wel the trowthe discovered schold be,  
al the Rote and al the Endyng
- knowing that  
the truth will  
be discovered.  
7920  
Of the Birthe of Arthur the kyng.
- [leaf 118 b]  
7924  
Thus Wenten they Forth Alle Jn Fere  
To the barowns in the paleis there they were;  
and gret joye vlphyn of merlyn made,  
and ech of hem mad othyr glade.
- Ulfen and  
Merlin meet  
with joy.  
7928  
Thanne Arthewr and the Bysschoppes also  
to-ward the paleys gonnen they go,  
and with hem Antron jn compenye,  
also faste as they myhten hye.
- Arthur, the  
bishope,  
and Antron  
also arrive,  
7932  
vndirstondith that Arthewr armed was ful wel  
vndir his robe with an haberiown of stel.  
whanne to-fore the Baronage that he cam,  
on eche partye stood there many a man  
merlyne to 3even there good awdyence,  
whyles that he stood jn the kynges presence.
- Arthur with  
a coat of mail  
under his  
clothes.  
7936  
and whanne the kyng they Syen comen, trewelye,  
alle the Baronage azens hym gonne hye ;  
atte reverence that Sacred he was kyng,  
azens him they wenten jn metyng,  
and jn Reuerence of therchebisschope also
- The barons  
go to meet  
them.  
7940  
ek azens hem gonne they go.
- All take their  
seats,  
save the  
archbishop.  
7944  
Thanne Seten they down everichon,  
Sauf only therchebisschope stod alon.  
“ Now, Lordynges, lesteneth what j schal say,  
and beth wel avysed alle, J 3ow pray ;

and Ek for goddis love and for charyte,  
what j schal Seye, taketh kepe to me.

J 3ow preye for charyte,  
of schedyng of blood 3e hauen pyte,  
whiche is cristene blood, as 3e wel knowe,  
as wel of the hye as of the lowe.

7948 "Have pity  
on Christian  
blood,"  
says the  
archbishop.

and thinketh but on man that 3e be,  
and assone here deyen Schole 3e,  
& assone deyeth the Riche as the pore,  
and of þe owr of here deth knoweth no more."

7952 "Each of you  
is but  
one man,  
and the rich  
man dies as  
quickly as  
the poor."

thane quod the Barowns to hym anon that tyde :

"Sire, we 3ow preye a whyle to abyde,  
Tyl we han spoke here with Merlyn  
of certein thinges of his devyn,

7956 The barons  
request the  
archbishop  
first to let  
Merlin give  
his informa-  
tion.

and whanne declared to vs hath he  
a thing that to vs Js vncerteynte,

7960

For sethen we comen jnto this lond,  
of Sweche thingges cowde we neuere vndirstond."

the Bisschope Seide: "Seres, with good wylle,  
what that Ewere merlyne seith 3ow vntylle."

7964

The arch-  
bishop agrees.

thane sat þere therchebisschope a-down,  
and merlyne gan speke to hem jn vyrown :

Merlin ad-  
dresses the  
assembly.

"Now, Lordynges that ben here present,  
what j schal Seyen, take 3e good entent.

7968

J schal 3ow declaren here ful openly  
hos sone Arthewr was trewely.

He tells them  
of Uter  
Pendragon's  
fathership,

weteth wel alle, Sires, now jn certeyn  
that vterpendragones sone he is, pleyn,  
and on ygwerne he begat hym that nyht  
whiles the dewk, hire Lord, was slayn in fyht.

7972

And on the morwen, whanne he cam owt  
From that Lady, with-owten dowl,

7976

the king's  
promise to  
Merlin

a bone j hym axede there anon ryht  
of that he hadde begeten on hire that nyht,

For alle the Benfetes and my Servyse  
that Ewere j hym dyde jn ony wyse.

7980

with regard  
to the begot-  
ten child,

and he me graunted there anon

That al myn axynge scholde be don,

the soiled  
confirmation  
of the  
promise,

wher-offen lettres vndir his Sel  
j haue to Schewen, bothe goode & lel,  
whiche 3it kepith vlphyn, that is here,  
and hym-self there was, wytnesse to here." 7984

the king's  
words to  
[leaf 118 e]  
his sponse  
about her  
pregnancy,

" Whanne that Pendracon hadde weddyd ygwerne,  
To barnesche with chylde sche wax full 3erne. 7988:  
And so aftyr, hyt happede as j 3ow Seye :

As jn bedde they lyen bothe tweye,  
The King Hyre often gan to Repreve,  
and seyde : ' now, lady, be 3owre leue, 7992

This chyld js neyther the dewkes ne myn,  
how konne 3e this preven be ony devyn ?'

the queen's  
shame

Anon thys lady abassched hyre Sore,  
and euere the lengere more and more. 7996

and grief,

whanne the kyng Sawh hire scomfytur  
and hire schamfulnesse, J 3ow enswre,  
hym forthowht sore hyre hevynesse,  
that he hadde hire put jn swich distresse. 8000

And for so moche morneng by hyre he Say :  
' dame, of on thing j schal 3ow Say :

Sethen hit nys not myn jn maryage,  
kyng may he not ben after myn age. 8004

their agree-  
ment con-  
cerning the  
expected  
child,

Therefore anon as that born hyt Js,  
J 3ow cownseyll with-owten mys,  
whom ferst 3e fynde atte the halle dore,  
The child to ben deliuered with-owten more.' 8008

And the goode lady hym grawntyd anon  
that al his desyr scholde be don,  
For that sche wolde jn non degre  
that hire lord with hire wroth scholde be. 8012

its delivery  
first to  
Merlin,

and thus, certein, whanne hyt was bore,  
To me it was delyvered at the halle dore."

then to  
Antron,

" And whanne delyveryd hit was to me,  
To Antron j wente, ful certeynle, 8016  
• and this chyld there j hym betook,  
and that of his wyf hyt scholde Sowk,  
For deliuered sche was half 3er to-fore

7994. 3e added afterwards above the line.

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- (leaf 118 d] Openly to the Baronage He declared Hyt thore. 8060  
 and whanne the comune peple herde al this,  
 The people, greatly moved, side with Arthur,  
 anon for pyte they wepten, j-wys,  
 and cusede alle tho that azens hym were  
 Jn ony degre here armes to bere. 8064
- And whanne the Barowns vndirstoden al this,  
 that the peple so with hym held, j-wys,  
 recognizing God's provision.  
 and seyden that hit was be goddis chaunce  
 that his man he wolde so here avaunce, 8068  
 thanne bethowhte hem the Baronye  
 To speken of here kyng more velonye,  
 But the barons declare they will have no bastard for their king.  
 that for me Rehersed schal not ben here.  
 but they seyden that a bastard jn non manere 8072  
 kyng of that Lond ne scholde neuere be,  
 nethyr that Rem governe jn non degre.  
 Therchebysschope answeyrd hem ful sone :  
 The arch-bishop expresses his trust in God.  
 "sethen that god this Eleccyouz hath done, 8076  
 he wyl hym leten for non maner of thing,  
 but hym Susteyne as a trewe kyng,  
 bothe jn his werris and his fyht,  
 he wyl hym susteynen as his owne knyht." 8080
- Whanne therchebysschope and the clergye  
 Now Arthur's adherents depart to his court,  
 and the comown peple, Sekerlye,  
 herden the vntrowthe of the Baronage,  
 how Fers they weren and how owtrage, 8084  
 To-gyders they helden hem Everychon,  
 and toward Arthewrs court gonne they gon.  
 and alle the Baronage departyd away,  
 and the barons,  
 Ful wroth and angry, the Same day, 8088  
 and seyden : "now Every man hym defende  
 with threatenng words,  
 that with Arthewr halt jnto the ende.  
 For oure kyng schal he neuere be,  
 we hym defye and his progene, 8092  
 and al the helpe that he may haue,  
 be hym we not sette, so god vs save."  
 Thanne to ostage wenten they anon  
 repair to their lodgings. All arm themselves.  
 and hem dyde armen there Everichon. 8096  
 And Arthewr jnto pe mayster towr wente

- with mochel peple with hym, veramente,  
 & there hem armeden jn that plase,  
 ek al the peple that with hym wase. 8100  
 So whanne that alle assembled they were,  
 Sevene thowsend harneyssed weren they there ;  
 but of knyhtes hadde he but fewe,  
 Thre hundred and Fyfty jn that Rewe, 8104  
 that Sworen his helpe Forto be,  
 Tyl deth hem departed, ful Sykerle.
- So whanne the kyng and his meyne  
 weren alle j-armed, Ful Sykerle, 8108  
 they comen owt Anon of the towr,  
 here Bodyes to kepen From dolowr.  
 and the Baronage, as j haue told, 8112  
 hom to here ostage wenten manyfold,  
 and harneyssed here men on hors to Ryde,  
 with the kyng to meten jn that Tyde.  
 So eche man assemblede to his Banere  
 of foure thosend knyhtes that weren there, 8116  
 with Seriauntes and arblasterys  
 and gret foysovn of Sqwyers that weren ful fers.  
 whanne that alle assemblyd they were,  
 thanne axede of hem the Baronage there 8120  
 3yf that the paleys thei wolden assaylle.  
 Somme seiden 3e, with-owten faylle,  
 and some seyden, to the Baylle they wolden go  
 and that besegen with-owte ony mo— 8124  
 “ that So we Scholen afferen hem with-jnne,  
 that jn non weye they Scholen owt wyne.”  
 So that Whyles they Weren Jn this Talkynge,  
 Towardes hem cam merlyne faste hyenge, 8128  
 and seyde : “ Lordynges, what wyle 3e do ?  
 thinken 3e azens 3owre kyng to go ?  
 hyt schal be to 3ow more velenye  
 and gret hyndryng and los, ful Sekyrlye, 8132  
 and swich veniaunce on 3ow schal falle,  
 that Fowlyche scholen 3e ben schamed alle,

Arthur has  
7000 foot-  
soldiers,

and 350 faith-  
ful knights.

The barons

have 4000  
knights  
with a huge  
force on foot.

They deli-  
berate on  
an attack.

[leaf 119a]  
Merlin visits  
them,

and warns  
them.

8100. *ek* added in the left margin.

8121. *thei*, *i* squeezed in afterwards.

8129. MS. *seyden*.



- and of 3owre londis disheryted to be,  
For wrong to hym 3e thinken, sykerle. 8136  
and of the Eleccion that god hath sent  
3e don gret wrong, Sires, verament.”
- But they scoff at his words. “ behold,” quod [the] Barouns amonges hem there,  
“ what this Enchawntour telleth vs here !” 8140  
thussone on hym they gonne to lye,  
Eche of hem to othir, ful Sekerlye.
- Then Merlin returns to Arthur,  
and encourages him. And whanne merlyne Sawh they taken on so,  
Toward kyng Arthewr faste gan he go, 8144  
and seyde : “ sire, haue thou non drede,  
For azens thyn enemyes wel schalt pou spede,  
and azens hem as mochel helpe schalt pou haue  
as alle they conne cryen other crave.” 8148
- In the evening they have a consultation. So whanne hit woxen was to Eve,  
kyng Arthewr took merlyn be the sleve.  
Ek therchebisschope, and Antron also,  
Sire kay & sire Vlphyn to-gederis gonne go, 8152  
and Sire Bretel with hem jn compenye,  
these vij in cownseyl to-gederis gonne hye.  
the kyng clepyd merlyne to hym tho,  
So that alle to-gederys gonne they go. 8156
- The king says to Merlin : “ Dere frend merlyne,” thanne quod the kyng,  
“ lesteneth now to my talkyng.  
J haue herd told, ful certeinle,  
that with my Fadyr thou were preve. 8160  
So wolde j 3ow preyen, with-owten faylle,  
That 3e wolde ben of myn cownsaylle  
and cownseyllen me of this thing among,  
3if that this meyne wylen me ony wrong. 8164  
wherfore j wolde 3ow hertelyche preye  
my cownseyl to be & the sothe me seye  
lyk as to my Fadyr, kyng vterpendragon,  
3e 3oven hym cownseyl in many areson. 8168  
And wete 3e wel, Sire, jn ful certeyn,  
that j wyl neuere don 3ow ageyn,  
ne thyng that schal 3ow mysplese owher,
- as you were my father's ;  
and I will follow your advice.

8139. MS. quod Barouns.

8142. *hem*, *e* corrected from *y*.8156. MS. *Sothat*

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bothe be day and ek be Nyht,  
that men mown feren of that Syht."

This Rion

" This kyng Ryowns that j of telle,  
a myhty man he js and Felle, 8212

and mochel peple with hym hath he,  
that myhty ben & ful of crewelte.

has con-  
quered  
twenty kings,

and conqweryd he hath be his myht  
twenty corowned kynges jn fyht, 8216

whom he has  
treated dis-  
gracefully,

and alle here Berdes kut of hath he

Jn gret dispyt, as ze Scholen Se,  
and closed they ben, with-owten lette,

and eche day to-forn hym at his mete 8220

a knyht hem halt, as ze Scholen here,  
as for gret dispyt, with-owten dwere.

and he swears  
he will not  
cease till he  
has con-  
quered thirty.

And zit kyng Ryowns swereth, with-owten faylle,  
neuere to leven werre nethir Bataylle, 8224

Tyl that thrytty kynges conqweryd hath he.

and this kyng vppon leodegan werreth, Sykerle.

If your neigh-  
bour's land is  
destroyed,  
yours will  
come next;

Now leodegan marcheth vppon the,  
and zyf that his rem dystroyed be, 8228

thy rewm schalt thou lesen, with-owten faylle,  
but zif thou werke be myn cow[n]saylle.

and he would  
have lost his  
already but  
for the  
knights of the  
Round Table.  
Go to him,

and so hadde he his rewm, ful Sykyrle,  
nere knyhtes of pe Rownde table hadde j-be. 8232

wherfore, and thou wylt don aftyr me,

with hym a while schalt thou be,

and marry his  
daughter.

and his dowhter to wyve, with-owten Nay,  
and al his rem aftyr hys day. 8236

also therto sche is bothe zong and fayr,

and of alle his goodis schal ben his ayr,

therto the wysest j-cownted that may be.

Do not  
trouble about  
the barons:

and of thin owne rewm nothing drede the, 8240

For the Barowns that azens the werre,

they will have  
enough to  
defend them-  
selves.

So moche scholen they han to done from ferre,

that lytel whille scholen they abyden there,

So mochil here bodyes scholen ben put in fere. 8244

8230. MS. *cowfaylle*.

8244. The line was omitted and then written up the right margin, preceded by the crossed-out line: *that nethir' to hauē myde on mōn ne sterre.*

but Sore occupyed Scholen they be  
hemself to defende, ful Sykyrle.

and 3owre strengthes jn warde scholen 3e pytte

Jn dyvers hondys to kepen hem qwyte,

8248

Put your  
strongholds  
in order,

3owre cytes and 3owre castelys bothe  
with arblasteris and seriawnts, forsothe.

and ek therchebisschope schal therto

acursen hem that 3ow wrong wyl do,

8252

and have your  
foes cursed  
by the  
archibishop

and hym-Self schal don this Sentense,

To alle tho that to 3ow don ony offens,

and to alle the clergye thus schal hyt go

thorwh the rem to ben declared So.

8256

and the  
clergy.

and 3e scholen sen, in tyme comenge

what schal behappen of al this thinge.

thorwh the helpe that j schal 3ow do,

they scholen ben affrayed, er they go.

8260

and weteth wel, Sire, jn certeyn,

That to 3ow evere J schal ben ful beyn.

[leaf 119e]

and whanne ony nede that 3e haue,

j schal comen to 3ow, er that 3e me crave.

8264

I will come  
whenever you  
want me;

And loke, anon whanne j to 3ow crye,

that 3e opene 3owre 3ates ful redylye,

and lete hem entre there everychon,

then open  
your gates  
at once;

and thanne that amonges hem 3e ben anon.

8268

thanne So Sore abassched Scholen they be,

so pat somme scholen Sone there fle,

that discomfyt scholen they ben alle;

Swych aventure on hem pere schal falle."

8272

and your  
enemies  
will be  
discomfited."

Thanne departyd they there fulson,

and vppon to pe walles pe bisschope went anon.

and there kyng Arthewr aparayllede his men,

an merlyne a baner to hym made then,

wherby he hadde gret Sygnyfyauce,

and to his adversaryes ful gret dowtance.

vppon a lawnse that Baner was pyht

with an oryble dragown in here Syht,

8280

with a fire-  
vomiting  
dragon set  
on a lance.

8260. *affrayed*, *d* squeezed in afterwards.

8270. The line was omitted and then written down the right margin.

that Flawm & Fyr there owt he caste,  
 where-offen the barouns agrysen ful faste ;  
 and therto he hadde a ful long taylle,  
 where-offen they merveyllid, with-owten faylle. 8284

The king ap-  
 points Kay  
 his chief  
 bannerer.

Thanne kyng Arthewr took this Baner,  
 and Syre Kay, his Styward, betook hit ther  
 jn this manere, as j 30w Say :  
 that whyles he jn this world lyven may, 8288  
 his chef Banorer forto be,

Whiles he may lyven jn prosperyte.  
 Thus arayed weren they with-jnne,  
 and they with-owten to Fyhten wolden not blynne, 8292  
 but there they pyhten here pavylouns,  
 with Baners displayed and gomfanouns.

The barons  
 pitch their  
 tents outside.

and whanne therchebysschope beheld al this,  
 anon to hem he clepede, j-wys, 8296

The arch-  
 bishop calls  
 to them.

and bad hem comen here myhtes to preve,  
 3yf the towr they myhte wynnyn er Eve.  
 they answeyd azen, with-owten faylle :  
 " Non men but we hyt scholen assaylle." 8300

Thanne therchebisschope ryht there anon  
 hem cursede alle there everychon  
 that azens kyng Arthewr dyden ony thyng,  
 his rewme to damage other hyndryng. 8304

He curses  
 all king  
 Arthur's an-  
 tagonists.

Thusone the Baronage answeyd ageyn :  
 " of alle thy cursyng we setten not, pleyn,  
 but hym chasen Scholen we ful vtterly,  
 owt of this Lond to dryven hym jn hy. 8308  
 and 3if we mown taken hym be ony weye,  
 he schal not asckapen that he Schal deye."

The barons  
 defy him.

Anon whanne merlyne herde here bobaunce,  
 Fulsone he wrowht hem gret myschaunce : 8312  
 on hem he caste his enchawntemens,  
 vppon Tentes and pavylouns, with-owten defens,  
 and alle vppon a tyr there hem Sette,  
 That non of hem ne myhten hyt lette. 8316

Merlin sets  
 their tents  
 on fire,

So thens they fledden everychon,

and brings  
 about confu-  
 sion.

8284. *they, t* inserted above the line.

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of Bachelers bolde and chevalrye. 8356  
 and ryht a gret spere kyng Newtres bar,  
 and with kyng Arthewr he mette ryht thar.

King Arthur,  
 with a mighty  
 lance, rides  
 to meet him.

whanne that kyng Artheur hym say comenge,  
 azens hym fulfaste he gan to flynge 8360  
 with a gret lawnce, the hed of stel,  
 wherwith he besteryd him ryht wel.

For they that him Syen come prekyng,  
 they merveyllede that evere a man so 3ynge 8364

. . . . .  
 . . . . .

and so sore to-gederis gonne they ryde,  
 that here hors Fowndrede jn that tyde.

Newtris  
 breaks his  
 spear,

kyng Newtris Arthewr so sore mette,  
 that his spere to-brak, so sore he smette; 8368

and Arthur  
 smites him  
 off his horse.

and kyng Arthewr him smot ageyn,  
 thorwh Scheld & arm hit wente, ful pleyn,  
 Ek thorwh the Scholdere there he hym bar,  
 and down of his hors threw hym ryht thar, 8372  
 his hed to the grownde, his helys on hye,  
 that al the erthe denede, ful Sekyrye.

King Loth  
 hurries to  
 his cousin's  
 assistance.

but whanne kyng loth of orkanye this beheld,  
 that his cosyn germayn lay jn the feeld, 8376  
 his hors with his Spores he took anon,  
 and toward kyng Arthewr rood ful Son  
 his half-brothyr to avengen there

(For two sostren hadden they wedded, as j 3ow lere). 8380

Arthur meets  
 him.

and whanne kyng loth he say comen so,  
 kyng Arthewr azens hym gan to go,  
 as ther of hym nothing he ne Rowhte,  
 but fulfaste on hym kyng Arthewr sowhte, 8384

Tyl that to-gederis ful sone they mette,  
 and ful grete strokes to-gederis they sette.

They break  
 their spears,

and so sore they cowntred there,  
 that bothe here speris to-borsten were, 8388

allight,

that here hors non ferthere myhte pase.

and take to  
 their swords.

thanne sone here swerdis gonnen they vnbrase,

and so sore strokis to-gederis they smette,  
that kyng loth was feld, with-owten lette.

8392 King Loth  
falls.  
[leaf 120 a]  
There is a  
general rush  
to assist the  
kings,

Thanne Began thore A passyng Scry  
on bothen partyes, ful Sekerly.

and a ful gret stowr began there thanne,  
the kynges to Socowren, of eche manne ;

8396

bothe of knyht and ek of kyng  
there was wondyr gret distorbelyng.

and kyng Arthewris meyne cam also  
hym forto Socowren what they myhten do.

8400

thane be-gan there a ful gret stowr  
on bothe partyes with grete langowr.

and a great  
tumult.

But certein, al this jlke stownde  
bothe kynges lyen atte grownde.

8404

Whanne kyng Arthewr thus anoyed was,  
his swerd he drowh owt jn that plas,

that jn the drawyng hit 3af a clerte,  
that alle the peple there myhte hyt se ;

8408 Light flashes  
from Arthur's  
sword,

as thowh xx torches hadden ben lyht,  
So that there hit semede to alle here Syht ;

therto the same swerd, hos wyle hyt look,  
That kyng Arthewr owt of the ston ferst he took.

8412 the same  
sword that  
he took out  
the stone,  
and whose  
name  
'Escalabort'  
is engraven  
in the steel.

and abowten the Swerd wreten was ful wel  
Escalabort, þe wheche was graven in steel.

a name of ebrew hit was, j-wys,  
that jn frensch Trawnchefyst j-clepyd Js,

8416

that is englesch Forto telle  
as Trenchaut, and scharpe, & cuttyng ful snelle.

and that, forsothe, ful trewe hyt Js,  
as that here-aftyr 3e scholen heren, j-wys.

8420

whanne that kyng Arthewr recouered was,  
and his swerd drawen jn that plas,

Arthur, in  
the thickest  
press,

jnto the grettest pres he gan to go,  
There as most pres thanne say he tho,

8424

and thusone there wyth a knyht he mette,  
and swich a boffet there thanne hym sette,  
the arson of his hors he smot atwo,

kills man and  
horse,



and the knyht to dethe he wowndyd tho, 8428  
 that bothe hors and man they fyllen to grownde ;  
 and ful gret slawhtre he mad that stownde,  
 So that his strok dorste non man abyde,  
 So Ferd of hym they weren that tyde. 8432

and causes  
 terror all  
 round.

The seven  
 kings,  
 greatly  
 distressed,

Whanne the Sevene kynges Syen this damage,  
 that Arthewr wrowht hem so moche owtrage,  
 thanne ful Sorewful jn herte they were,  
 and alle to cownseyl they drowen hem there. 8436

agree on a  
 joint attack.

“ Let vs assemblen on hym Everychon  
 and down to the erthe bringen hym anon.”  
 So that with here sperys, that weren so stronge,  
 Towardys hym faste gonne they fonge, 8440  
 also faste as they myhte ryde,  
 hym down to beren jn that Tyde.

They assail  
 him all at  
 once ;

and alle they grated on hym at onys,  
 him to han Slayn for the nonys ; 8444

his armour  
 proves firm ;

but kyng Arthewr was armed so wel,  
 bothe jn Erne and Ek jn steel ;

but he falls to  
 the ground.

but down they boren hym to the grownde. 8447

Arthur's men  
 rush to his  
 relief.

that say vlphyn, Antron, & kay, & Breteaus pat stownde,  
 and so dyde more alle here lynage,

To Arthewr thei wente with gret corage.  
 and whanne the vij kynges they Syen this,  
 azens this meyne they wenten j-wys. 8452

Kay strikes  
 king Augwia,

and pere Syre kay with kyng augwys mette,  
 and thorwh the lefte Scholdere ful sore him smette,  
 more over down to the erthe him Bar,  
 thanne as for ded he lefte hym thar. 8456

Antron, king  
 Carados ;

and antron Karados so smot thanne,  
 that he to-brosed hym bothe body & panne,  
 and jn ded swowne lefte hym pat tyde,  
 So that he ne myhte nethyr gon ne ryde. 8460

[leaf 120 b]  
 Ulfen en-  
 counters king  
 Newtris,

And Vlphyn Kyng Newtres mette Anon,  
 that hors and man to-gederys gonne gon.

Breteaus,  
 king Ydiers.

and Syre Breteaus & kyng Ydieres  
 theyre swerdis they broken, they weren so fers, 8464

8450. *thei*, *i* squeezed in afterwards.

8459. *lefte* twice, the latter crossed out.

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but lyf for lyf and hed for hed,  
thus pleyden bothe partyes jn that sted.

King Arthur

Thanne kyng Arthewr so ful of Yre  
owt sprang on horsbak as spark of fyre ✓ 8504

encounters  
king Ydiers,

To-forn alle his othyr meyne,  
and with kyng Ydyers sone mette he.  
and vp his swerd he lefte on hy  
him to han smeten ful grevously. 8508

who loses his  
horse,

but of his purpos he fayllede tho,  
and kyng Ydiers hors nekke he smot atwo,  
that down they fylle bothe to grownde,  
bothe hors and man in that stownde. 8512

but is relieved  
by his men.

thanne retorned kyng Ydiers meyne  
hym forto Socowre, as hit myhte be.  
thanne strengere fyht was jn that plas,  
thanne of alle daye to-forn there was, 8516

After great  
fighting,

and more harm & more occisiown  
there was don that tyme jn vyrown.

in which  
Arthur has  
his sword  
bathed in  
blood,

for kyng Arthewr dyde moche harm jn that pres  
bothe of hors and men, and wolde not See, 8520

with Trenchefust, his Swerd so good,  
that bathed was al in mennes blood ;  
al his harneys and his armure  
with mennes brayn was soyled, j the ensure. 8524

king Ydiers  
and the  
others fly,

So that Ydiers and his meyne  
as discomfyt fledden, Sykirle.

[leaf 120 c]  
pursued by  
Arthur,

So that ful Longe Lasted this chas  
after these vj kynges jn that plas. 8528

and having  
lost all their  
property.

and of al the good that they thedyr browhte,  
the valew of twey pens away borez they nowhte,  
that alto-gederis j-lost was there,  
what thorwh bataylle and thorwh Fyre, 8532

which that merlyne vppon hem wrowhte ;  
Sauf Gold oper Sylver Saved was pere nowhte.

Chap. VIII.

Whanne kyng Arthewr hem hadde conqweryd,  
these Syxe kynges, as ze haven herd, 8536

- Be the cownseyl of merlyne,  
To cardeweyl jn wales he turned ageyn,  
and Sente faste abowtes jn that contre  
aftyр Sowdyowrs ful gret plente. 8540  
Bothe Robes and fees he 3af hem there,  
To alle the Sowdeowrs that with him were,  
bothe to powre, sqwyers, and to knyht,  
So that they Sworen be god almyht, 8544  
with hym they wolden both lyven and deye ;  
thus they hym enswred be here feye.  
whanne Kyng Arthewr hadde thus j-sped,  
& the hertes of þe peple geten jn that sted, 8548  
and gret love abowtes jn that contre  
of alle the peple jn here degre,  
and aftyr he stuffede his cytes echon,  
his castelis, his garesouns be on & be on. 8552  
and sethen to logres he wente, j vndirstond,  
that now is Clepyd Londone jn Engelond.  
and there his parlement began he thanne ;  
To hym there Semblyd many a manne. 8556  
This cowrt there began, with-owten delay,  
In Septembre vppon owre ladyes day.  
atte that cowrt, with-owten dowte,  
Many knyhtes he made, both stronge & stowte. 8560  
and to hem he 3af bothen grete rentes & fe,  
and to hym dyden they homage & fewte.  
To every man he 3af swich gwerdon there,  
So that here degre wel Sosteyned were. 8564  
and thus he gat hym love plente  
of knyht, Sqwyer, and comunealte,  
So that they hym enswrede here trowthe & feye,  
with hym to lyven and ek to deye. 8568  
and sethen they dyden him Socour, Sekyrlye,  
as aftyr 3e scholen heren jn this storye.
- Aftyр that kyng Arthewr thus hadde j-do,  
and j-mad thre hundred knyhtes & mo, 8572  
and al his strengthes j-stuffed ful wel,

8565. *plente*, *le* blurred.8567. *trowthe*, *o* daubed.

bothen cytees, townes, and castel  
 (aftyr merlynes cownseil pis wrowhte he,  
 and Ek moche more, ful certeinle), 8576  
 and whanne he hadde al this j-do,  
 kyng Artheur on syde merlyne took tho,  
 and so to cownseyll to-gederis they wente,  
 and Vlphin with hem they token presente. 8580  
 “Syre kyng, a thing j moste 3ow telle  
 (that 3e and Vlphyn herkenen my spelle !):  
 There js a good man jn on forest,  
 that jn wildyrnesse lyveth as a best, 8584  
 whiche that Js jn northhumberlond,  
 and an holy man he is, 3e vndirstond ;  
 and to me he is bothe leef and dere,  
 For my modyr he savede and me jn fere.” 8588  
 thanne began he to tellen, verament,  
 how that his modyr scholde han be brent  
 For A Blame and For A cryme  
 that on hire was put be old tyme, 8592  
 and how Fortager hym dyde seken also,  
 Ek how his modyr veylled a nonne was tho,  
 and how the towr lasteth Jnto this day,  
 and stonden hit schal for evere and ay, 8596  
 Ek of the dragowns the Signifyance,  
 al this hem tolde, *with-owten varyaunce.*

Thanne tolde he, aftyr the deth of Fortager  
 how *with Vterpendragon* he qweynted ther ; 8600  
 and of the grete bataylle he tolde also .

That vppon Pendragon was j-do ;  
 and how be the dewchesse he made hym lye  
 jn the castel of Tyndagel, Sekyrye— 8604

“Jn wheche place engendrid 3e were” ;  
 and how Vlphin purposyd the maryage there—  
 “be-twene 3owre Fadyr and 3oure modyr, the queene” ;  
 alle these he tolde hem be-dene ; 8608

and how fyve dowhtren hadde sche bore  
 (what Maryed & ded they weren to-fore),

8595. *lasteth* inserted above the line, erroneously after (instead of before) *Jnto*.

Merlin with-  
 draws to have  
 a consulta-  
 tion with  
 Arthur and  
 Ulin.

He tells of  
 Holy Blasay.

who saved  
 Merlin's  
 mother  
 (Ch. I),

(leaf 120 d)

of king  
 Fortager

and his tower  
 (Ch. II),

of Merlin's  
 acquaintance  
 with Uter-  
 pendragon  
 (Ch. III),

of the en-  
 gendering  
 of Arthur  
 (Ch. IV),

and the  
 marriage of  
 his parents  
 (Ch. V).

Further  
 he tells  
 of Arthur's  
 sisters and  
 half-sisters,

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They shall both be dubbed by thee, and bring lots of people with them.

and wete pou wel, pat dubbed scholen they not be,  
Tyl pou hem armes 3yve, ful Sykyrle. 8648

and they scholen bringen the gret compeny,  
For love of here kyn, certeinlye,  
Of Barowns sones & oper mo ;  
moche peple with hem cometh the vnto 8652

[leaf 121 a]

The Forto Don Alle maner of Servyse,  
whyles that they lyven as jn here wyse."

Further, in Little Britain, there live two kings,

"also, Sire, jn lytel Bretayngne,  
dwellen tweyn kynges, jn certeyne, 8656  
the wheche they holden both of the,  
and cosynes germayn bothe they be.

and tweyne sostres j-weddyd they han perto,  
that cosynes germayns there ben also. 8660

with children that shall be brave men ;

These tweyne kynges, chyldren they han,  
that stalworthe scholen ben and myhty men.  
and so worthy knyhtes they scholen be,  
theyre pere schal ben jn non contre. 8664

these kings are called Ban and Boors.

The eldest of the tweyne kynges of fame,  
kyng Ban of Baynoc js his Name.  
the tother kyng, of gawnes Sire Boors hyhte,  
a worthy werroure and mochel of myhte. 8668

They are vexed by a neighbour (king Claudas, p. 234).

but a felonus Neyghebour hath that kyng,  
that hym doth gret Travaylle & hyndryng,  
and alle he hit doth for envye,  
For he ne may hem not justefye. 8672

Send word for them

and for they ben so trewe and so stedfast,  
aftyr hem j wolde thou wost senden jn hast,  
and sende hem to seyne, ouer alle thyng  
that thow wost ben of here aqweynting, 8676  
and with the to ben at al halwen feste.

to come to thy parliament ;

thane to the moste comen bothe lest and meste,  
To thy parlement, and the obeye.  
Somme comen for good, as j the seye, 8680

they will come with gentle hearts.

and somme for Evel jn othyr degre,  
but these tweyne kynges, as j telle the,  
they comen with hertys deboneyrre,  
here to thy cowrt Forto Repeyrre. 8684

<p>For they ben ful good men and trewe,          bettyr of condissious fyndest þou but fewe.          and þerfore azens hem j wyle thou go,          and thy Servyse to hem offren also.          and mochel thank they scholen konnen the,          and to þe don homage and fewte.          thanne whanne al this js j-do,          and thy cowrt they welen gon fro,          anon thow hem clepe to thy cownsaylle ;          and sey to hem, with-owten Faylle,          that jnto Tarmelyde thou wylt go,          There to ben avenged of thy fo,          Preyeng hem to gon with the          (For ryht goode men Syker they be),          there to abyden with kyng Leodogan,          and so preye þou as wel as þou kan ;          For goode knyhtes ben they bothe,          and here lond of the hath mester, forsothe.          For thin enemyes azens the the lond wilen defende,          but they scholen not Therto longe attende,          Nethyr Sosteynen non whyle azens the,          thorwgh helpe of these tweyne kynges, sykerle,          that jn thy compenye scholen abyde.”</p> <p>“3yt to 3ow more J seye this tyde :          a costom J have, j Sey 3ow pleyntylye,          that to the forest j moste me hye          be Enchesoun of my nature,          thyder j moste, j 3ow Enswre,          bencheson of hym that me dyde gete ;          this thing at this tyme wyl j not lete.          and for anothis cawse also          to the wyld forest wyl j go :          with holy Blase to speken there,          For An Holyere man Knowe J Nowhere.          and thou schalt neuere have nede of me,          but Sone that J schal ben with the,</p>	<p>8688</p> <p>8692</p> <p>8696</p> <p>8700</p> <p>8704</p> <p>8708</p> <p>8712</p> <p>8716</p> <p>8720</p>	<p>Receive them with honour,</p> <p>make them your coun- sellors,</p> <p>and ask them to go with thee to Tarmelid.</p> <p>They will want thy help,</p> <p>and thou shalt have theirs.</p> <p>I must go to the forest partly on account of my nature,</p> <p>partly to speak with Blasy.</p> <p>[leaf 121 b]</p> <p>Whenever you want me, I shall come.</p>
--	---	--

8702. *hath*, the second *h* squeezed in afterwards.

8708. MS. *the þ<sup>e</sup> the*, with *þ<sup>e</sup>* crossed out.

8706. *helpe* added in the left margin.

8711. MS. *Enchenou*.



the to cownseyllen what that j may.

But I shall  
often appear  
in another  
shape

but of on thing j schal 3ow say :

often-tymes schalt thow me se

jn other semblaunce, ful sykerle,

8724

thanne þou sixt me to-forn þe now here,

often-tymes toforn þe schal j apere ;

In order to be  
known only  
by a few.

For j kepte not alle men knewe

whanne j with the spak, but 3if it were fewe.

8728

more over j wylle that thou swere to me,

that be the neuere discured j be

of non thing that j haue told the,

but that thou kepe hit evere prove.

8732

and 3if thou do, j schal the Seye :

hyt schal the Torne to angyr and treye."

The king pro-  
mises secrecy

and the kyng hym swoor there anon ryht,

he scholde nevere discure hym to non wyht,

8736

and implicit  
compliance.

ne neuere schold don thing azens his wylle ;

thus the kyng Seyde hym vntylle.

and merlyne Enswred hym ageyn

that he wolde deserven hyt, certeyn.

8740

In the city,  
where the  
consultation  
took place,  
the people  
rejoice,

Thus the covenant was fenyssched there,

be-twene the kyng and merlyn jn fere.

Gret joye maden they jn that cyte

of here kyng so 3ong jn his degre,

8744

that so worthy a man of armes he was,

and therto so hardy jn Eche a plas.

so that for joye of that solempnite

the worthy Burgeys of that cyte

8748

a qwyntyn they reryd there besyde

jn a fayr medewe that jlke tyde,

the 3onge knyhtes to bowrdeyen there

with scheldes hangeng abowten here swere.

8752

this revel lasted Fully viij dayes

with grete feste, as this storye sayes.

After the  
festival,  
Arthur  
returns to  
London,

and whanne the feste was al j-do,

To londone ward the kyng gan go,

8756

there to abyden his parlement,

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and kyng Ban than answeyrd ageyn,  
and seyde hit was neuere his, jn certeyn. 8796

a war began;

So that thorwh this, grete werre began ;  
but kyng Ban wolde leven hit for non man,  
that the castel he dede vpe make,  
owther for drede owther for wrake. 8800

thus began gret hate, werre, & envye,  
betwixen tho two kynges, Sekyrlye.  
This werre al here lyve dyde laste.

Claudas  
invaded the  
country,

So that this clawdas jnto Ban his rem paste,  
and hym defyede jn many a d[e]gre,  
and jn that Lond dyde grete adversyte  
Jn Townes that vnwalled were ;

burnt and  
pillaged,

Sone on fyre he sette hem there, 8808  
of wheche he took many grete pelages ;  
the peple he Slowh and dyde Owtrages,  
For he was with-owten pyte.

but could  
not take the  
castle

but as towching to the castel, Sykyrle, 8812  
that kyng ban hadde areryd there,  
he ne hadde non myht to don hyt non dere.  
This castel kyng ban hadde Stuffed wel  
With Seriauntes and arblasteris everydel. 8816

from its  
defender, an  
old captain ;

and þere-jnne hadde he put an old capteyn,  
hos name was gracyen, with-owten leyn.  
and on of Bannes sones with gracyen was,  
that Baynyn was clepyd jn that plas. 8820

this Baynyns was sethen of gret worthynesse,  
a worthy knyht, and of gret prowesse ;  
more thanne at this tyme þe Storye doth [not] spelle.

king Ban

but now of kyng ban j schal 3ow telle, 8824  
that ful wroth & ful angry was  
For the harm he hadde jn many a plas.

collected an  
army,

and whanne he knew the certeynte,  
To-gyderis he gaderyd his meyne 8828  
azens kyng clawdas forto fyhte,  
for alle passages he knew ful ryhte.

8805. MS. *dgre*, *g* being tampered with, as if a correction had been intended.

8823. MS. *doth spelle* ; *p* squeezed in.

8829. *clawdas*, *la* blurred.

- Whanne these tweyne osten scholden mete,  
 To-gederis to Fyhten they wolden not lete. 8832 gave battle,  
 So that there was ful gret mortalyte  
 on bothe partyes thanne, certeynle.  
 and so moche peple Slowh this kyng ban,  
 and dissemed the membres of many a man, 8836 killed lots  
 that a man myhte han seyn jn the feld  
 hepes as of Swyn oper of schepe lyn ded.  
 So that Fawht kyng Ban & his meyne,  
 That kyng clawdas fledde & his compeyne, 8840 and put  
 and loste al his harneys and his Pelage,  
 that he to-fortymes took be owtrage,  
 and the presoners rescued weren Everychon.  
 On anothir partye entryd kyng boors anon, 8844 king Boors  
 that half-Brothyr was to kyng Ban,  
 jnto kyng clawdas Lond entrede he than,  
 and pere brende and dyde distrocciown  
 Abowten Al His Lond Jn Vyrown 8848 destroyed it  
 Jnto the cyte of desert ;  
 thedyr he brend ful sone and apert,  
 and that lond distroyede al abowte,  
 that nowher for hym non man myhte rowte. 8852  
 So gret distrocciown there he dede,  
 that jn twenty myle of lengthe & brede  
 No man jn that Lond loggen myhte,  
 To liggen drye be day ne be nyhte,  
 but 3if vndir roche oper vndir Erthe hit were,  
 cowde no man drye loggen hym there.  
 So was kyng clawdas emporysched there tho,  
 that he ne wyste what he myhte do. 8860 and crushed  
 So on the kynges dorste he non more werre make,  
 lest hit scholde hym torne to Sorwen and wrake.  
 thus fownden they this lond distroyed & brent,  
 they that on kyng Arthewris message went, 8864 Thus king  
 and merveyllled mochel of this thing  
 as jn the contre they paste rydyng.  
 So ryden they forth, with-owten les,  
 Tyl they comen to þe castel of Trebes, 8868 They ride on  
 to Trebes.

That kyng Ban there dyde arere,  
From his enemyes to defenden him Every-where.

They there  
and Ban's  
fair young  
queen,  
Eleyne,

In this castel qwene Eleyne was,  
kyng bannes wyf jn that plas, 8872

and therto the Fairest Lady was sche  
that owher was jn ony contre,  
and but of 3ong age, the sothe to say,  
but xvj 3er 3it be that day, 8876

whose sister  
is married to  
king Boors,

and but lytel whyle wedded was sche  
kyng Boors hire soster wedded, sykerle,  
a worthy lady jn alle wyse,  
as ony man on Erthe cowde devyse. 8880

ask for the  
king,  
learn that he  
is with his  
brother,

whanne Vlphyn and Bretel comen to trebes,  
aftyr kyng Ban they axeden, with-owten les.  
they seyden, he was gon to parlement  
to his brothyr, kyng Boors, verament. 8884

and depart  
again.

and whanne they wysten he was not there,  
of qwene Eleyne they token here leve in fere.  
So armed Ryden they forth anon,

They now  
have to pass  
through a  
country in-  
fested by  
robbers,

For the contre that they scholde by gon 8888

was perylows forto passen by,  
as j 3ow Seye, sires, certeynly,  
For mysdoeris jn that contre.  
and many mo Scholden there be, 8892

whom the  
two kyngs  
certainly try  
to put down.

Nere drede of þe two kynges so ryhte  
that on hem don reddure anon with myhte.  
For 3if ony man that they cowden aspye,  
And he were taken with felonye, 8896

anon to jewyse he Scholde be do  
and ben distroyed for Evere mo.

Before long,  
they meet  
seven of king  
Claudas'  
knights.

Whanne these knyhtes from Trebes weren gon,  
Vlphyn and Bretel to-gederys alon, 8900

and Er fyve Myles they hadden past,  
vij knyhtes there they Syen jn hast,  
that weren of kyng clawdas meyne,  
that theke pas they kepten, Sykerle, 8904

8869. Abbreviation mark in darker ink.

8888. *by*, *y* corrected from *e*.

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- You will have to give up your harness and your horses." thanne forth to passen scholen 3e han grace,  
and Ellis 3owre harneys moste 3e leven here,  
and bothe 3oure hors to-gyderis jn Fere. 8944  
thanne with-owten deth passen scholen 3e,  
Oþer payeng of rawnsom, Sykyr 3e be.  
therto presonement scholen 3e now have,  
but hey[1] & al hol to passen here Save, 8948  
Sauf 3oure hors and harneys scholen 3e forgone."  
thus seide this knyht þat to hem cam alone.
- Ulfin angrily replies : Anon as Vlphin this vndirstood,  
For anger he lokede as red as blood. v 8952
- "Stop a bit, "Sire knyht," he seyde, "hye the not to faste,  
For al thy malyce is nygh j-paste.  
Mafey, thou spekest ful velenosly !  
what trowest thou þat j sette þer-by ? 8956
- you won't get them ! " For nethyr hors ne harneys g[e]tyst þou not here,  
For er thou have, thou beyest hem ful dere.  
J trowe thou wene hem sone forto gete,  
and þat schalt thou not, for j schal the lette." 8960

- Bretel records his fellow, Whanne that Bretealx vndyrstood this,  
that the knyht to Vlphyn so spak amys,  
he seyde : "sire knyht, þou thinkest ful ylle,  
but of thy bost j schal the sone felle." 8964
- and rushes against the knight. with his spores bretel his hors smot blyve  
azens that knyht to ryden wel swythe.  
and þat beheld thanne this knyht anon,  
and Faste azens Bretel he gan to gon, 8968  
and abowtes his nekke he heng his Scheld,  
there-with to defenden him jn that feld.
- They meet. and there fulsore to-gederys they mette,  
So that on Bretel a gret strok he sette, 8972  
and Bretel ful sore smot hym ageyn
- Bretel pierces the knight, that thorwgh the left scholdere he bar hym, pleyn,  
Tyl that þe tronchon schewede on þe tothyr syde,  
hal[f] schaft and more jn that ilke tyde. 8976

8948. MS. *hey*. 8956. MS. *what*. 8957. MS. *gtyr*.

8960. þ<sup>r</sup> squeezed in afterwards.

8961. Ornament like a face in the left margin (inside the long flourish of *w*); similarly ll. 8987, 9265, etc.

8967. þ<sup>r</sup> squeezed in afterwards. 8976. MS. *hal*.

& pere to þe grownde he bar hym ful ryht,  
both hors & man pere jn that fyht.

who falls to  
the ground ;

There Swowned this Knyht for Angwysch & peyne,  
as this Storye here telleth, Syres, jn certayne.

[leaf 122 b]

8980

than azen sire Bretel his spere owt drowgh thore,  
al hol and as sownd as hit was to-fore,

he draws  
out his spear  
again,

and seide to þe knyht thanne jn þat tyde :

and says :

“ here mown now 3e wel resten and abyde  
this weye to kepen for man othir knave,  
and geten swich avauntage as 3e mown haue.”

8984

“ Now you  
may stay here  
and keep the  
road ! ”

Whanne that Vlphyn beheld al this,

Ulfn greatly  
approves.

Ful wel hyt lyked hym, þe justis, j-wys,

8988

and preysede Bretel for his jorne,

For wel had he qwynt hym, ful Sykerle.

thanne forth they reden but a lytel weye,

that the vj knyhtes behelden, jn feye,

8992

The six  
knyghte

hough that h[er]e lord sore wowndyd was

and jn the Feeld lay jn that plas,

and seide that glad scholden they neuere be,

Tyl here lord venged were, ful certeinle.

8996

vow venge-  
ance.

thanne of these vj, tweyne gonnen Owt ryde

to ouertaken þe messengeris jn that Tyde,

al so faste as here hors myhte hem bere,

So that they ouertook hem anon there.

9000

and whanne that they weren hem faste bye,

anon these messengeris they gonne ascrye,

and therto hem manacede wondyr sore,

but fullytel there-offen they 3oven thore.

9004

with a men-  
acing cry.

and whanne they hem Syen aprochen so ny,

ageyns hem they torneden ful worthyly

with here scheldis and speris anon riht there,

that with-jinne schort while jsembled they were.

9008

The messen-  
gers turn on  
them,

so that alle iiij there so sore they mette,

and so grete strokis to-gederys they sette,

that on peces to-schateryd here scheldis,

and the gobettes flowen jnto the feldys,

9012

and there is  
a fierce  
encounter.

that persched was bothe hauberk & habiriown



of Bothe partyes there jn Vyrown.

Bretel felle  
one,

thane aftyr, Bretel with his Lawnce

Smot his aduersarye atte owtrawnce : 9016

thorwgh hawberk, haberiown, & porwh pe throte

he hym there sone bar, god hyt wote,

that ded of his hors pere fyl he down,

jnto the Feld ouer his arsown. 9020

Ulfn, the  
other.

and Vlphyn his aduersarye smot so tho,

that his spere thorwgh his lyft scholdere gan go,

and down of his hors fyl he jnto the feeld,

where as he lay styлле vndyr his scheld. 9024

Two more  
knights ride  
to attack,

Thanne of th[e] iiij knyhtes jsswed owt tweyne,

here felawes to avengen pere, jn certeyne,

and maden there a ful gret scry,

and seiden that they wolden deyen, trewly, 9028

but that here Felawes avenged were,

er that they pasten ony forthere there.

are met by the  
messengers,

thane anon the messengeris tweyne

azens hem here hors hedis tornede ageyne. 9032

anon Sire Vlphyn dressid hym ful faste

azens his adversarye, er he forthere paste ;

and Bretel azens the tothyr gan ryde,

So that al fowre metten jn that tyde. 9036

and des-  
patched in a  
similar way.

Sire Bretel his felawe th[er]e so smot,

that thorugh the Body the spere hit glot.

and Vlphin his felawe there so mette,

and swich a strok on him he sette, 9040

that hors & man to grownde he bar,

So that his nekke asondir barst ryht thar.

Bretel renews  
his scoffing  
speech,  
[leaf 122 c]

thane spak Bretel to his felawe :

“ Syre, of this Jorne ze mown Ben Fawe ! 9044

and here to manacen whom that ze wylle,

and this passe to kepen, and here lyn styлле,

Therto good leve, Syre, scholen ze have,

thys weye to kepen from knyht oþer knaue.” 9048

9020. *ffeld*, *ld* on erasure. 9022. *lyft*, *t* squeezed in afterwards.

9028. *hors* added above the line. 9025. MS. *th* *iiij*.

9027. *scry*, *c* corrected from *r*.

9037. MS. *the* ; cf. l. 11379, footnote.

9048. *thys*, *y* corrected from *e*.

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The knights  
and the mes-  
sengers  
recognize  
each other as  
dear old  
friends.

and whanne they herden hem bothe thus seyn,  
thanne eche of hem othyr knew, ful pleyn.  
anon eche othyr there gan forto embrace,  
and mochel joye they maden jn that place. 9088

thanne axeden they 3if they speken scholde  
with the tweyne kynges, and what they wolde.  
and they seyden: "3e, sires, ful sekyrly,  
For therto haven we nede, trewely." 9092

Hand in  
hand, they go  
to the kings.

anon thanne jn hondis they taken jn fere,  
and so to-gederis jnto chambre wenten there.  
thanne anon as the kyng[es] these two knyhtes sye,  
azens hem they wenten ful hastelye, 9096

For wel wisten they thanne, with-owten Fayllynge,  
that they scholden here som newe tydyng.

The messen-  
gers are intro-  
duced to the  
kings.

Thanne seyde Leownces to these kynges tho:  
"Behold these messengeres that fer comen Fro!" 9100

For they comen owt of gret Br̄staygne  
with 3ow tweyne to speken, jn certeyne."

and welcomed  
by them.

and whanne the tweyne kynges herdyn this,  
they seyden that they weren welcomen, j-wys. 9104

thanne gret joye to-gederys they made,  
and ech of other they weren ryht glade.

Thanne down they seten alle pere jn Fere.

[leaf 122 d]  
They are  
asked about  
their errand,

Thanne Axeden the Kynges of Hem there  
what nede that drof hem jn-to that contre,  
For ellys hyt myhte non othirwyse be. 9108

thanne forthermore, as j vndirstond,  
they axeden tydynges owt of here lond, 9112

and about  
the barons  
and their  
king.

and 3yf here Barowns hadden ony kyng  
aftyr here owne wille, with-owten lesyng.

For of the eleccyown knewen they ful wel,  
and of the swerd and pe ston, everydel, 9116

that on cristemasse day there gan apere  
afor the mynstre and the peple there.

The messen-  
gers give a  
full account

Thanne tolden the messengeris here tydyng,  
how that jt was, jnto the endyng, 9120

9095. MS. *kyng*; cf. ll. 9279, 9788, footnotes.

9101. *Br'taygne*, r' corrected from o.

9119. Abbreviation mark perhaps added afterwards.

- and of alle the Stryf that was there  
of kyng Arthewr & þe Sevene kynges jn fere ;  
and of the merveillous Fyr also  
that merlyne amonges hem wrowhte tho, 9124  
and ek of the grete chevalrye  
that þe 3onge kyng Arthewr dyde, Sykyrlye.  
aftyr they tolden hem word and ende  
and of Mer-  
lin's advice,  
how merlyn cownseyllede, for hem wende 9128  
that they scholden comen to kyng Arthewr  
and not Jt to letten for non langowr ;  
where-offen Vlphyn preyde jn haste  
answere to haven, er that they paste ; 9132  
For here tyme was schort therto,  
and here nede ful gret also.  
thane answeyrd the kynges ageyn,  
and seiden that—" gret werre we han, certein,  
azens kyng clawdas jn this contre,  
that mochel noysaunce doth to owre meyne.  
and 3yt emporysched he js jn partye,  
But 3yt we dreden vs now, Sekerlye, 9140  
that and we owt of this contre were,  
lest he wolde don vs mochel dere."  
thane seiden the messengeris to hem ageyn :  
" That kepten we not, Syres, jn certeyn,  
But merlyne sente 3ow forto say :  
whiles that 3e walkyn jn his jornay,  
3e doren not of non damage drede,  
For he wyl 3ow both wyssen and rede." 9148
- Whanne kyng Ban & kyng Boors  
herden of merlyne so gret a los,  
and merveyllede mochel of his werkyng,  
that he knew thinges þat weren comeng, 9152  
thane seyden they to þe messengeris anon,  
that syker thens Scholden they not gon,  
but hol thre dayes there to abyde ;  
the messengeris hym thankyd þat tyde. 9156  
the kyng comanded disarmen hem anon  
(For further, certeyn, scholden they not gon,

but jn his owne place abyden pere styll),  
and hem vnarmed and used at wylle. 9160

When the  
messengers  
are disarmed,  
their friends  
notice their  
broken  
shields,

whanne that these knyhtes vnarmed were,  
thussonne there comen the two knyhtes there,  
and beheldyn here harneys and here armure,  
Where-offen they merveylleden, j 3ow ensure, 9164  
how that here scheldis so to-broken were,  
and here harneys so forbled was there.

they preyden hem, of gentrye, the sothe to seyne,  
that al the trowthe to tellen hem, pleyne. 9168

are told of  
the encounter  
with the  
seven  
knights,

thanne begonnen they anon, ful vttyrlye,  
alle the trowthe to seyn, ful pleynye,  
Of the vij knyhtes, put weren so bolde,  
And How that Hem Asayllen they Wolde. 9172

“But thankyd be god and owre Ladye,  
we ben now here jn 3owre compenye!”  
and whanne the tweyne knyhtes herden this,  
That of tho Sevene they weren delyuered, j-wys, 9176

and praise the  
fine exploit.

thanne of hem maden they gret preysyuge,  
For they hem knew, with-owten lesynge,  
that they weren bothe knyhtes worthy,  
and for goode men and trewe, certeynly. 9180

King Ban  
gives them  
good cheer;

thanne kyng Ban dyde hem sytten anon,  
and with worthy deyntes Served hem thusson.

Leones and  
Fariens serve  
them well,

what Leowneces of Paerne and Phareens  
To hem they dyden al here deligens ; 9184  
of alle tho deyntes that myhte ben fownde  
To hem they browhten jn that stownde.

remembering  
former times  
in Great  
Britain.

For toforn tyme they syen in gret bretaygne  
hem Servyd with alle deyntes, jn certeygne, 9188  
jn tyme of kyng Vter Pendragown,  
that kyng Arthewres fadyr was be Resown.

Ban and  
Boors are  
ready on the  
third day ;

Thussonne kyng Ban & his brothyr jn Fere  
Forward they gonnen to arayen hem there, 9192  
So that Redy thei weren be th[e] thrydde day  
with these messengeris to gon forth here way,  
and token here londys Jn governaunce

9168. MS. *behaldyn*. 9182. *with, h* squeezed in afterwards.

9193. *thei, i* squeezed in afterwards. MS. *th thrydde*.

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(Context mis-  
understood;  
see Notes).

and seide they hadden ryht wel j-do.  
 thanne tolden they to merlyne vnto 9232  
 how that be the weye assaylled they were,  
 and hou of vij knyhtes they deliuered hem there,  
 ek with the two kynges j-spoken also,  
 and how here londys they hadde deliuered tho 9236  
 To tweyne barowis of that contre,  
 and the tokene of the ryng also tolden hee.

Merlin ad-  
vises king  
Arthur to  
meet the ap-  
proaching  
kings.

Anon seide merlyne to kyng Arthewr thanne :  
 "Goth, ordeyne 3ow to meten these worthy menne, 9240  
 For thin owne men ful Syker they be,  
 and Born of hygh lynage, ful Sykerle,  
 and ek here wyves Jn that same wyse  
 hyghe Born as ony man kan devyse." 9244

thanne answeyrd the kyng to merlyne ageyne :

"As thou me redest, j wyl don, certeyne."

thanne quod merlyne jn alle haste :

"that the weyes ben clensid ful faste, 9248  
 and perto alle the maidenis that pou miht gete  
 hem to meten dawnsing jn that strete,  
 & thus with songe & dawnsyng with-owten pe town  
 hym so to meten in merie processiwne, 9252

and the whole  
chivalry  
to welcome  
them.

and thanne 3oure-self with alle 3oure chevalrye  
 ek hem to meten ful worschepfullye."

"Now, goode merlin," quod Artheur the kyng,  
 "whanne mai j be seker of here comeng?" 9256

They will  
arrive on the  
Sunday  
morning.

"a sondai next comeng, er pe owr of Tyerce,  
 hidyr scholen thei comen bothe heyl & ferce."  
 whanne that kyng Arthewr vndirstood al this,  
 thanne aftir merlines wii he wrowhte, j-wys, 9260

Arthur  
makes pre-  
parations  
accordingly.

and merline him tawhte what he scholde do,  
 and hou to the kyng he scholde speken vnto,  
 that jn non wise jnterupt scholde he not ben  
 Jn non thing that he Scholde don other sen. 9264

Vppon this him ordeyned Artheur the kyng  
 azens these kynges to gon encowntryng.

- thus abyden they stille til vppon the sonday.  
 thanne myht me sen men there jn good aray : 9268 On the Sunday, Arthur  
 the kyng Artheur & al his Baronye, meets the  
 therchebisschope of dover with his clergye, kings in  
 thus with processiou<sup>n</sup> they hem metten, sykerle. grand pro-  
 thanne gret kysseng & joye there men myhten se. 9272 cession,  
 thus toward the cyte passeden they there, kisses them,  
 where as dawnsyng many maidenis were conducts  
 with many karoles & ryht merye song, them to the  
 at that tyme was these maidenis among. 9276 city,  
 and thus thorough the cyte thei gonne to ride where maid-  
 To the grete towr that ilke tyde. and to the Tower  
 Anon as these kynges to þe paleis weren browht, 9280 where mag-  
 grete jewelis and ȝiftis sone weren vpe sowht nificent gifts  
 and to the kinges presentyd there ; are dis-  
 also cowrseris, palfreyes, & with destrere, tributed  
 Ek robes, and armures bothe goode & riche  
 To these kynges he ȝaf and to oþer j-lyche. 9284 both to the  
 and al this wrowht he be merlines cownsaille, kings and to  
 For aftyr hit dede hym gret availle. others.  
 So that gret love he gat him there Arthur thus  
 Of Riche and powre thanne Every-Where, 9288 wins the love  
 and of hem that neuere hym sye [leaf 123 *v*]  
 Toform tyme ne aftyr with here eye. of rich and  
 Ful mochel merveylleden the peple tho poor ;  
 whens that alle tho jewelis comen fro, they wonder  
 and jn so schort time hit was j-don, where all the  
 bothe to hye and to lowe þere riht anon. 9292 jewels come  
 So that Eche man jn his degre from,  
 kyng Artheuris man swor forto be, 9296 and swear  
 and for nothing hym Neuere to faylle fidelity.  
 jn pes, in werre, nethir jn bataille.
- Whanne that these kynges jn þe cite were,  
 daunsyng of ladies Syen thei there, 9300 Dancing and  
 Torneyeng of Bacheleris ȝonge, tournaments  
 that alday lasted jnto Evensonge. are going on.  
 more ouer alle the stretis of the cyte

9279. *kynges*, / squeezed in afterwards.9301. Abbreviation mark in darker ink, between *i* and *s*.



- The streets  
are hung with  
cloths of silk.  
The weather  
is fine. 9304
- Lamps filled  
with balm  
spread sweet  
odour all  
around. 9308
- The royal  
party attend  
mass, 9312
- which is sung  
by the arch-  
bishop, 9316
- and then have  
a splendid  
dinner. 9320
- At table serve 9324
- Kay, Ulfín,  
Bretel, 9328
- Lucans the  
Boteler,  
and Gifles. 9332
- After dinner,  
the quintin is  
raised. 9336
- 9340

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that hem thowhte the brayn was owt of h[er]e paine,  
 and ek the eyen owt of here hed,  
 So sore they torneyed jn that sted. 9380  
 and ech of hem to erthe oþer there bar,  
 that jn Swowneng stille they lyen thar.  
 So that the peple wenden, þat stoden abowte,  
 that bothe hadden ben ded, with-owten dowte. 9384  
 For so crwel a fyht Syen they neuere eke  
 be-twixen two men that knyhtes were.

and bear one  
 another to  
 the earth.

(2) Then en-  
 sues a general  
 rush,

Thussone to-broken the renges anon ;  
 to rescwen these knyhtes wenten they ful son. 9388

there on partye with anoþyr to-gederis gonne mete,  
 that on eyther partye lay jn the strete.

ek so sore to-gederis metten they there,  
 that eche man on oþyr brak his spere. 9392

spears are  
 broken,

whanne that here sperys to-broken were,  
 anon here swerdis they pulden owt there.

and swords  
 are pulled  
 out.

So that there a melle began ful strong,  
 betwixen tho knyhtes hem among. 9396

ȝyt was there thanne anoþyr knyht,  
 that ful merveillously bar hym in fyht,

Lucans the  
 Hoteler, Gir-  
 des' cousin,

that Lucans le boteler was his name,  
 cosin germayn to Gyrfles, a man of fame. 9400

This Lucans so on gan taken there,  
 that bothe hors and knyhtes he gan to fere.

For so harde he took on thanne,  
 that his strok ne dorsten abyden non manne. 9404

gives irre-  
 sistible  
 strokes,

he rente the helmes of hedis adown,  
 here scheldes caste ouer here arsown,  
 and swiche maistryes werken þere he began,

and excites  
 general  
 admiration.

that of hym merveilled many a man. 9408

and so deden these kynges thre,  
 and of hym merveilleden jn many degre.

Longe lasted the torneyeng that Tyde  
 at Londone faste by temses syde. 9412  
 and ȝit knew non man the bettyr partye,

9378. MS. *he pāne*.

9406. *from crossed out before oi.*

- ho þe victorye scholde hauen, sykyrlye.  
 For so many goode men there were  
 here myht to preuen on bothe sides þere. 9416  
 whanne Gyrfles and his felawe vpe weren sette  
 and on horsbak þere, with-owten lette,  
 Whanne they Auentyd Weren Jn that plas,  
 azen they torneyeden with-jinne litel spas. 9420  
 thanne sire Gyrfles and sire lwcans jn Fere  
 Ful grete maystryes begonnen they there,  
 and of hem of Baynoic goten they lond,  
 and from here place remeved hem, j vndirstond. 9424  
 whanne that this they of Baynoyc Sye,  
 that here Feleschepe gonnen so forto flye,  
 they comen to rescwen hem with alle here myht,  
 that toforn not ne hadden comen jn fyht. 9428  
 thanne comen of Arthewris thre hundred knyhtes  
 azens hem of Baynoyc þere anon ryhtes.  
 and thus they entermellyd bothe jn fere,  
 tyl that merveillous werkyng maden they there ; 9432  
 for so sore to-gederis gonnen they ryde,  
 that here speris to-borsten jn that tyde.  
 and whanne here speres toborsten were,  
 anon eche man his swerd drowh owt þere. 9436  
 and þere began ful gret Tornement  
 of tho worthy knyhtes, verament.  
 For a man the sothe myhte knowe,  
 the worthynesse of knyhtes al be Rowe, 9440  
 and ek of zonge knyhtes that þere were,  
 that lerned to torneyen with scheld and spere.  
 but of alle othere jn that plas  
 Sire Gyrflez & Sire lwcans gonne hem pas. 9444
- Whanne hyt was comen to the owr of noon,  
 Syre kay with xvj felawes there cam anon,  
 that zit non strok j-smeten they hadde ;  
 thussone jnto the reng þere he hem ladde. 9448  
 So that þe ferste they gonne there mete,  
 down they hem boren a-myð the strete.  
 So sore they justed vppon that grownde,  
 that here speris to-borsten þat ylke stownde. 9452

Girles and  
 his adversary  
 are re-  
 mounted.  
 [leaf 124 a]

Girles and  
 Lucans

gain ground  
 on those of  
 Balnok.

(3) Fresh  
 joustes join

on both sides,

and there is  
 a powerful  
 encounter,

in which also  
 novices par-  
 take.

(4) At noon,  
 Kay enters  
 the lists with  
 16 comrades;

they fight  
 keenly with  
 spears

and whanne here speris to-broken were,  
 anon here swerdis they pulden owt there.  
 that so sore they fyhten begonne,  
 and fowhten, whiles they hadden ony sonne, 9456  
 that sire kay on his partye hadde the gre,  
 on þe tother side Gyrflez & lwcans, sykerle.  
 thanne wenten these knyhtes tho jn fere  
 Forto aventen hem owt of þe place there. 9460  
 thanne to that resorted þere anon ryht  
 of Baynoyc Lordis of ryht gret myht,  
 hos names j schal 3ow telle,  
 and 3e wylen herkene to my spelle. 9464  
 There was Vsmerawnt of þe Roche, ful prest in age,  
 and Gawnes de bloy, & Vryens of þe forest savage,  
 also Belyas Amorews of maydyn castel,  
 and Flawndres le Blans, and Graciens the Lel, 9468  
 and Blyes de la kasse, and Bliobens of desert  
 with melyadus þe bloys & madyeus of crispes, apert,  
 and placydas the gays with hem, trowelye ;  
 alle these to torneyeng comen jn compenye. 9472  
 whanne this fresch peple cam to tornement,  
 There they so torneyeden, verament,  
 So that non man dorste hem there abyde ;  
 So sore they torneyeden jn that tyde. 9476  
 and whanne Sire kay be-held al this,  
 that here lond his felawes hadden lost, j-wys,  
 and there aventyng as he was  
 & with hym his felawes jn that plas 9480  
 behelden hem of Baynoyc lond  
 putten his felawes to þe wers, j vndirstond,  
 Thussonne þere hasted hym thanne syre kay  
 And His Felyschepe With Hym, Jn Fay, 9484  
 and prekeden jnto the grettest pres  
 that he myhte fynden, with-owten les,  
 and with hym his feleschepe in compenye.  
 there gonnen they sore to torneyen, trowelye, 9488  
 So that but a lytel whyle hadden they ben there,  
 that they of Baynoyc Scomfyt they were.

9490. *Baynoyc*, c squeezed in afterwards.

and with  
swords.

Kay, Girfles,  
and Lucans  
excol.

They leave  
the ground  
for a while.

(5) Several  
knights of  
Bainoik

(Usmerant,  
Gawnes de  
Bloy, Uriens,  
Graciens,  
Bliobers,  
Placides,  
and others)

come to the  
tournament

and drive the  
other party  
back.

(6) Then Kay

(leaf 124 b)  
and his com-  
rades return,

and begin  
afresh.

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# HISTORY

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He tilts  
Ladmas and  
Graciens off  
their horses,

that bothe hors and man fyl jn the feld ; 9528  
and at þe same strok there also  
Sire Graciens trebens to erthe gan go.

and relieves  
his fellows.

So with that cowrs he brak his spere,  
and anon his swerd he drowh owt there, 9532  
and rescwed his felawes Echon.

thussonne his name discried was anon,  
how that alle his felâwes socowrede he,  
that Scomfyt they wenden forto han be. 9536  
thanne torneden they alle aʒen jn fere,  
and of al that day ne dyden not so wel þere.

The kings  
notice his  
chivalry.

These jostes beheld wel Artheur þe kyng,  
kyng Ban and kyng Boors, with-owten lesyng, 9540  
and behelden the chevalrye of syre kay,  
that he there dyde that ylke day,  
and seiden he was a worthy knyht,  
vayllaunt & vysable jn every fyht. 9544

Lucans goes  
off in another  
direction ;

and whanne Lwcans the Botelers Sawgh kay so do,  
hym forto helpe hym Nede not to go.

[leaf 124 c]

Thanne took He His Hors With His spores Anon,  
and jnto the grettest pres he gan to gon, 9548

he bears  
Blols to the  
ground.

and smot Syre Bloys so sore there,  
that al on peces to-barst his spere,  
and to the grownde him bar down ryht,  
and his swerd owt drowgh þere forto fyht. 9552

Girls, seeing  
Bllobers and  
his two com-  
rades

thanne began þere gret Torneyenge  
here felawes to socowr forto brynge.  
Thanne cam Sire Gyrfler, armed ful bryht,  
as faste prekinge as that he myht, 9556  
and Sawgh there Blyobers & his felawes tweye,  
that abowten Sire kay weren, trewelye.

pressing hard  
on Kay,

and with here swerdes on hym they leyden faste,  
that wondyr hit was he myhte hit laste, 9560

For grete nede of socour there hadde he,  
For he was but on aʒens hem thre,  
and thike thre þe best men were  
of Baynoykes meyne þat was there. 9564

thanne mette he there with placydes,  
 and his helm to-barst jn that pres.  
 Aftyr Rod he to Blyobers,  
 that thike tyme was bothe stordy & fers, 9568  
 and smot evene a-myddes þe scheld,  
 that he there fyl down jn the feld,  
 and drowh owt his swerd anon thanne,  
 and smot sire placydes so on þe panne, 9572  
 So that sore astoned pere he was,  
 and from his hors fyl down jn that plas.  
 Thanne what tyme Syre kay beheld al this,  
 vp ful sone he hym dressed, j-wys, 9576  
 and beheld sire Gyrflez, his socourer,  
 and thowhte that kyndenesse to qwyten owher.  
 So from that day evere aftyr-warde  
 they loveden to-gederis ful strong & harde ; 9580  
 Al the whyle they leveden here,  
 myht non man departin hit fer ne nere.

Whanne S[i]re Gyrfles Sire kay rescwed hadde,  
 and thens as he lay thanne forth hym ladde, 9584  
 thanne aspyde Sire kay on þat hyht zeroas,  
 that hym sore anoyede jn that plas.  
 anon his Swerd Sire kay owt drowghe,  
 and, schortly to seyne, there hym he slowghe. 9588  
 thanne be-gan there gret noyse & cry  
 on the tothyr partye there, certainly.  
 thanne comen they thedyr fast prekynghe,  
 and ek on sire kayes syde, with-owten lesinge. 9592  
 So that gret melle there began,  
 that hurt and anoyed was many a man,  
 er alle fyve felawes rescwed were,  
 owthyr er to-gederis they mo[w]n semblen there. 9596  
 but whanne to-gederis they weren alle fyve,  
 wel mochel deseysel they wrowhte ful blyve.  
 and 3if 3e wil knowen whiche fyve they be,  
 J schal 3ou here declaren, ful sekerle : 9600  
 Ferst Vlphyn, Bretel, and Syre kay pere,

9583. MS. *Sre.* 9586. MS. *jnthat.*

9596. MS. *mō, δ* on erasure.

breaks Placides' helm,

and brings both Bliobers

and Placides to the ground.

Kay rises,

full of gratitude.

He and Gyrfles become friends for life.

Kay strikes Yeroas.

There is an outcry,

and a fresh tumult,

in which the five knights

(Ulfin, Bretel, Kay,



Girles, and  
Lucans)

Sire Gyrflez, and Sire Iwcans þe botelere.  
and whom so evere þese fyve metten jn place,  
to therthe they wente, ther nas non oper grace, 9604

are a wonder  
to all the  
spectators.

For so wel these Fyve gonnen hem be-stere,  
Merveylleng to alle tho that there were.  
and how they myhte so longe endure,  
These thre kynges merveilleden, j 3ow Ensure. 9608

[leaf 124 d]

So that thus ther Was Ful strong melle  
on bothe partyes there thanne, Sykerle.  
and gret poyntes of armes þere was j-do,  
and tyl hyt was even, hyt lasted tho. 9612

In the even-  
ing, the kings  
stop the  
tournament,

thanne comen these thre kynges adown  
this Torneye to breken al and som.  
So that they comen jn-to the place  
there as this Torneyeng al day was, 9616

declaring  
both sides  
equal.

and helden bothe partyes parygal.  
Anon thanne comen they jn with-al,  
For they cowde not wel declare  
on whiche partye the gre schold fare. 9620

They attend  
even-song,  
and go to  
supper.

and there departed the Torneye anon,  
So that eche knyht to his jn hom gan gon.  
and the kynges wenten forth to Evensong,  
and aftyr to here Soper gonne they fong. 9624

Speaking of  
the tourna-  
ment,

and whanne the Soper was j-do,  
of this tornement thanne spoken they tho,  
and ho that best bar him thar,  
and whiche of armes pat wysest war. 9628

king Ban  
says that six-  
teen of his  
knights

thanne anon hem answerede there kyng Ban,  
& seide: "xvj knyhtes j have here than  
that jn this Torneyeng bettere han doon  
thanne alle the Remnaunt Everichon, 9632.

stand  
highest.

and on this partye heyhte there were,  
For stronge & harde they peyned hem here,  
and many merveillous armes dyden they,  
no thanne at this tyme j kan wryte oper sey." 9636

At last the  
prize is given

so vppon this long weren they jn talkyng,  
and þanne atte laste for the gre 3eveng.  
So that the los was 3oven, and the prys,

9608. *Ensure*, *E* corrected from *j*.

9616. *al*, *l* squeezed in afterwards.

9634. MS. *fol.*

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[leaf 125 a]

Other of Al crystyndon, J Vndyrstonde."

Ban inquires further,

"Now where Js he?" quod the kyng Ban tho,

"and what his name, telle thou me also." 9676

"Syre, hit is merlyne," quod Sire Bretel thanne,

"that we holden ryht a wys manne,

and jn my chambre he lyth to reste.

learns that Merlin is in Bretel's chamber,

he is a man of cownseyl of pe beste, 9680

For be his cownseyl we comen for 3ow,

wheche we hopen schal ben for 3oure prow."

Thanne spak kyng ban anon thanne

To kyng Arthewr there of this manne : 9684

and asks to see him.

"Now, good Syre, lete 3e vs now hym se,

For gret lust therto we han, parde,

For merveilles that we han herd of seye

of that man jn manye a weye." 9688

Arthur sends Ulfyn to fetch Merlin.

kyng Arthewr seide, with ryht good wylle

That anon he scholde comen hem vntylle.

Anon thanne sente he For Sire vlphyn,

and preyde hym gon to seken after merlyn. 9692

Merlin meets Ulfyn,

And as Sire Vlphyn gan forth to gon,

ryht there with merlyne he mette anon.

thanne seide Sire Vlphyn : "welcome 3e be ;

the kyng wolde gladliche speken with pe." 9696

"J come ryht anon," quod merlyne tho,

"For j ne rekke toforn whom pat j go."

is brought before the kings, and relates of his knowledge and his life.

Thus entrede merlyne jnto that pres,

and many thinges seide, that was non les, 9700

bothen of his konnenge and of his lyf,

there he hem tolde, with-owten stryf.

King Ban's clerk, Guinebant, questions Merlin.

thanne hadde kyng Ban a clerk there,

a wyser man ther nas nowhere, 9704

and aposyd merlyne of many a thyng ;

his name was Guinebant, with-owten lesyng.

And what evere of merlyne he gan to freyne,

Merlin answers,

merlyne hym answerede anon, certeine, 9708

For merlyne knew neuere non maner of man,

that hym so aposede as he dyde than.

and the kings listen.

And evere these kynges stodyn ful styllle,

- tyl bothe clerkes hadden seid here wylle, 9712  
 and tyl the dispetesoun was al j-do  
 er that<sup>r</sup>ony of hem wolde thennes go.  
 So that there aqweyntawnce they took,  
 and neuere there-aftyr hit forsook. 9716
- Thanne whanne al this was thus j-don,  
 merlyne to these two kynges gan to gon,  
 and seide: "3e ben lordis bothe goode & trewe ;  
 my Lord kyng Arthewr hath sweche to fewe. 9720  
 beholdeth now my lord and kyng, ful sikerle,  
 For he 3oure Sovereyn and lord moste be,  
 and of hym 3oure Rem to holden vnder gage,  
 and him to don bothe Fewte & homage,  
 and he schal 3oure Socowr and helpe be  
 azens alle 3oure enemyes, Sykyrle." 9724
- " Now, merlyne, telle vs, we preyen the,  
 in what maner he was chosen kyng to be,  
 and 3if that Antron wyste, verraylly,  
 kyng vter pendragones sone he were, trewely." 9728
- " 3e, Sires," quod merlyne, " with-owten lesyng,  
 that was pe cawse he is chosen kyng.  
 and of his Elecciown, with-owten dwere,  
 they konnen beren witnessse pat ben here,  
 bothe therchebisschope & vlphyn also ;  
 bothe konne they seyn how hyt gan go." 9732
- " merlyne," quod the kyng thanne,  
 " We holden the for a ful trewe manne ;  
 perfore we wolden preyen the for thi lordis sake  
 of on thyng vs sewr forto make ; 9740
- And For A trewe man We Knowen the, sekyrlye,  
 and for non erthely good thou wylt not lye."  
 " A," quod merlyne, " 3e wolden that j swore  
 that hit were trewe pat j tolde 3ow to-fore." 9744
- thanne gonnen these kynges to lawghen anon :  
 Swyche on knewe they neuere but hym alon.

The two wise  
men become  
great friends.

Afterwards  
Merlin asks  
the visiting  
kings

to become  
Arthur's  
vassals.

These inquire  
about Ar-  
thur's elec-  
tion, and if  
he is really  
king Uter's  
son.

Merlin says  
he is,

and refers  
to the arch-  
bishop and  
Ulin.

The kings  
want Merlin  
to make them  
sure of one  
[leaf 125 b]  
thing.

Merlin  
divines that  
they wish  
him to swear  
to his previ-  
ous state-  
ment.

9712. *hadden*, the first *d* through correction.

9713. *waf*, *f* added afterwards. 9718. MS. *ganto*.

9730. *fone* added above the line.

9731. *merlyne*, the final *e* blurred.

9741. *we* crossed out before *Man*.

Merlin is willing,

Thanne seide merlyne to hem ageyn :

“ what ze so me axen, j schal tellen zow, pleyn.” 9748

but puts it off till the next day.

So that respyt they tooken that nyht,

Tyl vppon the morwen hit was day lyht.

thus they departyd here cownseyl thanne,

All go to bed,

and to bedde they wenten Every manne. 9752

thanne jnto on chambre wente that meyne :

thre kynges, þe bisschope, Guinebant, & merlin in com-  
peyne ;

the kings, the archbishop, Guinebant, and Merlin, in the same chamber.

For departen wolden they jn non weye,  
and namly þis clerk Guinebant & merlyne, jn feye. 9756

For a gret clerk held hym this merlyne,  
as aftyr this storrye Reporteth wel and fyn.

Chap. X.

Thanne to bedde these kynges wenten ful sone,  
and alle these meyne Everichone, 9760

Next morning, when the bells ring for service,

and slepten on the morwe tyl hyt was day,

Tyl that to Servysse they rongen, jn fay ;

For abowtes halewen-tyd tho hit was,

whanne tyme they weren jn that plas. 9764

Merlin calls the kings.

thanne cam merlyne to hem anone,

& þere two wyndowes he openede thussona,

For he wolde som lyhte that there were

hem onestely to arayen with there. 9768

They dress, and go to the cathedral.

so that they hem dihte, & gonne to gon

to the chef mynstre thanne anon.

there therchebisschope the masse dyde Synge,

and at þat masse merlyne, with-owten lesynge, 9772

There Merlin swears on the Sacrament that Arthur is king Uter's son

Swor on the sacrament jn that place

that kyng Artheur kyng vterpendragones sone was,

and that on Ygverne begeten was he

the same nyht þe dewk was slayn, Sykerle— 9776

and rightful heir.

“ So that he is the moste ryhtful Eyr

That to this lond cowde repéyr.”

9747. *seide*, the first *e* blurred.

9758-59. Between these lines there is a blank corresponding to about eighteen lines. Similarly between ll. 10080-81, 10174-75 10258-59, &c.

9776. The *n*-mark in darker ink.

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“ King Ar-  
thur here has  
no wife.  
I know of  
a beautiful  
princess,

and that non wyf haueth now he ;

wherfore j knowe on, ful sykerle,

9816

that is bothe comen of kyng & qwene,

and a Fairere mayden han ze not sene,

and is dowghtyr to kyng Leodegan

of Tarmelyde, ryht a worthy man.

9820

and no mo children now hath he

but only this lady, ful Sykerle.

more ouer an old man js that kyng,

and gonnore hyhte that mayden so z yng ;

9824

therto Eyr schal sche ben aftyr his day.

but gret werre he hath, with-owten delay,

with on kyng Ryoun of Geauntes lynage,

a myhty man & a riche & of gret parage.

9828

and he conqwere kyng leodegan,

kyng Artheuris lond next him lyth than.

For zif that Tarmalide conqwerid be,

thanne schal neuere kyng Arthewr, sykerle,

9832

his lond jn pes thanne non whyles holde

For this kyng Ryown that is so bolde.

and zif pat the knyhtes of pe rownde table ne hadde be,

kyng leodogan his lond hadde lost, ful Sykerle.

9836

therfore this were now myn cownsaylle,

that thyder ze wente, with-owten faylle,

with kyng Artheur jn this manere

as thowh alle Sowdeours pat ze were,

9840

and there a zer oper two forto abyde,

his aqweyntaunce to geten the same tyde.

For non whylle scholen ze there not be,

that he wel schal zow loven, Sekerle,

9844

better thanne hem pat with him now ben,

and that ryht sone scholen ze now sen.

and j vndirtake for kyng artheur here

that to him he schal ben so leef & dere,

9848

that his dowhter he schal hym zyve to wyve

and Eyr of that lond aftyr his lyve.

For anon as weddyd thanne he js,

anon the jeauntes scholen han knoweng, j-wys ;

9852

9825. *schal* twice, the former crossed out in darker ink.

9837. *cownsaylle*, a corrected from *e*.

only daughter  
of the old  
king Leode-  
gan of Tar-  
melid (p. 217),

and called  
Gonnore.

Leodegan has  
a powerful  
enemy,  
king Rion of  
the Giants.

If Rion con-  
quers him,  
this land will  
come next,

and have no  
peace.

Hitherto the  
knights of  
the Round  
Table have  
saved Leo-  
degan.

Now you all  
ought to go  
to him,  
disguised as  
soldiers,  
and stay a  
year or two.

He will love  
you better  
than his own  
men.

King Arthur  
will marry his  
daughter,

and from that day forward, with-owten lye,  
the jeauntes doren not abyden, trewelye,  
not be a gret jorne there abowte ;

and the  
Giants will  
be kept in  
awe for all  
future."

This is ful trewe, with-owten dowte."

9856

Thanne Answerede Anon Kyng Ban,  
and to merlyne seyde he there than :

[leaf 125 d]  
King Ban  
replies :

"my leve frend, j schal tellen the :  
what aventure scholde thanne this be

9860

"My dear  
friend, how  
can we leave  
our own land,

Now to forsaken oure owne lond,

Lyke jn werre as hit doth stond ?

beset, as it is,  
by enemies ?

how scholde we thanne taken on pere,

with hem that on vs don so werre

9864

and oure londis distroyen & brenne ?

wers wylen they don, and we ben thenne.

For but 3if we jn owre lond abyde,

For they will  
do still more  
harm if we  
are absent--

hit wyle vs hyndren jn Every tyde,

9868

but 3if that kyng artheures barowns here  
oure londis to sosteyne, & we not there.

unless Ar-  
thur's barons  
sustain it,

and ful gret peryl now hit Js,

other men oure londes to defendyn, j-wys."

9872

which, how-  
ever, is a  
perilous  
thing."

"A, Sire," quod merlyne to the kyng tho,

"to me 3e speken, as 3ow lyst forto do.

but j 3ow Enswre, ful certeynlye,

Merlin as-  
sures them  
that they will  
gain two hun-  
dred times  
more than  
they will  
lose :

that and 3e there lesen on penyne,

9874

two hundred therefore scholen 3e gete,

and of this j dar 3ow wel behete.

For ther ne schal comen jnto 3owre contre

distroccioun nethir to town ne cyte,

9880

none of their  
towns will be  
destroyed,

while 3e ben jn kyng Artheures presens ;

J schal 3ow waranten ful Syker defens.

and there a ryal rewme scholen 3e wynne,

and therto al the Lordschepis þat ben with-jnne,

9884

but they will  
win a king-  
dom.

that this Lond defenden schal evere with-al

vndistroyed, and lasten for ay & fynal."

thanne answerede kyng Ban to merlyn anone,

and there to hym he seyde thus sone :

9888

The kings are  
convinced,

"We the knowen for man ful wys ;

J schal the Seyn now myn avys.

9862. *doth*, *d* corrected from *f*.

9886. *Eve* crossed out before *ay*.



Sethen hit is so as thou dost telle,  
Aftyr thy cownseyll don we wylle. 9892

ask when  
they are to  
start,

but telle vs now whanne we scholde wende,  
and we scholen þere-offen maken an ende.

and want to  
send for their  
men.

and þerto oure retenu scholen we calle,  
that they mown ben redy alle." 9896

"All be-  
times," says  
Merlin.  
"It will be at  
Mid Lent.  
But first we  
must have a  
battle with  
the barons.

"Al betymes," quod merlyne tho,  
"For hit schal be midlentine, er þat 3e go.  
and 3it er that 3e gon, with-owten faille,  
here moste we han a gret bataylle 9900

azens the barowns, that rysen ben  
kyng Arthur to werchen treye & teen.

Therefore call  
your troops,

therefore j wolde þat 3e anon ryhte  
to gete as moche meine as 3e myhte, 9904

station them  
secretly in a  
plain in the  
forest of  
Bredigam,

and that 3e don hem loggen ful prevylye  
jn a fayr lawnde here faste bye,  
that js jn the Forest of Bredygam,  
there as that meyne neuer ne cam. 9908

and the  
barons will  
have the  
worse."

and dubblefold harm scholen they haue  
thanne ony of 3owre, 3e mown ben save."

King Ban  
asks if it can  
be done in  
time.

Thanne there anon tho spak kyng Ban,  
and there to merlyne he seyde than : 9912

"3if þat for men jnto my lond j scholde sende,  
scholden they be tyme hidere to me wende?"

Merlin offers  
to bring the  
men

"3e, certein, Syre," quod merlyne tho,  
"For ryht wel hyt may be do. 9916

and on this message, Sire, wyl j wende  
alle this mater to bryngen to an ende.

in time for  
the battle;

For this message hastyd most hyt be  
azens the bataylle, sire, Sykerle, 9920

the whiche at candel-masse schal be-tyde  
the forest of Bredygam there be-syde.

therefore 3oure meyne moste hasted be

[leaf 126 a]

Hedyr Betymes to comen, Sekyrle. 9924

they will have  
to ride day  
and night;

For they mosten Ryden bothe day & nyht  
this jorne to spede, and they don ryht.

as for him-  
self, he will  
be in Little  
Britain the  
next morn-  
ing.

and wete 3e wel, the sothe forto preve,  
that j schal be there to morewen er Eve." 9928

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"Let him  
have the ring  
and be gone.

"Sethen hit is so as that 3e seyn,  
That 3e taken hym 3oure Ryng anon,  
and that he were forth past & gon. 9968

You shall  
hear more  
wonders  
when he re-  
turns."  
Merlin con-  
firms these  
words,

for 3e scholen heren merveillez mo,  
whanne that he cometh 3ow a3en vnto."  
"Now, be myn hed," quod merlyne thanne,  
"3e han seyð Ryht as a wys manne. 9972

and gets the  
ring.  
On his way,  
he visits  
Blasy,

For more of this scholen 3e han Encres,  
thanne oni of 3ow kan seyn, with-owten les."  
thanne delyverede him þe kyng his Ryng anon,  
and þer-with forth merlyne gan to gon, 9976  
and be Blasye, his maister, he took þe weye,  
and of alle thinges tolde him, Sekerlye :  
that jnto litel Breteignes he scholde go ;  
of the message eke he told him also ; 9980

who writes  
down all  
these things.

whiche that Blasye wrot in that throwe ;  
and elles how scholde we hit knowe ?

Thus merlyne from Blase departed anon,  
and forth on his message he gan to gon, 9984  
and dyde his message al in good tyme,

Early next  
morning,  
he arrives at  
Bainoik, and  
delivers the  
king's mes-  
sage.

For he was þere he wolde er the morwen at pryme,  
and tolde sire Leownces the kynges wylle,  
and the kynges Ryng took hym vntylle. 9988

[leaf 126 b]

there they beleved hym anon,  
and deden al that was forto don,  
And senten Anon bothe fer and Ny,  
and faire retenu to gaderen, trewly. 9992

Troops are  
gathered  
from forty  
milles around,

So that with-jnne fowrty myles abowte  
thedyr they gadered with gret rowte,  
so that they weren to-forn the cyte  
vij dayes to-forn cristemasse, Sykerle ; 9996

and keepers  
are set in the  
cities :

thanne good warde putten to þe townes alle  
that to the tweyne kynges be riht schold falle.

in Gawnes,  
a fair lady,

jn that on hold they putten a lady Bryht,  
that worthy lady was and of gret myht : 10000  
the cyte of gawnes kepte sche thanne  
and with hyre ful many a worthy manne.

9974. *oni* added above the line.

9982. MS. *wel hit* (a begun *l* after *we*).

- Ek Phareens there *Merlyne* preyde also  
that al his power he wolde do, 10004 assisted by  
Fariens  
(cf. Notes);
- and that he hym grawntyd, ful sekerly,  
jnto al his power, ful vtterly.
- on the toper syde, jnto Baynoyc cyte  
they putten a man of gret degre, 10008 in Balnoik,  
sir Raier;
- Sire Raier, the Lord of Hawt mure,  
a worthy knyht and vaillaunt, j 3ou ensure.
- and jn the castel of Trebes  
they putten Sire graciens, *with-owten* les, 10012 in Trebes,  
sir Graciens
- the whiche was godsonne to kyng Ban.  
and jn that castel with him hadde he than
- Two sostren of Raynes, the worthiest  
knyht pat pere was be est oper west. 10016 with two  
ladies;
- For it was the strengest castel  
of alle pat contre be many a del.
- and at mowntloyr, pe castel of kyng Boors,  
that was don kept with strengthe & fooris : 10020 and in Mont-  
loir, sir  
Placides.
- Sire placydes, that was a worthy knyht,  
That castel he kepte bothe day & Nyht.
- And whanne alle these ordenaunces weren jdo,  
*Merlyne* with his meyne forth gan to go, 10024 These ar-  
rangements  
made, Merlin,  
in a moon-  
light night,
- and that was be the tyme of Nyht,  
For theke tyme the mone schon ful bryht.
- and *Merlyne* condeyede hem the weye  
From alle enemyes, as he wel kowde, jn feye. 10028 conducts the  
army to the  
sea.
- and to the se he Browht hem ful sone ;  
there Faste to schepe gonne they gone.
- and kyng Arthewr, vppon the toper syde  
To bataille hym arayed the same tyde, 10032 Meanwhile  
Arthur makes  
secret pre-  
parations.
- also *prevyly* as he cowde thanne do.  
So that moche peple him cam vnto :
- bencheson of tho 3iftes grete  
that he hem 3af, they wolde not lete. 10036 His liberality  
and his fame  
attract great  
numbers.
- Also oper peple to hym comen that throwe,  
For that they wolden kyng Arthour knowe ;  
ek other peple hym kam forto se

For that they herden of his gret bownte. 10040

So that whanne to-gederis j-sembled they were,

Ten thousand  
horsemen,

x thousand on horsbak redy they were ;

For foot-men thedyr wolde he non haue,

for his meyne and vytaille þat he wolde save. 10044

and on þe toper syde there comen a-down

and wagon-  
loads of pro-  
visions,

charyettes with vytaylle alle jn virown

evene aftyr merlynes ordenaunce ;

So was hit don, with-owten variaunce. 10048

and ful prevyly alle j-logged they were

are quietly  
brought to  
Bredigam.

jn a lawnde besyde Bredigan there ;

For that was on the prevyest place

that jn that contre owher wace. 10052

and whanne this was al j-do,

All being  
assembled,

merveillously wrowht kyng arthur tho,

[leaf 126 c]

whiche that merlyne Hyt plesed ful Wel,

whanne he hit knew, his wyt, echedel. 10056

For anon as that they logged were,

alle the weyes be-sette he there,

Arthur sets  
guards in the  
roads

that non man therby Scholde passe

jnto his lond, nethir more ne lasse, 10060

but 3if he were taken and to-forn him browht,

Er that ony jnto his rewme forthere sowht.

For he kepte that non aspye

to intercept  
spies,

his rewme scholde entren, trewelye,

For to certefyen his enemyes

what was his ordenaunce oper his devys.

For there kyng Arthewr charged alle tho

and forbids  
his own sub-  
jects to pass  
that way,

that to hym belonged vnto, 10068

that non man thyke pas scholde ryde,

tyl hyt were aftyr kandelmasse tyde ;

and ho þat dide azens his comandement,

To deth he scholde gon, verament. 10072

So that styлле they helden hem Every man,

where-offen þe comune peple merveylleden than.

much to the  
wonder of the  
rustics.

So that thus prevyly this was wrowht,

& sauf þe kynges cownseille wist non man nowht. 10076

Now leveth this storrye of this mater,

10048. *with, h* squeezed in afterwards.

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Thanne thus departyd the parlement.

Anon every man abowtes faste sent, 10116

Now there  
arrive, with  
thousands of  
men, the duke  
of Cambeny,

So that to hem repeyrede there anon  
the dewk of cambenye & othyr manyon.

Fyve thousande men he browhte with hym,  
that jn bataylle weren bothe stowt & grym. 10120

the king of  
North Wales,

thanne cam there forth Tradelynaws,  
that kyng of Northgales tho he was,  
with vj thousand of Fyhteng men.

king Clarion,

and on þe tothyr partye come th[e] kyng clariouns then  
with thre thousand men also. 10125

the king of  
a hundred  
knights,

thanne þe kyng of .c. knyhtes cam tho,  
and with hym foure thousande he browhte.

the king of  
Orkney,

thanne the kyng of orkanye owt hem sowhte  
wit[h] vij thousand jn his compenye. 10128

king Carados  
of Strangor,

and aftyr hym carados of strangor faste gan hye,  
that vij thousand men of armes hadde

10132

king Newtris,

thanne cam kyng Newtris, & with hym ladde  
Sixe thousand men, that weren not badde.

and king  
Ydiers of  
Cornwall.

hym Folewede kyng Ydyers of Cornewaylle  
with vj thousand men, with-owten faylle. 10136

They ride  
slowly  
through the  
country,  
and send out  
spies.

So that smale jornes they gonne to ryde  
The contre to Serchen jn that Tyde.

thanne here aspyes abowtez faste they 3ood,  
to weten how hit with kyng Artheur stood. 10140

but they that þe march & the weyes kepte,

But these are  
captured by  
Arthur's  
guardsmen.

Fulsone to these aspyes they lepte,  
and token hem, and to kyng Arthewr sente,  
& anon to presoun they ful sone wente, 10144

So that Tydynges azen boren they non.

The kings  
arrive at  
Bredigam.

thanne jn here jorne forth gonne they gon,  
Tyl that they alle j-logged were  
vndir þe castel of Bredygam þere. 10148

For thanne they wenden alle han wonne, certein,  
but hit was alto-gederis jnveyn.

Their for-  
gers find the  
land empty,

thanne senten they here forreyerys jnto þat contre,  
but ful lytel fowndyn they, Sekirle; 10152

10124. MS. *th kyng.* 10129. MS. *wit*; cf. footnote to l. 10046.

10134. MS. *Suze.*

For al that good was lad before  
jnto castelis and jnto cites thore.

the goods  
having been  
brought into  
safe places.

this was wrowht be cownseyl of kyng Ban  
and Ek of kyng Boors, a ful wis man.

10156

Whanne that they aspyden al this,  
that the contre thus was warned, j-wis,  
anon they Fireden, an gonne to brenne,  
and al the contre distroied thanne.

They then  
begin to burn  
and destroy.

10160

So that owt of here owne Lond they hadden vetaylle,  
as hit scheweth here with-owten Faille ;  
So that of vytaylle they hadden plente,  
as For swich a tyme hit longed forto be.

But they  
must send  
home for pro-  
visions

10164

and whanne to-gederis was al this semble,  
Fowrty thousand weren acounted, certeinle,  
of clene pyked men to fyhte,

for the 40,000  
men.

Ek worthy werroures and of gret myhte.

10168

Thus endeth here now of here gaderyng,  
and speketh how merlyn browht to Arthewr þe kyng  
Socour and helpe owt of lytel Bretayngne,  
as here-after scholen 3e heren, jn certeigne,  
and what meyne þat merlin with him browhte  
owt of litel breteigne, where he hem sowhte.

In the mean-  
time Merlin,  
with his rein-  
forcements  
out of Little  
Britain  
(p. 267),

10172

Forthere tellyth this Storye here  
how jn litel Breteygne merlyne spedde there,  
what be Leownces of Paerne, j vndirstond,  
and Sire Fariens, and Antony of þat lond,  
that of Baynoyc tho steward was.

[leaf 127 a]

10176

alle to the port comen they in that plas,  
and jnto here Schepis they entred anon ;  
thanne jnto grete breteigne sone gonne they gon.

10180

embarks for  
Great Britain.

and it is good reson that 3e vndirstonde  
why that hit was clepyd Breteigne Londe.

10184

The origin  
of the name  
of Britain  
is this :

j do 3ow to wetene here Every man

that aftyr þe distroccioun of Troye, as j kan,

After the  
destruction  
of Troy,

10158. *warned*, *w* through correction. 10160. MS. *distrioed*.

10164. MS. *swowich*.—*longed*, *g* roughly corrected from *d*.

10174–75. On the blank between these lines (at the top of column 127 a) there is written in a later hand: *where it is callyd brytō*.



two kings  
fled from  
there

hit behapped that two kynges departyd thenne  
For drede of grezois, as this doth kenne, 10188  
lest they wolden hem han slayn ;  
this caused these kynges forto gon thayn.

with a large  
retinue.

These tweyne kynges with gret meyne  
thens departed ful hastyle, 10192

One of them  
was called  
Brute.

of wheche the ton Brewt he hyhte,  
that was bothe gentyl & worthy knyhte,

He built a  
city, and  
named it  
New Troy.

that jn his lyve he bylte with gret joye  
a fair cyte, that was clepid new troye ; 10196  
bencheson that owt of troye cam he,  
Troye was clepid that jlke cyte.

The country  
was called  
Britain.

Ek the contre thanne clepyd hit was  
after Brewt Breteigne in that plas. 10200

One of his  
successors,  
Logrius,

thanne long aftyr, whanne Brewt was ded,  
anon kam there a kyng jn his sted,  
that Logryvs was his ryht name,  
a worthy man and of gret fame, 10204

improved the  
city greatly,

that mochel amendyd this cyte,  
bothe Towres and walles, Sykerle.  
and whanne thus amended was pat town,  
thanne wolde he zeven hit a Sewrnown, 10208

and called it  
Logrea.

and after Logryvs Logres cald hit he,  
that jn gret breteigne stont, Sykerle.  
So that this name dured forth, in feye,  
long aftyr that Artheur gan deye. 10212

After Ar-  
thur's time,

thanne aftyr the deth of lawncelot,  
that kyng Bannes sone was, wel j wot,  
a great plague  
hyt happede that a gret mortalyte  
jn that lond was after, certeinle, 10216  
bothe of Barowns and comunes also,  
that thike tyme deyden so tho.

gave rise to  
the name of  
'Blue  
Britain,'

and for þe grete Los that they hadden thanne,  
Bloye breteygne hit was clepyd of Every manne. 10220  
and why bloye, j preye now the ?  
leve sires, for this cause, parde :

10195. *lyve* on erasure. 10200. *aft'*, *t'* added afterwards.

10201. MS. *thanne* with an *n*-mark superscribed.

10208. *thāne*, *-ne* through correction.

10218. This line was omitted and then written up the right margin.

10222. *cause* on erasure.

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they land in  
Great Britain,

Thanne anon as a-ryved they were,  
vppon the se banke he bad hem there. 10260

truss up their  
harness,

thanne merlyne comaunded every man  
here harneys al forto trossen than ;  
For that he wolde For non thing  
that they maden non taryeng. 10264

march  
straight  
towards  
the camp  
at Bredigam,

But they holden here ryht weye  
Thyder as merlyn wolde hem gye,  
Tyl that to kyng Arthewr they comen ful ryht,  
there that he lay with al his myht. 10268

and arrive  
there on the  
fifth day.

So that hym they folewedon alle,  
what so evere there-of myhte falle.

So that be the Fyfthe dayes ende  
To þe Forest of Bredygam gonne they wende, 10272

where as logged was Arthewr the kyng,  
that made gret joye of his comeng,  
and logged hem among his ost ful son,  
and amonges hem every day gan he to gon. 10276

After a  
week's rest,

thanne aftyr viij dayes j-rested they were,  
and merlyne here vetaylle departyd there  
amonges hem, Er that he furtherere wente.  
thanne seide he that he wolde veramente 10280

Merlin says  
he will visit  
the three  
kings (fetch  
them from  
London).

Gon visiten the thre kynges, where so they be,  
and how they ferde, to knowen & to se.

[leaf 127 c]

Thanne Seyde Syre Vlphyn to Hym Anon :  
"merlyn, be war how that 3e gon, 10284

Ulán warns  
him to be-  
ware of his  
enemies.

For they on the tothir syde don 3ow manace,  
3if they mown geten 3ow jn ony place,  
that certeinly 3e scholen be ded,  
and they mown 3ow geten jn ony sted." 10288

Merlin reas-  
sures him,

"3e," quod merlyne, "3it wyl j not werne  
that to these kynges j wyl ful 3erne.  
For of me geten they non power.

And ek also amonges hem com j not ther, 10292  
Tyl that j haue spoken with Arthewr the kyng ;  
j ne schal maken non taryeng.

10272. In the right margin, in a later hand : *bredygam forest*.

10274. MS. *maden*.

10283. *Vlphyn* added above the line ; over *y* there is a tag like the one over an *i*.

10288. *3ow*, *w* squeezed in afterwards.

and there-fore gouerne 3e wel this ost,  
 that non man Jsswe, nethyr lest ne most. 10296 and asks him  
 For kyng Artheures enemyes jlogged be to take good  
 here vndyr Bredygam, ful certeinle, care of the  
 and Fowrty thousand of hem ben told, army in the  
 wel horsed men, hardy and bold, meantime,  
 and but xxv thousand men we haue ; the enemies  
 there-fore we moste loken to kepen hem saue, being 40,000  
 and of hem that non j-lost there be, against  
 To this mater vs behoueth to se." 10304 25,000.

"Merlyne," quod Syre Vlphin thanne,  
 "hit is bette 3e sende som other manne."  
 "that schal j not," quod merlyne tho,  
 "For that arende my-self best kan do 10308 Ulfm still  
 and hem to bringen jn Savete, advises Mer-  
 that non of here enemyes hem schal se." lin to send  
 "thane goth 3e forth in goddis name, somebody  
 and he 3ow kepe from angyr & blame." else,  
 thanne from hem he wente ful sodeynlye, but Merlin  
 that they ne wyste whanne, trewelye, perseveres.

so that they hem blesseden everichon,  
 that so sodeinly he was from hem gon. 10312 Ulfm asks  
 Azen to the ost wenten they thanne, him to go  
 and there they charged every manne with God.  
 that owt of his tente they scholde not pase,  
 but prevyly to kepen hem jn that plase. Merlin  
 So that fowre dayes contened this, disappears  
 & pat of 3e iij kynges non word they herden, jwys, suddenly.

Nethir of merlyn neuere the mo. 10316  
 For streyht to londone gan he go 10324 The army is  
 and, as this storye reporteth here, ordered to  
 on the morwe er Evensong was he there, remain in  
 where that he fond the kynges al thre. their tents.  
 and they weren ful hevvy, Sykyrle, 10320

For so sodeinly amongis hem comen he was,  
 that they ne wysten owt of wheche plas. Merlin goes  
 and whanne they wisten that hyt was he, straight to  
 gret joye they maden, ful certeinle. London,  
 thanne axeden they hym how he hadde sped, 10328

and appears  
 suddenly to  
 the kings. 10332

10332

and seyde : "wel in Every sted !"

Merlin asks  
the kings  
to join their  
army.

and bad hem, faste that they scholde hye  
To here ost, that hem Bod, trewelye.

10336

Thanne seide kyng Ban To merlyn :

"bien owre Socours comen wel & fyn ?"

He tells them  
that the  
auxiliaries  
have arrived.

"that they ben, Syre, ful trewelye,  
and kyng Arthuris host ben logged faste bye  
jn the lawnde besydes Bredygam ;  
there ben they logged Every man.

10340

The enemies,  
although  
numerous,

but on the tothyr syde moche peple there js,  
Ten kynges corowned, with-owten mys,  
and jn here compenye a dewk also,  
and xl thousand men they hauen & mo."

10344

"For oure help now be god," quod Antron,

"For mochel mischef toward vs gynneth gon."

10348

Merlin  
assures,

"3e," quod merlyne to hym ryht thanne,  
"as that j am now kyng Arthewris manne,  
and be the oth that j haue hym j-do  
and ek to my maister Blasye also :

10352

shall be dis-  
comfited,  
[leaf 127 d]

be goddis helpe, and that j kan don,  
To Evel Ende schal j hem bringen Echon.  
For so moche to Done J schal Hem make,  
that they ne scholen wetez how on to take.

10356

but gret Bataylle schal there be,  
and gret occisiown, ful Sykerle.

without the  
kings losing  
more than  
eighty men.

but on oure side ne schal not dye

Not passing iiij score, vtterlye.

10360

and on here syde deyen ther schal

be thowsendis & hundredis of gret & smal.

The kings  
must start  
the same  
night,  
with pro-  
visions for  
four days.

therefore aparaylle 3ow ryht anon,

that aftyr Sowper we myhten hens gon,

10364

and for Every man foure dayes vytaylle,

For Ellis be the weye scholen 3e faille."

10334. *in Every st* on erasure ; dashes before *in* and after *Every* to fill the blank.

10339. *ful, f* through correction.

10347. *help* added above the line.

10352. *maist* added above the line.

10356. MS. *onto*.—*take, t* blurred.

10362. *thowsendis, w* through correction.

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Of alle of ȝoure ȝiftes jn eche degre.

In order to win the hearts of the people.

For mennis hertes geten ȝe neuere, trewely,

So wel as be grete ȝiftes, pleynty.

10408

For therto jnowgh now scholen ȝe haue,

As mochel as ȝe wilen axen other crave."

Arthur will have enough to give,

" weteth wel, Syre, and vndirstond

for there is a tresoure hidden close by.

that gret Tresowr js jn this lond ;

10412

but vnknowen to ȝow schal hit be,

Tyl that from bataylle ȝe comen, sikerle.

and perfore that ȝe marken wel this place,

whanne alle thy Bataylle j-don thou hase."

10416

They go to a well, and mark that spot.

thanne ladde he him forth to a welle,

where a tokene he made, as j ȝow telle,

So that they merveilleden, þe kynges Echon,

of swich thing as merlyne hadde þere don,

10420

and ek they merveilleden þere also

of swich thing as merlyne tolde hem tho.

Then they continue their [leaf 128 a] ride,

thanne jn here weye they gonne to Ryde,

For there nolden they non Lengere abyde.

10424

So Ryden they forth bothe day and nyht,

that of hem ne Restede neuere a wyht,

tyl that they comen to Bredygam,

and eventually arrive at Bredigam.

where as was logged many a man.

10428

King Arthur encamps near a clear well with abundant water.

So that kyng Arthewr was logged there

be a passyng fayr welle and clere ;

and So gret foyson the water owt ran

Evne thorwh the Lawnde to everich a man.

10432

The weather is cold.

therto the wedyr ful cold was there,

For hit was jn the mounthe of jeneuere,

viiij dayes to-forn the kandelmasse ;

that tyme schortly forsothe hit wasse.

10436

After two days,

and there Rested they hem two dayes be-dene,

here harneis to dresen and maken clene.

Merlin advises the kings to prepare a sudden attack,

thanne to hem kam merlyne anon,

& seide : " on ȝoure Enemyes now mown ȝe gon,

10440

and devyseth now perfore amonges ȝow here

ho þat toforn schal gon ȝowre Meyne to lere.

For jn swich a manere scholen ȝe gon,

that of hem alle schal weten neuer on,

10444

- Tyl that evene on hem that 3e falle  
jn þe dirk morweneng, er ony man calle.  
For 3if that aparceyved there 3e be,  
azens hem mown 3e not stonden, sikerle. 10448  
and doth thus, & haueth non drede,  
For azens 3ow scholen they han but lytel spede."
- Thanne eche man harneysede hym anon  
Jn armes to Bataylle forto gon. 10452  
and the vwarde hadde sire kay  
with kyng Arthewris baner, jn fay,  
and with hym knyhtes bothe stowt & feers :  
Sire girfle3 & sire lucawns the Botelers, 10456  
Marvg de la roche & Gwynaus the bloys  
with dryaunt of þe forest savage & belyas Amorroys,  
ek with hem forth paste Flawndrys the bres ;  
these viij forth pasten, with-owten ony les, 10460  
and with hem foure thousand jn compenye,  
the vomwarde to gouernen, ful Sykirlye.  
The secund warde hadde Sire Bretel,  
a worthy werrowr ful strong and lel ; 10464  
and thre thousand with him he ladde,  
alle goode men and neuere on badde.  
The thrydde warde there ladde tho  
Sire Vlphyn, that jn armes mochel cowde do ; 10468  
and in his compenye kyng Arthewr was there  
with many a brown vndir that Banere,  
and with hem fowre thousand jn compenye  
of worthy Bodyes, an j schold not lye, 10472  
that neuere here lord nolden failen there,  
tyl that to þe deth j-browht they were.  
thus eche warde thanne took his way,  
and forth they wenten, er hit were day, 10476  
and merlyn to-fore, the weye to lede,  
Rydyng vppon a stalworthy stede.

to be carried  
out early next  
morning.

Preparations  
are made.

Sir Kay,  
with king  
Arthur's  
banner,  
takes the  
vanguard,  
consisting  
of many  
knights

and 4000 men.

Sir Bretel  
takes the sec-  
ond division,

Sir Ulfyn,  
the third,

in which is  
also king  
Arthur.

They set out,

Merlin lead-  
ing the way.

After come  
the forces  
of Ban  
and Boors :

Aftyr this devisede kyng Ban his Meyne,

10447. *aparceyved*, the second *a* corrected from *e*.

10452. *Bataylle*, *t* blurred. 10457. *Marvg* through correction.

10464. *and*, *d* squeezed in afterwards.



- and ek his brothir king Boors, ful sekerle, 10480  
 So that to sire pharens taken they þe ferste warde  
 vndyr kyng Boors baner to ben here garde,  
 and with hym that tyme forth þere wente  
 Sire ladmas with riht good entente, 10484  
 and sire moret de laveye forth jn that pres,  
 Syre graciens the Bloys & pales Trebes  
 with Blyobers & sire melidyaus in compenye,  
 and with hem Sire madevs jn gret hye. 10488  
 So that thre thowsend with him wente  
 Of Ryht goode Bodyes, Veramente.  
 the secunde warde of kyng Ban  
 Sire Leownces of Paerne ladde than, 10492  
 and with him foure thousand ladde he  
 of goode bodyes jn his compeyne.  
 the thrydde wyngeladde kyng Boors,  
 that of non werre took he non fors, 10496  
 with fowre thousand j-armed owt ryht,  
 that evere weren redy forto fyht.  
 the Fourthe Bataylle ladde kyng ban,  
 Jn alle degrees a ful worthy man, 10500  
 and his baner he took forto bere  
 To sire lyawne, his steward, there,  
 and foure thousand jn his compenye  
 with hym bothe forto lyven & dye. 10504  
 and whanne that all redy they were,  
 an esy pas they pasten forth there.  
 and hit was tho past the mydnyht,  
 And þerto þe mone schon ful bryht. 10508  
 Ek therto þe wedyr was ful styllle,  
 Ful preve & esy at here owne wylle.  
 Now of this sesyth this storrye,  
 and to hem of yrlond hit doth now hye, 10512  
 and of the kynges that to hem marched be,  
 as here-aftyr scholen þe heren and se.  
 Now cometh hit here to Remembraunce,  
 that kyng Brangors, with-owten variance, 10516

10488. *Gret hye* on erasure.

Sir Fariens,  
with king  
Boors' ban-  
ner, com-  
mands the  
first division,

[leaf 128 b]

Sir Leownces,  
the second,

king Boors,  
the third,

and king Ban,  
the fourth,

Sir Liane,  
his steward,  
carrying his  
banner.

They ride  
quietly forth  
in the still  
moonlight  
night.

In the mean-  
time, some  
Irish kings,

Brangors,

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- Thus here Reporteth this Storye  
 how that kyng Arthewr his ost gau gye  
 and the kyng Ban his bataylles also  
 azens the xj kynges forto go. 10556
- But these xj kynges wysten non thyng  
 of kyng Artheures ordenaunce ne of his comeng ;  
 So that nyht to bedde wente Every man,  
 For of kyng Artheur rowhten they not than. 10560  
 but hit happede wel that nyht,  
 that þe xj kynges to-gederis j-plyht  
 with the kyng of an hundred knyhtes were,  
 For drede of non man hadden they there. 10564
- Jn the mene whyle that they Slepten so,  
 kyng loth jn a wondyr drem fyl tho :  
 hym thowhte that so gret a wynd þere was,  
 so merveillous and boystows, jn that plas, 10568  
 that houses and clochers hit threw adown,  
 and aftyr of thondyr he herde a gret sown,  
 that hym thowhte al the world, j-wys,  
 hit astoned & qwook for drede of this. 10572  
 and aftyr him thowte, 3yt say he more :  
 a gret passyng water that was thore,  
 that alle the howseng it bar a-down,  
 and dreynte the peple jn virown ; 10576  
 & hym-Self in peryl hym thowhte he was  
 There to ben persched jn that plas.
- Jn this maner dremede Sire loth, the kyng,  
 and sone after he fyl jn wakyng, 10580  
 and of his dreme he wondrede, j-wys ;  
 he gan hym blesse, & seide : “ what meneth this ? ”  
 and to his Meyne he wente anon,  
 and tolde hem of his avisoun. 10584
- thanne axeden they hym anon Ryht  
 jnto what party he Say that Syht.  
 and he seide, from the Forest syde,  
 that thens hyt kam, him thowhte þat tyde. 10588
- thanne seiden they, with-owten faylle  
 that with-jinne schort tyme to hauen bataylle.  
 thanne Eche man awok oþer anon,
- they march to attack,*
- unknown to the opposing kings,*
- who all sleep in the tent of the King of a Hundred Knights.*
- There king Loth dreams of a great wind,*
- with thunder,*
- earthquake,*
- and inundation,*
- endangering also his own life.*
- When he awakes, he wonders at his dream,*
- and tells his retinue of it.*
- They ask where he saw the sight.*
- He says it came from the forest.*
- Then they declare that it forebodes a battle;*

- So that to armes faste gonne they gon, 10592 [leaf 123 d]  
 and awoken alle here compenye, they arm,  
 Forto serchen the contre gonnen they hye. wake their  
 with this the bataylles togederes were, comrades,  
 the xj kynges and Artheur jn fere. 10596 and ride out  
 So that merlyne hastyd forth more meyne, to search the  
 That to-gederis they metten, ful Sykirle, country.  
 they that the contre Serchen scholde Thus parts  
 and Artheurs meyne, hos wol oper nolde, 10600 of the two  
 To-gederis they weren, er they jt wyste, armies  
 and merlyn to-fore rod for truste. collide.
- and whanne kyng lothis meyne say this, 10604 King Loth's  
 So moche peple þere armed, j-wys, men call out:  
 they axeden of him that rod tofore, "What peo-  
 what peple it js, was armed thore. ple is this?"
- Merlyne seide: "Arthewris meyne ; 10608 Merlin  
 this lond to chalange hider comen we replies:  
 azens hem that him don defende "Arthur's  
 his lond to entren, er than they wende." men; we come  
 to challenge  
 this land!"
- anon as they thanne this worde herde, 10612 Then Loth's  
 azen ful faste Bakward they ferde. men fly back,  
 and whanne to the ost they comen ageyn,  
 Anon thanne they gonnen cryen & seyn : and alarm  
 "Treson, Treson amonges vs now js, the camp.  
 and falsly we ben betrayed, j-wys. 10616  
 as armes now bothe bacheler & knyht,  
 For 3e hadden neuere more nede to fyht."  
 So that every man to his harneys Sowhte, 10620 All run for  
 but sone jn gret deseisse weren browhte. their arms,  
 3it of on thing hit happede hem wel :  
 that here hors weren sadelyd eche del. 10624 their horses  
 but so sore j-hasted neuere they were, standing  
 as as theke tyme they weren there. ready, with  
 and whanne that harneyssed they weren Echon, the saddles  
 a wondir aventure Fyl hem vppon : on.  
 merlyne swich a wynd amonges hem sente, Now Merlin  
 sends them  
 a wind,

10592. *faste*, *t* almost obliterated.10615. The first *r* almost obliterated.10620. *gret*, *g* corrected from *d*.

which blows  
down their  
tents,

that hit down blew bothe pavylow<sup>n</sup> and tente, 10628  
and vppon here hedis hit Fyl a-down,  
So that they weren encombryd Echon.  
and p<sup>er</sup>to the storm so strong there was,

and prevents  
them from  
seeing one  
another,

that non man othir sawh jn that plas. 10632  
and this distorblede hem wondyr sere,  
Er that alle Fullich redy pey were,

whilst  
Arthur's  
men slay  
and destroy.

which that Tornede hem to gret damage 10636  
be Artheuris men, that dedyn owtrage,  
that Slowen and maden distrocciown  
of mochel of the meyne jn virown.

The hostile  
kings flee into  
the field,

But the xj kynges that departed were, 10640  
and jnto the pleyn feld weren fled for fere,

and set a bush  
on fire  
to collect  
their men.

they setten a busch on lyht Fere thenne,  
therby to hem to gaderen thanne.

Those who  
can escape  
the violence  
of Arthur's  
men,

and so they deden, as they myhten gon, 10644  
For of hem pyte Artheurs meyne hadde non,

So that Er they knewen the day lyht,  
thre part of here meyne weren slayn jn fyht.

flee to their  
banners,  
where horns  
are being  
sounded.

whanne they of the ost behelden al this, 10648  
that azens hem was so mochel peple, j-wys,

Eche man fledde to his Banere,  
where as pe horn herde he sownen there.

For these kynges to-gederis j-gadered were 10652  
Fast by thentre of the forest there.

Thus 20,000  
men re-  
assemble;

So that lytel and lytel they gonne Releve,  
Tyl xx thousand they myhte preve.

10,000 flee,

and x thousand torned forto fle 10656  
on dyvers partyes, ful Sykerle,

with weping, cryeng, and with gret mone,  
For the harm that they hadden Echone.

and 10,000  
are lying on  
the ground,  
[leaf 129 a]

and x thousand atte grownde lay down ryht, 10660  
What Slayn and maymed every A Wyht,

unable to  
help or hurt.

that non other there Socouren ne may,  
Ne non man deseisen be Nyht and day.

Whanne Arthur beheld, al this herbergerye

10634. *pey* added above the line.

10641. *ffer'*, *r'* squeezed in afterwards.

10644. *Artheurs*, *A* through correction.

10650. *horn* added above the line. 10652. MS. *fastby*.

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That þe scheltrom onnethis brekyn th[e]y myhte ;  
So Sore the xj kynges gonnen to fyhte.

but cannot  
endure long.

but longe myhten they hit not endure,  
the stowr so strong was, j 3ow ensure. 10704

Ulfin rides  
into the  
press.

Thanne cam Vlphyn jn ryht gret haste,  
and thorwgh that meyne fulsone he paste.

And whanne with-jinne hem that he was,  
Fulsore he fawht there in that plas. 10708

The din of  
the battle  
is heard a  
mile off.

and so they cryde and so they ferde,  
that an hol myle the Noyse was herde.  
So that wondir strokes weren there set  
on scheldis and helmes, whanne they met, 10712

Ulfin is  
unhorsed,

and manye hors to grownde wente jn that plas.  
So that mochel harm was there do ;  
and Vlphyn onhorsyd on grownde was tho. 10716

but defends  
himself with  
his spear.

Thanne Say Bretel his Brothyr on grownde,  
and ful faste he prekede thedyr that stownde.  
but thowgh that Vlphyn on grownde were,  
3it he defendid him with his spere, 10720  
that no man dorste hym there comen ny ;  
So sore he fawht and so manly.

Bretel comes  
to his relief,

whanne Sire Bretel sawh that hit was so,  
his hors with the spores thanne took he tho, 10724

throwing  
Ulfin's an-  
tagonist off  
the horse.

and him so sore he smot that Tyde,  
hym that on Vlphyn there dide abyde,  
that bothe hors and man there wente to grownde ;  
So sore he hym smot that ylke stownde. 10728

King Clari-  
oun rides  
against  
Bretel ;

whanne kyng clariouns beheld that chevalrye,  
Ful angry he was and þerto ryht sorye,  
and azens Sire bretel he gan to ryde

[leaf 129 b]

His felawe to socowren that ylke tyde. 10732

Bretel meets  
him ;

Whanne sire Bretel Say hym come ryding so,  
azens hym faste he gan to go,

their shields  
are pierced,

and they to-gederis sone metten jn fere,  
that bothe here scheldis thorwgh-persched were ; 10736  
So grete strokis & harde smyten they tho,

For worthy knyhtes weren they bothe two.  
 So sore they fowhten, that hit was wondir,  
 Tyl bothe here speris borsten on sondyr, 10740 their spears  
 and bothe here scheldes flowen jnto þe feld ; burst,  
 Swich strokes there eche to oþer gan zeld.  
 and 3it Sorrer to-gederis they mette,  
 for ech swich strokis on oþer sette, 10744 they give  
 here eyen hem thowhte out of here hedes wente ; each other  
 So sore they fowten there, veramenta. heavy strokes  
 and therto so sore they astoned they ben, with their  
 and ek here hors, as they that hyt Syen, 10748 the blood  
 that they romnen al there on blood ; streams from  
 So depe jn here syde the spores wood. their horses'  
 and therto with fowndryng here hors also sides  
 on here knes non skyn beleften tho, 10752 and knees,  
 So that hyt ran owt blood ful cler,  
 as they in the weye reden ther.  
 and so longe atte the grownd they lye  
 and so fowle astoned there, trowelye, 10756 and eventu-  
 that they ne knewen nethyr day ne nyht ; ally they lie  
 So stronge to-gederis they weren jn fyht. in a swoon  
 So ferforth they wenden that hem beheld, on the  
 that bothe hadden ben ded pere jn þe feld. 10760 ground.  
 So that on bothe partyes they comen ful blyve Both parties  
 To reskwen tho knyhtes and saven here lyve. come to  
 For they wenden, ded that they hadde ben, rescue :  
 on bothe partyes, as they hem Syen. 10764  
 but whanne Sire kay this beheld, Sir Kay  
 that Sire Bretel lay jn the feld,  
 Thedyr he gan hym ful faste hye  
 Sire Bretel to Socowren, Trowelye. 10768  
 Thanne thre kynges azens hym comen ryde is encoun-  
 with gret anger, haterede, & with gret pryde ; tered by  
 with these azens kyng Arthewr they were three kings ;  
 what that they cowden with scheld oþer spere. 10772  
 and þe toper xj kynges, verament,  
 Ful harde they fowhten and with good entent,  
 amongis whom Sire Gyrflez beten he was Sir Gyrflez

10747. *ben* crossed out before *astoned*.10755. *lore* (?) crossed out before *longe*.



and Lucans  
are unhorsed;

and Lwcauns the Botelers jn that plas. 10776  
 Thanne kyng Brangors & kyng Ydyers  
 as two kynges bothe stowt and Feers,  
 ek kyng Augwyseax and kyng Vryens  
 eche with oper rod forth ju presens. 10780

there is a  
general  
tumult.

So that there began ful strong melle  
 bothe partyes to reskwen, Sekerle.  
 for Ful merveillous weren the strokes and stronge  
 that thike partyes weren there amonge. 10784

Kay puts  
Girfles on  
King New-  
tris' horse,

So that with fyn fors and strengthe there,  
 among alle the ENemyes that pere were,  
 there reskwed sire kay with strengthe & myht  
 Sire girfles, and horsyd hym anon ryht 10788  
 vppon kyng Newtres, with-owten lye.

and throws  
down king  
Loth with a  
truncheon.

and perto kyng loth, ful certeynlye,  
 with a tronchon of a spere was so bete,  
 that sothely he wende his lyf to lete. 10792

The King of  
a Hundred  
Knights,

And jn this mene while there kam anon  
 the kyng of an c knyhtes ful son  
 and with hym xl knyhtes of prys,  
 as he wolde chesen at his devys, 10796  
 the beste that weren jn his compenye  
 amongis alle oper that he cowde dyscrye.

seeing Kay's  
achievement,

and whanne pat he sawhe sire kay pere present,  
 that kyng loth So hadde beten, verament, 10800

[leaf 129 c]

rides against  
him,

Wherfore ful sory He Was that tyde,  
 and faste thedyrward he gan to ryde,  
 and toward Syre kay he rood ful faste,  
 whyles that the breth of his hors myhte laste, 10804  
 and there so sore to hym he rod,

bears him to  
the ground,

and non lengere there he ne abod,  
 and smot Syre kay so jn the Scheld,  
 that down he fyl there jn the Feld, 10808

and leads his  
horse to king  
Loth.

and took his hors with-owten more,  
 and to kyng Loth he ladde hit thore,

10783. *for* added afterwards in the left margin.

10785. *strengthe*, *r* corrected from *e*.

10787. MS. *the*, corrected from *he*, *t* being added in front (in the margin), the *er*-mark at the end.

10794. MS. *ful fon*. 10799. *sawh*, *w* corrected from *y*.

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Thanne thowhten the viij kynges tho,  
that ful wel they wenden hauen j-do,  
but lyhtly they losten al jn fere.

King Arthur  
coming to the  
assistance  
of his men,

For kyng Arthewr fulsone aspyde there, 10852

and kam jn comforteng of his meyne,  
ek thorwh that meyne paste he, sykerle,  
and so the hors with his spores he smot, ✓  
that owt hit sprang the Fyr so hot. 10856

and finding  
Ulfn and  
Bretel un-  
horsed,

And sire Vlphyn fond he growndyd there  
with his swerd on hande hym forto were  
and Sire Bretel at gret mischef also,  
that vnnethis to horsbak myhte he go. 10860

rides against  
the king of  
North Wales,

wherfore ful sory that tyme he was,  
and forth he prekede jnto that plas :  
with a spere bothe myhty & strong  
jnto the pres there gan he fong, 10864

and there mette wyth Tradelamaund,  
kyng of north wales, as j vndirstond.

anon so sore he there with him mette,

[leaf 129 a]

And swych a Strok He on Hym sette, 10868  
and smot hym evne amyddes the scheld,  
that over he fyl there jn the feld.

tells him,

therto his left Scholdre he smot a-down,  
that he fyl there ouer the hors arsown. 10872

takes his  
horse,

kyng Arthewr the hors took jn that plas  
be the Brydel, that ful wel gylt was,

and leads it to  
Sir Ulfn.

and lad hit to Sire Vlphyn anon,  
and bad that he scholde faste vp gon 10876

on hors-bak to ben avenged there

vppon his enemy, that dyde hym dere—

“and thenketh vppon the grete velonye  
that ze han Suffred, and gret anoye.” 10880

Ulfn thanks  
him.

thanne horsede hym Sire vlphyn hastely,  
and Seyde : “sire kyng, now gromessy !”

He rides  
forth with  
king Arthur.

anon he prekede jnto that pres,  
kyng Arthewr & he, with-owten les. 10884

thanne there began so strong melle,

that pyte and rowthe hit was to se.

- For there broken they the buschschement  
~~that~~ vppon his meyne there was present, 10888  
 So that they vppon the tothyr partye  
 Ful mochel harm cawhten, Sekerlye. They do the  
 enemy much  
 harm.  
 and 3it half meyne more they hadde,  
 thanne kyng Arthewr thedyr with hym ladde. 10892  
 So that gret occision pere thanne was  
 of many bodyes jn that plas.  
 So that kyng Arthewr merveillez wrowht pere,  
 that eche man dradde hym Every where ; 10896 King Arthur  
 fights  
 wonderfully.  
 So that no man dorsten abyden his hond,  
 So spetowsly he took on with his brond ;  
 For that tyme dorst hym non man abyde,  
 So sore he fawht that ylke tyde. 10900
- Whanne the kyng of an hundred knyhtes  
 Sawh Tredelemaunt anon ryhtes,  
 that at pe Erthe stille he lay,  
 Ful Sory he was that ylke day 10904 The King of  
 a Hundred  
 Knights,  
 seeing his  
 special friend  
 on the  
 ground,  
 (For he lovede hym ful specyaly),  
 and faste ageyn Arthur he gan hym hy,  
 and his hors with the spores he smot rides against  
 king Arthur  
 azens kyng Arthewr evene foot hot, 10908  
 and hym ful spetowsly smot jn that plas,  
 so pat kyng Arthewr sore astoned was. and strikes  
 him.  
 and whanne kyng Arthewr that strok felte,  
 anon his lyvere abowtes he delte, 10912  
 but 3it sorye he was, ful trewelye,  
 for sire kay, that was jn his compenye.  
 kyng Arthur left vpe his swerd anon,  
 and to pe kyng of an hundred knyhtes gan he gon 10916 King Arthur  
 tries to strike  
 his enemy in  
 return ;  
 and thorwh the left Scholdere han hym bore.  
 that beheld anon the toper kyng thore ;  
 and whanne he sawh the strok comenge,  
 awayward faste gan he flynge, 10920 but the latter  
 puts up his  
 shield ;  
 and his scheld vppon his hed he caste.  
 but kyng Arthewr to hym pere thraste,

10917-18. *left Scholdre* corrected from *helm Scholde* ; the original *bore* altered into *bere* ; the stressed vowel of the rhyming word (in 10918) might be read either *e* or *o*.

10921. *scheld*, *d* squeezed in afterwards.

- the stroke  
cleaves the  
shield,  
10924
- descends on  
the horse's  
head,  
and makes  
horse and  
rider tumble.  
Sir Kay takes  
10928
- the horse to  
Antron,  
10932
- Antron rides  
against Mar-  
gamur, the  
steward;  
sends jeer-  
ingly his  
compliments  
to the king,  
[leaf 130 a]  
and fells Mar-  
gamur.  
10936
- The horse he  
takes to Sir  
Bretel.  
10940
- Bretel gets  
up,  
10944
- sees Sir  
Lucans on  
the ground,  
defending  
himself  
10948
- against four-  
teen,  
10952
- and rides to  
his relief.  
10956
- 10960

and so sore smot hym vppon the scheld,  
that hit flew half jnto the feld.

So that his strok discendid there  
on his hors hed, with-owten dwere ;

So that bothe to grownde they wente.

and pat beheld syre kay, veraymente,  
and say that hors astray there gon,

and to his fadyr Antron he ladde it anon.

So that jn the sadel ful sone he was,  
and pereof was joyful jn that plas.

thane azens margamur, the kynges stewarde,

Sire Antron with his hors rod ful harde,

and badde hym greten wel his lord & kyng,

that of an hundred knyhtes hadde governyng—

“ And for his Love j schal the mete,

For For nothyng J ne Wele Hyt Lete.”

that thorwh the ryht Scholdere he smot him thanne,

and to erthe he Bar hym, hors & manne ;

So thanne on hym there barst he his Lawnce.

and with that hors sone gan he Bretel avance,

and to hym hit ladde thorgwh the pres

(For tyl he hym fond, he wolde not Ses),

of whiche hors Sire Bretel hadde gret nede

owther ellis of sum othyr, so god me spede.

thane was fulsone Sire Bretel on lofte,

and abowtes him he lokede ful ofte,

and Syre lwcawnes ryht sone he say

down vppon therthe there he lay,

and vp keuerynge was, and defendid hym faste,

whiles ony strengthe jn hym myhte laste ;

that gret Joye hit was hym forto se,

For abowtes hym xiiij there weren, sikerle,

and he nas but hym-self al alone ;

but for al the power that they cowden done,

owt of that place hym remeven ne myhte ;

and [this] beheld Sire Bretel anon ryhte,

and to hym there prekede jn that pres.

So whiche pat ferst he mette, with-owten les,

10926. *on*, *o* corrected from *h*.

10958. MS. *and beheld*.

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that his felawes he rescwede anon ryht.

King Arthur  
encounters  
one of the  
hostile kings.

And al this mene whyle Artheur the kyng  
vppon the tothyr side ful sore was bekeryng, 11000

and anothis kyng pere hym ageyn,

So pat gret noyse gan rysen, jn certeyn,

On both sides  
the people  
run to their  
assistance.

on partye to reskwen pere kyng Artheur,  
anothis partye hym to werkyn Langowr. 11004

So that anon bataylle began there ful strong

betwixen bothen partyes hem among,

but evere bothe kynges on horsbak were.

but kyng Arthewr they myhten don no dere, 11008

[leaf 130 b]

For Kyng Arthewr and His meyne tho

to the partye thanne wrowhten ful wo ;

and streyht to rescwen he forth wente

Arthur rides  
to rescue  
Sir Gyrles  
and Sir Kay,

Sire Gyrles and Sire kay, veramente, 11012

that with kyng Newtres & with Brangores,

with kyng Vryens & with kyng Ydiers

and ek the Fyfthe kyng abygawnt also—

these fyve these knyhtes hadden don moch wo ; 11016

hem hadden they so beten and vnhorsed bothe,

that aschamed they weren & of here lyves lothe.

and these two knyhtes non oper Socour hadden there

who have  
been beaten  
and un-  
horsed,  
Sir Lucans  
being their  
only helper ;

but goode Syre Lwcawns the Botelere. 11020

and there this sire Lwcawns so hym per bar,

that there-offen wondrede kyng Arthewr thar,

and beheld the grete nede that they weren jne.

thanne for non thyng ne wolde he blynne, 11024

but jnto that pres prekede as a wood lyown, ✓

Arthur works  
destruction.

and on bothe sides dyde he mochel distrocciown,

that non man there dorste his strok abyde ;

So sore fawht kyng Arthewr jn that tyde. 11028

and on bothe his sydes he slowh down ryht,

so hydous & angry was he in fyht.

and ek Sire kay and Sire Gyrles

with Arthewr sore fowhten they in that pres. 11032

Antron, Ulfyn,  
and Bretel  
fight

on the toper syde syre Antron, Vlphyn, & sire Bretel

azens dukes & kynges fowhten wondyrly wel,

10998. MS. *rescuedē*.

11014. *kyng Vryens*, MS. *kyng Newtris*.

11029. *on* added above the line.

wyche weren dewk Escam and kyng Tradelyvand,  
and azens chyvret, kyng of Northumberland,  
and ek azens kyng karados also,

11036

against duke  
Escam  
and several  
kings.

that a worthy werrour was holden tho,  
and alle these azens kyng Artheur gonnen ryde,  
and there sore fowhten they in that tyde.

11040

These all  
turn on king  
Arthur.

For eche azens oper so sore justed there,  
that they to-borsten bothe Scheld & speze,  
For ne hadde socour to kyng artheur some þere be,  
the wers hadde he hal, ful certeynle.

11044

Arthur is on  
the point of  
succumbing.

For tho kynges and knyghtes on þe toper side,  
Ful worthy men they weren that tyde ;  
ek dowble they hadden azens kyng Artheur,  
that vnnethe they myhten abyden that stowr.

11048

Thanne happede, kyng Ban and kyng Bors  
that owt of þe forest comen with gret fors  
jn releveng of kyng Arthewr there ;

Then (the  
first division  
of) Ban and  
Bors' army  
comes out of  
the forest

but þe tothyr partye of hem not war were.

11052

Anon they gonnen hem askryen so Lowde,  
that hit dynede jnto the clowde.

with a  
mighty war-  
cry.

Ful fresch they comen owt of that forest  
as worthy kynges, to fyhten ful prest.

11056

Thanne behelden al this these oper barowns,  
and wisten wel that non distrocciowns

The enemies,  
realizing the  
danger,

myhte comen but thorwghe theke partye ;

11060

withdraw to  
a meadow,

wherfore to cownseille they gonne hem hye,

and to-gederis assemblede jn a medewe þere,

al these Lordynges to-gederis Jn fere,

and have a  
consultation.

and token cownseyl what they myhten do.

thanne seide kyng Loth to hem ryht tho :

11064

King Loth  
says

“J wot wel that ech of vs here fyhten muste,

but to on thyng ze mown wel troste :

that j my-self azens fowre oper thre,

be my josteng ouercomen scholen be.

11068

that he, for  
his part,  
will avenge  
himself on  
three or four.

Forto avengen myn noysaunce

on hem j thenke to don veniaunce.

for mochel peple han we lost here,

11043. *artheur* added above the line.—MS. *þe han be*.



whiche that they scholen beyen ful dere." 11072

The King of  
a Hundred  
Knights  
praises him,

And whanne the kyng of an .c. knyhtes  
herde kyng Loth thus Speken owtryhte  
gret preyseng to hym 3af he thanne,  
as belonged to swich a worthy manne, / 11076

[leaf 130 c]  
and swears to  
do the same.

And Swor By His creawnce Anon Ryht  
that the same wolde he don jn Fyht;  
And kyng karadas & kyng Newtres also  
the same oth sworn they bothe twy. 11080

So do several  
others.

And the dewk Escam of kambenye  
the same oth there swor, Sekerlye,  
and Ek kyng clarioun of Northumberland  
the same oth swor, as j vnderstand. 11084

King Loth  
then says  
that six of  
them should  
go against the  
ambuscade,

"Now schal j seyen 3ow," uod Kyng Loth thanne,  
"what we scholen don nowq Every manne.  
sixe of owre feleschepe we scholen ordeygne  
azens 3one busschement, jn certeyne ; 11088

and the other  
five remain,

and here scholen beleven othyr fyve  
azens this meyne to fyhten ful blyve.  
for xi kynges here we now be  
to fyhten azens al this meyne. 11092

the former  
with over  
10,000 men,

So that azens this busschement welen we go  
with .x. thousand fyhtyng men and mo,  
and viij thousand scholen we leven here  
kyng Arthur to anoyen jn alle manere. 11096

the latter  
with 6000  
men ;

and toward þe forest welen we go ;  
tyl azens the Nyht lete vs don so.  
and oure purpos thanne bettere scholen we have  
and therto owre meyne moche bettere Save. 11100

that will be  
the better  
plan.

For 3if that we abyden here styll,  
they ben ful lyk to werkyn vs ylle."

All approve.

To this cownseyl of kyng loth þere anon  
thussone concentyd they Everychon. 11104  
thanne assembled to-gederis they were,  
and here hol meyne departed there.

Thus King  
Loth, with  
part of the  
forces,

So that kyng Loth took with hym  
the kyng of an hundred knyhtes so grym,  
augwysseaus, & dewk Escam of kambenye, 11108

11087. of twice, the former crossed out.—ordeygne, the last  
letters through correction.

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And whanne that to-gederis there they mette,

He fights  
well,

many sore strokes to-gederis they sette,

11148

So that the noyse myhte wel han ben herd

a long half myle ; so sore they Ferd.

Ful gret occisioun thanne there was

bothe of men and hors jn that plas.

11152

but is eventu-  
ally repulse.

but certeyn kyng Ydiers meyne

that storm miht not suffren jn non degre,

but fledden away for discomfyture

Another king  
helps him.

To kyng gwyseawns, j 3ow ensure,

11156

whiche sone hem comforted sothfastly.

and a strong bataylle began pere, trewely,

They press  
hard on Sir  
Fariens ;

So that Sire Faryens and his meyne

at gret mischef weren, ful Sykyrle.

11160

but Leonces  
(with the  
second divi-  
sion) comes  
to rescus,

and whanne leownces of Paerne be-held al this,

Ful sone to reskews he rod, j-wys,

and so sore rod vpon that meyne,

that jn that place ne lefte he, Sykerle,

11164

Non that dorste hym there abyde ;

So socowred he Pharyens jn that tyde.

and throws  
them back on  
the duke of  
Cambeny.

and thus drof he forth that compenye

Jnto the dewkis ost of kambenye.

11168

The duke  
pushes for-  
ward,

Whanne the dewk hem Sawh comen so,

thanne jn his herte he was ful wo,

and azens hem faste he gan to ryde

that hem so chasede jn that Tyde.

11172

makes the  
fugitives  
return,

and thanne they that flower to-fore,

azen with the dewk returned thore,

and there began ful strong Bataylle,

whan that Eche partye gan other assaylle.

11176

Now king  
Boors ap-  
pears (with  
the third  
division),

thanne thus sone entrede kyng Bors there

with his hol meyne al jn fere,

and there so sore they meten jn same,

that betwene tho partyes was non game.

11180

and king  
Ydiers ex-  
claims :

and whanne kyng ydyers kyng Bors beheld,

that So kam prekyng jn the feld,

thanne to his feleschepe there seide he anon :

11160. *at*, *t* on erasure.11172. *hem*, *e* corrected from *y*.

- "god vs defende now everychon  
 this day from the peryl of ded  
 of hym that cometh here jn this sted !  
 For hym j knowe be his armure,  
 that he is knyht bothe good and sure.  
 For neuere his place he wyle forsake  
 For non dismembrure ne for non wrake.  
 and perto he is so worthy a knyht,  
 jn al this world non bettere jn fyht.  
 for thowh al the world were hym ageyn,  
 but his owne brothyr hit were, jn certeyn,  
 of prowesse Js there non man  
 that jn bataylle dar abyden hym than."
- Anon the kyng of an hundred knyhtes thanne  
 askede of kyng ydiers what was that manne.  
 thanne answerede kyng loth to hym ageyn,  
 & seide hit was kyng Bors of Gawnes, jn certein.
- "but, certein, j ne wot how he here kam ;  
 and behold, with hym he ledeth many a man !"  
 "what," quod the kyng of an hundred knyhtes tho,  
 "how jnto this contre scholde he comen so ?"
- "j not, so me god helpe !" quod kyng loth thanne,  
 "but this day behoveth now every manne  
 to preven hym-self a worthy knyht  
 azens this kyng Bors here in fyht."
- Anon Answerede Kyng Karados thanne :  
 "j not, this day ho pat kan preven hym a manne,  
 nethyr this day what we scholen do ;  
 but j my-self azens hym now wile j go.  
 and 3if ony mester that j haue of Socour,  
 loke 3e not me Faylle for non langour."  
 therto they graunteden everychon ;  
 he took his leve, and forth gan to gon.
- thus kyng karados wente forth thanne  
 and with hym jn compenye many a manne ;  
 an esy pas and sadly they wente,  
 til that kyng Bors they metten presente.  
 and whanne that so ny to-gederis they were,  
 of an archer a bowe drawht there,
- 11184 "God defend  
 us from him  
 who comes  
 here!"
- 11188 I know him  
 by his  
 armour.
- 11192 In all the  
 world there  
 is no one  
 better in  
 fight."
- 11196
- 11200 The King of  
 a Hundred  
 Knights asks  
 who he is.  
 King Loth  
 answers:  
 "King Boors  
 of Gawnes.  
 I know not  
 how he came  
 here."
- 11204
- 11208 But now it  
 behoves every  
 man to prove  
 himself  
 a worthy  
 knight."  
 [leaf 181 a]  
 King Karados  
 says:
- 11212 "I will go  
 against him.  
 If I need  
 help, do not  
 fail me."
- 11216
- 11220 He rides  
 forth,  
 and meets  
 king Boors.

There is  
a fierce  
encounter.

bothe parties to-gederis mette so faste,  
that Ech on othyr here speres gonne breste, 11224  
so that on bothe partyes they fyllen a-down,  
and of karados meyne gret occisiown.

thanne drowen they owt here swerdis blyve,  
and manye a man there loste his lyve. 11228

King Boors  
commande  
an old knyght  
to bear his  
banner.

thanne kam kyng Bors to an old knyght,  
whiche man that Blaaryus hyht,  
and hym comanded his Baner to bere  
(and this knyght dorste not Refusen it there), 11232

and bad hym gon forth hym be-fore,  
that the Bretowns his armes myhten sen thore.

He takes  
a spear,  
rides into  
the press,

Thanne took he a Royde spere anon,  
and jnto that pres he gan faste to gon, 11236  
and that Reng he to-barst ful sone,  
and pere-jinne entrede amonges hem Echone.

and pierces  
a knyght.

and with a knyght he mette schortly there,  
that thorwh armes and harneys he gan him bere. 11240

So thorwh the body there he hym smot,  
that down he fyl thanne, god hit wot,  
and brak his Nekke jn his fallynge tho ;  
Swich destenye that knyght cam vnto. 11244

Then he  
draws his  
sword.

thanne kyng Boors drowh owt his sword,  
and amonges that meyne pere so he ferd.  
and whanne the peple Say hym faren so,

King Kar-  
dos' men flee.

Ful faste to flyht thanne gonne they go. 11248  
thus kyng karados loste his meyne ;  
For kyng Bors they gonnen alle to fle.

The King of  
a Hundred  
Knights  
comes to  
succour.

that beheld the kyng of an hundred knyhtes ;  
to Socouren karados he kam ful Ryhtes 11252

with ij thousand knyhtes jn compenye,  
that bolde werriours weren and worthye.  
and there fulsone to-gederis they mette,  
and many harde strokes to-gederis smette. 11256

Both Boors

For there to speken of king Bors prowesse,  
how that he fawht there jn that presse !  
Also Ek on the tothir kynges syde

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- and ek vppon here hole meyne ;  
 For pere made kyng Ban gret mortalyte.  
 For anon as they kyng Ban aspyde,  
 Ful faste they fledden that jlke tyde 11300  
 For the grete occision  
 that kyng Ban made abowtes hym jn virown ;  
 and gret martyrdom he made also,  
 and thus jn Eche Reng pere gan he go, 11304  
 bothe on lefte syde and ek on pe ryhte ;  
 he kyd hym there as kyng and knyhte.  
 So that j-dowted he was ful sore  
 of alle his enemyes pat weren thore. 11308
- King Loth  
 and the King  
 of a Hundred  
 Knights,  
 Thanne forth cometh kyng Loth tho  
 and the kyng of an hundred knyhtes also,  
 and Sire margamur here thridde felawe was,  
 with here Bataylles jn that plas. 11312  
 For thussonne the bataylles j-medlyd were  
 on with-jnne anoper ryht sone there.  
 and whanne that they behelden kyng Ban,  
 that so gret damage dyde there than, 11316  
 kyng Loth there-with was angry tho,  
 and ek the tothyr kyng was ful wo.  
 with here spores smeten they here hors thanne,  
 and bothe they reden azens kyng Barne, 11320  
 for kyng Loth was a worthy knyht,  
 and that he kydde there in his fyht.  
 For with his spere he smot so kyng Ban,  
 that a cantel of his scheld jnto pe feld flew than. 11324  
 and whanne that kyng Ban felte thys,  
 Fulsore he was amevyd there, j-wys.  
 Anon his goode swerd he lefte on hy,  
 as a man that was bothe wroth and angry, 11328  
 and to the kyng of an hundred knyhtes he rod,  
 and hym so smot, there that he stod,  
 vppon the helm ; but hit glawcede adown  
 There vppon his horsis arsown, 11332  
 that Trapped was jn erne & stel.  
 but zit that Strok hyt bot ful wel,  
 For the hors chine asondir there he smot,
- King Ban  
 kills his foes,  
 and breaks  
 their ranks  
 both right  
 and left.
- King Loth  
 and the King  
 of a Hundred  
 Knights,  
 seeing, with  
 anger and  
 grief, damage  
 done by king  
 Ban,  
 ride against  
 him.
- King Loth  
 cuts off a  
 piece of king  
 Ban's shield.
- King Ban  
 smites the  
 King of a  
 Hundred  
 Knights on  
 the helm ;  
 the glancing  
 stroke hits  
 the horse.

- that bothe to grownde wenten fot hot. 11336 Horse and  
And whanne this kyng of an .c. knyhtes rider fall;  
Felte hym so feld there jn fyhtes  
And therto His Hors Vndyr Hym so Ded, [leaf 131 o]  
thanne was he ryht of Sory red. 11340  
Vpe sone he rekouerede forto stond,  
and his swerd took jn his hond,  
and leyde his Scheld vppon his hed,  
For fulsore he dowede of ded. 11344  
Whanne ~~that~~ kyng Brangores beheld al this,  
that ~~pe~~ kyng of an hundred knyhtes, j-wys,  
was thus feld and leyd on grownde,  
anon to kyng ban he rod that stownde, 11348 smites king  
and smot hym evene a-myddes the scheld, Ban on the  
there as he hovede jn the Feld. shield;  
and kyng Ban Sone there tornede ageyn,  
and vppon the helm he rawht hym, ful pleyn, 11352 king Ban  
that his coyphes of yrne and Sercle also returns the  
evene asondyr smot he tho, stroke,  
that to the grownde he fyl down ryht,  
For lengere to sytten hadde he non myht. 11356 and fells his  
foe.  
Aftyr, whanne these kynges rekouered were,  
azens kyng ban Sore Fowhten they there. In the ensu-  
ing fight,  
but he dede hem mochel more grevaunce,  
thanne they hym deden, with-owten dowtaunce. 11360 king Ban  
keeps the  
upper hand  
against his  
wounded  
enemies;  
For 3it nas there non of the kynges two  
but that mochel of here blood hadden lost tho.  
what be here hurtes & woundes bothe  
Ful feynt to fyhten they were forsothe. 11364  
but 3it mochel harm there was j-do  
betwixen thike thre kynges tho. much harm  
is done to  
them.  
and whanne the bataylle entre-mellid were,  
asondyr sone weren they departyd there, 11368  
whethyr that eyther partye wolde oper non;  
but 3it amonges hem moche harm was don.  
Thanne hyt happede that ylke tyde,  
that kyng Artheur jnto that pres cam ryde, 11372 King Arthur,  
coming  
thither.

11336. *bothe* crossed out before *fot*.11344. MS. *dowteded*.



Ande kyng  
Ban fighting  
on foot,

and fond kyng Ban fyhtyng on fote,  
wherfore he was ful wo, god wote.  
but Ewere he fawht So sore there,  
that non man ne dorste comen hym nere, 11376  
and so forth wente thorwh the pres  
vigerously fyhtyng, with-owten les.

yet keeping  
all at bay.

but there wolde non man his strokes abyde,  
So Merveyllous they weren jn that tyde. 11380.  
thanne entrede kyng Artheur on þe to[thyr] partye  
thorwh al the pres ful manfullye

With his  
blood-soiled  
sword,

with his swerd on honde, that Soyled hit was  
with hors blood & mernes jn that plas. 11384

For manye Merveylles wrowhte kyng Arthewr,  
For jn armes he was bothe Styf & stowr.  
but whanne he Say kyng Ban at sweche myschef,  
hym thowhte hit was to hym gret repref. 11388

Arthur rides  
against a  
knight,

Anon kyn[g] Arthewr aspyde a knyht,  
that ryaly was arayed forto fyht.  
with his swerd to hym kyng Arthewr rod,  
and non lengere there he abod, 11392

cleaves his  
head,

but with his swerd smot hym so sore,  
that jnto the teth he clef his hed thore,  
that ded to the grounde he fyl anon.

and takes  
his horre to  
king Ban.

And kyng Arthewr be þe Reyne his hors took son, 11396  
and to kyng Ban he ledde hyt ful faste.

“my leve frend,” he seide, “worth vp jn haste,  
For amonges 3oure ENemyes 3e han j-be ;  
this place to forsaken sone scholen 3e hem se.” 11400

Joyfully the  
two turn on  
their enemies,

[leaf 181.d]

Whanne that kyng Ban Recouered was  
Be helpe of kyng Arthewr jn that plas,  
Gret Joye Bothe to-gederys they made,  
and amonges here ENemyes they prekeden ful glade. 11404

who are dis-  
comfited,

Anon as they on the tothyr partye  
kyng Artheur and king Ban dyden aspye,  
anon so discomfyt weren they tho  
of the harm þat these two kynges hadden j-do, 11408  
that they hadden j-lost clene here talent

11379. *the*, the abbreviation mark in darker ink.

11381. MS. *þ* to *þtye*. 11389. MS. *kyn*.

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Thus Arthur  
and Merlin  
depart.

thane departyd kyng Arthur thens anon,  
and merlyn jnto the forest js he gon 11448

To speken with Blasye, that hym bod there,  
that of many thinges dide hym enqwere.

Merlin telle  
Blasy of his  
intercourse  
with Arthur,

and merlyne seide he hadde j-be  
to conseillen kyng Arthur, Sykerle. 11452

“that is wel don,” quod Blasye thanne,  
“hym to counseillen as a wis manne.”

and of all  
that has  
happened.

than tolde Merlyne to blasye anon  
of al tho thinges that hadden be don, 11456

and hou kyng Arthewr jnto lytel breteyne sente  
there socoure to haven, veramente.

Sethen he tolde hym ek also  
of the grete Bataylle pat was j-do, 11460  
and of the scomfyture of the xj kynges.

Blasy writes  
it in his  
books.

So that this Blasye wrot alle these thinges,  
and jnto his Book pere wrot he euery thing,  
Be whom now perof haven we knowleching. 11464

[leaf 132 a]

[B]ut of Al this Bataylle Leven We now talkyng,  
[an]d let vs Speken of anothyr thyng,  
[Ne]thir of Blasie ne of merlyne at this tyde

Now let us  
return to kyng  
Arthur.

[No] more to speken, but let vs forth glyde, 11468

[an]d to kyng Arthewr & to the tweyne kynges also  
[tha]t jn his compenye gonne forth to go,  
[and] ek of other baronage jn compenye,

[tha]t with kyng Arthewr weren, Sekerlye. 11472

Chap. XI

After the  
defeat of the  
eleven kyngs,

[N]ow here putteth this Ilke Storye  
[of t]hese xj kynges Jn memorye,  
[and o]f the dewk of Askam also,  
[tha]t be merlynes cownseylle conquered weren tho, 11476

[an]d how joyful from Blasye he cam,  
[an]d how that kyng Arthewr ordeyned hym than.

tents are  
pitched,

[th]anne here Pavylouns pyhten they ful faste  
[an]d ek here tentes jn ryht gret haste. 11480

11457. *sente* above crossed-out *wente*.

11465-90. The beginning of each of these lines is destroyed through the leaves having stuck together. Traces, partly quite distinct, are to be found on the other leaf.

11475. *lucawr* crossed out before *Askam*.

- [So] that they casten hem there to abyde  
 [an]d Forto resten hem that jlke tyde. 11482  
 [th]anne gouernours of þe ost goune they ordeyner there : watchmen  
 are ap-  
 pointed,  
 [S]ire Leownce, Sire gyrflet, & Sire Lwcawns the botelere.  
 [th]anne Sire Faryens to sire Leownces j-joyned he was  
 [Towar]dis the wode to kepen jn that plas ;  
 [and Si]re Lwcawns and sire gyrflet  
 [kepte]n the medewes bothe drye and wet. 11488  
 [and] the remnaunt to Reste gounen to gon,  
 ly[k a]s þerto they hadden Nede Everychon. and the  
 others refresh  
 and rest  
 themselves.  
 So that they eten & dronken, & maden here play,  
 and there hem restede, tyl hit was day. 11492  
 For j-nowh they hadden of the Beste,  
 bothe riche and powre, to gladen his geste.  
 Thus they hem restede, tyl hit was day ;  
 And thanne kyng Arthewr comanded, jn fay, 11496  
 that al the good that geten was  
 and ek al the rychesse Jnto on plas  
 that to-gederis scholde ben browht, ful pleyn,  
 For he wolde departyn hit þere, jn certeyn. 11500  
 and whanne that they hadden herd here Masse,  
 they wenten there as al þe trosor wasse.  
 and there on hepis as that hit lay,  
 These thre kynges, with-owten delay, 11504  
 departyd this good þere to Every man,  
 as that hem thowhte he hadde nede than :  
 on man lasse and a-nothyr more,  
 as hem thowhte they weren worthy thore, 11508  
 and ek to many pore knyhtes also,  
 Ek to seriauntes that with hem weren tho ;  
 they ȝouen hem of þat good ful largely,  
 Whyles that Hem Last there ony peny. 11512  
 and sethen departyd they forth in here compenye  
 bothe stedys and palfreyes ful justlye,  
 clothes of gold & of Sylk also,  
 that nowht to departyn beleft hem tho. 11516  
 So that Every man gwerdonen he was  
 that with hem was jn that plas.  
 thanne xl knyhtes chosen they tho

(Misunder-  
standing

of the  
context;  
see Note.)

with hem of Tarmelyde forto go, 11520  
which meyne Sire Leownce & sire pharyen  
jn governaunce hadden & with hem sire Gracien.  
Thus this peple of Tarmelyde  
jnto here lond they gonne hem gyde, 11524  
that kyng clawdas non harm scholde þere do,  
whyles the two kynges here lond weren fro.

The men, on  
arriving in  
their own  
countries,  
buy property  
with the  
money.

Thanne these Barowns to-fore seid here,  
Jn here owne contres whanne they were, 11528  
hem purchased bothe londes and fe,  
everych a man aftyr his degre,  
with the grete ziftes that they hadde,  
and with þe tresor þat they out of þe ost ladde, 11532  
So that evere riche men they were,  
whiles that on erthe they lyvede here.

The three  
kings remain  
at Bredigam,

So sojorned kyng Arthur at Bredygam styll  
and with hym bothe kynges at his wylle 11536  
(that was jn the march of gret Breteyne  
and ek of Tarmelyde tho, in certeyne)  
Merlyne forto abyden there ;

waiting for  
Merlin.

this was Arthuris entent, j sey 3ow here. 11540  
and vppon the morwen, whanne this was do,  
that kyng Arthwr his meyne hadde departyd so,  
and at Bredygam hadde mad gret feste  
as wel to þe meste as to the leste, 11544

(going out in  
the m<sup>o</sup>rning

and whanne they hadden eten echon,  
out of here loggenges gonnen they gon  
Forto beholden bothe ryvere and mede,  
How þat the flowres dyden springen & sprede, 11548  
thanne behelden they furthermore :

they see an  
old man com-  
ing over the  
meadows,

they Syen where a old cherl cam thore  
ouer alle the medewes, the sothe to sayn,  
with his bowe on hande, jn certayn. 11552

with wild  
birds hang-  
ing from his  
girdle,

and boltes vndir his gyrdel bar he,  
and wyld fowl hadde slayn, sekerle,  
the whiche vndir his gyrdel him heng abowte.  
3it anothir bryd aspide he, with-owten dowte ; 11556

11552. *on*, *o* corrected from *j*.

11553. *Gyrdel*, *d* through correction.

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# HISTORY

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Yet giving  
would do thee  
credit."

and forto ʒeven of þat thou hast geten here,  
me thinketh for thy worschepe gretly it were." 11596

The kings  
look at each  
other in sur-  
prise.

Whanne that the kyng Arthewr vndirstod this,  
eche kyng on othyr thanne lokyd, j-wys,  
and sethen they seiden hem be-twene :

"where-of devel spekyth this carl so kene?" 11600

Ban asks him  
what he  
means.

thanne þere anon hym clepede kyng Ban,  
and axede what devel he seyde than.

He answers  
not, but says  
to Arthur :

but this carl to hym nou word wolde speke,  
but to king Arthewr he gan for to reke. 11604

"Take these  
birds; for I  
will depart."

"haue þou," he seide, "these Bryddes here,  
For j wele walken jn Myn manere."

Ban asks him  
who he is.

thanne Spak kyng Ban, certeinle :

"Seȳ what maner man that thou be." 11608

He replies :  
"Such a man  
am I,  
that Merlin  
has told me

"Swich a man am here j," quod he,

"that a savage man thus tolde me,

whiche that merlyne is his name,

jn this lond a man of ryht gret fame— 11612

and that same merlyne tolde to me

that hider wolde he comen, ful sykerle,

Forto speken with ʒow kynges present ;

thus merlyne me tolde, verament." 11616

he will come  
here and  
speak with  
you kings."

Ulfín, coming  
out, over-  
hears the con-  
versation.

and jn the tyme of this talkyng  
cometh Vlphyn owt of a chambre goyng,  
and herde the pletyng of hem two,  
hou kyng Ban to merlyn spak tho. 11620

Ban is in-  
credulous.

"O," quod kyng Ban, "hou may this be,  
that merlyne scholde speken with the?"

The man  
says he may  
believe it,  
or do the  
other thing.

"what," quod the carl, "ʒif þou wylt me leve,  
chese ; the oþer ellis thou beleve." 11624

Ulfín smiles,  
knowing that  
it is Merlin.

And [whiles] the veleyne hadde seyde al this,  
euerestood sire Vlphyn and herkened, j-wys,  
and thussonne he gan for to Smyle,  
and knew hit was merlyne be his wyle. 11628

Merlin asks  
him to take  
more birds  
to his stingy  
king.

whanne that merlyne aspyde him so,  
towardis hym he gan forto go.

"haue here mo Bryddis to thy kyng,  
that grochcheth forto ʒeven onything." 11632

- Thanne lowh Vlphyn wonderly sore  
of the wordis that Merlyne seide thore,  
and seide : " sire, 3if hyt thy wylle be,  
wylt pou jnto chambre gon with me  
For diuers thinges that j haue to seyn  
betwene the and me pere, jn certeyn."  
" 3e, sire, gladly," quod this veley n tho,  
" with the to chambre now wyl j go."  
Thanne beheld the kyng sire vlphyn,  
and axede to what ende oþer fyn  
That so Faste He Lowh there,  
and why that his Skele were. 11636  
" Sire," he seide, " jn tyme comeng  
3e scholen hit knowen Every thing."  
there mette the veley n with Sire kay,  
and thus to him he gan to Say : 11640  
" Go make Redy this wylde fowl here,  
that hit be at thy lordis Sopere."  
" 3e, sire," quod Vlphyn to that veley n,  
" hit nys not the ferste, jn certeyn."  
and with this cam pere sire Bretel,  
and herle these wordis Everydel. 11644  
So whanne they hadde ben there a stownde,  
thanne wyste Bretel he hadde merlyn fownde,  
and vndyr his mentyl he lawhed anon.  
thanne axede of hym the kyng thusson :  
" Why dost pou lawhen here so sore ?"  
" Sire, and þe carl wyle, j schal tellen 3ow fore." 11648  
thanne this veley n there lowh ful faste,  
and seide to Vlphyn atte laste :  
" Sey now on what js thy wylle."  
than Vlphyn seide the kyng vntylle :  
" Sire," he seyde, " knowe 3e not merlyn,  
whiche that is 3oure owne devyn ?"  
" 3is," quod the kyng, " why axen 3e ?  
hym j wel knowe, and j him 3e." 11652  
" Sire," quod vlphyn, " this js now he  
Ulfin laughs,  
and asks for  
a private  
talk.  
The man con-  
sents.  
Arthur asks  
Ulfin why he  
laughs.  
[leaf 132 d]  
Ulfin answers  
he shall know  
by and by.  
Now Sir Kay  
comes ;  
the man asks  
him to pre-  
pare the  
birds.  
Bretel also  
arrives,  
recognizen  
Merlin,  
and laughs  
in his sleeve.  
The king  
again asks  
why he  
laughs.  
Merlin laugh-  
ingly says to  
Ulfin that he  
may tell.  
Ulfin says :  
" Do you  
not know  
Merlin ?"  
Arthur re-  
plies : " Of  
course, if I  
see him."  
Ulfin says :

11633. *Vlphyn*, MS. *v<sup>r</sup> kyng* corrected from *M<sup>r</sup>lyne*.11640. *to* above the line.11656. *thāne*, *ne* through correction.



"Why, this  
is he?"

that here toforn 3ow now 3e se,  
that ij or thries 3ow hath serued thus.  
why not 3e hym knowe, j merveylle, be jesus." 11672

The king  
wonders  
grently,

Whan that the kyng herde vlphyn spekyn so,  
wondirly abasched sore was he tho,  
that he nyste what forto seyn.  
thanne seid Vlphyn to hym ageyn : 11676

"that j haue seyn oftere thanne one,  
the bettere j schal knowen hyt eft sone."

and still asks  
who the man  
is.

that seide the kyng to hym ageyn :  
"Sej me now, what js this veleyn ?" 11680

Ulfin says  
again: "Do  
you not know  
Merlin?"

"Sire, knowe 3e not merlin, and 3e hym se?"

"3is, what scholde ellis now EYlen me?"

"thanne beholde 3e this good man so hore,  
3if euere 3e syen hym owht here before." 11684

and the kyng beheld him ful wel,  
but he hym knew neuere a del.

"Now certes," quod sire vlphyn with that,

He will think  
his service  
badly  
applied."

"he may thinken his Servise EVEL beset, 11688

that 3ow so mochel servyse hath j-do

an 3ow j-loved so wel therto

and 3ow hath holpen jn alle manere

azens 3oure ENemyes, where so they were." 11692

Arthur  
crosses  
himself,

thanne whanne kyng Arthewr herde this,

fulsone thanne he hym blessede, j-wys,

and the other  
kings also  
marvel.

and the tothyre tweyne kynges[s] also

ful mochel merveylle hadden tho, 11696

and seiden: "merlyn, how is this be-tyd

now to ben clothed jn swich an abytt?"

thanne seide merlyn to hem ageyn:

"hit may ful wel ben, in certeyn." 11700

Ulfin says  
that Merlin  
will show  
his true  
semblance.

thanne seide Vlphyn: "Sire, hasche 3ow not,

for his semblawnce he wil schewen, wel j wot,

that 3e tofore hauen hym jnne seyn;

he wile hit 3ow schewen, jn certeyn." 11704

The kings  
are pleased  
to hear it.

"that wolde we fayn," quod these kynges,

"To bringen vs owt of distorbelynges."

11675. *what*, *h* corrected from *a*.

11688. *may*, *a* through correction. 11695. Cf. l. 9095.

11703. *feyn*, *n* in darker ink.

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Arthur stays  
at Bredyngham  
till Mid-Lent.

Thus they soiourned there Everychon,  
tyl that mydlentone was al a-gon. 11748

He makes the  
acquaintance  
of a fair  
maiden called  
Lysanore ;

So that kyng Arthewr vppon a day  
be merlynes leve, the Sothe to Say,  
he aqweynted hym with a mayden so 3yng ;  
hym thowhte he sey neuere a fayrere thyng. 11752

she and many  
barons have  
come thither  
to pay hom-  
age to the  
victor,

hire name Lysanore y-clepyd hit was,  
therles dowhter Sevayn, that deyde be kas.  
that mayden homage cam forto do  
and with hyre Barowns manye mo  
anon aftyr the Scomfytur 11756

In order that  
they may  
keep their  
lands.

of the xj kynges, j 3ow ensure.  
thus for drede they comen to hym tho  
here londes to holden with-owten wo. 11760

Lysanore  
lodges with  
a rich  
burge-s.

For his bettere neuere j-seyn was ;  
that thus for here londys they sowhten here gras.  
So that jt happede that this mayde,  
of whiche to-forn tyme j 3ow seyde, 11764

The king  
desires her,

cam to the castel of Bredyngham,  
where that sche osteyed hyre than  
wit[h] a riche Burgeys, as j Rechers,  
that was bothe Riche, stowt, and fers. 11768

[leaf 133 b]

sleeps with  
her,  
and begets  
Loost,

and anon as the kyng hadde cast his eye  
vppon that mayden, the sothe to seye,  
Thanne With merlyne Spak He Anon,  
that they to-gederis myhte speken alon. 11772

one of the  
knights of  
the Round  
Table.

So be that mayde that nyht the kyng lay,  
and on hire be-gat, the Sothe to say,  
On hyhte Loost, as good a knyht  
as euere armure scholde beren jn fyht, 11776

After Mid-  
Lent, the  
three kings  
leave for  
Tarmelid.

which that was after, with-owten fable,  
On of the knyhtes of the Rownde table.  
This Loost dyde many a merveyllous thyng,  
as here-aftyr hit schal come to Rechersyng. 11780

whanne that mydlentone was fully gon,  
kyng Arthewr of this damysele took leve anon.  
that so bothe kynges and Ek he  
jn-to Tarmelyde wenten, certeynle. 11784

11749. *vpp* crossed out before *Arthewr*.

11752. *he, e* corr. from *a*. 11767. MS. *rit*.

Now of hem resteth this Talkyng,  
and lete vs speken of a-nothyr thyng,  
and to the xj kynges Retornen ageyn,  
whyder that they weren chased, jn certeyn. 11788

Now the nar-  
rative turns  
to the  
defeated  
kings.

Now begynneth this Tale and telleth here  
of the xj kynges that conqwered were,  
how that they reden al that nyht  
Sorewenge & wepyng, j 30w plyht,  
For here grete los and here damage ;  
thus ryden they Soreweng, bothe knyht & page ;  
Nethyr of al nyht rested of rydyng,  
which was to hem alle an hevy thyng. 11792

Chap. XII.  
The defeated  
kings ride all  
night,

For nethir drynk ne mete was hem among,  
Nethyr of al day whiles þe bataylle was strong,  
so þat day & thike nyht they weren meteles,  
and therto gret passing cold, with-owten les,  
therto strong frost and Ys there was ;  
So weren they evel esed in Eche a plas.  
thanne ryden they forth to a cyte  
ful hungry & ful cold, as j telle the,  
whiche cyte Sorhant it hyhte,  
of kyng vryens, that was jn fyhte.  
So there they weren Resceyved alle  
and wel j-esed, as tho myhte befallē.  
For there-offen they hadden ful gret mester,  
For many man was hurt and wondyd ther.  
and manye there deyden for Noysaunce,  
For at thike tyme swiche was here chaunce. 11800

sorrowing  
and weeping,

thirsty,  
hungry,

and cold.

And Skars thre dayes there hadde they be,  
that hem comen tydynges, ful sykerle,  
owt of cornewaylle & orkanye  
of gret distroccioun & of þe felonye  
that to here londes þere weren j-do,  
and toforu þe castel of Vandeberis Sege leyd also,  
And therto the peple is Fled A-Way,  
that neuere to-fore Remevede, j dar wel say. 11804

They arrive  
in a city

called  
Sorhant,

and are well  
received.

For there-offen they hadden ful gret mester,  
For many man was hurt and wondyd ther.  
and manye there deyden for Noysaunce,  
For at thike tyme swiche was here chaunce. 11808

Many die  
from their  
wounds.

And Skars thre dayes there hadde they be,  
that hem comen tydynges, ful sykerle,  
owt of cornewaylle & orkanye  
of gret distroccioun & of þe felonye  
that to here londes þere weren j-do,  
and toforu þe castel of Vandeberis Sege leyd also,  
And therto the peple is Fled A-Way,  
that neuere to-fore Remevede, j dar wel say. 11812

News arrives

of an inva-  
sion of their  
lands

and besieging  
of one of their  
castles.

[leaf 183 c]

11813. *dayes*, *f* added afterwards.—*they*, MS. *he*.

and whanne these Barowns herden of this,  
 alle here flesch gonnen to tremble, j-wys,  
 For that so soleyne an aventure  
 To hem scholde comen jn that langure. 11824  
 thanne wisten they, with-owten dowte,  
 that they weren distroyed al abowte,  
 and Gonnen thanne to wepen Ryht sore,  
 alle the peple that was thore. 11828

So thanne hit happede vppon a day  
 that kyng Brangores this myschef say.  
 So that he sente messengeris faste  
 To alle the kynges osten jn haste, 11832  
 and that to hym they scholde comen anon  
 jn alle the haste that myhte be don.

So that thyder assembled many men  
 jnto the halle of kyng vryen. 11836

and aftyr that they hadden herd pis kyng speke,  
 alle jnto on partye they gonnen forto reke  
 with Eyen Rede and al for-wept,  
 that longe waked hadden & lytel slept. 11840

and amonges hem spoken they word non,  
 but stodyn ful styll there everychon.

and whanne that kyng claryowns say this,  
 that there non man wolde Speken, j-wys,  
 anon vppon his fet he was there stondyng,  
 and seide openly to Brangore the kyng :

“ Syre, hyder am j comen now to the  
 to weten what thow wylt Seyn to me. 11848  
 Now telle me, Sire, what js thy wylle,  
 & to my power j schal hit fulfyllen.”

thanne seide sone kyng Brangores ageyn :  
 “ j schal 3ow schewen, sire, jn wordis pleyn 11852  
 the cause why that j for 3ow sente ;  
 j schal 3ow tellen, Sire, veramente.

Lordynges, hit is not to 3ow vnknowe  
 that the kynrede of kyng Augwys this throwe 11856  
 jnto oure londes entred they ben,

11850. *power*, *p* corrected from *ic*.

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who defends  
himself  
against the  
Giants;

For vppon the jeawntes werre halt he,  
that moche noysaunce hym don, Sykerle. 11896

For the jeantes wolden held his lond  
al of hem, as j now vndirstond,  
and he defendyth hym as a man,  
as long as that he may & kan. 11900

nor from  
Perdenian,

Nethyr of Perdenyan the kyng  
mowen ze hauen non helpyng,  
nethyr of the kyng Amadonan,  
nethir of kyng clamades, j telle zou kan ; 11904

Amadonan,

and  
Clamades,  
who war  
upon king  
Galaost.

For they werren vppon kyng galaost,  
the wheche is cosyn, wel thou wost,  
To the kyng of an hundred knyhtes ;  
and azens hym they kepen here fyhtes." 11908

And if Gala-  
ost conquers,

" But assone as kyng Galaost  
hath conqweryd the tothyr ost  
the wheche he halt werre ageyn,  
thanne wot j ful wel, jn certeyn, 11912

he will want  
Uter Pen-  
dragon's  
land.

that non thing so sore doth he crave  
as þat was vterpendragons Lond to have.  
So that other cownseyl geten ze non of me  
but that grete God oure conseil be. 11916

Now let us  
consider,

and therefore, sethen we ben jn fere,  
amonges vs lete vs casten here ;  
For neuere so moche nede hadden we  
as now, and ze wylen therto se. 11920

or we shall be  
all destroyed.

For and we distorben now this matere,  
we ben alle distroyed, *with-owten* dwere.  
For we knowen wel Everychon  
that bope oure good & worschepe is a-gon. 11924

Our good  
and glory is  
gone—

For þe damage that we han, wete ze wel,  
Be merlynes conseyl hit is don eche del,  
whanne tho two kynges he fet, certayne,  
kyng Ban and kyng Boors, out of lytel bretayne, 11928  
that jn al the world bettere knyhtes ne be,  
and to Arthewr han don homage & fewte.

all owing to  
Merlin,  
who fetched  
Ban and  
Boors out  
of Little  
Britain,

11897. *held* afterwards corrected from *he*.

11901. *Perdenyan*, *P* roughly corrected from *B*.

11905. *Galaost*, *l* squeezed in afterwards.

11928. *bretayne*, *a* roughly corrected from *e*.

- For wete[t]h wel, as longe as merly[n] with hem is,  
the bettere of hem geten we not, j-wys. 11932
- For there nys non man so myhty here,  
nethyr so wys in non manere,  
that kan hym kepen from Merlynes wyle,  
& that he ne schal vs alle begylle. 11936
- For he knoweth of alle thyng,  
what that is don and what is comeng.  
and perfore nethyr with wepyng ne with mone .  
we mown not helpen that is to done, 11940
- Neper therby wynnen but lytel thyng ;  
For offys of women hit is wepyng.  
and perfore operwyse we mosten ordeyne  
oure londes and peple forto meyntheygne 11944
- azens this that vs don Noysaunce,  
whiche that not be of owre creaunce.  
Therefore, goode Lord, for thy gret pyte  
on vs and oure peple thou haue merce !” 11948
- after this word these Barouns echon  
seten ful styll, & word spoken they non ;  
And thus a gret whyle this dyden they hawnt.  
Thus Sone Vpe Ros Kyng Tradelyvaunt, 11952
- that of northwales was kyng tho ;  
to thike assemblyng spak he vnto :  
“the beste counceille that j now can,  
that we now vs ordeyne Every man 11956
- vppon that contre to setten keping,  
there as the hethene hauen here entring,  
and that with al oure chevalrye  
Faste thedirward now let vs hye, 11960
- and stoppen hem of here vytaylle,  
and of here socour ek to Faylle.  
& jn that tyme mowen we than  
gaderen to vs many a man. 11964
- So that whanne we han gadered oure myht,  
thanne with hem scholen we fyhte,  
For ellis j ne knowe in none degre  
From here sege remeved to be.” 11968

and is most  
powerful  
and wise,

and all-  
knowing.

It is no use  
weeping ;

that suits  
women.  
Let us do  
something for  
our defence ;

and may the  
Lord save  
us !”

After a long  
silence,

[leaf 134 a]  
Tradelivant,  
king of  
North Wales,  
rises:

“ Let us  
watch the  
country  
where the  
hethens  
have entered,

and cut off  
their supply  
of victuals.

In the mean-  
time we will  
gather forces,

and then give  
battle.”

11931. MS. *wete*, *h* in darker ink.—MS. *merly*.

11936. & added in the left margin.



All praise his  
scheme,

Whanne that the barouns hadden vndirstondyng  
of the wordis of Tradelivaunt the kyng,  
Ful wel they hym preisede Euerichon,  
& seiden that bettere myhte they not don ; 11972

and lik aftyr his owne wylle  
plenerly thei wolde hit fulfille,  
and axeden into what partyes thei scholden go,  
and what Meyne ek scholden gon þerto. 11976

which is  
afterwards  
carried out.

So that forth they wenten, with-owten faille,  
with hem that leften of the bataylle  
Sauf only to kepen that cyte.  
forth thanne they wenten ful prevyle, 11980

He con-  
cludes :

and kepten the vitailles of the contre,  
that non refressching to the hethin scholde be—  
“ thanne with the meyne that we gaderen mown  
To putten hem to gret distrucciown. 11984

“ If they are  
beaten,  
our people  
will be rich.

and zif hit happe hem j-scomfyted to be,  
thanne rich may ben aloure meyne.

This is the beste counseil that j kan ;

Now let every  
man say his  
advice !”

Now sey his avis here Every man ! 11988

For my counseill at this tyme this js ;  
Now let Every man Sein his beste devys !”

King Loth  
rises,

Thanne ros vpe kyng loth there anon,  
and to that peple he seide Echon : 11992

“ Lordynges, Sekerly, j ne kan not se  
how that these marches kept scholen be,

and recom-  
mend-  
measures of  
precaution  
against king  
Arthur,

but that we setten good asspye  
vppon kyng Artheuris londis, Sekerlye, 11996

bencheson of the kynges that with hym be,  
and For merlyn, that is maister in mani a gre,

that aloure conseil knoweth ful wel  
& al that we don here now Everydel. 12000

who may  
seize the  
opportunity

For zif we ryden the hethen to asspye,

anon he wyl comen vs to distroye

he othir partyes jnto othyr contre ;

vppon vs ryden wilen they, ful sykirle. 12004

Fore for the hethen they wylen not lette

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and jn that Roche dwelleth that may,  
 that ful good counseil to vs kan say.  
 For jn that castel sche dwellith, j-wis,  
 that maiden, that is so mochel of pris, 12048  
 hadegabrantis Sostyr, with-owten lye,  
 that mochel cowde of Negromauncye,  
 wherby often-tyme socoured they be ;  
 wherfore be my counseyl, certeinle, 12052  
 with hire to speken is myn entent,  
 & ellis greved mow we ben, verament."

Whanne that pe barouns vndirstodyu al this,  
 that kyng Arthur was forthe, with-owten mys, 12056  
 thanne merveillede the barouns Everichon  
 For what maner cause he wolde so don.

but thanne vndirstoden they alle  
 that be Merlynes counseil hit gan falle. 12060

So that they repentyd al jn fere  
 that evere with merlyn angry they were ;  
 but alto late hit was tho  
 hem to repente : he was a-go. 12064

So that they acorded alle jn fere  
 alle the marches to don kepen there.  
 Thanne sente they forth be eche partye  
 to kepen the marches, ful sekerlye, 12068

bothe olde & zonge that myhte gon  
 & of straunge Sowdiours manion.  
 So that forth they wenten & wolden not blynne,  
 hoping gret richesse forto wynne 12072

and also to geten hem bothe pris & fame  
 the better to ben beloued of every dame.

but owt of kyng Arthewris lond  
 non sowdiour wolde comen, j vndirstond ; 12076

For good j-nowgh they hadde be-fore,  
 and for pat cawse they wold not comen thore ;

For Arthur avauused hem everichon,  
 Er that he owt of his lond gan gon ; 12080  
 and zit he behyhte hem better to do,  
 whanne that azen he come hem vnto.

She can give  
 good counsel,

for she is  
 the sister of  
 a necro-  
 mancer."

The kings  
 marvel at  
 Arthur's  
 departure,

but under-  
 stand that  
 it is due to  
 Merlin,  
 and repent  
 of their anger  
 with him.

They resolve  
 to have the  
 borderlands  
 watched.  
 Troops are  
 sent,

also mer-  
 cenaries.

From Ar-  
 thur's land,  
 however, no  
 one comes,

on account  
 of the king's  
 liberality.

The fyrste cyte that they dyde kepen tho  
was toward Cornewaille, with-owten mo,  
whiche that thike tyme Nawtes hyghte,  
there as the hethene gonnen alyghte.

12084 (1) King  
Ydiers  
marches to  
Nawtes in  
Cornwall,  
the landing-  
place of the  
heathen.

Thyder gan gon kyng Ydyers

12088

with a meyne bothe prowde & fers,  
that beleften of his Bataylle,  
as j 30w seye with-owten faylle.

and whanne kyng ydyers cam to pat cyte,  
Ful glad and blithe gonnen they to be.

12092 The inhabit-  
ants are joy-  
ful,

For Every day affrayed they were  
of tho hethen that weren comen there,  
that Everyday there, certeinle,

having been  
exposed to  
the depreda-  
tions

they wenten abowte that cyte

12096

and distroyed alle jn virowne abowte  
the contre there, with-owten dowte.

For of hem Sevene thousand there be  
jn this partie aryved, ful sekerle.

12100

of 7000  
vikings.

so that there dar non man passen therby  
with-owten gret strengthe, Sekerly.

The tothyr cyte that they Senten Vnto  
hindicam hyghte at thyke tyme tho.

12104

[leaf 134 c]

The dir rod kyng Newtris of Garlot  
with thre thousand knyghtes, wel j wot,  
that beleften hym of his bataylle ;

(2) King  
Newtris  
marches to  
Hindicam ;

to that cyte he rod, with-owten faylle.

12108

thanne they of the cyte ful gret joye made,  
and of his comeng they weren ryht glade.

its inhabit-  
ants likewise  
rejoice at the  
relief.

For with-owten comfort & socour they were  
agens the hethene that aryveden there.

12112

for they distroyeden al that contre

bothe of corn and of bestes, ful certeinle.

but whanne kyng Newtris entryd that cyte  
that jn cornwaille stood, ful pleynerle,

12116

The king  
manages  
well,

he it wel gouvernede with al his myht,

lyk as he was bothe worthy kyng and knyht.

and alle the strengthes that belonged perto,

equipping the  
strongholds,

Ful manfully he let Stufen hem tho, 12120  
 and sente aftyr sowdeours jnto Eche contre,  
 Tyl Sevene thousand he hadde in semble  
 what on hors and what on foote  
 (So manye he hadde, wel j wote) 12124  
 with-owten tho that weren jn towne that day,  
 Fyve thousand men sensible, j dar we[1] say.  
 thanne so wel kepten they that contre,  
 that non of the hethene, ful Sykerle, 12128  
 but lytel refresschyng cowden they wyne,  
 and euere among was bataille hem betwyne.  
 So that the hethen be aventure  
 losten gret peple, j 3ow Ensure. 12132

for kyng Newtris was a worthy knyht,  
 and a sone he hadde of ryht gret myht  
 be his wyf, that Soster was sche  
 To kyng Arthur jn alle degre. 12136

this 3ong child was xvj 3er of age,  
 ful of bewte and of gret corage.  
 his modir qwene Blasine hyghte,  
 Qwene Ygwernes dowghter, j sey 3ow ryhte, 12140  
 that vterpendragon hadde to wyve,  
 aforu dewk Tyndagellis wif be his lyve,  
 whiche dewk this blasine on Ygwerne be-gat,  
 er that he deyde, j wot wel that. 12144

Vppon this same qwene Blasine thanne  
 begat kyng newtris this worthy manne.

For as here reherseth this storye,  
 a knyht of þe rownd table he was, sekerlye. 12148  
 his name was that tyme jn presence  
 Sire Galachim, that tyme dewk of clarence.

So whanne this galachim gan to vndirstonde  
 that Swich a werre there was jn londe, 12152  
 how his fadir kyng Newtris with Arthour gan werre,  
 To his modyr he wente, & sowhte not ferre,  
 and seide: "dere modir, j preie now the,  
 The trewthe of on thing telle thou me: 12156  
 were 3e not dewk hoelis dowhter of tyndagel

12126. MS. *we.* 12142. *Tyndagellis, d* corrected from *g.*

sending for  
soldiers,

cutting off  
the supply of  
the enemies,

and giving  
battle every  
now and  
then.

Newtris has  
a son,

sixteen years  
old,

by his wife  
Blasine,  
who is a  
daughter of  
Ygwern  
(Arthur's  
mother) by  
her first hus-  
band, the  
duke of Tyn-  
dagel.

This son,  
later on a  
knight of the  
Round Table,  
is called  
Galachim.

When he  
hears of the  
war between  
his father  
and Arthur,

he asks his  
mother about  
her parents,

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the opposi-  
tion of the  
barons,

that the Barouns of this contre  
Ne welen not resceyven hym as for here kyng,  
whiche me sore repentith ouer alle thing.

12196

and of the  
miracle of  
the stone.

but behold, the grete god of myht,  
considering that he is kyng be ryht,  
hym ches be myracle of the ston  
& of the swerd aforne hem echon"—

12200

and hym tolde of mani an aventure  
that of hym be-fel, j 3ow ensure.

12204

Galachim  
prayn to God  
to be knyghted  
by Arthur,

Whanne that galachim gan vndirstonde  
the dedis of þat worthy kyng jn londe,  
anon he besowhte god, certeynlye,  
that jn this world he scholde neuere dye,  
Tyl that kyng had mad hym knyht,  
that holden was so worthy jn fyht.

12208

and vows  
fidelity.

“and 3if onis with my swerd gyrde he me,  
al my lyve after, ful certeinle,  
with hym to dwelle, to lyven & to deye,  
j sey 3ow, modir, be my feye!”

12212

He leaves his  
mother,

thus from his modir departed he thanne  
as an hevy & a pensyvous manne,  
and him be-thouhte thanne everich ovr  
how he myhte comen to kyng Arthewr.

12216

and sends a  
messenger to  
his cousin  
Gawnehet  
(or Gawein),

Anon a messenger dide he sende  
after gawnenet, his cosin so hende,  
that was kyng lothis Sone,

12220

appointing a  
secret meet-  
ing.

that to hym to brokelond scholde he come  
also prevyly as he evere he myhte;  
the day was set of metyng ryhte.

12224

and with this the messenger wente his way  
To his cosin gawnenet, þe sothe to say.

Now let us  
return to  
the kings at  
Sorhant.

Now lefe we here of this storrye,  
and to speken of þe kynges now let vs hye  
that at Sorhant to-gederis dwelle,  
and how that of aventuris they don telle.

12228

[leaf 135 a]  
(8) King Loth

Now aftyr cometh hit Jnto memorye  
hou from Sorhant departyd kyng loth, sekerlye,

12232

12197. *hym*, *y* corrected from *e*. 12220. *aft<sup>r</sup>*, *t<sup>r</sup>* added afterwards.

- and wente forth streyht To Garle cyte  
with ful thre thousand of his meyne,  
that weren holden worthy knyhtes & goode,  
whiche with him out of pe bataille 3oode. 12236  
& whanne he was comen to that cyte,  
the cetezeins maden joye and solemnite ;  
for the hethen diden hem ful gret anoye,  
and al that contre they deden distroye 12240  
what with robberye and brennenge ;  
that contre they wasted jn alle thinge.  
Anon as kyng loth knew of this,  
For sowdeours he sente, with-owten mys, 12244  
Faste abowtes jnto eche contre  
to geten as manye as þanne myhte he.  
and Er a mounthe was fully past,  
ten thousand sowdeours he hadde jn hast 12248  
with-owten hem of that cyte,  
weren foure thousand, certeinle,  
To kepen that cyte bothe day & nyht,  
whiles þat kyng loth rod owt to fyht. 12252  
So that often-tymes he with hem mette,  
and to-gederis many strokes they sette.  
So that his pore bachelerye  
gat often gret goodis, sekerlye. 12256  
and al that evere they myhte wyne,  
kyng loth hit parded there hem betwynne.  
and that causede that gret meyne  
To kyng loth repeirede, certeinle, 12260  
For bencheson of his gentilnesse & fre,  
Sprang so wyde jnto eche contre ;  
Thre thousand comen to hym anon ryht,  
For that he was holden so fre a knyht. 12264  
and faire children he hadde be his wyve ;  
worthiere bodyes weren non on lyve.
- Soth hit is that kyng lothis wyf  
was kyng Artheuris soster, with-owten stryf, 12268  
ryht evene fully jn the same degre

marches to  
Garle.

and is wel-  
comed by the  
distressed  
inhabitants.

He sends for  
soldiers ;

within a  
month he  
has 10,000  
men.

He often  
meets the  
enemies.

Whatever  
booty is won,  
is distributed.

His liberality  
attracts more  
people.

King Loth's  
wife is also a  
stepsister of  
king Arthur's  
(p. 329).

12267. In the right margin: *the birthe and the Engedrure of Mordret.*



- as was kyng Newtris wyfe, Sekerle.
- She has four sons by her husband:** this lady bar be hire lord, Loth the kyng,  
fowre worthy childeren, with-owten lesing : 12272
- Gawnehet (or Gawein), Agravains, Garrers, and Gaheries; and one son by Arthur: Mordret.** Gawnenet, Agravains, & sire Garrers,  
Gaheryes, foure knyhtes bothe goode & fers.  
on the tothyr syde was Sire mordret  
hire eldest sone, with-owten let, 12276  
whiche that on hire be Artheur engendrid was,  
and wyle 3e now heren be a wondyr cas.
- I will tell you of his generation,** For j thenke to tellen 3ow every del  
how he was begeten on hire ful snel, 12280  
So thanne the bettere may this storye  
ben more alowed, ful Sekerlye.
- of which many are ignorant.** For mani men knowen not how pat it was  
of his be-geteng, ne nowht the cas. 12284  
therefore they preisen it moche the lasse,  
For they ben vnknoweng of day & plase.
- The barons were assembled at Cardiff in Wales** hyt behappede, as j 3ow schal say,  
that the barons alle vppon a day 12288  
of þe Rewm of logres assembled were  
at kerdyf jn wales, with-owten dwere,  
there forto chesen hem a newe kyng  
aftyr vter pendragoun, with-owten lesyng. 12292
- to choose a new king (p. 181).** so that kyng loth with hym gan lede  
with hym his wyf jnto that stede ;  
and so dyden oper barons also,  
that here wyves dyde with hem go. 12296  
So that kyng loth j-logged he was  
and alle his meyne jn a ful fair plas,
- Loth and his wife were there;** jn wheche place Antron jlogged was he  
and with hym Sire kay, ful certeinle. 12300  
and artheur ful previly jlogged he was  
jn þe kyngges chombre, so fil the cas.
- Antron, Kay, and Arthur** And Whanne Kyng Loth to mete Was Set,  
aftir Antron he sente, with-owten let, 12304  
and also anon aftyr Sire kay,  
that but a 3ong knyht was that day.
- [leaf 135 b]** So pat kyng loth ordeyned there  
that Antron & Sire kay j-logged were 12308  
jn his owne chambre ful previly ;
- were to stay in the king's lodgings.**

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as if it had  
been her hus-  
band.

that of non othir took sche non kepe  
but of hire owne lord so dere,  
weneng to hire to ben hire fere.

Arthur,  
understand-  
ing how it  
was,

and whanne that Arthewr felte this,  
thane wiste he wel, with-owten mys,  
that of hym sche took non kepe  
but as a womman that was jn slepe.

embraced her  
in return,

So that he embraced hire ageyn,  
and so be hire he lay, jn certeyn,  
where-offen the lady ful joyful was ;  
sche wende hire Lord hadde ben jn pat plas.

and begot  
Mordret.

and that Nyht, in certein to say,  
was mordret begeten, with-owten delay,  
jn this maner as 3e now here.

When the  
queen had  
fallen fast  
asleep,  
he stole away.

And whanne that Arthur his wil hadde there,  
he ne slepte non maner thing,  
tyl that lady was fallen jn Slombring ;  
thane stalkyd Arthur previliche a-way.

Next morn-  
ing he told  
her,

For per-of ne wyste non, the sothe to say,  
tyl on the morwe, as hit gan falle,  
that hym-self hit tolde jn the halle,

whilst serv-  
ing her at  
dinner.

whanne sche was set at hire denere,  
and Arthur as hire kervere knelede there.

She had  
noticed his  
long kneel-  
ing,  
and made a  
remark about  
it.

So that hit happede tho, this lady gent  
of his long knelyng took good entent.

“leve sevs,” sche seide, “3ong Bachelere,  
Ful longe [now] 3ow thinken that 3e knelen her.”

[leaf 135 c]

And He Answerede Ful Boldlich Ageyn :

He replied :  
“ I cannot  
kneel too  
long.  
For I cannot  
deserve the  
great boon.”  
She axed for  
an explan-  
ation.

“ to longe may j not knelen, certeyn,

For j ne may not deserven the grete bownte,  
myn owne lady, that 3e han don for me.”

thane axede this lady anon ryht :

“ what bowntes ben tho, gentyl wyht ? ”

Arthur made  
her promise  
not to tell  
anybody,

thane seide Arthur, certeinle,  
that for him discovered scholde hit neuere be,  
ne non thyng to hire he wolde discrye,

but 3if of trowthe sche wolde hym affye

12364. *Slombring*, o blurred.

12374. MS. *longe 3ow*.

- that neuer sche scholde discouere it to non creature,  
and also anothis thing sche schold hym Sure :  
that harm to his body scholde sche neuere do,  
ne be hire to ben purchased nether to ne fro. 12388  
And sche hire trowthe ensured hym ful son  
as womman of that mater took kepe non.  
thane anon Arthewr gan hire to telle  
prevely betwixen hem how hit be-felle, 12392  
and jn what maner that he be hire lay ;  
al he hire tolde thike same day.  
Anon this lady gan wexen red,  
that for pure schame sche was ny ded ; 12396  
but non wyht wiste of here covyne.  
for at that tyme wolde sche no more dyne  
but let tables ben drawen, verament,  
and ful faste to hire chombre sche went. 12400  
lo, thus zonge Arthur be his soster lay,  
that kyng Lothis wif was that day ;  
but hit behappede neuere aftyr more.  
and thus was Mordret of hire body bore, 12404  
For sche knew wel be tyme & space  
that he Arthewr with childe sche was.
- Whanne that the tydynges gonnen forto springe  
that this zonge Arthur scholde be kyng,  
and this Mordret was tho j-bore,  
thane jn herte louede sche him wel more  
thane ony man cowde tellen that day,  
but for hire lord sche dorste nowht say. 12408  
and mochel sorwe sche hadde jn herte  
for that werre, that was so smerte,  
and jn that rewme so many a schowr  
betwixen hire lord and kyng Arthowr  
and betwixen oper peple also  
that in theke rewme weren tho. 12412  
So that hit happed vpon a day,  
that zonge Gaweyn scholde hym go play,  
and qweyntely was he arayed there  
jn manere of a zong sqwyere  
that on huntynge scholde fare 12420

and not to do  
him any  
bodilly harm.

Then he told  
her how it  
all had hap-  
pened.

The queen,  
almost dead  
with shame,

left the table,

and hurried  
into her  
room.

She never  
after had  
such inter-  
course with  
him.

When the  
news of  
Arthur's  
exaltation  
spread, and  
Mordret was  
born,  
she loved him  
in her heart.

She was very  
sorry for the  
war

between him  
and her hus-  
band.—

One day, Ga-  
wain comes,  
ready for  
hunting,

to chasen bothe the hert & hare 12424

with many  
greyhounds.

with two les of grehoundis jn pat place,  
& besides him stood there 3it two brace.

He is a fine  
man,

he was the fairest schapen man  
that jn his tyme ony knew than ;

12428

but this storye not declareth here

with one  
peculiarity:  
at the dif-  
ferent hours  
of the day,

Sauf of on thing in this manere :  
that he hadde certein tymes of þe day ;

12432

what that they weren j schal 3ow say.

whanne that he ros on morwen vpryht,  
jn the world ne was there a strengere knyht ;

and at the ovr of pryme, *with-owten* delay,

his strength  
increases and  
decreases  
(cf. Notes).

his strenkthe hit doublede Every day ;

12436

and at the our of Tiers hit doublede eft sone,

and eft-sones hit dowbled at the None ;

and so alle the oures of the nyht

*with* him it abod jnto day lyht ;

12440

So that Every morwenyng

thus ferle gawayn, *with-outen* lesyng.

He finds his  
mother by  
the fire,

Whanne gaweyn entrede the chambre there,

as 3e hauen herd rehersed here,

12444

[leaf 135 d]

His modyr Lay be on chemene,

and there-jn fyr ful gret plente,

brooding  
over the war  
between the  
Christians,

as a woman that ful pensif was

For hire brothyr jn that plas,

12448

and for the werre, was hem be-twene ;

thus lay that lady & morned be-dene ;

and for schedyng of blood ful gret plente,

and the inva-  
sion of the  
heathen.

that was amonges the cristiente,

12452

and for the hethen that entred were

jnto that Lond amonges hem there.

When she  
sees him,

Whanne that lady Gaweyn beheld,

that tyme it were to beren armes & scheld,

12456

Sche began to wepen riht sore.

she begins to  
weep.

Anon Sire gaweyn axede hire wherfore.

“ certes, sone, j haue now gret Skyl,

“ You and  
your brothers  
waste your  
time ;

For 3e 3oure tyme ne don but spyl

12460

and ek 3oure bretherin, jn certeyn,

3e don but spillen 3oure tyme jn veyn,

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& sette on & tolde hem al on ende  
holychē hou that mater gan wende.

Gawein vows  
to take  
knighthood  
only from  
Arthur,

And whanne that gaweyn herde al this,  
anon to his modir he seide, j-wys :

12504

“ he þe trowthe j owe to God & ʒow,  
of on thing j schal maken avow :

that swerd ne armvre to beren jn fyht,  
tyl that kyng Artheur haue mad me knyht.

12508

and to help  
him against  
his foes.

and we to his cowrt scholen gon  
him forto helpen azens his fon,

ʒyf ʒe welen helpen vs owht þerto ;

The brothers  
will do the  
same.

bothe my bretheren scholen þedir go

12512

of hym forto ben dubbid knyhtes

& after to helpen him jn his fyhtes

[leaf 136 a]

Aʒens Hem Alle that Hym Wrong Wylen Don ;

we scholen him gon helpen everichon.”

12516

The queen  
says she will  
bless the day  
when Loth  
and Arthur  
are good  
friends again.

“ Now, swete children, as towching me,  
neuere disturbeled scholde ʒe be.

For that day wolde j ones abyde,

and blessin j wolde that jlke tyde,

12520

To sen ʒoure Fadir & ʒoure oncle jn fere

as goode frendes as euere they were ;

hit were to me as joyful tydyng

as to ben lady of alle worldly thing.”

12524

Gawein asks  
her to cease  
weeping ;

“ Now, leve modyr,” quod Gawayn tho,

“ lef ʒe ʒoure weping & doth not so.

For on avow j schal here make :

Aftyр that j my leve take,

12528

J schal neuere sen ʒow eft ageyn,

tyl my Fadir & min vnclē, certeyn,

ryht goode frendes that they be,

er that eftsones ʒow, modir, j se.

12532

and min owne bretheren scholen gon with me

azens my Fadyr al forto be.”

And she re-  
plies : “ God  
make you all  
good men !”

“ Now swete sone,” quod the modir thanne,

“ God make ʒow alle Ryht goode menne !”

12536

During this  
conversation,

And as Gawayn thus to his modyr spak,  
jnto the chambre there entrede, with-owten lak,

12507. *armvre*, *v* a hybrid of *v* and *u*.

- bothe Agrevains and Ek Guerrers  
and Gaheries, þat weren stronge & fers, 12540  
and herden there of here talkyng  
& also of here modris gret morneng.  
thane seide Agrevains to Gaweyn anon :  
“ 3e ben more to blame thanne we echon, 12544  
For 3e ben eldest of vs alle ;  
therefore to 3ow hit hadde be-falle  
vs to han lad, knyhtes to han be  
mad of him, most of dignite. 12548  
and him to serve let vs now reke,  
of whom worschipe al the world doth speke.  
For god forbede but 3if that we  
as worthi jn armes scholden be 12552  
as they sein Ambroy oyselet is,  
For here he moste kithen his pris.  
For the hethene ben entred vs vppon,  
& distroyen the contre be on & on, 12556  
and jn this contre peple non js  
hem owt to dryven, with-owten mys,  
but only be helpe of kyng Arthewr.  
therefore now let vs gon this owr 12560  
and armes of hym forto take  
and with him to risen, bothe slepe & wake,  
and with him to fyhten azens his fon,  
For so is vs mochel better to don. 12564  
For here non thing ne mown we wyne ;  
therefore lete vs faste hens twynne,  
rather than here to lesenoure Renown  
and with the hethen ben taken & leid in presown 12568  
and so to lesen botheoure tyme & age ;  
this is non of the sevene sage.”
- Whanne gaweyn herde his brothir so sayn,  
thane was he jn herte ful fayn, 12572  
and was ryht joyful of his talkyng,  
whiche him plesede ouer alle thing.  
“ Now lakketh vs nowht at this Tyde

12570. MS. *is non of nō of the.*



asks his  
mother to see  
to their  
equipment.

but oure aray wherwith to Ryde ;  
and therefore *with-jnne* these xiiij dayes,  
Modyr, 3e helpen here now to arayen vs.”

12576

She joyfully  
promises to  
do so,

whanne that here Modyr vndirstod this,  
a ioyful womman sche was, j-wys,  
and thanked god ful many a Sithe.

12580

“ For 3ow to arayen j schal hyen me blyve,  
For hors ne harneys scholen 3e non lakke,  
nethir that be-houith to 3oure bakke.”

12584

and her sons  
are as merry  
as bird on  
bough.

thanne weren the children glad jnowh  
and also merye as bryd on bowh.

Now of this levc now we oure talkyng,  
and let vs forth speken of the kyng,  
that out of sorham cite ryt ful hevyly  
bencheson of the hethene pat ben him by.

12588

[leaf 136 b]

Now forthermore let vs tellen son  
how that these iij kynges ben agon  
owt of Sorham, that cyte there,  
jnto othir contres, *with-owten* dwere.

12592

After the  
three other  
kings have  
left Sorham,

thanne rod owt kyng clarioun, j vndirstonde,  
that was kyng of Northumberlonde,

12596

and rides to  
Berland

and rod him to on fair cite,  
that berland hyhte, certeinle ;  
whiche cite he kepte wondir wel

with 3000  
men.

*with* iij thousand men bothe goode & lel  
*with-owten* hem that jn the town were,  
of whiche fyve hundred fond he there.

12600

He holds the  
border-lands,  
fights the  
heathen with  
varying  
success,

So that tho marches he kepte ful strong,  
and euere with the hethene he fawht among,  
and often he wan & often he loste,  
as hit behappeth jn every oste.

12604

and cuts off  
their supply.

thus this kyng anoyed hem sore,  
for jn that contre vitaille no more  
mihten they geten to here refressching ;  
So hit hadde vpe gadered clarioun the kyng.

12608

(5) Then the  
King of a  
Hundred  
Knights,

So that after kyng Clarioun was gon,  
the kyng of c. knyhtes isswede anon  
12591. The top of the column blank.

12612

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- a maid called Carville assists the heathen. that a maiden that carville hyhte,  
Socoured the hethen with alle hire myhte ; 12653  
hadagabrantis soster, certein, was sche,  
that thike castel hadde jn baylle.
- They are safe in those border-lands, And be tho marches, j sey 3ow ryhte,  
non of the kynges there ne myhte, 12656  
for non power that they myhten do,  
non noysaunce the hethen don vnto.  
for bothe viaunde & vytaylle þe hethen hadde  
out of þe castel ech day to hem ladde. 12660
- and the castle cannot be taken. for that castel so strong hit was tho,  
that non harm myhte comen hit vnto.
- (Carville is an enchantress,  
like Morgain  
and Juanne, (For this carville cowde more of enchantement  
than ony oper womman, verament, 12664  
except morgain, that Sostir was  
To kyng Arthur, jn everi plas,  
oper ellis juanne, the love of merlyn,  
that of enchantement coude wel & fyn ; 12668  
For sche knew more of merlynes konnyng  
thanne alle þe creatures that weren levying,  
as 3e scholen heren jn tyme comeng,  
whanne 3e me heren speke of swich a thing.) 12672  
what so þorwh helpe of that castel  
the hethen ben refresschid wel,  
wherfore cast out of londe mow they not be  
but be helpe of kyng Arthour, Sykerle, 12676  
and be the helpe ek of kyng Ban,  
that is holden so worthi a man,  
also kyng Bors jn here compenye  
(þe sonere out of þis lond scholen they hye), 12680  
and be helpe of oper mo :
- and king Loth's children. kyng Lothis children with hem scholen go,  
as here-aft[e]r 3e scholen heren say  
jn storye j rad this jlke same day. 12684

(7) King Brangor rides to the city of Strangor,

Than owt of sorhant wente kyng Brangor  
with iij thousand men j-armed thor,  
and to strangore cite he rod ful faste ;

12680. *son<sup>e</sup>*, abbreviation mark in darker ink.

12683. MS. *here afte*.

- For next to the Roche hit was ful preste, 12688  
there as the hethene j-logged were.  
and aftyr sowdiours he sent Every where, and sends  
tyl that assemblyd he hadde the Ryht for more  
vj thousand armed & redy to fyht 12692 soldiers.  
with-owten iij thousand he with him browhte,  
that forto werren on the hethen ne dredden they nowht.  
this kyng brangores hadde a wif, King Bran-  
kyng Andoannes dowhter, with-outen strif, 12696 gorn's wife is  
that of costantyn-noble was Emperovr a daughter  
and therto a man of ful gret honour. of Andoane  
and he his wif, that ded was, (Adrian<sup>o</sup>),  
tweyne dowhtres he hadde jn that plas, 12700 emperor of  
of whiche kyng Brangor weddid þe tone, Constanti-  
and þe tothir at costantyn beleft alone, nople.  
that weddid was to the kyng of hungrye, Her sister is  
as j sey 3ow certeinlye. 12704 married to  
the king of  
Hungary.  
So that at thende of fyve 3er, j wen, These have  
a knave child hadden they hem be-twen a son,  
of the fairest forme that myhte be, handsome,  
that becam bothe worthi & strong, sikerle. 12708 brave, and  
strong,  
at whiche tyme whanne kyng brangor  
out of Sorhant paste thor,  
thike child of age that tyme was old enough  
a knyht to ben mad jn ony plas. 12712 to become a  
knight,  
and he was clepid he his Ryht Name and called  
3onge sagremour, that child of fame, Sagreinour.  
whiche that after dyde gret prowesse,  
as the lond of logres bereth witesse, 12716  
as aftir jn this storye here scholen 3e fynde,  
whanne aftyr to this mater j come be kynde.
- The Renown that Sprang Abrod so Wyde [leaf 136 d]  
of kyng Arthur jn Every syde 12720 When king  
and of his largenesse & of his gentrie, Arthur's  
alle the world hit spak of, trewelye. fame spread  
throughout  
the world,  
so þat jn alle stronge contres, with-owten lesynge,  
was non speche but of Arthur the kyng. 12724

12688. A second *Roche* crossed out after *ful*.12696. *d* crossed out after *kyng*. 12710. MS. *pasten*.

- For his los tho sprange so wyde,  
 that jnto costantynnoble hit cam that tyde ;  
 that so ferforth hit cam to Ere,  
 so 3onge sagremour herde þerof there. 12728  
 that nas 3it but fyftene 3er old,  
 a fair 3ong Bachelor and a bold.  
 and whanne that he herde this tydyng,  
 he ne wolde not letten for non thing, 12732  
 tyl he were mad knyht of his hond,  
 the sothe j do 3ow to vndirstond.  
 and often to his counseil seide he  
 that a worthy man moste he nedis be— 12736  
 “whanne that myn ayel, adrians the kyng,  
 of him knyht was mad, with-owten lesing.”  
 For that he was þe nexte Eyr  
 that to theke Empire scholde repeyr. 12740  
 so that Sagremour swor, certein,  
 that knyht scholde he neuere be, pleyn,  
 tyl that kyng Artheur of Breteygne  
 hym knyht hadde mad, jn certeygne. 12744  
 So that they spoken þer-offen so ofte,  
 that thike noise wax hye on lofte.  
 So that Adrians gan him to hyc  
 Sagremours to sende forth, Sekerlye, 12748  
 jn-to breteyne with gold & fe  
 and what thing that to him belonged on lond & se.  
 now speke we no more 3it of this matere,  
 but here-after more scholen 3e here. 12752

3yt procedith forth this storye :

- whanne kyng brangores was past. trewlye,  
 owt of Sorhant thike cyte,  
 kyng karados aftir wente, sikerle 12756  
 with his Meyne arayed ful Ryht,  
 foure thousand men redy to fyht.  
 and to strangore cite he wente ful faste  
 (alle his men of armes with him paste) 12760

12731. *whāne*, *n* corrected from *l*.

12742. *pleyn*, *p* corrected from *f*, appearing like a hybrid of those characters.

12747. *him* twice, the former crossed out.

young Sagremour, at Constantinople, also hears of him,

and wants to be knighted by him.

He speaks of him to his council,

and swears never to be a knight except through him.

Adrians therefore sends his grandson to Britain.

After Brangor, (the) king Karados leaves Sorhant,

and goes to Strangor.

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More soldiers  
are sent for.

3it sente he forth bothe day & nyht  
to seken soudeours be every syde ;  
So that him comen with-jnne a tyde 12800

what on hors & what on foote  
x thousand Saudours, wel j wote,  
with-owten alle his owne Meyne  
and ek the peple of that cyte. 12804

They fight  
the heathen,

so with the hethen helden they bataille,  
& often goodes wonnen, with-owten faille,

and repair  
the walls of  
the city.

and reparailled the walles of here cyte,  
pere as it was most wont feble to be. 12808

thus longe dured pe werre tho  
be-twene thike partyes bothe to.

(10) Duke  
Escam

Thanne aftir this out of Sorhant wente  
dewk Escam of kambenye, veramente, 12812  
with iiij thousand j-armed ful wel  
what on hors & on foote echedel.

rides to  
his city  
Cambeny,

And forth he rod bothe day & nyht,  
tyl to Cambenie cite he cam ful ryht, 12816  
the whiche of richesse hadde gret plente  
and per-jnne thre thousand men, Sikerle.

and is wel-  
comed by the  
inhabitantz.

and whanne they syen pe dewk cambenye,  
gret joye they maden, certeinlye, 12820

For pe deseisse they hadde there  
of the hethen, that weren hem nere,  
that comeng weren to on castel,

For whiche kyng Artheur ordeyned ful wel, 12824

er that he paste ouer the se  
jnto tarmelyde lond, Sikerle.

He sends for  
more people

3it sente that dewk al abowte  
to geten more peple to his rowte ; 12828

So that vij thousand he hadde redy,  
as this storie witnessith apertly,

with-owten hem pat weren jn that cite,  
which pat kepe weren ordeyned, Sykerle. 12832

and fights the  
heathen.

and with the hethen fowhten they ofte,  
for mochel Sorwe was pere on lofte.

12827. A paragraph mark before this 3it ; it seems to have its right place before the 3it of l. 12835.

- 3it whanne these barouns out of sorhant were gon,  
 thanne lefte kyng Vryens behinde hem Echon, 12836 (11) King  
 and sent his gold jnto Eche contre Uriens, who  
 aftyr sowdiours ful gret plente ; remains at  
 so that viij thousand to him comen ful ryht, Sorhant,  
 and jn the cyte viij thousand Redy to fyht. 12840 sends for  
 For a sege there lay hem faste by plenty of  
 but on jorne thennes, Sekerly ; soldiers.  
 so that often they metten jn same  
 al on Ernest & not on game. 12844  
 som tyme they wonne & losten also, In the neigh-  
 as the aventure torned bothe to & fro. bourhood,  
 so that v 3er, whilles hit dede endure, a town is  
 was gret meschef, j 3ow Ensure, 12848 besieged.  
 That othir levying was not jn that contre They fight  
 But as Ech of other Hyt tok, Sykerle, [leaf 137 b]  
 the cristene of the hethene som on day, constantly  
 & the hethen of cristene anothir, jn fay. 12852 snatching  
 thus was distroyed that contre, the food from  
 that pyte & rewthe hit was to se. each other.—
- Jn this manere the werre dyd laste,  
 that ech azeis oper bekeryd ful faste. 12856  
 thens torned the hethen from pat contre  
 jnto kyng Artheures lond, certeinle. Eventually  
 And there diden they gret damage, the heathen  
 for there nas non to letten here owtrage, invade Ar-  
 but as it kam be aventure, thur's land,  
 as gret god wolde, j 3ow Ensure, 12860  
 bothe faire & good of sqwyers 3onge, where an en-  
 as goode as myhte ben Rehersed with tonge, 12864 counter with  
 that kepten ful wel that ylke lond, the young  
 tyl kyng Arthewr cam hom, 3e vndirstond. squires,  
 and now scholen heren more of this, and with king  
 how kyng Arthours lond was kept, j-wis. 12868 Arthur, is  
 in store for  
 them.

Now telleth this tale 3it furthermore :  
 whanne that Galachim herde tellen thore,

Chap. XIII.

12843. Abbreviation mark in darker ink.



Galachim  
sends a mes-  
senger to  
his cousins  
to ask for a  
private meet-  
ing (cf. ll.  
12219 ff.).

he took a messenger ryht anon,  
and to gaweyn he sent him ful son, 12872

that previliche to-gederis scholden they mete  
jn a certeyn forest, & not to lete,  
and his bretheryn with him to brynge,  
and that he make non Taryenge, 12876

but on the morwe next Pask day  
there forto meten with-owten delay.

The messen-  
ger arrives in  
Orkney,

the messenger rod bothe day & nyht,  
tyl jnto orkanye jn wales he kam ful ryht, 12880

and delivers  
his message,

and dide his arende pere ryht anon  
To gaweyn & to his bretherin echon,  
and seide that—"Galachim sente 3ow to say  
with him to meten swich a certein day 12884

fixing day  
and place.

jn the forest of Brokelond  
at swich a place, 3e vndirstond.  
For pere sekerly he wyl 3ow abyde,  
3if he be heyl, what so be-tyde." 12888

They gladly

whanne that they herden this messengere,  
gret joye they maden amonges hem there,  
and seiden, with-owten ony lettyng  
they wolden ben there be pe day spring. 12892

promise to  
come,

for som nede per was, they wisten trewelye,  
that they were aftir sent jn so gret hye.

and reward  
the messen-  
ger,

thanne to this messenger they 3oven a steede  
and oper gret 3iftes to his meede. 12896

who speedily  
returns  
home.

thanne spared the messenger ne per hors ne man,  
tyl that to galachim ful sone he cam,  
that jn that place abod styll there  
of his cosynes to heren answeere. 12900

Galachim, on  
hearing the  
answer of his  
cousins,

Whanne that this messenger was comen ageyn,  
to his lord galachim he seide, ful pleyn,  
the answeere of his cosines dere  
and that they gretten him al jn fere. 12904

gets ready,

"and aftyr Pask the thrydde day  
they scholen there 3ow meten, with-owten delay."  
thanne ordeyned him fast this galachym

12897. MS. *messeng* with an *es*-mark at the end and an *er*-mark above it.

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The barons  
oppose him  
unjustly.

I will be  
made a  
knight only  
by him."

& with wrong þe barouns azens him goune fyht.  
for weteth wel," quod gaweyn, "Sekerlye,  
that knyht j wele ben mad of his bodye  
and neuere er armes to bere,  
certein, galachim, j 3ow swere." 12948

Galachim is  
delighted,

and they all  
rejoice.

Whanne that galachym vndirstood al this,  
his herte was ful of joye and blys, 12952

They tell  
each other  
of their  
mother's  
words.

and als mochel joye to-gederis they made  
as thouh alle the world they hade,  
and told hym þat for non othyr thyng  
for hym he sente, with-owten lesyng. 12956

Ek he told hym al jn fere  
hou it kam be talkyng of his modir dere.  
thane to galachim spak gaweyn þe bolde:  
"Ryght evene the same my modir me tolde." 12960

Then after  
agreeing to  
meet again  
in a fort-  
night,

and whanne that thus they hadden spoken jn fere,  
anon they acordyd thanne ryht there  
whanne they wolden taken here jorne:  
with-june xv dayes, ful Sykerle. 12964

they ride  
home to equip  
themselves.

thane wenten they forth ech jn his way  
hem forto purveyen alle maner aray,  
as behouede to swyche children so goode,  
that comen weren of so hygh a blode. 12968

Galachim  
musters 200  
well-armed  
warriors.

thane rod forth galachym anon ryht  
hym forto ordeyne with al his myht,  
tyl ij c. of knyhtes & sqwyers had he  
ful wel j-harneised jn alle degre,  
of the beste that he cowde chese,  
for be his wyl he wolde non lese. 12972

He leaves  
home without  
telling his  
father.

[leaf 137 d]

And thus wente he prevyly forth his way,  
that non word to his fadir wolde he say. 12976

His cousins

And streyht to Brokelond thanne Rydeth He,  
and there abydeth with his meyne,  
Tyl gawein & his bretherin comen were;  
this galachim abod hem ryht There. 12980

For they hem purchased on here syde

- v. .c. Men with hem to Ryde  
 what of worthy knyhtes & of sqwiere  
 wel j-horsed & harneysed al jn fere,  
 and lordis children weren they alle  
 and þe most part knyhtes, as hit gan falle.  
 but of galachymmes meyne  
 nere but xx knyhtes, certeinle.
- whanne they to-gederis weren j-met,  
 there was gret joye, with-owten let.  
 thanne conseilled they to-gederis tho  
 jnto what partye they wolden go.  
 thanne acorded they everichon  
 that to Londone in breteine þey wolden gon,  
 the chyef cyte of Artheur the kyng ;  
 For þere scholden þey sonnest heren tydyng  
 hope of the kyng and þe hethene also,  
 that jn that contre dide mochel wo.
- Now, as ȝe me heren hope reden & say,  
 jn the begynneng of the mounthe of may,  
 whanne trees & medwes wexen grene  
 and faire flowres growen hem be-twene,  
 ek also Bryddis meryly don Synge,  
 also swete dewes jn the mornenge,  
 and also hertes lyhtenen be kynde,  
 ek thanne is merye vnder wode lynde,  
 thanne thouhte Gaweyn & galachim,  
 Gaheris & gwerrers, & mo with hym,  
 and Agrevayn jn here compenye :  
 faste to ryde gonne they hem hye,  
 whiles the morwenyng hit was cold ;  
 they thowhten to ryden, þat weren so bold.  
 for they weren tendre and ȝong of age,  
 hardy, bold, & ful of corage,  
 and þerto j-armed wondirly wel  
 bothe jn erne and ek jn stel,  
 here swerdis hangyng on here sadelbowe,  
 and thus they reden al be rowe.  
 for jn þat contre was gret doute  
 of the hethene. that ryden aboute
- 12984 have 500 noble followers,  
 12988 mostly knyghts.  
 12992 When they all meet, there is great joy.  
 12996 They decide to go to London.  
 13000 In the lovely month of May,  
 13004  
 13008 Gawain and his cousins start on their journey,  
 13012 full of courage and well armed.  
 13016  
 13020 For the land is infested by the heathen,

who plunder  
everywhere.

bothe for pray and ek vytaylle ;  
alle that contre diden they asaille.  
whiche contre so ful of good hit was,  
whanne they entrede jnto that plas, 13024  
that gret deal hit is to here  
what distroccioun they maden there.

On the third  
day,  
they meet  
four viking  
kings,

[leaf 138 a]

The thridde day whanne they goune ryde,  
3e scholen here what hem gan be-tyde : 13028  
they metten kyng leodegron, verament,  
Kyng Sonygron, And Kyng mandelent,  
Therto kyng Sernagn jn compeyne,  
that hadde distroyed al that contre ; 13032

with im-  
mense booty

For thens they ladden many gret praye  
of wyn, flesch, vytaille, The sothe to saye ;  
and the portis weren aryved with marchaundise,  
the ryalest that ony man cowde devyse, 13036

laden on  
horses and  
vehicles.

that v hundred somers weren charged there,  
xv chares, & ten .c. charyettes jn Fere.  
this cariage so wondir gret hit was,  
that the powdir ros wondirly jn that plas, 13040  
that onnethes ony other myhte se

fire, and  
smoke,

For dowst, that was so gret plente,  
therto the Fyr & smoke so strong also,  
that non man myhte sen where oper gan go. 13044

and the poor  
people bewail  
their losses.

whanne these zonge children herden the cry  
of the powre peple that cam hem by  
For the harm that the hethen hadden do,  
of whom ther weren ten thousand & mo 13048  
with-owten hem that weren on foote,  
that both robbed & brende, god hit wote—

The young  
squires ask  
for king  
Arthur.

Whanne the children this dolour Sye  
of that poure peple to-forn here Eye, 13052  
they axeden where kyng Arthour was.

The people  
answer : " He  
must have  
gone to  
Tarnelide.

they ne wiste, they seide, jn non cas—  
" but he be jnto the lond of Tarmelyde,

13029. *kȳg*, *g* squeezed in afterwards.

13038, 13039. .c. and so added above the line.

13047. The second *the* corrected from *he*.

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that they ladden toward here ost  
with thre thousand Paynemis of gret bost.  
and hit was passed the mydday,  
as this storye here doth say, 13096

Ek wondir hot hit was tho ryht  
both for sqwyer and Ek for knyht.  
Anon as þe chyldren here enemyes sye,  
azens hem faste gonnen they hye, 13100

Also Faste As they myhten Ryde ;  
with here enemye they metten that tyde,  
and theke tyme slown doun ryht euerichon,  
that thike tyme from hem paste not on. 13104

thike day be gaweyn so manye weren ded,  
that body & hors weren al blood red.  
For azens the ax that he bar on hond,  
there myhte non man his dynt with-stand. 13108

Eke his other bretheryn dyden wel tho,  
For they slown that day mani a fo.  
and galachym with gawayn evere was,  
that mani merveilles wrowh jn that plas ; 13112

For al that euere stood jn his weye,  
he slowh down ryht, as j ȝow seye.  
but of þe marterdom þat made gaweyn,  
hit is wondir to tellen, jn certeyn ; 13116

For azens his strok wolde nowht abyde  
nethir harneys ne man that ilke tyde.  
So fowhten the children that jlke day  
with hem þat ladden that jlke pray, 13120

that there ne sckaped but xx men,  
of whiche ȝit there weren ten  
that returned to hem that comen behynde,  
of hem socour ȝif they myhten fynde ; 13124

of wheche vij thousand fully there were,  
but alle wel armed weren they not there,  
for hit was trossed hem be-fore  
among the chariettis that wenten thore : 13128

For the gret hete that was thanne,  
onharmed ther rool ful mani a manne.

conducted  
by 3000  
heathen.

It is a very  
hot day.

[leaf 134 b]

The squires  
attack and  
slay the  
heathen ;

Gawein,

his brothers,

and Galachym  
doing  
wonders,

more particu-  
larly Gawein.

Only twenty  
heathen  
escape ;  
ten of them  
reach the 7000  
men who  
come march-  
ing behind.

Many of these  
carry no arms  
on account of  
the heat.

13094. *bost*, *t* through correction.

13115. *made*, *d* through correction.

- whanne these ten fugytyves comen ageyn  
to tho vij thousand, they tolden hem pleyne  
how that alle jslayn they were  
that here cariage cowndyet there. 13132 The fugitives  
tell of their  
defeat.
- Whanne that the hethin vndirstodyn al this,  
anon to here armes they wenten, j-wis ;  
thike that ony armure hadden tho,  
dyden as wel as they myhten do. 13136 Those who  
have their  
weapons at  
hand, get  
ready.
- so that the thridde partye there  
of armure destitewd they were, 13140 But the third  
part have  
their armour  
lyng on the  
carts
- whiche jn charettis was crossed be-fore,  
pat these 3ong sqwyers hadde wonnen thore ;  
whiche to Londone they senten, with-owten let,  
be theke passauntes that with hem met,  
and let coundie hem be anothir way,  
lest pat these hethene scholde hem betray. 13144 now seized  
by the squires  
and sent off  
to London.
- and sethen they seweden forth the chas,  
til that they comen jnto that plas  
there as thei to-gederis mette,  
bothe hethen & cristen, with-owte lette. 13148 The squires,  
in pursuit of  
the fugitives,  
fall upon the  
heathen force.
- thanne there began ful gret bataylle.  
For there slowhe caweyn, with-owten faille, 13152 Gawein  
cleaves the  
body of one  
of their  
kings,
- kyng Noas the Brun of yrlond.  
his strokis weren sweche, 3e vndirstond,  
that with his ax he clef him vnto,  
that asondir fyl his Body tho. 13156
- Galachim so smot tho kyng Sonigran,  
that jnto the feld his hed fley than ;  
for so took galachim there vppon,  
that his strok dorste abyden non. 13160 Galachim  
cuts off the  
head of an-  
other,
- And Gaheries chased kyng Gwyneband  
the drawht of an archier, j vndirstand.  
for he hadde beten his brothir gwerrers,  
perfore jn herte he was ful fers. 13164 Gaheries  
chases a  
third, Gulne-  
bant,  
who has hit  
Guerrers with  
a spear.
- (with a spere gwineband him smot, sikerle,  
wherfore gaheries wende ded he hadde be ;  
but Gwerrers harm cawhte non (That Gurr-  
ers was  
unhurt,

13152. *ffor*, *ff* through correction. 13160. *strok*, *k* blotted.  
13161. *Gwyneband*, *d* corrected from *t*.



that ilke tyme of his fon ; 13168

Gaheries did  
not know.)

but that wiste not the sothe gaheries.)

So forth he prekede jn that pres  
with his swerd j-drawen on hande,  
as faste as the hors myhte fleande. 13172

[leaf 138 c]

Guinebant  
flees in terror.

Whanne Gwynebant Gaheryet tho beheld,  
that he cam so prekyng jn the feld,  
he fledde faste from hym a-way  
For drede of deth he hadde sein that day. 13176

(For Gaheries  
has that day  
made almost  
as great  
havoc as  
Gawein.)

(For he was of merveillous prowesse,  
and that day nygh dede as gret dystresse  
jnto litel partye as dyde Gawayn,  
and al the sothe now Scholde j sayn. 13180

He has sworn  
an oath

thane swor Gaheriet anon there  
be god & be his blessed modir dere  
that zif euere he myhte armes welde  
to ben a knyht and beryn a schelde, 13184

never to rest,

that he scholde neuere jn place abyde  
nethir day ne nyht, that he nolde ryde  
vppon the hethen, avenged til that he be  
of his brotheris deth, ful certeinle. 13188

till he has  
avenged his  
brother's  
death.)

For he wende gwerres hadde ben dede  
Ful Sekerly there jn that Stede.)  
and euere he sewed forth ful faste,  
tyl he ouergat him at the laste. 13192

Gaheries  
overtakes  
Guinebant.

Behind him  
are the  
hethen men.

So that behindes him weren the hethen men  
an arblastes, j wot wel then.  
thane swed hym Gwynebant's meyne,  
that from that bataylle gonnen they fle. 13196

Gaheries fells  
his foe,

So that to-gederis they metten jn fere,  
that Gaheriet so smot Gwynebant there  
thorwh the helm (ful Sone hit glod)  
that down he fyl with-oute ony abod. 13200

and wants to  
return.

So that the Ryht qwarter fley away  
jnto the Feld that same day.

thane torned gaheriet his hors hed,

13176. MS. *thay day*. 13184. *and, d* corrected from *b*.  
13200. *oute* added above the line.

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Your brother  
Gaheries is  
lost, unless he  
gets speedy  
help.

3e han lost gaheriet, 3oure brothir dere,  
but he som socour the sonnere haue here, 13240  
For a cursed hethene he chasede ful blyve,  
where-thorwh j trowe he hath lost his lyve.

[leaf 138 d]

He chased  
and felled a  
heathen,  
but was pur-  
sued, and  
lies beaten  
in yon dark  
valley!"

For the Hethen He Beet down to grownde,  
but the paynemys sewed jn that stounde, 13244  
and 3ondir jn 3one dyrke valeye  
there lyth gaheriet beten, with-outen delaye.  
For passing gret los it now were  
thus forto lesen 3oure brothir dere." 13248

Gawein prays  
to God and  
the Virgin  
that he may  
not lose his  
brother,

whanne that gaweyn herde of this tydyng,  
anon he preide to hevene kyng  
and to blessid Marye, his modir jn fere,  
that he scholde not lesen his brother dere. 13252

for if he does,  
he will never  
be glad,

"For 3if j hym lese jn this degre,  
joyful jn herte schal j thanne neuere be ;  
and 3if j thus lese hym jn this feld,  
abowtes my nekke neuer hangen schal scheld!" 13256

nor fight  
again.

He lets the  
squire indi-  
cate the spot,

Anon of the Esqwier axede he  
jn what partye that he myhte be.  
thanne he him tolde: "jn 3one valeye  
vndir 3one wode, as j 3ow seye." 13260

and calls on  
his men to  
follow.

thanne 3onge gaweyn ascryed anon  
that his Meyne scholde with hym gon.

Galachim  
says:  
"We have  
laboured hard  
to-day,  
and must  
labour harder  
still!"

"leve cosyn," quod galachim tho,  
"For this nede whom somone 3e so ? 13264  
we han laboured Sore this day,  
and 3it we mosten sorrer, jn fay."

Gawein takes  
the lead,  
as swift as  
an arrow,

So that they disrenged pere anon,  
and to-forn hem alle gaweyn gan gon. 13268  
and also faste he gan forth to Ryde  
as qwarel of arblast doth owt glyde,  
with a Ryht good ax jn his hond.

and works  
his way

and swich Martirdom he made, j vndirstond, 13272  
that thus they Slowen bothe to & fro  
a Myle wey, Er gaheriet they comen to.  
and atte laste gaheriet they fownde

to Gaheries.

13257. *axede*, a through correction.

13259. MS. *than* with an abbreviation stroke over *an*.

13267. MS. *disregend*.

- liggende ful plat to the grownde. 13276 *Gaheris is lying on the ground. The heathen have taken off his helm,*
- (his helm they token of jn that sted,  
for they wolden han smeten of his hed.  
but they bethouhten hem also blyve,  
that they wolden han taken hym on lyve, 13280  
and sende him forth to kyng Bernage,  
on of the hethene ful of corage.  
thane torned they gaheriet pere anon  
to bynden his hondis behinde his bakbon.) 13284 *and want to bind his hands behind his back.*
- thane cam gawein rydyng ful faste,  
whiles ony breth on him myhte laste,  
with a myhty ax beryng on honde ;  
there-with the hethen he thouhte don schonde. 13288  
whanne so with his brothir they token vppon,  
he thowhte of hem to sparen not on.  
Thanne on bothe Sydes he gan on leye,  
that wondir hit is al forto seye, 13292  
that non man dorst his strok abyde.  
thane behelden they that ylke tyde  
that his brothir helden hem be-twene,  
For swiche strokes hadde they non sene. 13296  
So that non lengere wolde they him kepe,  
but 3if to the deth that they wolde lepe.  
whanne Gaheriet say his brothir gawayn,  
tho vp he Stirte and was ful fayn, 13300 *and Gaheris jumps to his feet.*  
and cast his helm vppon his hed  
ful rediliche jn that sted  
and took his swerd & fawht ful faste.  
Ek Agrevayn his brothir he spide atte laste, 13304 *Agrevain brings him a horse,*  
that him an hors pere browht jn hyghe  
and seide : “gaheriet brothir, trewely,  
worth vp faste vppon þis stede.  
For 3e ben to blame, so god me spede, 13308 *and chides him for his foolhardiness.*  
so fer from 3oure felawes forto gon ;  
So myhten 3e han lost 3oure lif anon.  
Anon as Gaheriet to hors was dyht,  
the bretheren semblede with al here myht, 13312

13276. *Grownde, wn* on erasure.13280. *hȳ, y* corrected from *e*. 13281. *fende d* corrected from *t*.13307. *þ* squeezed in afterwards. 13312. MS. *alher*'.

The squirens  
collect their  
forces;

[leaf 139 a]

so do the  
heathen.

and gadered here peple to-gedere jn same,  
For hem was comeng mochel game.

For the Hethen Wente Faste Abowte

here batailles to gaderen jn-to a rowte.

13316

Now let vs resten of this Talkyng  
bothe of the hethene and pe children so 3yng.

And of the passauntes let vs now talke,

that with the cariage to Londone gonne walke.

13320

In the mean-  
time, the  
peasants  
hurry on to  
London with  
the booty,

Now Reherseth forth here this Storye,

that the passauntes gonnen faste hem hye,

as men joyful and glad they were

that the cyte they hadde aprochyd so nere,

13324

For but fowre myles they weren thens ;

and amonges hem but lytel defens,

wherfore they hyed hem wondir faste,

tyl jnto pe cyte that they weren paste.

13328

for they wisten wel, the hethene wolden asaye

3if they myhte geten a3en that praye.

whanne they of the cyte behelden that Syht,

Sore jn here hertis they weren afryht

13332

of that good & of that Richesse

that thike meyne browhte, *with-ouren* distresse.

and ask who  
have wrought  
such a brave  
work.

The cetezeins axeden the passauntis sone

ho that al that prowesse hadde done.

13336

The peasants  
answer :  
"Gawein,  
his brothers,

they seiden that—"gaweyn, kyng Lothis son,

his bretherin & cosines jn viron,

Gaheriet, gwerres, & Agrevayn,

and their  
cousin  
Galachim ;

and galachim here cosyne, jn certayn,

kyng newtres sone, as j 3ow telle,

13340

with the hethene they fyhten ful felle,

and leven Londis, richesse, & alle thyng,

and comen to helpen Artheuroure kyng ;

13344

that neuere for joye ne3er for wrake

oure kyng Artheur nilen not forsake ;

but vij hundred felawes in compenye

a3ens iij thousand this wonnen they, trewlye,

13348

and hem they slowen Everychon ;

that so with this pray gonne we gon.

With 700 men  
against 3000  
they have  
won this.

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a small  
force only.

but iiij xx knyhtes, as j kan sen,  
and but v. hundred of sqwyers,  
that nethir ne semen prowde ne fers, 13388  
and xx that not dubbed ne be,  
and iij c besides thanne, Sykerle."

The chieftains of the heathen, Medelans (Mandelent) and Guinehans (Guinehant, -haut) have their forces divided in two brigades.

but the hethene gouernours that pere were,  
Medelans & guinechans bothe jn fere, 13392  
hadden departyd here meyne  
jnto tweyne bataylles, Sykerle ;  
and jn every bataylle iiij thouse[n]d was  
of tho hethene jn that plas. 13396

Guinehans  
rides for-  
ward ;

So that this Guinehans cam forth be-fore  
with a strong spere jn his handis thore ;  
and gawayn, that to-fore alle oper was  
with his ax on honde jn that plas, 13400  
and boldeliche he rod him to mete ;  
for non maner of thing he wolde not lete.

They meet.

this guinehant with his spores his hors tho smot,  
& mette with gaweyn anon foot hot, 13404

Guinehant  
breaks his  
spear on  
Gawein.

and azens the brest smot him so sore,  
that al on peces the spere fleygh thore.  
for his hauberck was strong jnowgh,  
of double mayl bothe good & towgh, 13408  
and him-Self a worthy Bachelor,  
that on Enche wolde not remeven ther  
for non strok that he cowde sette.

Gawein hits  
him on the  
helmet,

that zonge gaweyn ne did him lette, 13412  
but to hym he rawhte ful ryht  
with his ax so trenchaunt as man of myht.  
vppon his helm he smot him so,

and throws  
him to the  
ground.

that Top ouer tail he gan to go, 13416  
and with that his hors fyl to grownde,  
and this was don jn a lytel stownde.

The heathen  
are amazed.

Whanne that the hethene behelden this,  
of that strok they merveilleden, j-wys, 13420

13389. *not, t* blotted. 13395. MS. *thoufed*.

13403. *hors* added in the right margin.

13405. *Smot, S* daubed.

13413. *ful* twice, the former crossed out.

- For they wende here king ded hadde be ;  
 hym to socouren faste gonne they fle.  
 and gaweyn amonges hem gan to ryde,  
 and they with him fowhten on ech syde,  
 and *with* here gleyves slouen his destrer  
 betwene his thyes, as he Rod ther.  
 thanne thussonne he was on foote  
 bothe angry & fers & of herte ful hote,  
 and on bothe sydes he leyde so vppon,  
 that of hem dorste neghen hym non.  
 thanne cam socour hym abowte,  
 so *pat* pere was strong fyht, with-owten dowte,  
 abowtes gawayn jn that stounde,  
 and euere lay kyng Guinehans atte grounde.  
 For the hethene jn dowte were  
 whethir to reren guinehant they scholden gon pere  
 (owther Abowtes Gawayn forto Abyde ;  
 thus jn dowte they weren that Tyde.  
 but gawayns felawes Fowhten there sore,  
 and the melle wax hard evere more & more.
- Whanne gawayn wist where-abowtes they were,  
 that they wolde taken him presonere  
 & an hethen hadde smeten his broper Agrevayn,  
 wherfore he was sorry, in certayn,  
 and stirte him forth jn al that pres  
*with* his ax on honde (he wolde not ses),  
 and lifte vp his ax pere on hy,  
 pat he thethen to han Smeten, trewly.  
 this hethen ne myhte not wel asterte,  
 but caste vp his Scheld also smerte ;  
 & with his ax he smot hit on peces two,  
 that jnto pe feld they flowen tho.  
 the strok vppon pe left scholder alyhte,  
 and down to pe girdyl he clef him down ryhte,  
 that down to pe Erthe he fyl anon,  
 and gaweyn his hors took ful son.  
 thanne vp he stirte jn ryht gret haste,

They hasten  
to his assist-  
ance,

13424

and kill Ga-  
weyn's horse.

13428

But Gawein  
keeps them  
at bay.

He gets help.

13432

13436

The heathen  
do not know  
whether to  
assist Guine-[leaf 139 c]  
hant, or turn  
on Gawein.

13440

Gawein, in  
danger of  
being taken,

13444

makes a rush  
into the  
press,

13448

13452

cuts through  
a heathen's  
shield,

13456

cleaves him  
to the girdle,and throws  
himself on  
his horse.13430. *hym*, MS. *hym*.13442. *they*, *y* squeezed in afterwards.



Encouraging  
his comrades,

anon to his Felawes he ascriede wel faste :

“let se, Eche man prove his prowesse,  
that *with* vs here ben, more oþer lasse. 13460

For now scholen ȝe sen þat bothe my strokes & myht  
this oure ben doubled, j ȝow plyht.”

he plunges  
into fresh  
combats.

thane amonges the hethens gan he ryde,  
and gret martirdom he mad that tyde, 13464  
that the pecis flowen jn-to the feld  
as wel of mennes bodies as of scheld.

By this time  
Guinehans  
is put on  
horseback ;

be that tyme guinehans was vp set  
To asayen ȝif he cowde don ony bet. 13468

he rides  
against  
Agrevain,

he took a stowt lawnce, jn certeyn,  
and faste he rod azens Agreveyn,  
that his owne cosin hadde j-slayn  
be-forn his owne eyen, certayn. 13472

and throws  
him to the  
ground.

So azens him he rod *with* mayn & myht,  
and sire Agrevaynes he smot ful ryht,  
that hors & man to grownde he wente ;  
thane wenden his bretheryn he hadde be schente. 13476

There goes  
a chill  
through the  
hearts of the  
friends.

Whanne Gaheriet & galachim this goune beholde,  
jn here hertes they woxen ful colde,  
for siker they wenden he hadde be de[d] ;  
him to reskwe they wente jn þat sted. 13480

Galachim  
strikes  
Guinehant  
on the helm,

Galachym was þe ferste tho  
þat to guinehant gan forto go,  
& vppon the helm so hym smot,  
that his bak bowede anon fot hot ; 13484

Guerrers  
wounds him  
in the arm,

and guerreiers smot him thorgwh the arm  
(ȝit ere he wente, hadde he more harm),  
and gaheriet betwene þe nekke & þe scholder bon,  
that jnto þe feld þe hed flygh anon ; 13488

and Gaheriet  
cuts off his  
head.

and galachim with his foot that stounde  
threw down þe Body to the grownde,  
and took his hors & ladde to Agrevayn,  
that on foote fawht with strengthe & mayn. 13492

Galachim  
takes the  
horse to  
Agrevain.

and whanne Agrevayn was vpe j-dyht,

13479. MS. *be de*.

13486. This line was omitted and then written up the right margin.

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For þe lasse the hethen hem scholde anoye.

They attack  
afresh;

they torned here hors al jn fere,

& vppon þe hethen they ryden jn there.

13532

but thanne weren the hethen sory,

For kyng Guinehaut lay ded hem by.

thussonne they gonnen medlen sone;

thanne was þer not a litel to done.

13536

spears are  
broken,

here speres schatered jn þe feld,

& many hethen ded vndir his scheld.

And whanne here speris to-broken were,

Eche man to his swerd took there.

13540

swords are  
drawn,

So ech with-jinne oþer gan to ryde,

So that gret bataylle was þat tyde.

bothe of hors & ek of men

and much  
blood is shed.

ful strong bloodsched was þere then,

13544

that it ran down be eche vale,

as here reherseth this ylke tale;

þerto þe dost so gret hit was,

onnethis ony oþer knew jn þat plas.

13548

The furious  
battle

Ful strong was þanne that melle

of the children and [hem] of Londone, as ȝe mown se,

azens tho cursed hethen wyhtes,

that so longe endured jn fyhtes.

13552

lasts until  
evensong.

From morwen jnto evensong belle,

so longe they fowhten, as j ȝow telle.

There dede gaweyn worthy prowesse

amonges the hethene jn that presse,

13556

Gaweyn meets  
with  
Mandelent,

thanne mette with kyng mandelent;

with him to fyhte hadde he good entent.

For he hadde smyten on of his kyn,

þerfore he thowhte to meten with hym.

13560

who has  
struck one  
of his kin,

Doon of  
Cardiff.

Doon of kerlyf was his name;

a man he was of ful good fame.

to þe erthe he hadde him browht,

whiche þat gaweyn ful sone him sowht.

13564

13532. *there, th* on erasure (probably *f* was erased).

13545. *that it ran*, the second *t* and *an* blotted.

13550. MS. *and of London*.

13557. *mandelent, nt* corrected from *is*.

13564. *Gaweyn, G* corrected from *f*.

he wolde han smeten of his hed,  
 but anoper thowht gawayn jn pat sted.  
 Atte laste 3it gaweyn with mandelent mette,  
 & on strok he on him sette ;  
 thorwh his helm Ran gaweyns dynt,  
 and at his teth pere hit stynt,  
 & he fil ded doun to pe grownde ;  
 thanne sory weren pe hethen pat stonde.

13568 Mandelent  
falls.

13572

Whanne the Hethene Behelden tho  
 that kyng mandelent was ded so,  
 Ful sore abassched alle they were,  
 So pat echon they fledden there,  
 and to Vandobers they goune hem hye,  
 where as the Sege was, Sekerlye.  
 thanne began the chas ful strong  
 and ek gret dowst, pat ros hem among,  
 that non man oper myhte knowe,  
 not pe fadyr the Sone jn that Rowe.  
 So that Sore was that Bataylle,  
 that jn thyke chas weren slayn, sauns faille,  
 what be gaweyn & his Felawis there  
 and with helpe of hem of londone jn fere—  
 xij thousand weren Slayn vpryht,  
 that onnethe of pat meyne askapen ne myht  
 not thre thousand of al that Rowte ;  
 So they were chased bothe jnne & owte.  
 thus the hethene weren scomfyt Echon,  
 & homward ful joyful pe children gonne gon  
 To the cyte of londone ful rapelye ;  
 these children ful faste gonne hem hye.  
 with presoners and pray faste pedir they Ronne,  
 with the goodis pat tofore tyme pe hethene hadden wonne.

[leaf 140 a]

Then the  
heathen take  
tright,13576 and flee to-  
wards Van-  
dobers,  
the besieged  
city.13580 They are  
pursued ;

13584 slain are

12000 men ;

13588 scarcely 3000  
men escape,13592 The young  
squires return  
to London13595 with prison-  
ers and booty.

Whanne that these children to Londone weren went,  
 gret joye the cetezeins maden, verament,  
 and to-forn hem they Browhten anon  
 alle the prayes that they hadden don.  
 thanne to gawayn seiden they there,  
 jn maner as chef lord that he were,

13600 The citizens  
of London  
are full of  
joy.They ask  
Gawain to act  
as chief lord

- and distribute the goods. that he scholde maken distribucioun of this good there al Jn vyrown. 13604
- But Gawein leaves it to Sir Doon of Cardiff, Thanne answerede Sire guweyn anon that for non thing he nolde hit don. " but let Sire doon of kerdyf cyte departen hit as that he wyl for me. 13608
- who knows the people. For he knoweth bothe Poure & Riche and aftir eche degre to departyn aliche. perfore at his wille hit Schal be do, For of hit j wele entermete no mo." 13612
- The citizens praise Gawein's gentleness and modesty. and whanne the cetezeines herden this, Ful mochel gaweyn they preiseden, j-wys, and hym they lovedyn with stedfast herte, For he was gentyll, debonewre, meek, & aperte. thus jn londone Restede that meyne with mirthe, Joye, and Solempnite. 13616
- Now we will speak of king Arthur and his followers and of kyng Artheur let vs speken here, 13620
- in Tarmelide. that thike tyme weren ful worthi men, and also of here compenie tho, 13624
- that jnto tarmelide with hem gonne go with kyng leodegam forto dwelle jn maner of Sowdiours, as j 3ow telle.
- 
- [leaf 140 b]  
Chap. XIV. Now Forthere to this mater Let Vs pace, 13628
- King Arthur, with Ban and Boors, hou that Arthewr past owt of his lond and with hym these kynges, 3e vndirstond, bothe kyng Ban and eke kyng Bors, that weren men of myht and Fors ; 13632
- arrives at Tartaise (Tortoise) how that they riden Jn here jorne, Tyl to Tartaysse they comen alle thre, where as lay kyng leodegan, j vndirstond, that was a worthi man of his hond. 13636
- on the eve of Palm-Sunday, On palmes-sonne Eve jn gonnen they ryde and with hem merlyn that jlke tyde.
- Merlin riding in front. there thus merlyne rod hem be-fore on a fulfair stede to pe paleis thore, 13640

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The strangers  
bow to the  
king;

and whanne they comen to-fore the kyng,  
they hym obeyeden jn worscheping.

he rises.

Anon the kyng ros hem ageyn,  
as this storye reporteth certeyn, 13680

For they semeden ful worthy men  
be here aray that they hadden then.

Thus whanne they weren entred echon,

Ban salutes  
him;

thanne bespak kyng Ban þere anon, 13684

and Salwede kyng leodegan.

the king  
says they are  
welcome,

anon thussonne he zald him than,  
and seide that alle welcomen they were—

if their inten-  
tions are  
good.

“ zif that for good ze be comen here.” 13688

Ban replies :

thanne bespak kyng Ban tho,

and to kyng Leodegan he seide vnto :

“ For no evil  
do we come,

“ Certein, Sire, with-owten lesyng,  
For non maner of evel is oure comeng, 13692

Ne not we comen owt of oure contre

here jn thy lond Forto noyen the,

but as jn manere of socouryng,

but to help  
you.

For sothe as j zow seye, Sire kyng, 13696

and zou to don Servise jn swich degre

that to zoure plesaunce now myhte be.

and zif ze wilen not with vs don so,

If you will  
not have us,

Owt of zoure lond, sire, we scholen go 13700

And to Betaken zow god Al-myht,

that algates he spede zow jn zoure ryht ;

and we scholen gon jnto an nothir contre,

we will go  
thither where  
people are  
glad of our  
cuming.

theþer as men of oure comengo glad wylen be 13704

and vs resceyven jn Swich a manere

as we to zow oure Servise profren here.

but certainly hit was vs tolde

However,  
we were told  
that you keep  
all manner of  
mercenaries.”

that alle manere of Sowdiours ze with-holde, 13708

and þerfore was hedyr oure comeng ;

Therefore zoure wille telle vs, Sire kyng.”

King Leode-  
gan consults  
his counsil.

Thanne answerede kyng Leodegan  
that with his counseil spoken wolde he than. 13712

so þat he axede of hem anon

what that were best forto don.

- and they to him answerid anone  
that he scholde with-holden hem Echone. 13716 He is advised  
to keep them  
all,
- “For worthy men they Semen alle,  
what so Ewere there-of may befallē.  
and also hastely as 3e MOWN don,  
that 3e knowen here names Echon, 13720 and to find  
out who they  
are.
- and whens they ben & of what contre ;  
al this that [3e] knowen jn certeinte.”  
thane partyd leodegan from his cownsaille,  
and to these Barowns he cam, sauns faylle. 13724 He says to  
them :
- “J merveille mochel of 3oure askyng,  
& that 3e wilen not discuren 3ow for non thing,  
ne tellen what 3oure names ben ;  
swich anoper meyne haue j not Sen. 13728
- but goode men me semeth be 3oure chere ;  
that causeth me to rescayuen 3ou here.  
and ryht welcome mooten 3e be  
bothe to my Barouns and ek to me 13732  
as Frennis and felawes to my Socowr,  
thus to 3ow troste j bothe day & owr.  
and to this 3e scholen don me affiaunce  
with me to stonden jnto owtraunce ; 13736  
& as longe as 3e ben jn my compenye,  
trewly me to helpen 3e scholen me affye.  
but of on thing j wolde 3ow praye :  
that what 3e ben, 3e wolden me Seye ; 13740  
and for this cause, 3e vndirstonde :  
3e Moun ben swich men of oper londe,  
that hit myhte ben gret schame to me  
of 3ow Servise to taken, certeinle, 13744  
and that j not of power were  
3oure mede to qwyten jn non manere.  
For j Suppose, ful trewely,  
that 3e ben grettere men than am j.” 13748  
Thanne they answered hym ageyn  
that him misplesen they nolden, certeyn,  
but hym to Serve jn Swich degre,

He says to  
them :

“I wonder at  
your demand  
and at your  
not telling  
your names.

But you seem  
to be good  
men ;  
therefore I  
will keep you.  
Be welcome  
as friends and  
helpers,

and promise  
to be true to  
me.

Tell me who  
you are.

Perhaps it  
would be a  
shame for me  
to accept your  
service ;

for you may  
be better men  
than I.”

They promise  
to please him

13717. *they, y* squeezed in afterwards.

13722. MS. *althis that knowē.*

13726. & added in the left margin.



that likyngge to hym Scholde hit be. 13752

and to tell  
their names  
as soon as  
possible.

and thus ensurede kyng Ban, certeinlye,  
For hym and for al his compenye,  
and that, as hastely as he myhte,  
alle here names to declaren owt ryhte. 13756

Then Arthur  
and his men  
are conducted  
by Merlin

Thanne thus departyd they from the kyng  
jnto the town to taken here loggeng  
of the beste that they cowden gete.

So þat merlyne hem ladde jnto a strete 13760

to the house  
of a good  
young man,

To Ryht a good 3ong mannes hous,  
that was bothe riche and plentevous  
and Ryht good esement jn alle degre ;  
thydir ladde hem merlyn, certeinle. 13764

and his de-  
vout wife.

Ek a good womman there was at house,  
that wel lovede god and ek hire spouse.  
and him-Self was curteis ek also,  
and of good lif they weren bothen two. 13768

He is called  
Blaires,  
she, Leonel.

therto hym-Self Blaires hyhte,  
his wyves name Leonel be ryhte.  
whanne to þat hostel þat they comen there,  
auon they alyhten al jn fere, 13772

They alight,  
are welcomed  
by the host,

and Blayres wente hem ageyn,  
and seyde they weren welcomen, jn certein.

[leaf 110 d]

Anon they Answerede Hym Ful sone  
that he scholde han Crystes benyson. 13776

walk into the  
beautiful  
hall,

they alyhteden, and jn-to halle they wente,  
whiche was onestly arayed and gentle.

and have  
their horses  
put into the  
stable.

and the 3omen loggeden here hors anon,  
and deden jn stable what was to don. 13780

They spend  
a week in  
good cheer,  
serving king  
Leodegan at  
his court.

thus there they sojourned viij dayes,  
not but eten & dronkyn, & merye playes  
and on morwe they to court wente  
and Ek at Even after here talente 13784

so thus they servede kyng leodegan  
with alle the worschepe they cowden than

Then the  
king sends  
out messen-  
gers

thanne sente forth this kyng anon  
be sondry messengeris many on 13788

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of these malfetours, sekerly,  
that Robbede & stroyede that contre.

The citizens  
shut the  
gates.

Anon the citezeines aspiden hit, sykerle, 13828  
and here gates they schetten ful blyve,  
that owt scholde gon non man on lyve.

All the  
knights as-  
semble.

anon asarmes they gonne to crye, 13832  
the cheualrie þat with-jinne was, trewelye,  
and to-forn the gate they semblede anon,  
knyhtes of þe rownd table Everychon.

(1) The 250  
knights of  
the Round  
Table have  
Hervy of  
Rivel and  
Malet le  
Bruns for  
leaders,

and the cheventeyn of hem was 13836  
hervy of Ryvel jn that plas,

and malet le bruns was his felawe, 13840  
that many a man browhten of dawe,  
with cc. & fyfty jn here compenye  
of worthy Bodyes, with-owten lye,

that vndir hevene non bettere nere  
thanne tho bodyes that weren there.

and keep to  
themselves.

these be hem-selven weren alone, 13844  
For with opere meddelen wolden they none.

On the tother part they gonnen hem dyhte,

the cheualrye of þe towne anon ryhte,

And of hem iiij thousand ther were,

That myhte Bewelden Bothe Scheld and Spere. 13848

this meyne hadden a cheventeyn

that cleodalis hyhte, Jn certeyn,

that wont was the kynges baner to bere

bothe jn pes and Ek jn werre. 13852

but sethen the knyhtes of þe rownde table

that Lond entreden, with-owten fable,

thanne was hervy of Ryvel

the kynges banorer Everidel. 13856

but he bar a lytel gomfaynoun & did it sprede

with tweyne Langues be ryht resoun rede,

the Feld gold with crowns of ynde.

and the grete baner, that cam behynde, 13860

whiche that hervy Ryvel Bar,

jn this maner was araied thar :

but now car-  
ries a small  
ensign.

The great  
banner,  
carried by  
Hervy of  
Rivel,

13830. *scholde* corrected from *schelde*. 13850. MS. *hyhten*,  
13852. *werre*, the second *r* corrected from *e*.

- with foure langues fayre & pleyne,  
and there-jnne corouns of gold, jn certeyne,  
the Feld asure bothe fair and schene ;  
thus this Baner bar he hem betwene.  
whanne Bedy armed that they were,  
aforn the 3ate they sembleden there,  
and abyden the kynges comeng,  
that 3it at that tyme was anarmyng.  
and whanne the kyng j-armed was,  
anon he asemblede jn that plas,  
and þere drowh to hervyes Baner  
sytteng vppon a good destrer.  
and þere he houed with his compenye  
To knowen of these jresch more certeinlye.
- On þe thridde partye was armed than  
kyng arthur, king Bors, & kyng Ban,  
and his compenye al jn fere,  
of wheche but xlij ther were.  
and ful ryaly they weren adyht,  
and merlyn here baner bare in fyht.  
and whanne j-horsed alle they were,  
thane to hem Seide merlyn there  
that thyke day bothe gret & smalle  
to Sewen his baner, what euere befalla.  
“jn what place that Evere 3e hit Se,  
loke 3e hit Sewe and foleweth me.”  
and alle they seiden with on cry  
that So they wolden, ful trewely.  
thane so they reden thorwh þe town,  
and merlyn bar here gomfaynown.  
but richere arayed thanne they were,  
jn that town was neuere seyn there.  
and here baner was ryht Merveyllous  
Forto beholden and ryht spetous :  
his Baner hit was on dragown,  
and not ful gret hit was jn virown ;  
the tayl a kebyt and an half was long,  
al j-mailed as a serpent ful strong ;
- 13864 has four  
lozenges with  
golden  
crowns.
- 13868 The knights  
assemble at  
the gate ;
- 13872 the king joins  
them,
- 13876 and waits  
there.
- 13880 (3) Arthur  
and his 42  
companions  
likewise get  
ready.
- 13884 Merlin, who  
carries the  
banner,  
asks all to  
follow it,  
whatever  
may happen.
- 13888
- 13892 They ride  
through the  
town.
- 13896 Their banner  
is of strange  
and grim  
device :  
a dragon
- 13900 with a scaly  
tail,

and vomiting  
fire.—

and his throte so gret & sterne hit was,  
that hit Seme de hem jn that plas  
so that the tonge that stood with-jnne  
euere enflawmeng & wolde not blynne,  
that thorwh the throte owt fyr hit caste  
vpe jnto the ayr, hit seme de hem faste. 13904

By this time  
the heathen  
have come to  
the town,

and jn the mene while the jresch men,  
that hethen tho weren, as j 3ow ken,  
with here speres comen to the town, 13908

and assall the  
gates;  
then they  
go into the  
meadows,  
and seize  
the grazing  
cattle.

and the 3ates asayllede jn virown.  
and sethen jnto þe medewes they wente,  
& alle the bestes they token, veramente,  
that abowtes the town jn pasture weren tho;  
with hem they maden hem forto go. 13912

For þere nas non man hem to defende,  
Tyl that god sone grace gan sende. 13916

Merlin

[leaf 141 b]

thorwgh þe town paste merlyne anon,  
There As the peple Weren sembled Echon,  
and thorwgh that pres redily he paste,  
tyl to the 3ate he cam atte laste 13920  
and with hym there al his meyne.

arrives at the  
gate with his  
troup.

He says to  
the gate-  
keeper: "Let  
us pass out."

Anon to the porter thanne seide he:  
"let vs now, porter, here owt pace,  
Fore hit is tyme to comen on place." 13924

The keeper  
replies:  
"Not with-  
out the com-  
mand of the  
king."

and þe porter answered hem ageyn  
that they Scholden not passen hit, Jn certein,  
with-owten comaundement of the kyng,  
and thus 3af he hem to answeyng. 13928

Merlin says:  
"That's bad,

"that is be Misaventure," quod merlyn tho,  
"that thou þe 3ate ne schalt vndo,  
whanne that j am as strong as thou,  
and that Schal j sone preven now." 13932

as I am as  
strong as  
you."

He pulls out  
the gate with  
his hand,

Anon kam merlyne to the 3ate,  
and with his hond pulled there-ate,  
and pulde þe 3ate owt from the ston.  
thanne owt they wenten there Echon,  
ho so wolde or ho so nolde;  
owt they Riden al glytered jn goolde. 13936

and out they  
ride.

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that they can-  
not see one  
another.

that non of hem oper myhte Se ;  
So merveillous dowst hit was & gret plente.

The 42 fel-  
lows attack  
the heathen.

Anon as these two and fowrty men  
with-jnne these hethen weren Entrid than, 13980

they beten and slowen so many a-down,  
that ded abowtes they lyen jn virown.

Now king  
Leodegan  
orders the  
gates to be  
opened ;

Anon comanded kyng leodegan  
that the gates anon opened weren than ; 13984

and so they weren jn Ryht gret haste,  
So that thike meyne owt þere paste.

[leaf 141 c]

There the Steward Rod forth Be-fore  
with iiij Thousand men wel armed thore, 13988

Cleodalis,  
with 4000  
men, sallies  
out,

and they founden the gate schet ful faste,  
there as merlyne and his meyne owt weren paste.

with xv thousand they fowhten that whyle þere  
Ful merveillously a ful gret tyde in fere. 13992

and joins in  
the battle.

Thanne forth cam cleodalys tho,  
and to that pres faste gan he go.

So that the noyse of speris that þere were,  
the brekyng of hem, jnto the cyte was herd there. 13996

Great de-  
struction is  
wrought ;

there was thanne so gret distroccioun  
of men dede & hors slayn j[n] viroun,

the din  
resembles  
thunder.

So that hit Semede be here gruntyng  
that hit hadde ben a merveyllous thondryng, 14000

but merveillously wrowhte these xlij men  
that vndir merlynes Banere weren than.

The four  
heathen  
kings divide  
their army :

Whanne that the iiij kynges Syen al this,  
that with the cristene they weren thus mellid, j-wis, 14004

they departed her meyne anon vntwo,

7000 go  
against the  
approaching  
banner of  
king Leo-  
degan,

of wheche vij M<sup>t</sup> to þe cyte gan go  
agens the baner of kyng leodegan.

whanne they aspide hym comeng than, 14008

Ech of hem agens oper gan forto ryde,  
also faste as they myhten that Tyde.

13988. *T* through correction. 13991. *þere* added afterwards.

13992. *whille* crossed out, and *tyde in fere* added, at the end of the line.

13998. MS. *j viroū*.

13999. *h'e*, abbreviation mark in darker ink.

14006. MS. *M* with *l* at the top (= *Milia*).

14008. MS. *comēng*.

and þe toper viij thousand fowhten ful faste, whilles that here strengthe myhte laste.	14012	8000 remain.
but leodegan and this othir meyne, betwixen hem gret bataylle was, Sikerle, that bothe helmes & hauberkes j-borsten they were, Neþer non mail of steel lasten myhte not there, that down they fillen al bloody to grownde, For þere was ȝoven many a dethes wounde. And whanne here speris j-borsten they were, anon here swerdis they drowen owt there.	14016 14020	The fight with king Leodegan is fierce;  many are killed.
thane began there gret Bataylle, that merveille to beholde hit was, sauns faylle. and namly the knyhtes of þe Rownd table merveillously they fowhten, with-owten fable, of wheche weren but two hundred & fyfty, and of the tothere vij thousand, ful sekerly. but at gret mischef they weren there, that here bodyes gonnen tremblen for fere ; and whethir they wolde other none, here grownd to forsaken mad weren they sone. but they helden hem so faste jn fere, that no man with-jnnen hem entren myhte there ; Nethir litel ne mochel, lasse ne more, with-jnnen hem entren cowde not thore. whanne Plareouns & kyng Roallaunt To-gideris swich a meyne gonnen se haunt, and of hem so lytel peple there was azens so gret meyne jn that plas, Ful gret dispit hadden these kynges bothe, and sworn ful bitterly many a gret othe that of hem askape scholde not on, as ferforthly as they myhten don.	14024 14028 14032 14036 14040	The knights of the Round Table excel,  but are in great dis- tress.  They keep close to- gether.  The heathen leaders of the 7000 men  viciously vow that none of them shall escape.
Thussone they maden an ordenance Forto han wrowht this meyne mischance. So that xl of that litel compenye weren sore defowlid, with-owten lye. And euer this jresch hethen peyned hem fulsore	14044	Forty of the knights are overthrown ;

14028. *h<sup>e</sup>* abbreviation mark in darker ink.

14030. *groūd* added in the left margin.



hem to han de-fowlid ful mochelis more 14048

and hem to han maymed, 3if hit myhte han be ;

but they myhte not thanne for here compene.

For with-jnne hem þere non man there paste,  
as fer as ony of here dyntes of swerdis myhte laste. 14052

And jn this mene whille, as j 3ow telle,  
vppon kyng leodegan they fowhten ful felle,

So that fulsore beten he was jn that place,  
and there with his enemyes j-taken he was 14056

and lad forth there anon tho ryht  
with v hundred redy armed to fyht.

So Hym Forth they Ladden, As J Vndyrstond,  
towardis kyng Ryown of jrlond, 14060

And with gret joye they forth hym ladde,  
for they wenden the werris ended ben hadde.

So thus they hyede hem wondir faste,  
Tyl owt of the ost that they weren paste. 14064

And whanne that kyng leodegan Say this,  
that with his enemyes he was taken, j-wys,  
and him forth ladden moche maugre his hed, ✓

For sorwen he swownede jn that sted, 14068  
and wepe ful Sore, & made gret pyte,

that jn swich a maner j-taken was he.  
they hym forth ladden vppon the weye  
two Skottysch milles, the sothe to seye. 14072

but evere the noyse ful gret hit was  
of the vij thowsend jn that plas

and of the cc. and fyfty knyhtes,  
that azens þe vij thousand held fyhtes, 14076  
that maden gret sorwe & gret mone,

For kyng leodegan was so gone.  
and whanne they syen, hit wolde non oper be,

that non reskeus was there, sekerle, 14080

they dresseden here bakkes al jn fere,  
and jn maner of a scheltrom they stoden there,

and there thanne so sore they fowhte,  
that non man deren hem ne mowhte. 14084

but they maden gret occisioun  
of men & hors aboutes hem jn virown

14082. *ād* corrected from *an* (in darker ink).

etill they keep  
the assailants  
off.

King Leo-  
degan is  
captured,

and led away  
by 500 men

[leaf 141 d]

towards king  
Rion.

When he  
realizes his  
plight,

he is faint  
with grief.

The battle is  
continued.

The knights  
bemoan the  
loss of king  
Leodegan ;

they defend  
themselves  
in a compact  
body,

and kill many

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and overtake  
the prisoners'  
convoy. tyl that they comen jnto on valey,  
where as these v hundred ladden away 14124  
kyng leodagan, here presoner.

Merlin cries: And anon merlyn ascryed hym ther :  
" Rescue the " Now, barouns, let Se, kythe here 3oure myht 14128  
king, To reskwen the kyng here with 3oure fyht.

or he goes his  
way! and but 3if 3e don, he goth his way."  
And evere he cride : " Tray, tray, tray !"  
So that these knyhtes Sewede on faste,  
Tyl they hym ouertoken atte laste. 14132

They rush  
into the con-  
voy, Thusone they entred hem betwene  
with manye gret strokis, as hit was sene,  
and slowh & maymed al that per were,  
that nowht on his hele hadde there. 14136

slay, and  
malm. there pese xlij maden swich martyrdom,  
of men & hors a ful gret Som,

Of the 500  
escape  
only five. that vnnethes askaped ony away  
of thike v hundred, the Sothe to say, 14140  
Sauf only fyve, that fledden be-fore,  
anon as kyng leodagan they hadden forlore.

King Leo-  
degan  
marvels, And thus Reskwed was Leodagan the kyng,  
whiche to hym was ful gret merveylling, 14144  
To sen Swich martirdom Jn that plase  
as of thyke lytel peple j-mad there wase.

and whanne he beheld the dragown þat merlyn bar,  
thanne wiste he wel his frendis weren thar. 14148

and thanks  
God for such  
soldiers. thanne thankede he god of that dede,  
that so his Sowdeours with him dyden spede.  
Anon merlyn there to hym wente,  
and þere hym sesede anon presente. 14152

Ulfn and  
Bretel alight, Whanne Vlphyn beheld kyng Leodegan,  
anon of his hors alyhte he than,  
and sire Bretel jn the same wyse,  
anon he alyhte to þat kyng of pryse, 14156

unfetter the  
king, and him vnbownden, & armed hym wel,

14138. *of*, *o* corrected from *a*.

14142. *leodagan*, the first *a* corrected from *e*.

14148. *wiste* he twice, the former crossed out.

<p>and sette hym on a destrer bothe good &amp; lel.          whanne Bretel &amp; Vlphyn horsid hym hadde jn pat wise,          he thankede hem ful hyhly of here Servise. . . . . 14160</p>	<p>and put him on a good horse.</p>
<p>thanne merlyne began to ascryen eft sone :          "Now thynketh, Barouns, what ze han to done.          Seweth now me, what euere ze do,          and be non wyse partyth not me fro." . . . . . 14164</p>	<p>Now Merlin again asks them to fol- low him,</p>
<p>he took his hors with the spores welfaste,          and toward the cyte he prikede jn haste,          where that the knyhtes of the rounde table          at gret mischef weren, with-owten fable, . . . . . 14168</p>	<p>and sets off towards the city,</p>
<p>of wheche two hundre[d] and fyfty knyhtes          there nere but xx on hors owt-ryhtes,          and al the remnant on foote were,          and ful manfully fowhten there. . . . . 14172</p>	<p>where of the 250 knights only 20 are still on horseback.</p>
<p>thanne merlyne prikede so faste to-fore,          so faste hym Sewede his feleschepe thore,          that here hors on swot they weren echon ;          So faste thyderwardis dyden they gon. . . . . 14176</p>	<p>He rides fast;</p>
<p>And the dragoun pat merlyn Bar,          Swiche plente of fyr hit cast owt thar,          that tho whiche weren jn the cyte,          Large half a myle they myhten hit se, . . . . . 14180</p>	<p>the dragon vomiting so much fire</p>
<p>the clernesse of that Fer so bryht,          how jnto the Eyr hit wente vp ryht.</p>	<p>that it can be seen at fully half a mile's dis- tance.</p>
<p>Whanne that the cetezeins of that cite          behelden that jlke litel meyne, . . . . . 14184</p>	<p>When the citizens see the little troop coming</p>
<p>thanne wisten they wel, the xlij it were,          that jn feleschepe weren jn fere,          and with hem was kyng leodagan,          that these xlij hadde reskwed than. . . . . 14188</p>	<p>with king Leodegan,</p>
<p>wherfore gret joye they gonne to make,          and so dede gonnore for here fadris sake,          merveilleng sore what these knyhtes were,</p>	<p>they rejoice.  So does Gon- nore, and wonders who these knights are</p>

14166. *welfus* (*f* not completed) crossed out before *jn haste*.  
 14169. MS. *hundre*.  
 14172. MS. *ful manfulmanly*; cf. l. 14298.  
 14174. *so, s* corrected, in a fashion, from *T*; the character still looks like a *T*.  
 14182. *ryht, r* corrected from *R*.

- [leaf 142 b] That so Vygoursly fowhten there. 14192
- that fight so  
marvellously. For lyk as thondyr here dyntes ferde, ✓  
that jnto the kyr hit myhte ben herde ;  
For so merveillous was here fyhtyng,  
that alle that weren jn here stondyng 14196  
they Slowen down ryht as they come,  
that to-gederis they lyen on many a throme.  
and whanne the xlij jn fere  
amonges tho jeawntis weren Eutred pere, 14200  
thanne began the fyht so strong,  
that wondir passyng noyse was hem among.  
so that gonnore, with-owten nay,  
that hydows noyse myhte heren, Jn fay. 14204
- Ban gives  
irrealistible  
strokes, there dyde kyng Ban of Baynok,  
with correcense, his swerd, 3af many a strok.  
For whom that Evere pere-with he smot,  
to grownde they wenten anon foot hot, 14208  
that neyther helm, hauberk, ne haberjon  
withstondyn his dyntes myhten nouht on.  
and thus took he on jn that Bataylle,  
pat downryht slowh man & hors, with-owten faille. 14212  
so there nas non, myhte with-stonden his dynt,  
Tyl of here lyvez that they weren stynt.  
and jn the same manere ferde kyng bors,  
that of alle the enemyes gaf he non fors. 14216  
and whanne the hethene behelden this  
of pe merveillous strokys they Syen, j-wys,  
and how kyng Artheur with kalybrond  
merveillous strokis 3af with his hond 14220  
(azens weche swerd, the sothe to say,  
myhte there non armure lasten that day,  
For Evere he vsede to smyten so sore,  
that non man his strok abyden myhte thore)— 14224
- In the course  
of the battle, Thanne, whillos they fowhten Jn this manere,  
happede, kyng artheur 3it neyghede hym nere,

14194. MS. *myhtē*.14198. *they, t* (very small) inserted afterwards.14212. *downryht, w* corrected from *o* (and something else).14221. *weche, w* corrected from *f*.14226. *artheur* added afterwards above the line.

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that ryht ful sone gret harm he cawhte ; 14264

[leaf 142 c]

slitting him  
from fore-  
head to  
girdle.

The strok thorwh the panne Hit gothe  
and thorwh the left scholdere Evene, for sothe,  
and jnto the gyrdelstede Evene down ryht,  
that ded down he fyl for fawt of myht. 14268

Bors cuts off  
the banner-  
bearer's arm.

Thanne kyng Bors pere smot so Sarmedoun,  
that bar these jeauntes Gomfanown,  
that bothen arm, Baner, and scheld  
ful fer hit fley jnto the feld. 14272

King Leo-  
degan says to  
himself:

"Never king  
had better  
help!"

these strokes beheld kyng leodagan,  
and to him-self jn his herte seide than :

"there nas neuere kyng, so god me spede,  
that better socour hadde atte neda." 14276

Now the  
heathen turn  
to flight.

and whanne the jeauntes syen here lordes ded,  
and here banerer was slayn jn that Sted,  
anon they Tornede hem to the flyht,  
eche man be hym-Selve, hos gon myht. 14280

A party out  
of the city  
pursue them.

thanne that Syen they of the cyte,  
& owte pere comen a praty meyne,  
wel two thousand j-armed ful bryht,  
and folwed that chas pere anon ryht. 14284

But Merlin  
returns to  
Cleodalis  
(p. 377).

but merlyn wente not that contre,  
For sone to cleodalis thanne turned he,  
where as he with his iiij thousand men  
azens vij thousand fawht he then, 14288  
whiche Sonygrenx hadde jn gouvernaunce  
and kyng Sorohaunx with mischaunce.

He finds him  
unhorsed,

Whanne merlyne cam to that Bataylle,  
he fond Cleodalis, with-owten faylle, 14292  
vnhorsed and at the erthe, jn certein,

but standing  
upright with  
his banner,

but on his fet he was rekeuered ageyn,  
and the baner kepte, with-owten lesyng,  
For that wolde he not leven for non thyng. 14296

and defended  
by his men.

and abowtes him stoden his compenye,  
that him defendid ful manfullye,  
but they weren at gret mischef.

Merlin and  
his party

Natheles merlyn gan sone hem relef, 14300  
and amonges hem entrede with his baner,  
& þe xlij felawes him folwede ther.

- thanne jn they flyen as stordyly  
 as Evere dide tempest out of þe sky, 14304 dash upon  
 and so worthily they fowhten there, the enemy;  
 thyke xlij felawes þat weren jn fere,  
 that neuere men myghte bettere do  
 than thyke compenye diden tho. 14308  
 but Evere this kyng leodagan  
 here faleschepe nolden not forsaken than. king Leo-  
 whanne these xlij amonges the jeawntes were, degan is ever  
 Swich a noyse amonges hem was þanne there, 14312 with them.  
 as of alle þe world the carponteris  
 jn wodes hadde hewen stowt & fers.  
 The din is  
 tremendous.  
 This was ȝit the angriest stour  
 that thike day they suffreden be ony our, 14316  
 and þe most dolorowse and angwisschous,  
 but Evere hem socourede swete jesus.  
 For there a man myhte beholde  
 bothe men & hors fulmanifolde 14320  
 as thikke fallen vnder here scheld  
 as that motes fien jn the feld. Men and  
 horses fall  
 as thik as  
 moths in the  
 field  
 There myhten ȝe sen hors walken astray,  
 that non man of hem took kepe, jn fay, 14324  
 of wheche the Sadelis ful blody were  
 of þe knyhtes that vppon hem weren slayn there. horses run  
 about with  
 empty,  
 bloody sad-  
 dles;  
 and swich a noyse amonges hem was,  
 For lyk as thondring hit ferde jn that plas. 14328  
 the noise  
 resemble  
 thunder.  
 So that theke xlij persones  
 merveillously boren hem for þe nones,  
 that aftyr the deth of hem, j vndirstond,  
 nit was of hem longe spoken jn that lond, 14332  
 and, as this storye reporteth now here,  
 that So manye Bodyes weren slayn there.  
 Beheueded, qwartered, dislemed Also,  
 that many day aftyr men myhten go  
 jnto þe places as the batailles were  
 be men dede & hors that lyen there  
 thorwh the conqwest, as J ȝow telle. [leaf 142 d]  
 and the traces  
 of the battle  
 were visible  
 many a day  
 after.

14308. *than*, MS. *that*.14313. *þe* squeezed in afterwards.14331. *j*, MS. *jn*.



Here follows the list of	hos names here-aftyr J schal 3ou spelle, For so wyle here this storrye, aforn goode men to rehersen hem, vtterlye.	14340
the forty- two heroes who had come	The ferste kyng Ban of Baynoc hyhte, the secunde kyng Bors, a man of myhte, the thridde kyng Arthur that tyme was, the fourthe was Antron jn that plas, the fyfthe was vlphyn, as j 3ow tel, the sixthe was goode sire Bretel, the seventhe that tyme hihte sire kay þe fers, the viijthe sire lucauns the botelers, the ixthe, the sone of kerdif, hihte þan doo, the xthe moret le Roche cleped was tho, the xijthe dryauns of þe forest sauage, j vndirstonde, the xijthe hyhte lorgelons de la launde, the xiiijthe, j kan tellen ful wel, hihte belias Amoreus of mayden castel, the xiiijthe Flaundris ly brez, wel j wot, the xvthe hihte ladmas of Baynot, the xvijthe hithe Amoreus ly brews, the xvijthe Anchalanx ly rows, the xvijthe bloys of casel, fel & fers, the xixthe hihte goode Bliobers, The xxthe hihte canodes þat tyme be vois, the xxijthe hihte melyadon de bloys, the xxijthe Aladank le crespé, þis storrye says, the xxiiijthe hihte placides ly gays, the xxiiijthe Lampadys Plangwye, the xxvthe geroas lenches in compenye, the xxvijthe cristofre de la roche Byse. the xxvijthe engelyn desuans, a man of prise, the xxviiijthe calogrenaunt the fre, the xxixthe Agwysale le desyrre, The xxxthe thanne hyhte good Agravel, the xxxijthe hihte thanne claryel, the xxxijthe Gryves de lambele,	14344     14348     14352     14356     14360     14364     14368     14372

14361. *of*, MS. *of*. 14364. *xxijthe*, *j* corrected from *l*.  
14375. *Gryves*, *r* corrected from *y*.

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Cleodalis  
loved this  
maiden,

whiche mayden cleodalis lovede ful derne,  
For there-of myhte non man hym werne.

and asked  
the king's  
permission to  
marry her.

So that he preyde leodagan, verament,  
that he myhte wedden þat mayden gent

14416

For alle his goode longe Servise ;  
he axede no more to his apryse.

The king con-  
sented.

the kyng hym graunted with riht good wylle,

For þat he was mochel beholden him tylle.

14420

and whanne j-wedded hire that he hadde,  
and from cherche as sche was ladde,

At the wed-  
ding feast,

and browht was jnto the kynges paleys,

and down at mete was set on deys,

14424

therto apparaylled ful Ryaly

aboven alle ladyes that seten hire by,

she surpassed  
all in beauty.

thanne hadde sche moche more bewte

thanne ony oþer lady, Sykerle ;

14428

The king fell  
in love with  
her,

wherthorwh þe kyng on hire his herte caste,

that for non thing azen myht he hit wreste.

but said no-  
thing at the  
time.

So that styllle Leodagan the kyng

a gret whylle dwellede jn morneng,

14432

For sche was the fairest creature jn ony londe,

as this Storye doth me to vndirstonde ;

and thus at that tyme seyde he no more than.

but as hit happede that kyng leodagan

14436

One Mid-  
summer, he  
sent Cleodalis  
on an expedi-  
tion against  
his enemies.

at an hygh feste of seynt Johne,

Leodagan Cleodalis owt he sente anon

a certeyn chevachye forto do

vppon his Eneimes, þat hym noyede tho,

14440

The wife  
stayed at  
home, keep-  
ing the queen  
company.

and his faire lady behinde lefte there

the qwene compenye forto bere

(For bothen they loveden as paramour,

the qweene & sche, with-owten langour)—

14444

One night  
Leodagan lay  
by his wife,

hit behappede vppon a nyht,

Leodagan be his qwene lay, as wile ryht.

and begot a  
daughter.

that nyht on hire he be-gat tho

a fair dowhter, with-owten mo,

14448

that jn hire age Gonn[or]e hit lyhte,

14415. See footnote to l. 14142.

14431. *c* crossed out before *Leodagan*.

14449. MS. *Gonne*.

- whiche that was a wondir fair wyhte.  
 this qweene sche was of gret bownte  
 and an holy lyuere, certeinle ; 14452 The queen,  
who was very  
pious,  
 and on costom hadde this qweene :  
 þat but fewe nyhtes hit scholde bene .  
 that sche ne wolde to mynstre go  
 hire matynes & servise to heren tho. 14456 and regularly  
attended  
matins,  
 that same nyht þat sche conceyved was,  
 To matynes sche ros a ful gret pas,  
 and be the stewardis wyf sche cam ful stille,  
 and fond hire Slepung, & thowhte non ylle. 14460 went also  
this time,  
 thanne forth sche wente, & wook hire nowht,  
 To serven hire god, as sche hadde thowht,  
 and lefte this lady there styll on slepe,  
 that of non creature took sche kepe. 14464 without  
waking the  
steward's  
wife.  
 Forth wente þe qweene alone with hire sawtyere  
 to þe mynstre, that faste by was there.  
 Anon this kyng leodagan tho  
 this lady thowhte to werken wo. 14468 The king  
 and whanne þat the qweene to mynstre was,  
 anon vp he ros jn that plas,  
 and qweynte alle the lyhtes þat weren wyt[h]-jnne,  
 For er wolde he þat tyme not blynne. 14472 rose,  
put out the  
lights,  
 Sethen to the bed he goth ful ryht,  
 there cleadalis wif lay jnne that nyht.  
 Whanne the Lady Felte On Jn Hyre Bed,  
 sche axede ho was there Jn that sted. 14476 [leaf 148 b]  
She asked  
who was  
there.  
The king told  
her to be  
silent,  
or else he  
would kill  
her.  
 "hold thou thi pes," quod kyng leodagan ;  
 "and þou discure me to ony man,  
 vppon my swerd thou schalt deye,  
 j the Swere, dame, be my feye." 14480 Her resist-  
ance availed  
little ;
- This lady defended hire with al hire myht,  
 but non noyse dorste sche make owt ryht.  
 but lytel avayllede there hire defens,  
 For be hire he lay there jn presens, 14484 the king  
begot on her  
another  
daughter.  
 and that same nyht begat on hire tho  
 anoper dowhter ryht also.

14451. *was* crossed out before *sche*.14459. *wyf* added above the line.14471. MS. *wyt jnne*.

Both were  
born in the  
same night.

hit happede, whanne this qweene deliuered was  
The same nyht of a dowhter ju that plas, 14488

the same nyht, with-owten ony faylle,  
the stewardis wif gan forto travaille,  
and anoper dowhter hadde of gret bewte ;  
a fairrere creature myhte non be. 14492

They were  
so like each  
other,  
that they  
could be dis-  
tinguished  
only by a  
peculiar  
birth-mark.

thanne so lyk bothe children they were,  
that on from anothir knowen myhte not pere,  
Sauf gonnore þat þe qwenes dowhter was,  
a wondir mark hadde sche ju prevy plas : 14496

vppon the Reynes that child behynde  
hadde þe fygure as a corowne of a kyng.  
and but hit were be thike mark,  
cowde non man hem disseuere ju lyht ne derk. 14500

Both were  
called Gon-  
nore,

and ech of hem gonnore hyhte,  
as be here baptem j-named be ryhte.

and brought  
up together.

And Ewere weren they norsched bothe ju fere,  
tyl that the qweene after deide there. 14504

After the  
death of the  
queen,

and the kyng aftyr hire deth anon  
aftyr cleodalis wif sente ful son,

the king con-  
fined the  
steward's  
wife in a  
castle.

and al azens that ladyes wylle  
jn a castel he closede hire ful stille,  
bencheson that his steward of prise  
with hire scholde speke ju non wyse. 14508

Five years  
later,

and thus he contenede v zer,  
that cleodalis his wif ne say not ther ; 14512

the steward's  
friends re-  
monstrated  
with the  
king,

til on a day þe frendis of þe steward than  
there-of spoken to kyng leodagan,  
and hem answerede : whille he hadde werre,  
he scholde hire not hauen nethir nyh ne ferre. 14516

but in vain.

that 3it kepte he hire Styлле jnto the comeng,  
that jnto his lond Entrede arthur the kyng.

Yet Cleodalis  
remained  
faithful.

Now 3it, behold, for al this distresse  
the steward þe kyng Servede neuere the lasse. 14520

Now we will  
return to the  
battle ;

but 3it torneth this Storye ageyn,  
and of this Steward speketh, certein,  
how with the jeauntes he fawht on foote,  
that him and his felawes helden Ryhte hote. 14524

more of the  
Gonnore's  
later on.

and after, as processe cometh and tyme,  
of bothe Gonnore's scholen 3e here ju Ryme.

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# HISTORY

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- where he long  
lies motion-  
less. where as he lay a ful long stownde,  
that neuere remevede foot ne hand,  
as j do 3ow here to vndirstand. 14564
- Lucans and  
Girles kill  
two men. Ryht tho sire Lucauns and sire girles  
sloven tweyne stark ded jn that plas.
- The heathen  
try to re-cue  
Sonigrans ; Whanne kyng Sonygraux to grownde was leyd,  
anon these hethen maden a gret Breyd 14568  
hym to reskwe with alle here myht,  
but that the xlij felawes anon ryht  
abouten Sonygranx assemblid echon,  
that thike tyme nyhe hym myhte come non. 14572  
So that gretly defoulyd he was,  
as he lay there jn that plas,  
er that he myhte recoueren ageyn ;  
the hethen abowtis semblede, certeyn. 14576
- Merlin,  
carrying his  
banner, and merline, that bar the Banere,  
the cccc he cam to refreschen there,  
and the xlij felawes jn his compenye  
jn pat bataylle weren sprad, ful Sekerlye. 14580
- and Cleoda-  
lis, remount-  
ed on a good  
courser, and cleodalis Sormowntyd was  
& on a good destrer sette jn pat plas,  
and his Baner evere held he styлле.
- at the head  
of a party, Thanne ascryen he gan with good wille , 14584  
that tyme assembleden they ful faste,  
and ho so myhte to-fore gon, they gonne haste.
- make a fierce  
attack Anon there be-gan a merveillous stour,  
that was ful of angwis & of dolour. 14588  
there knyhtes feld men myhten se  
betwixen hors legges ful gret plente.
- on the com-  
pact mass of  
the heathen. but of the hethene so gret peple was,  
that hard it was to Entren jn that plas. 14592
- Now arrive  
the 5000  
fugitives  
from Toraise  
(pp. 381 f.). and so they fowhten evere than & then,  
tyl atte theke v thousand men  
that fledden from Torayse atte pe bataylle,  
azen retorneden, with-ouen faille. 14596  
they repeyrede anon to kyng Sorpharins  
and to kyng Sonigranx, with-owten lesinges.

14596. This line was omitted and then written down the right margin.

14597. *Sorpharins*, o daubed.

- But these xlij goode Saudioures,  
that jn that Bataylle weren stout & fers, 14600 Notwith-  
standing the  
42 fellows,  
wolde not remeven non foot of lond  
there as Sonigranx was beten, j vndirstond.  
Atte laste this Sonigranx remounted was 14604 Sonigrans  
is at last  
remounted.  
with gret sorwe & peyne jn that plas.  
thanne began there anon newe bataylle,  
For avenged wolde he be, with-owten faylle.  
Anon the kyng sonigranx & his meyne 14608 He wants to  
take revenge.  
The 42 are  
surrounded.  
the xlij they hadden envyrownd, Sekerle.  
thanne entrede merlyne with his baner  
with al þe myht that he myhte ther.  
and the cc & .l. knyhtes of þe rounde table, 14612 Merlin comes  
to their re-  
lief;  
the 250  
knights, now  
remounted  
(cf. l. 14170),  
arrive  
(cf. l. 14249),  
and join him.  
they weren Sourmontyd, with-owten fable,  
and a ful gret pas they comen Rydand  
to þe banere þat merlyne bar on hande,  
and to that part they gonnen drawe,  
where-offen merlyne was ryht fawe. 14616
- Whanne that these cc & .l. knyhtes  
to the bataylle weren sembled jn ryhtes,  
Amonges Here Enemyes they gonne to Reke, 14620 There is a  
wonderful  
fight.  
[leaf 143 d]  
there many a spere gonne they to-breke.  
and whanne here Speres to-broken were,  
anon here Swerdis they drowen owt there.  
So strong was the bataille, certeinle,  
that hit was wondir to behold & se. 14624
- On the tothyr partye þe steward cleodalys  
with his meyne ful sore fauht, j-wys.  
but for non power that was hem among,  
here a stale myhten they not kepen ful long, 14628 In the mean-  
time, Cleo-  
dalis' force  
is driven by  
Sorfarins  
towards the  
city.  
but sorpharynis to the cyte ward wente  
ryht velonusly with his entente.  
thanne cam þe two thousand of þe cyte,  
that toforn tym jn the chas hadden be. 14632 They meet  
the 2000 pur-  
suers  
(l. 14283).  
and whanne they syen the stywardis bauere  
and with him gret compenie there,  
anon they torneden jnto that partye.



These at once  
slay a thou-  
sand hea-  
then;

and jn here goynge thedirward, sekerlye,  
they slown a thousand jn here comeng,  
and thanne with cleodalis they maden restyng.

14636

and there  
begins a new  
boisterous  
battle

thanne there began a newe bataylle,  
as j 3ow seye with-owten faylle,  
that the Noyse wel herd myhte haue ben  
passeng a ful long myle then.

14640

against Sor-  
farin and his  
fors.

this kyng Sorpharyn hadde on his side  
x thousand men that jlke tyde,  
and cleodalis hadde on his partye  
but fyve thousand, certeynlye.

14644

The 250  
knights and  
the 42 fel-  
lows, who  
fight ag-  
ainst  
Sonigrans,

On the tothir partye was gret fyhtyng  
of hem of pe round table, with-owten lesyng,  
and the xlij sowdiours jn fere

14648

are in great  
distress.

azens kyng Sonigranx fowhten there,  
that azens viij thousand helden bataylle,  
and weren at gret mischef, with-owten faylle;  
For they myhten not long endure  
azens swich a meyne, j 3ow ensure.

14652

Merlin says  
to Ban they  
must destroy  
the five lead-  
ers of the  
hostile army.

thanne Merlyne clepede kyng ban anone,  
and to hym he seide ful sone :

14656

“barouns, bachelers, bothe fre & bolde,  
what stonde 3e stille & so beholde?  
here ben but fyve geantis in this stede  
that thus this meyne doth ouer-lede.

14660

weren theke fyve distroyed sone,  
thanne were al this bataylle done.”

Ban asks  
where they  
are.

“what partye ben they,” quod kyng ban tho,  
“3ondir jn bataylle bope to & fro?”

14664

Merlin says  
that Ulin  
and others  
struggle with  
them:

“certes,” quod merlyn, “j schal 3ow telle:  
Vlphines, Gyrfles, & bretel the snelle,  
Sire kay, & Sire lucauns also,

with hem they fyhten & suffren wo.

14668

“Now follow  
me,  
and we will  
see who does  
best!”

and behold & seweth now aftyr me,  
thanne the sothe there scholen we se,  
wich of this compenye best doth him here;  
the sothe thanne scholen we preven there”

14672

14664. This line was omitted and then written down the right margin.

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- Avaunt knyhtes of the table rowude  
and þe two and fourty Soudiowrs jn þat stownde: 14712  
Anon the hethene sore abasched they were,  
For of hem we[r]cen slayn mochel peple there.  
So that faste they gonne forto fle,  
that alle the Sowdyours hit myhte se, 14716  
tel to kyng Sorpharyns they comen, j-wys,  
that bataylle held with Cleodalis.  
thane borsten the hethen Jnto that pres,  
that non man there ne myhten hem ses, 14720  
So harde, that they whiche jn þe place were,  
Forsoken here place maugry here.  
and neuere they wolden astynte ne abyde,  
tyl that to-fore toraysse they comen that tyde. 14724  
Anon thanne the peple of the cyte  
wondir Sore affrayed weren, Sykyrle,  
that the Banere Syen they not than  
of here owne worthy kyng leodagan, 14728  
wherby thei thowhten thanne anon  
that taken or dede they weren Echon.  
On þe tothir partye they syen not here kyng,  
that the Sowdeoures hadden be Reskewyng; 14732  
wherfore they weren abasched wel sore,  
For that here kyng they syen not comen thore.  
and whanne they comen to-fore the town,  
thane alle lost thei wende hadde ben jn virown. 14736  
For but vj thousand of cristen ther were  
and jresch hethen xij thousand, as 3e mown here.  
Nedis the Sowdeoures weren at gret mischef,  
So that to the cyte they gonnen relief. 14740  
and euere the cetezeins, the soþe to say,  
of þe Sowdeours weren sore aferd, in fay.  
whanne the Sowdeours and here compenye  
among the hethen weren Entrid, Sekyrlye, 14744  
there began a ful gret stowr

14713. *hethene, eth* on erasure.14714. MS. *wē*.14724. MS. *tylthat*.14728. *worthy, w* corrected from *k*.—*leodagan*, see footnote to l. 14142.14729, 14736. *thei, i* squeezed in afterwards.

Ful of angwysch & of dolowr ;  
 the wheche endured ful longe than,  
 For there was slayn ryht many a man : 14748  
 For a thousand there fyllen jn that pres  
 atte ferste entre, with-owten les,  
 that neuere recouerede aftyr ageyn,  
 as j 3ow Seye now jn certeyn. 14752

and kill a  
 thousand  
 men.

On the tothir partye, whanne þe knyhtes of the rounde  
 table  
 and the xlij Sowdeoures, with-owten fable,  
 hadden discomfyt Sonigrenx the kyng,  
 and to flyht was put, with-owten lesyng, 14756  
 they wolden non lengere aftyr hym chase ;  
 For merlyne hem withheld jn that plase,  
 and drowh hem jnto on partye  
 of that feld, ful Sekyrlye, 14760  
 and to hem alle seide ryht anon :

As for the  
 knights of  
 the Round  
 Table and the  
 42 fellows,

they are told  
 by Merlin not  
 to pursue the  
 enemy,

“ herkeneth now, Lordynges Everichon,  
 3e scholen non ferthere Sewen hem here,  
 but doth now as j schal 3ow Lere : 14764  
 Alyhteth of 3oure hors jn this tyde  
 Hem to Refreschen, there to Abyde ;  
 For 3owre hors ful wery they be,  
 al be-swet and be-bled, as 3e mown se.” 14768  
 and they deden anon his comandement,  
 as j 3ow Seye, with ful good entent.

but to alight  
 and rest their  
 horses,

[leaf 144 b]

which are  
 weary,  
 and covered  
 with sweat  
 and blood.

So that there they alyhten alle anon,  
 and Refresched hem thanne Everichon, 14772  
 for therto they hadden ful gret mester,  
 alle the compenye of hem jn fer.

They all do  
 so.

Anon ther spak kyng leodagan,  
 and vnto merlyne Seyde he than : 14776  
 “ Sire, wylen 3e that these goode men here  
 with 3oure xlij myhte ben alle jn fere ? ”

King Leode-  
 gan suggests  
 to Merlin that  
 the 250 and  
 the 42 should  
 be together.

“ 3e certis, Sire,” quod merlyne thanne,  
 “ to vs js welcomen Every good manne. 14780

Merlin says  
 that every  
 good man is  
 welcome to  
 them.

For mochel the bettere scholen we do  
al jn on wynges to-gederis forto go."

The king  
tells Hervy  
of Rivel to  
join the 42.

Anon thanne clepyd kyng leodagan  
hervy the ryvel, his banorer, than, 14784

and preyde hym thanne forto comen ner  
jn compenye with these goode men to dwellen her—

"and 3oure Feleschepe with 3ow also,  
For jn on compenye now scholen we go." 14788

Hervy gladly  
obeys:

"Ful gladliche, sire," quod hervy ryvele,  
"For Of here compenye vs lyketh ful wel,  
3if that so here wylle now be."

"3is," quod kyng leodagan, "certeinle, 14792

For from this day hens forward  
but on compenye to ben both styf & hard."

"For good is  
the fellow-  
ship of good  
men."

"depardeux," quod Sire hervy thenne,  
"For good is the Feleschepe of ryht good menne." 14796

Thanne to-gederis weren they alle  
jn on compenye, as gan be-falle.

They start  
for the city,

and merlyne to-fore be-gan to ryde;  
thanne alle they hym seweden þat ilke tyde. 14800

And whilles they reden thus jn fere,  
as 3e han me herd rehersen here,

where Cleo-  
dalis is up-  
holding the  
battle against  
king Sorfa-  
rins' men.

Al the whille the steward Cleodalis  
with vj thousand jn his compenye, j-wis, 14804

agens kyng Sorpharynes fawht he tho,  
that with hym hadde xij thousand men & mo.

These fight  
dispersedly,

but enbataylled non thing they were,  
but ay fyhtyng they weren here & there, 14808

ever thinking  
the Chris-  
tians will suc-  
cumb.

for they wendyn han mad an ende  
of Cleodalis meyne, & so thanne they wende,

For at gret mischef, certeyn, they were,  
they that with Cleodalis weren there, 14812

For jn poynt to 3elden they weren echone  
and ek here place to forsaken welsone.

Now Merlin's  
banner is  
sighted.

thanne they lokede hem beside  
and Syen merlynes Baner that tyde, 14816

the dragon that the feer blew so hygh,

14803. MS. *Allhe.* 14806. *hym* added in the left margin.  
14810. *they* added in the right margin.

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For 3e ben comen now to 3oure asay ;  
 therefore let now se how 3e koune play." 14856

Arthur  
laughingly  
calls this  
fight a good  
joke.  
 whanne that kyng Artheur herde this,  
 To kyng Ban & kyng Bors he seyde, j-wys,  
 ryht hertely lawghenge jn his manere,  
 to tho two kynges thanne seide he there 14860  
 that—" neuere a bettere boorde was  
 thanne now is be-gonnen jn this plas."  
 thanne seide merlyne to hem anon :  
 " beleve 3oure boordyng now everichon, 14864  
 For al this wyke 3e mown jn fere  
 bothe Lawghen & boorden & make good chere."  
 whanne they vndirstod merlyne So speke,  
 amonges here enemyes gonne they reke 14868  
 welful of jre and maultalent.  
 there began a gret Stour present :  
 the sorrest that was of al theke day,  
 at that tyme there began, jn fay. 14872

Arthur  
excels.  
 There began Arthewr a merveyllous thing  
 be his owne handis as jn werkyng,  
 as merlyne hym cownseyllede at that tyde,  
 that al the world of hym spak so wyde. 14876

Gonnore  
 and the other  
ladies  
 and Gonnore, that on the walles was than,  
 the dowhter of kyng leodagan,  
 alle the ladyes and pe maydenis also,  
 to hevne ward here hondis heldyn tho, 14880  
 and preyden for Artheuris Savaciown,  
 that with enemyes was be-set jn virown,  
 and wepten for rowthe and for pyte.  
 So manye hethene azens crystyente 14884  
 merveille to suffren there hit was,  
 So 3onge as they weren jn that plas.  
 but kyng Arthewr amongis hem echon  
 distroyede most of alle here fon. 14888

With his  
sword Call-  
brand,  
 he kills  
 For [with] his swerd, that hyhte Calybrond,  
 whiche that he bar pere jn his hond,  
 bothe on pe ryhte syde & on the left  
 manye hedis & scholderis he hem berefte, 14892

14878. See footnote to l. 14142. 14889. MS. *for his.*

- legges, armes, & thyes also ; and maimes,  
 bothe knyhtes & hors to grownde gonne go.  
 he made here helmes fleen jnto þe feld  
 and knyhtes ded fallen vndir here scheld. 14896  
 Ek the Sercles, that weren mad of Stel, cutting even  
through steel.  
 azens his strok holden myhten non del.  
 but evere abowtes hym good warde þere was  
 hym forto saveu there jn that plas. 14900  
 For azens kyng Bors and kyng Ban Boors and  
Ban are irre-  
sistible ;  
 non maner of armure myhte duren than.  
 thanne so they wrowhten there jn fere,  
 that here strokis dorste non man abyden there, 14904  
 what of hem of the rownde table so are their  
companions.  
 and of the xlij Sowdiowrs, *with-owten* fable.  
 For amongis hem was forzeten non thyng,  
 whanne that they comen to here bekeryng. 14908
- Ful strong was þe bataylle and the stowr The violent  
battle outside  
the city walls  
 that to-forn þe cyte of Torayse was þat owr  
 (and every knyht Jn his owne degre  
 Ful boldly there hym bar, ful Sykirle), 14912  
 and dured al the day, as j 3ow telle, laste all day.  
 tyl that hit rang with evesong belle.  
 that So nygh they weren to the cyte,  
 Not thens A stones cast, Sykerle. 14916 [leaf 144 d]  
 but whanne hit cam to þe owr of noon tho, At the ninth  
hour,  
3000 foes are  
fallen.  
 of al that day fowhten they not So,  
 that xij thowsend Jnto nyne was browht ;  
 at that tyme so sore the crystene þere fowht. 14920
- Whanne Sorpharynes Sawhe that hit wente so, Sorpharyns  
swears he  
will be  
avenged ;  
 anon be his creauce Swor he tho  
 that he wolde neuere from that grownd gon,  
 tyl that he were venged of his fon. 14924  
 Anon he clepede his kynnes-men than, he calls his  
kinsmen,  
 Sire Gaydone & also Sire Sotybran,  
 Sire Senebant & Sire Claryown,  
 Sire mallors & sire Freellent jn virown ; 14928  
 They weren knyhtes bothe goode & bolde,

14929. *They, y squeezed in afterwards.*



as in this Storye here hit is tolde.

makes an  
attack,

they dressed hem forth alle in fere

amonges theke worthy Sowdyowrs there.

14932

and throws  
down Herry  
of Rivel,

hit happede kyng Sorpharyn to meten tho

Sire hervy the Ryvel, as hit gan go.

and Sire Ryvel he smot so sore that tyde,

that down to þe Erthe gan he glyde.

14936

Ankor (An-  
tron),

and aftyr Ancor he smot also,

that down to grownde thanne gan he go.

and Girffes.

Sethen Sire gyrffes smot he there,

that hors & man to grownd he bere.

14940

Each of his  
followers  
unhorses an  
adversary.

and Ech of his felawes smot a knyht,

that to the grownde he fyl anon ryht;

thanne Ech of his felawes bar hym so,

and maden here aduersarye to grownde go.

14944

but there nas non wondid to þe ded

that felden were in thyke sted.

Thus Lucans,  
Kay, Bretel,  
and several  
others

Sire Lucans þe botelers happed thanne thus,

Sire meraungis & sire Gorvayns Caradus,

14948

Sire blyobers, sire galeys louchauns, as telleth this tale,

Sire kay þe steward & sire guniret of lambale,

Ek Sire Godam and Sire staungot,

the nithe was sire Bretel, wel j wot :

14952

are thrown to  
the ground.

alle these in the feld j-feld they were.

but non man wyste the sothe there,

whethir be strok of lawnce hit was

or be defawt of here hors in that plas.

14956

There is  
great din  
and blinding  
dust.

thanne a ful gret noysse there began

and a wondir gret dowst forsothe than,

that non of hem othir myhten se,

as this storye Reherseth certeynle.

14960

but Evere the hethene peynede hem faste

the cristene to distroyen In alle haste.

The unhorsed  
knights  
defend them-  
selves on foot,

Anon these worthy nyne knyhtes

vppon here feet keuerede anon ryhtes.

14964

with here naked swerdis on honde

Styfly to-gederis gonne they stonde,

and Fowhten with hem with alle here myht

14935. *smot*, *m* blotted (corrected from *no* ?).

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and ek, j trowe, strengere, certeinle."

But Arthur  
perseveres.

"Now god Forbede," quod kyng arthur tho,

"that evere ony man but j hym go to.

15008

For the more pat dowted the jeaunt Js,

the sonnere asayen hym j schal, j-wys.

For elles my-selve j scholde neuere knowe

what j myhte don anothyr throwe."

15012

Merlin, see-  
ing the delay,  
harshly tells  
Arthur to  
hurry.

Whanne merlyne Sawh Arthewr Taryen So,

wondirly he ascryede hym anon tho :

"what Taryest thou here, pou fowle coward ?

dredyst thou the jeaunt jn this part ?

15016

Go, coward, and do as thou scholdest do."

Arthur feels  
ashamed,

and whanne kyng Arthur herde merlyne speken so,

and that coward he clypede hym thanne,

Ful sore aschamed was pat worthy manne.

15020

and rides on.

Anon he prekede jnto that pres,

that for non thing ne wolde he ses.

Ban remon-  
strates with  
Merlin.

thanne anon bespak kyng Ban,

and þere to merlyne seyde he than :

15024

"me thynketh hit is not ryht wel do

to chargen Arthur forto don so,

So zong a man as Arthewr now js

azens that gret devel to josten, j-wys."

15028

Merlin tells  
him not to  
mind, but to  
follow after  
with Boors  
and Ulfen.

"there-offen non warde," quod merlyn tho,

"but tak zoure spere and aftyr hym ze go,

and zowre brothir and Vlphyn jn compeuye ;

aftyr hym faste that ze don hye."

15032

his comandement they fulfylden in haste,

also swithe as here hors myhten laste.

When Sor-  
farins sees  
Arthur, he  
rides against  
him.

whanne kyng Sorpharynes Sawh Arthewr there,

anon azens hym he gan forto bere.

15036

And whanne they of the reng behelden this,

thanne hovenen they alle styll, j-wys.

All look  
anxiously on.

For of Arthewr they hadden gret drede,

lest that the jeawnt hym scholde ouer-lede.

15040

So sore to-gederis they metten atte laste,

that bothe here speres there al to-burste.

The spears  
burst.

15011. MS. *my felvel*. 15017. *and*, a corrected from *d*.  
15033. *haste* corrected from *hye*. 15042. MS. *alto barste*.

- Sorpharynes Arthewr jn þe flanke hyrte,  
that a lytel hit gan hym smerte. 15044 Arthur is  
slightly hurt  
in the side;
- and Arthour smot him so sore ageyn  
thorwh Scheld and hauberk, jn certeyn,  
that thorwgh the chyne the spere owt glod  
an arme lengthe behynde, er hit with-stod, 15048 Sorfarine is  
pierced,  
and falls.
- These Justes beheld this lady gonnore,  
the dowhter of kyng Leodegan, þat was thore, 15052 Gonnore,  
watching the  
combat,
- as sche atte a fenestre wyndowe lay ;  
sche beheld al theke bataylle that day,  
and merveyllede what this Bachelor was,  
that there so wel bar hym jn that plas. 15056 marvels at  
the young  
man
- Non wyht his name cowde tellen that owr,  
but that hit was on a worthy Sowdyowr—  
“ that 3oure fadyr hath now with-holde ;  
what so evere he be, he is a man ful bolde.” 15060 whose name  
nobody  
knows.
- “ Sertes,” quod the mayden tho,  
“ From goode men nedis cam he fro.  
For but 3if of hygh blood that born he were,  
he cowde neuere so handelen neþer scheld ne spere.”  
So that al thyke day jnto the ende 15065 and keeps on  
-peaking of  
the soldiers.
- of the sowdiours to speken sche wolde not lende.  
Anon kyng Bors and kyng Ban  
Jnto that Reng anon entred than, 15068 Ban and  
Boors ap-  
proach ;  
[leaf 145 b]
- eche of Hem With a spere Bothe myhty and strong,  
with hedis scharpe j-grownden, bothe stordy and long.  
There kyng Bors smot Sortybran,  
and kyng ban smot Claryel than ; 15072 they strike  
two enemies;
- Vlphynes smot Sire Gaydon jn þat plas,  
that of his lyf bereft he was.  
so that these jeauntes to dethe weren browht ;  
thane eche man his enemy owt þere sowht. 15076 Ulfen kills a  
third.
- 3it forthere these thre gonnen to ryde,  
So that eche of hem anoþer slowhe that tyde.  
the ton slowh moras, the tother Laundon,  
the thrydde senebawnt he slowh anon, 15080

15063 *but added above the line.*

So that stulle they leften there,  
tyl that away they were born on bere.

Arthur  
attacks  
Mallore

Anon kyng Artheur his swerd gan drawe,  
For eft to fyhten he was ful fawe. 15084

Sire mallore there he smot that day  
thorwh-out the helm, the sothe to say,  
For that he lay vppon kyn[g] Ban ;  
ful bytterly he smot hym than, 15088

and Freelent,  
who try to  
slay Ban.

and so he dede Sire Freelent,  
that bothen purposeden with good entent  
For to han had kyng bannes hed  
Evene from the body jn that sted. 15092

For the ton his helm wolde han of drawe,  
the toper with a mas wold han hym Slawe.  
thane lefte not kyng Artheur for nou of this,  
but welsone mallore; hed he hadde, j-wys, 15096  
and mad hit fien jnto the feld  
bothe from body and ek from scheld.

Mallore's  
head flies off.

Freelent

Whanne Freelent Sawh his felawe ded,  
that was his cosyn, jn that sted, 15100

lifts his  
mace ;

his mas he gan lyften ful lye  
kyng Artheur to han smeten, Sekerlye.

Arthur  
throws up his  
shield.

Artheur his scheld threw vpe anon,  
that þe strok hym scholde not lyhten vppon. 15104

The blow  
makes the  
shield drop,

and so sore he smot jn that tyde,  
that jnto þe feld þe scheld gan glyde  
and vppon the lefte scholdere decendyd adowne,  
that on þe hors nekke hit stynte wel son. 15108

and descends  
on Arthur's  
shoulder.

Freelent  
tries another  
blow ;  
but Arthur  
evades,

and vpe azen freellent wolde han rekured his mas ;  
anothyr thowhte Artheur jn that plas.

makes a fresh  
attack,  
and slit-  
Freelent's  
head.

he smot his hors with his speres tho,  
and azen to Freellent gan he go, 15112  
and vppon the helm hym hytte þere jn hy,  
that Jnto the gorget hit wente ful ny.

The heathen  
cry out in  
dismay.

thane the hethene gonnen forto crye,  
For sore aferd weren they, sekerlye. 15116

For socowr non hadden they thar

15087. MS. *kyn*. 15112. *freellent*, *r* corrected from *e*.  
15113. MS. *an hy*.

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with-jinne that mounthe weren sembled than,  
of wheche xx kynges thier were  
To kyng Ryown comen there. 15156

amongst  
whom 20  
kings,

Gret karyage they browhten with hem also  
of wyne, of vytaylle, as was forto do.  
So that here ost they kepten jn fere,  
that for non vyaunde ferreyen scholden they there, 15160

with plenty  
of wine and  
food,

so as to  
render torays  
unnecessary.

but 3if hit be jn-to on partye ;  
For plente of viaunde hadden they, Sekerlye.

The city is  
assailed  
vigorously.

Faste they asaylleden the cyte there,  
but they with-jinne of hem hadden non fere, 15164

But it is big  
and strong :

For the cyte was bothe byg and strong.

only famine  
is threaten-  
ing.

But skars of vetaylle was hem among,  
that was here drede for enfamyneng,  
lest the Sege were longe dureng. 15168

thus cam Socour thanne Every day

To kyng Ryown, the sothe to Say.

For welsore agreved he was  
of the meyne he hadde lost jn that plas. 15172

Now we will  
leave this,

Now leveth of this mater here,  
Of kyng Ryown & of his ost jn fere  
and of hem with-jinne the cyte.

and speak of  
king Arthur  
and his com-  
panions.

And of kyng Arthewr speke now we  
and of his felawes jn compenye ; 15176

Now to that mater let vs faste hyc.

This Storye here declareth a newe tale,  
how these hethene jeauntes weren browht in bale, 15180

and how glad that they of the cyte  
and joyful weren, whanne they gonnen fle,

Ek that so lytel a compenye  
hem hadde j-scomfyted, certeinlye, 15184

that jn al but vj thousand an cco were ;

azens xv thousand they fowhten there.

and the scomfyture only hit was  
be merlynes helpe and goddis gras. 15188

The pursuers  
return to  
Toraise.

whanne the hethen they hadde chased jnto þe nyht,  
thanne to Torayse they torneden anon ryht,

where as was kyng leodagan ;

Ful joyful and merye weren they than. 15192

- For leodagannes men hadden hym vp take,  
whilles the Sowdiours wrowhten the hethen wrake.  
And whanne Leodegan wiste the Sowdiowrs comenge,  
azens hem he wente jn cowntrynge. 15196 King Leodegan goes to meet them.
- Wondir gret joye thanne made the kyng,  
whanne they to-gederis comen jn metyng.  
But Whanne Sire Antron And Girflet they fownden þere, [leaf 145 d]  
Sire kay & Sire Lucawns the Botelere, 15200  
and alle here oper Feleschepe, bothe hol & sownd, All rejoice.  
thanne weren [they] joyful vppon that grownd.  
For they wenden, ded that they hadden be  
oper ellis taken presoner, certeynle. 15204  
and they hadden wonne good gret plente ;  
Anon kyng leodagan, Sekerle—  
anon to the Sowdeowrs hit was to sent,  
with that good hem forto present. 15208  
For better he wolde, and he bettere myhte do,  
but natheles that thedyr sent he tho.
- Whanne they seyen the grete curtesye  
that kyng leodegan dede openlye, 15212 The soldiers thankfully  
they hym thanked a thouse[n]d Sythe,  
and to that messenger seyden as blythe :  
“ we thanken the kyng of his gret sonde ;  
let hym depart yt forth Jn his londe ! 15216 decline the gift.  
and anothis tyme, whanne we hauen nede,  
we wylen Resceyven that he vs bede.”  
thanne cam merlyne Faste anon,  
and to the thre kynges gan he gon, 15220 But Merlin asks them to accept it.  
and bad hem Resceyven ouer alle thyng  
the presentes that to hem sente þe kyng.  
So they hit took, as merlyn hem bad,  
and amonges þe peple distrebucionz they mad, 15224  
and leften not the valw of on peny  
To here owne partis, ful Sekerly. Then they do so, and distribute it amongst the people.

15196. *hem, e* corrected from *ij*.15200. *lucawns, c* more like an *s*. At the end of *the* there is something like a daubed *a*. 15202. MS. *werē joyful*.15207. The first *to* added above the line.15218. MS. *athoused*. 15216. MS. *departyd*.15221. MS. *boden hem Resceyved*.



All praise the  
soldiers;

So that alle men of that contre  
Tho Sowdyowrs preyseden ful hertele. 15228

even such as  
never saw  
them.

So that the contre repleynsched was abowte  
of þe goodis þat they ʒoven, with-owten dowte.  
For hem that the Sowdeours neuere Sye,  
mochel worschepe hem spoken, certeynlye, 15232

and al for here largeness & here good dede  
thorwh-owt the Rem of hem gan sprede.  
And al this was be Merlynes cownsaille,  
as j ʒow Seye with-owten faylle. 15236

Arthur gives  
his host and  
hostess  
money,  
clothing, and  
horses.

Arthur to his ost he ʒaf that day  
bothe Richesse, and Robes, and many palfray ;  
that alle the dayes aftyr of here lyve  
moche bettere myhten they bothen thryve. 15240

After the  
distribution  
of the spoil,

Whanne that kyng Arthour hadde thus j-do,  
and alle the riches departyd so,  
that vppon the hethene they hadden gete  
(hit was departyd, er he wolde lete), 15244

the soldiers  
enter the  
town.

thanne they gonnen Entren into þe town  
with al here feleschepe in virowu.

King Leode-  
gan invites  
them to his  
palace,

thanne seide kyng Leodegan tho  
to alle the Sowdiowrs, as they gonne go,  
and wolde non Suffren with al his myhte 15248

to stay with  
him and the  
knights of  
the Round  
Table.

In that town there Forto alyhte  
Sauf only at his owne paleys ;  
he hem besowhte, with-owten les. 15252

They unarm.

Nether neuere owt of his compenye  
he ne wolde not Suffren hem, trewelye,  
but with the knyhtes of the Rownde table  
with hem in compenye to ben, with-owten fable. 15256

The king  
sends his  
daughters  
with rich  
garment-

And whanne vnarmed that they were,  
kyng leodagan his dowhter to hem sente there  
with the richest robes that he hadde,  
dame gonnore, his dowhter, to hem ladde, 15260  
and hot water to waschen hem In

and hot water  
for washing.

in bacenis of gold bothe goode & fyn.

15228. *hertele*, the last *e* corrected from *y*.

15247. *thane* corrected from *that*.

15258. *dowhter*, *r* corrected from *t*.

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For he was a man of gret valour. 15300

King Leodegan notices the respect paid to Arthur.

kyng leodagan took gret kep tho  
of the Reuerence they gonne hym do,  
and vndirstood wel be here Seruyse  
that here souereyn he was jn alle wyse, 15304

He wonders who he is,

and Merveyllede gretly what he scholde be,  
For fayn wolde he han wyst, Sykerle.

and wishes that he would marry his daughter.

and to hym-Self he thowhte ryht there  
that he hadde weddid his dowhter gonnore. 15308  
For he sawh neuere man of swich entaylle,  
but of hygh blood he were, saunz faille.

"Or perhaps the Lord has sent me a spirit in man's likeness,

" Oþer ellis the goode Lord jn maieste  
thys man for socour hath sent to me, 15312

for the sustenance of Christianity."

a spiryt to ben jn mannes lyknesse  
this Rewm to defenden from distresse,  
j wot wel, not only for the loue of me,  
but for the Sustenaunce of crystyente 15316  
and ek holy chirche Forto meyntheyne."

thus to hym-Self kyng Leodagan gan seyne.

Leodegan muses on his wonderful rescue

At that mete mochel thowhte than  
this worthy kyng Leodagan 15320

how that he Reskewed was, jn feye,  
with xliij felawes jn the valeye,

from imprisonment,

that hym Reskewed of .v. hundred men,  
whiche that to preson ward ladden hym then, 15324

and browhten hym a-geyn with gret richesse,  
and Slower alle tho that weren jn that prese.

So that for thowht that he was june ther,  
nothyng he Ete at his dener. 15328

and eats nothing. Hervy of Rivel

Thanne that aspyde hervy the Revelle,  
and þere-offen hadde Merveylle Buerydelle.

goes to the king.

Anon to the table to hym he wente,  
and there hym aresoned, veramente. 15332

and asks him

he seide that neuere sethen he was bore—

" Say j 3ow neuere of swich chere before,  
ne neuere abasched So, jn good fay,  
as 3e ben here this jlke day. 15336

15303. *weel*, *w* corrected from an uncompleted *b*.

15312. *thys*, *y* corrected from *e*; *man* added above the line.

- For 3e owhten gret joye to make  
only for these goode mennis sake ;  
and 3e faren wondirly for the Nones,  
as though 3e weren not of these wones." 15340  
to be cheerful  
for the guests'  
sake.
- Anon kyng leodegan hym bethowhte,  
how merveillously this man hadde wrowhte,  
and Seyde : " herry, my dere Frende,  
J thenke here of a wondyr ende, 15344  
Leodegan  
explains why  
he is so  
pensive,
- of the beste dede of on worthy man,  
that of al the world now tellen j kan.  
wherfore j ne may not with-holden me,  
but on hym to thenken, certeynle. 15348  
and says he  
cannot help  
it.
- and therefore, goode Sire, so blame me nowht,  
For this day for me hath he Sore wrowht."  
" Sire, 3it may j that leven ryht wel,  
But At this time 3e most Leven hit eche del. 15352  
Herry asks  
him to put  
(leaf 146 b)  
away all  
penniveness  
for the time.
- and whanne tyme cometh, thenk what 3e lyst,  
For what now 3e thenken, may not be wyst.  
but to hem maketh joye and Ek Solas,  
For 3e han gret cause here Jn this plas. 15356
- therfore abaschscheth non thing 3oure chere,  
For azens hem 3e mistaken 3ow here."  
" Sauf vostre grace," quod kyng Leodagan tho,  
" jn non wise that wil j now do. 15360  
Leodegan  
promises  
to do so.
- now goth and Sittyth down to 3oure mete,  
and al pensifnesse now schal j lete."
- Thanne Sette hym sire herry down to mete  
amonges his felawes, with-owten lete, 15364  
Herry re-  
turns to his  
seat.
- and the kyng to tho Barowns spak ful meryely.  
thanne gonnere Leodagans dowhter, trewely,  
of wyn Servyd hire fadir jn a cowpe of goold  
and kyng Artheur on knees ; pat lette sche nold. 15368  
The king  
speaks  
merrily.  
Gonnere  
serves him  
with wine.  
In serving  
Arthur, she  
kneels.  
He admires  
her features.
- kyng Artheur here beheld ryht wel,  
and of alle hyre fetures hym lykede eche del.  
hym thowhte sche was the fairest lady  
of that Lond or of al breteygne, sekerly. 15372  
Her dis-  
hevelled hair,
- that mayden al dischevele sche wente,

15351. *3it* added in the left margin. 15368. MS. *kyng*.  
15369. *here*, the first *c* corrected from *y*.

- her figure. with strawht Sydes, & myddel ful gente.  
On hire hed a chapelet of gold was set  
Ful of precyous stones, with-owten let. 15376
- her complexion. hyre vysage was bothe Bryht and schene,  
entermellyd whyt and with red betwene  
Ful naturely, as hit Scholde be,  
neper more ne lasse be qwantyte; 15380
- her arms hire scholderis wel large, hyre armes ful gent,  
bothe longe and smale, verament;  
with a merveillous faire Schapen Body  
and legs. and perto Fayre schapen loynes, Sekerly; 15384
- her feet with smale feet wel schapen & gent:  
Fairere cowde non man devysen, verament;
- and hands. hire handis white, fynGRES longe and smale:  
of hire bewte joye hit is to tellen ony tale. 15388
- are delightful. And yet her virtues are still greater than her beauty.  
zif that this mayde hadde al this Bewte,  
zit hadde sche dubble fold moche more bownte,  
bothe prowessse, largenesse, & kurtesye,  
of gret wyt and valour, Sekerlye. 15392
- Arthur, Whanne kyng Artheur thus beheld this mayde,  
as tofore this tyme j haue 3ow sayde,  
he beheld hire pappes smale & gent,  
bothe harde & rownde, verament; 15396
- seeing her delicious breasts as two smale apples Semed they there.  
and her flesh, white as snow hire Flesch was whyt and wondirly clere;  
there nas neuere snow, pat snew on grownde,  
whittere thanne hire flesch that stownde; 15400
- and red as drops of blood, and as bryht coloured forto se  
as dropes of blod jn snow, certeinle.  
So that kyng Artheur, verament,  
that mayden coveytede with al his entent, 15404
- covets her with all his desire. and anon for love he tornede his chere;  
but that parceyved not the two kynges there.
- She offers him the wine, and says: "Drink, Sir Bachelor!" This lady hym profered the wyn ryht thanne:  
"drynketh, Sire Bachelor, and as a worthi manne! 15408

15377. *hyre*, *y* corrected from *e*.15381. *hyr'*, *h* corrected from *a*.15388. *is* added above the line.—*ony*, *o* corrected from *a*.15394. MS. *tyme this tyme*, the former *tyme* crossed out.

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# HISTORY

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For with alle reuerence that he myhte do,  
 he wolde that Bacheler Servyd had be ;  
 For his name knew he not, certeinle. 15448

At the end of  
 the meal,

And whanne that the clothes J-drawen were,  
 and ek that they hadde waschen there,

Ban asks  
 king  
 Leodegan

thane anon be-spak kyng Ban  
 To that kyng there, Leodagan. 15452

thane kyng Ban be-gan to spelle,  
 and to kyng leodagan he gan to telle :

why he has  
 not married  
 his daughter

“ Sire, j me merueille mochel now, trewelye,  
 of on thyng that j se with myn eye,  
 and of zow, that ben so wys a man,  
 that zoure dowhter Maryen ze ne kan.

to a man of  
 renown, who  
 could help  
 him to defend  
 his land,

For sche hath age, wit, and discessioun  
 to ben weddid to ony hygh man of renown, 15460

that zoure lond myhte helpe to defende,  
 Sethen god no mo children doth zow sende,

and be his  
 heir.

zoure Eyr to ben aftyr zoure day,  
 zoure lond to gouernen and hauen for ay.” 15464

Leodegan  
 says he has  
 been pre-  
 vented by the  
 war.

“ Now certis,” seyde kyng Leodagan tho,  
 “ ne hadde þe werre j-ben, hit hadde be do ;  
 For hit ful sore hath greved me.

kyng Ryown of Yrlond, Sykerle,  
 and of denmark also, the bolde, 15468

which has  
 lasted seven  
 years :

thys vij zer werre with me hath he holde,  
 and neuere j ne kan Bryngen hit to an Ende.

for sethen þat tyme non man hidir cam wende  
 to whom that j myhte my dowhter take  
 me to defenden, myn enemyes to wrake. 15472

but if he could  
 find a worthy  
 bachelor,

but so me god helpe, ful wytterly :  
 and ouy worthy zong bachelor fynden myhte j, 15476

that jn armes were goode and Sure,  
 and that with travaylle he myhte endure  
 and my werres forto meyntheyngne,

he should like  
 his daughter  
 to have him.

Swych ou j wolde my dowhter hadde, certeyngne, 15480  
 and al my Lond aftyr my deces,

that j myhte lyven jn reste & pes ;  
 al thowh he were of non hygh lynage,

even if he  
 were not of  
 high birth.

15453. *leo* crossed out before *Ban*.

15454. *telle*, the first *e* corrected from an uncompleted *h*.

- of hygnesse of Lordschepe, ne of gret parage. 15484  
 and wolde god hit were now fullyche j-wrowht, Could he have  
his wish.  
 as that j now thynke jn my thowht,  
 Er that thre dayes fully don wende,  
 that mater wolde j bryngen to an ende, 15488 the matter  
would be  
quickly  
settled  
with the best  
of bachelors.  
 To ryht a fair 3ong Bachelor ;  
 bope the beste and þe worthiest this is owher.  
 For j knowe ful wel, certeynly,  
 that he is a mochel more heyghere man than j." 15492  
 Anon toward kyng Bors loked Merlyn than,  
 and to hym a signe sone make he be-gan  
 that for kyng Artheur spak he tho ;  
 And certeynly so gan he do. 15496
- Thanne gonnen they to speken of othyr thyng, [leaf 146 d]  
 where-offen Sory was Leodegan the kyng,  
 that he ne spak no more of that matere ;  
 Neþer of whens they weren, cowde he not lere. 15500 Then they  
begin to talk  
of other  
things, much  
to the regret  
of the king  
 And euere he beheld with herte wel sadde  
 what joye þe sowdeours of Artheur made,  
 whiche that maden hym to smerte  
 and forto ben ryht hevy jn herte. 15504  
 For so worthy men these xlij Sowdiours were,  
 but abouen hem alle Artheur hadde most chere.  
 wherfore the kynges dowhter dame gonnore  
 Fulsore hire loue on hym caste thore, 15508 Gonnore is  
greatly in  
love wth.  
Arthur.  
 and desired jn herte ful pryvyle,  
 to hym j-weddid that sche myhte be  
 aboven alle tho that Ewere sche say ;  
 thus this storye reherseth jn fay. 15512
- Furthermore telleth 3it this storye  
 that the fairest & wysest sche was, vtterlye,  
 of alle the ladyes of Bloye bretayngne  
 and best beloved, Jn certeygne, 15516  
 the fairest, the bryghtest of al that loud  
 Sauf Elayne Saun3 pere, j vndiistonde,  
 whiche was Percyes wif of þe Rous,  
 and sche þe dowhtyr of kyng Pellous, 15520 she is sur-  
passed only  
by Elaine.  
daughter of  
king Pellous.



and aftyr was sche wyf to kyng Alayn,  
that hurt was with þe veniable spere, certayn.

or Pellenors,  
with the  
maimed  
thighs,

Ek this Pellenors, that pellous callen we,  
thorwgh bothe thyes j-maymed was he,  
as the seint Graal schal maken mynde,  
lyk as here-aftyr jn this storie scholen 3e fynde.

15524

This mayden, of whiche 3e vndirstond,  
was the fairest thorwh-owt ony Lond.

15528

whereof more  
in the story  
of the Holy  
Graal.

Now sesen we now of this matere,  
and til Eftsones non more to speke þerof here,  
tyl that thaventuris of seint Graal  
holy discuren hit Somme an al.  
and speken we forth of this meyne oure fille,  
that jn kyng leodagannes court abyden styлле.

15532

Ryaly at here Soper weren they dyht,  
as hit belongede to men of myht.

15536

After supper,  
Merlin takes  
the three  
kings aside,

And whanne that the tables j-drawen were,  
the thre kynges on syde merlyn took there,  
and openly he seide there to hem alle :

“wilen 3e now heren what is jn breteyne befalle?”

“3e Certes,” quod kyng Artheur tho,

15541

“that wolde j weten, Er that J go.”

and tells  
them what  
has happened  
in Britain :  
the invasion  
of the  
heathen,

“wile 3e weten,” quod merlyn, “with-owten faylle,

aforu Londone hath ben ful gret Bataylle

15544

agens the hethene, that there j-entrid Js

and þat lond dispoillid han & robbed, J-wys.

their great  
transport  
of prey,

So that with the pray that they hadden take,

Towardis douer here weye gonne they make

15548

jnto the ost to leden that cariage

with ten thousand men of gret parage.

thanne so hit behapped jn that tyde,

the arrival of  
Arthur's five  
nephews,

that fyve of thy neveys comen þere Ryde,

15552

that from here moderis departyd were

and vnknoweng of ony of here fadris dere.

thanne how these forreyeris that they mette,

j schal 3ow tellen, with-owten ony lette.

15556

15529. here crossed out after we.

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